

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

January 21, 2022

8:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Harriet Drummond, Co-Chair
Representative Andi Story, Co-Chair
Representative Tiffany Zulkosky
Representative Grier Hopkins
Representative Mike Prax
Representative Mike Cronk
Representative Ronald Gillham

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 18

"An Act relating to national board certification for public school teachers."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 21

"An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 164

"An Act relating to early education programs provided by school districts; relating to school age eligibility; relating to early education programs; establishing a parents as teachers program; relating to the duties of the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to certification of teachers; establishing a reading intervention program for public school students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three; establishing a reading program in the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to a virtual education consortium; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 18

SHORT TITLE: TEACHERS: NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KREISS-TOMKINS

02/18/21	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
02/18/21	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/18/21	(H)	STA, EDC
02/25/21	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/25/21	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/02/21	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/02/21	(H)	Heard & Held
03/02/21	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
03/04/21	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/04/21	(H)	Heard & Held
03/04/21	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
03/09/21	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/09/21	(H)	Moved HB 18 Out of Committee
03/09/21	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
03/10/21	(H)	STA RPT 3DP 1DNP 1NR 2AM
03/10/21	(H)	DP: CLAMAN, TARR, KREISS-TOMKINS
03/10/21	(H)	DNP: EASTMAN
03/10/21	(H)	NR: STORY
03/10/21	(H)	AM: KAUFMAN, VANCE
04/30/21	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/30/21	(H)	Heard & Held
04/30/21	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
05/10/21	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
05/10/21	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
01/21/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 21

SHORT TITLE: ADD FACULTY MEMBER UNIV BOARD OF REGENTS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) WOOL

02/18/21	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
02/18/21	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/18/21	(H)	EDC, STA
04/26/21	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/26/21	(H)	Heard & Held
04/26/21	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
05/10/21	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
05/10/21	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
01/21/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented HB 18.

LISA PARADY, PhD, Executive Director

Alaska Council of School Administrators

Alaska Superintendents Association

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered a PowerPoint presentation in support of HB 18.

REPRESENTATIVE ADAM WOOL

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented HB 21.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:00:00 AM](#)

[The call to order and beginning of attendance was begun before the scheduled start time; therefore, the information was not captured on the recording but has been provided from the secretary's log notes.]

CO-CHAIR HARRIET DRUMMOND called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Representatives Story, Cronk, Gilham, Prax, Zulkosky, and Drummond were present at the call to order. Representative Hopkins arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 18-TEACHERS: NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

[8:00:33 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 18, "An Act relating to national board certification for public school teachers."

[8:01:15 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, re-introduced HB 18, [which was heard previously by the House Education Standing Committee on 4/30/21]. He said the proposed legislation seeks to acknowledge teachers who have pursued and achieved the national board certification, a

rigorous certification process. He said many states offer incentives to teachers who achieve this certification. He said the underlying idea is the importance of teachers and the acknowledgement of the work they do. He stated, "Everything we can possibly do to incent and attract excellent ... and high-quality teachers is incredibly important." He said HB 18 sets a goal for the number of National Board certified teachers the state might be able to attract, as well as puts forward a recognition of those teachers that would achieve that status. He related that he has worked with all aspects of the educational community in terms of the proposed legislation and has found universal support for HB 18.

[8:04:57 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND noted there was a zero fiscal note accompanying HB 18.

[8:05:25 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK offered his understanding that the National Board standards are comparable to a master's program, and he asked whether it would make more sense to "stick with" the University of Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS suggested Lisa Parady could address this query more thoroughly; however, he offered his understanding that the national board certification is "more clinically oriented" and addresses how teachers work in the classroom, whereas Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degrees are "more knowledge and theory oriented." He added that he does not see the two as mutually exclusive.

[8:08:37 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS asked the bill sponsor why he chose national board certification rather than other awards or accolades.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS answered that the national board certification has emerged as "the gold standard," recognized in all 50 states. In response to a follow-up question, he said getting certified is a multi-year process, and he offered his understanding that the cost for certification is \$2,000. He said many teachers pursue this certification by self-initiative, as a commitment to self-improvement. He mentioned a policy proposal to reimburse teachers, but said that is not put forth

in HB 18; however, he opined it would be "a no-brainer" thing to do.

[8:11:29 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY asked whether the National Education Association in Alaska (NEA-Alaska) has scholarship funds that could be applied to support teachers without financial means to pursue this certification.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS said he is not aware of such a fund, but would not be surprised if there were such a thing on some level.

[8:13:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked about the goal stated in HB 18 to reach a minimum of 4 percent of teachers being certified by 2025. He offered his understanding that about 220 teachers, or about 2 percent, currently have obtained this certification. Further, he said he heard there may be another 24 teachers in the process. He questioned whether [4 percent by 2025] was a reasonable goal.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS proffered that currently 2.5 percent are certified. He said it is a nonbinding goal for motivation. He said he would defer to the wisdom of the House Education Standing Committee to determine the best number to inspire but not be unobtainable.

[8:16:53 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND said there are a half dozen school districts in Alaska that provide financial incentive to teachers that achieve national board certification. She noted that this has had the benefit of lowering teacher turnover by three times. She further noted that several states provide additional stipends. She said the committee could consider this at some point to address the serious issue Alaska is having in regard to teacher retention.

[8:17:57 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:18 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.

[8:19:56 AM](#)

LISA PARADY, PhD, Executive Director, Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA), Alaska Superintendents Association, offered a PowerPoint presentation in support of HB 18. She displayed slide 3, "ACSA's Joint Position Statements," which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Preparing, Attracting and Retaining Qualified Educators

- Retaining effective educators and leaders is imperative to increase student achievement and eliminate academic disparity for all of Alaska's students. ACSA strongly encourages the development of comprehensive statewide programs to prepare, attract, and retain high quality, diverse educators and professionals.

DR. PARADY said the joint statements are derived from ACSA's members, including superintendents, elementary and secondary principals, school business officials, and school administrators across Alaska. She moved to slide 4, "How Does National Board Certification Help?," which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

- National Board Certification is recognized as the gold standard in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students
- Maintains high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do
- Builds leadership within classrooms, school buildings, and school districts
- Improves new teacher quality and retention

DR. PARADY turned to slide 5, "Current National Board Certification Numbers," which shows the following [original punctuation provided]:

- In the 2021 National Board Certification report, Alaska ranked 25th in the nation
- 2.64% of teachers have a National Board Certification

DR. PARADY said ACSA believes the goal proposed under HB 18 is an ambitious but attainable one. She pointed out that the process of certification is cyclical with limited windows of entry. She suggested moving the goal of 4 percent out to 2027. She explained that teachers who go for the certification often carry major loads in their work. She said in many cases teachers who achieve this certification are recognized as leaders, and mentorship from these certified teachers can improve new teacher quality and retention.

[8:24:46 AM](#)

MS. PARADY drew attention to the information on slide 6, "Current Challenges," which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

- Certification costs \$1,900
- Board Certification typically takes 3 years to complete
- Only 12 testing centers in Alaska
- Teachers in rural communities have additional travel costs

MS. PARADY pointed out that there is an added cost to some teachers to travel to a recognized testing site. She also noted that "submissions and tests" do not always coordinate with the teacher's school year schedule, which requires planning. To promote this certification, she recommended consideration of financial support in order to make certification available to all Alaska teachers.

DR. PARADY showed slide 7, "ACSA Supports HB 18," which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Increasing the share of Alaska teachers with National Board Certification is an important step, along with comprehensively addressing teacher recruitment and retention, to improve Alaska schools for all students. We are proud to support this policy and the goal of providing an effective teacher for all students.

DR. PARADY displayed contact information on slide 8 and offered to answer questions from the committee.

[8:27:19 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND asked how many teachers take the test each year.

DR. PARADY said she did not know but would find out and bring the answer back to the committee.

[8:28:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX noted that the National Board of Certification is a private institution related to Article 1, Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska. He questioned whether an opinion from Legislative Legal and Research Services may be necessary.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND suggested the question would be more suited for Legislative Legal and Research Services rather than Dr. Parady. She thanked Dr. Parady for her PowerPoint presentation on HB 18.

[8:29:31 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND opened public testimony on HB 18. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, she closed public testimony. She set an amendment deadline of Monday, 1/24/22, at 5 p.m.

[8:30:00 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced HB 18 was held over.

HB 21-ADD FACULTY MEMBER UNIV BOARD OF REGENTS

[8:30:11 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 21, "An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska."

[8:30:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ADAM WOOL, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented HB 21, which would add another position to the University of Alaska (UA) Board of Regents for a tenured faculty member and which would carry a two-year term. He said the term would be identical in length to that of a student

regent, and that the additional member would provide both parity and fairness. He characterized the proposed legislation as a move that would give the faculty a voice on the Board of Regents. He said the Faculty Senate for each campus would nominate two faculty, and the governor would appoint one out of the six nominees for legislative approval.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND noted the accompanying zero fiscal note.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL replied that there may be a small fiscal note to cover travel expenses.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND then acknowledged the \$4,500 fiscal note.

[8:33:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether UA has commented on the proposed legislation.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL responded that UA has not commented.

[8:33:39 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY asked whether the current regents have taken a position on the proposed legislation.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL replied that he doesn't know whether the board has taken a formal position, though he believes individual regents may have personal positions. He said that as a whole, he believes the board may prefer the status quo due to the odd number of members. He said if there is a tie vote, further discussion on the proposition would be warranted. He expressed the importance of having a faculty member on the board, and he addressed the concern of a faculty member having a conflict of interest in areas such as salary increases, explaining that the same concern could apply to the student regent with respect to tuition increases. He pointed out that the Board of Regents votes on program cuts, which affect both students and faculty, but there still exists a student regent.

[8:36:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GILLHAM commented that there would never be a tie vote with 11 regents, but with 12 regents, there would need to be tie-breakers.

[8:37:01 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS referred to the HB 21 sponsor statement [included in the committee packet] which read, in part [original punctuation provided]:

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities has stated that the University of Alaska system should "create a space for inclusive dialogue as the Board of Regents deliberates on the future of the University of Alaska System." One way to ensure that this inclusive dialogue occurs through current fiscal stressors as well as future organizational challenges is through the addition of a seat for a qualified Faculty Regent.

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS asked whether these notes came from the recent struggles with accreditation issues.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL responded that the discussion of having a faculty regent arose before the concerns with accreditation issues. He said he's heard from faculty members requesting a voice on the board since 2015. Faculty expressed frustration at not being included in discussions around possible university consolidation, and later with regard to the accreditation issues.

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS asked about the term for the faculty regent.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL replied that it would be a two-year term, the same as that of a student regent. He expressed that having a relatively short term would be good in order to consider different voices.

[8:38:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX expressed the idea that the regents serving eight-year terms have more "historical knowledge" than a faculty member serving a two-year term.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL responded that having a board member who is also a functioning member of the faculty would bring a perspective that regular board members don't have. He said the regular board members, who are generally business owners and community members, don't necessarily have any university experience other than perhaps earning a degree themselves. He noted that a hospital board will usually include a physician and/or a nurse instead of only business people.

[8:40:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK asked where the list of nominees for gubernatorial appointments comes from.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL repeated his earlier explanation that each Faculty Senate would nominate two faculty for appointment and legislative approval.

[8:41:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GILLHAM asked why the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) would not be included.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL responded that UAS, as one of the three main campuses, would be included.

[8:41:57 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND opined that having an even number of representatives tends to push consensus, since a passing vote for a 12-member board would be 7-5 instead of 6-5. She asked whether the student regent currently serves a two-year term.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL confirmed that the student regent serves a two-year term.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND expressed that she would be surprised if the Faculty Senates at each campus nominated new faculty to represent the campus on the Board of Regents.

[8:44:00 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced HB 21 was held over.

[8:44:32 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:44 a.m.