

SENATE BILL NO. 435

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATORS COTTEN, Collins, Uehling

Introduced: 2/18/92

Referred: HES, Finance

A BILL**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 "An Act establishing an elementary school class size reduction pilot program; and providing
2 for an effective date."

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

4 * Section 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. (a) The legislature finds that

5 (1) there is a need for information regarding the effect of reducing the ratio of pupils to
6 a teacher in public elementary school classes;

7 (2) preliminary research has shown that smaller classes have a positive effect on test
8 scores, school discipline, and parent involvement in schools; and

9 (3) a three-year pilot program would allow the state to collect necessary information on
10 the effects of reducing class size in public elementary schools.

11 (b) The purpose of this Act is to establish a program under which certain public elementary
12 schools would reduce the size of their classes and over a three-year period the state would monitor the
13 effect of the smaller class size on test scores, school discipline, and parent involvement in education.

14 * Sec. 2. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE REDUCTION PROGRAM. (a) The elementary

1 school class size reduction program is established in the Department of Education. The program shall
2 include

3 (1) additional state aid provided under (e) of this section for a school in a district that
4 is selected under (c) of this section;

5 (2) a program application and selection process determined by the department;

6 (3) a method to monitor and review the effects of a smaller class size on students in a
7 school selected to participate in the program; a district selected to participate in the program shall report
8 to the department annually by June 30 while participating in the program; and

9 (4) an annual audit.

10 (b) A district eligible under (c) of this section may apply to participate in the program by
11 submitting an application on a form provided by the department. The application must include

12 (1) the district's plan for using additional state funds for the purpose of reducing the ratio
13 of students to a teacher in certain schools;

14 (2) the existing ratio of students to a teacher in each elementary school in the district that
15 the district is proposing for participation in the program;

16 (3) the most recent standardized test scores for each grade in each school that is proposed
17 for participation by the district;

18 (4) the process that will be used to report the effects of reducing class size to the
19 department.

20 (c) A district is eligible to propose an elementary school in the district for participation in the
21 program described in this section if, prior to participation in the program, the ratio of students to a
22 teacher in each class in the elementary school, other than an art, typing, library, music, vocational-
23 technical, or physical education class, is greater than 25 to 1.

24 (d) The department may not select more than five elementary schools for participation in the
25 program required under this section. A school selected to participate in the program required under this
26 section shall participate until June 30, 1995.

27 (e) Those elementary schools selected to participate in the program required under this section
28 shall constitute a separate funding community for purposes of AS 14.17.031. Money required to be
29 expended under this subsection shall be included in the annual operating budget prepared by the
30 department.

31 (f) The Department of Education shall include a report on the program established under this

1 Act, as a part of the department's annual report.

2 (g) In this section,

3 (1) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.250;

4 (2) "teacher" means a person who is certified under AS 14.20.020 and who is an actual

5 classroom instructor in a regular instructional program.

6 * Sec. 3. Sections 1 and 2 of this Act are repealed June 30, 1995.

7 * Sec. 4. This Act takes effect July 1, 1992.