



# LAWS OF ALASKA

2001

**Source**  
CSSB 86(FIN)

**Chapter No.**  
69

## AN ACT

Relating to employment of teachers who have subject-matter expertise; and providing for an effective date.

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

THE ACT FOLLOWS ON PAGE 1

**Approved by the Governor:** July 3, 2001

**Actual Effective Date:** July 4, 2001

AN ACT

1 Relating to employment of teachers who have subject-matter expertise; and providing for an  
2 effective date.

3

4 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
5 to read:

6 FINDINGS, PURPOSE, AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT. (a) The legislature finds  
7 that

8 (1) there is a shortage of qualified teachers in the state;

9 (2) individuals with subject-matter expertise offer a valuable resource in a  
10 wide variety of subjects to schools in this state;

11 (3) the state needs to encourage individuals with subject-matter expertise to  
12 become teachers.

13 (b) It is the purpose of this Act to increase

14 (1) the options available to local school districts to improve the quality of

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1 instruction offered to their students; and

2 (2) the flexibility of local school districts in the way they provide instruction  
3 in subject areas that the local school district finds to be a local priority or a special need.

4 (c) It is the specific intent of this Act to place authority for regulating subject-matter  
5 expert teachers with local school boards and regional educational attendance areas and to limit  
6 the authority of the state Board of Education and Early Development with respect to subject-  
7 matter expert teachers only to the duties specifically given to the board in this Act.

8 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 **Sec. 14.20.022. Subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate.** (a)

10 Notwithstanding AS 14.20.020, a person may be issued a subject-matter expert limited  
11 teacher certificate, valid only in the subject-matter in which the person has expertise,  
12 upon compliance with the requirements of this section. A subject-matter expert  
13 teacher may only be employed to teach subjects in which the person has satisfied the  
14 education or experience requirements set out in (b)(1) of this section.

15 (b) To be eligible for a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate, a  
16 person shall

17 (1) hold at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher  
18 education accredited by a recognized regional or national accrediting association or  
19 approved by the commissioner and

20 (A) have majored or minored in the subject that the person will  
21 be teaching; or

22 (B) have at least five years experience in the subject matter that  
23 the person will be teaching;

24 (2) have submitted fingerprints to the department to be used for a  
25 criminal history background check and have been found by the department to be  
26 suitable for employment as a teacher under AS 14.20.020(f);

27 (3) be currently enrolled in an approved post-baccalaureate teacher  
28 education program at a regionally accredited institution meeting the requirements of  
29 AS 14.20.020(b) that provides for completion of the regular teacher certificate  
30 education requirements within two years after receipt of a subject-matter expert  
31 limited teacher certificate under this section; and

1 (4) pay the fee required by the department under AS 14.20.020(c) to  
2 defray the cost of the criminal history background check; the amount may not exceed  
3 the fee required for application for an initial regular teacher certificate.

4 (c) Before a school district or regional educational attendance area determines  
5 whether to hire a person as a subject-matter expert teacher under this section, the  
6 school district or regional educational attendance area shall administer a competency  
7 examination.

8 (d) A subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate is valid for one school  
9 year and may be renewed for one additional school year upon a showing of substantial  
10 progress towards completion of the teacher education program required under (b)(3) of  
11 this section.

12 (e) A school district or regional educational attendance area that employs a  
13 subject-matter expert teacher shall provide a mentor who is an experienced teacher for  
14 the subject-matter expert teacher for at least the first year of the subject-matter expert  
15 teacher's employment in the school district or regional educational attendance area.

16 (f) A person employed as a subject-matter expert teacher under this section is  
17 considered a certificated employee for purposes of AS 14.25 (teachers' retirement  
18 system). Employment as a subject-matter expert teacher under this section counts as  
19 employment for purposes of acquiring tenure under AS 14.20.150; however, a person  
20 holding a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate under this section is not  
21 entitled to tenure until the person receives a teacher certificate under AS 14.20.020.

22 (g) The department shall adopt regulations necessary to implement this  
23 section.

24 (h) In this section, "subject-matter expert teacher" is a teacher qualified to  
25 teach under (b) of this section.

26 \* **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2001.