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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State to Award Middle School STEM Grants

JUNEAU – The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development will award grants to two nonprofit organizations for pilot projects to expand science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for underserved and unrepresented middle school students with limited opportunities who are enrolled in a public school in the state.

The grants to expand middle school STEM education were proposed in Governor Parnell's comprehensive education legislation, Alaska's Education Opportunity Act (HB 278), and enacted into law following the 2014 legislative session. The grants will provide funding for three years beginning in fiscal year 2015.

The two nonprofit organizations that the department will award grants to are the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) and the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC). Grantees will be partnering with school districts from all regions of the state in order to expand STEM education to underserved and unrepresented middle school students.

ANSEP's grant will allow for a broad expansion of their Middle School Academy, which is a two-week, residential, science, and engineering experience. Currently ANSEP has four academies with a plan to have eight academies the first year and 12 academies the following two years.

SERRC's Pilot Project grant will have four components: 1) three one-week-long Middle School STEM Career Awareness Academies; 2) one two-week-long STEM Summer Camp; 3) community-based after school STEM Clubs for middle school students; and 4) a supported technology-based social learning network for program participants.

For more information, please contact the Commissioner's office at 907-465-2800.

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