



# Anchorage School District

## Education Center

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May 5, 2021

Mr. James Fields, Chair  
Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development  
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1878

Dear Chair Fields,

I am writing today as superintendent of the Anchorage School District (ASD) in response to the request for public comments on proposed changes to the State's English language learning regulations.

ASD was able to provide input on the proposed exit criteria for English Language Learners (ELL) in the fall of 2020. We are in full support of the proposed exit criteria.

Last spring, ASD exited 3.6 percent of ELLs based on the ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency Assessment. The newly proposed exit criteria would have allowed 12 percent of ELLs to exit, which is more in line with the 10-15 percent content experts predict should occur annually.

ASD also supports the revised and updated WIDA English Language Development Standards which are in alignment with District goals; the following Four Big Ideas anchor the standards and are interwoven throughout the document:

- Equity of opportunity and access
- Integration of content and language
- Collaboration among stakeholders
- Functional approach to language development

Thirty-nine states use the WIDA standards, as well as the Department of Defense and the Bureau of Indian Education. Adopting these standards will allow Alaska to align its practice with nationwide trends based on current research.

In closing, ASD supports the proposed amendment of 4 AAC 04.155 English Language Proficiency Standards and exit criteria.

Respectfully,

Deena M. Bishop, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

cc: Michael Johnson, Commissioner, DEED