

June 4, 2026

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Alaska's Education Challenge | DRAFT Strategic Plan SMART Goals



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INTRODUCTION

Alaska's education system is grounded in a shared commitment to ensuring an excellent education for every student every day. In September 2016, the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development (SBOE) established five strategic priorities to improve outcomes for all students. Building on this foundation, then-Governor Bill Walker, in his 2017 State of the State address, launched what became the Alaska Education Challenge (AEC) to address achievement gaps, increase graduation rates, and ensure every student across the state has equitable opportunities to succeed.

In early 2017, the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) engaged Alaskans statewide through a public survey, gathering input from nearly 1,400 individuals across 109 communities who contributed more than 18,000 ideas. From April through October 2017, stakeholders representing communities across Alaska worked collaboratively to refine these ideas into actionable recommendations aligned to the five strategic priorities. SBOE formally accepted these recommendations, which were shared with the Alaska Legislature in January 2018.

Since that time, AEC has provided a consistent framework for statewide improvement. Successive administrations have continued advancing this work, reinforcing priorities such as early literacy and educator workforce development. In 2020, Governor Mike Dunleavy elevated the importance of reading proficiency by third grade and teacher retention and recruitment, leading to the Alaska Reads Act, renewed focus on evidence-based literacy practices and system-wide supports, and the development of Alaska's statewide Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Playbook in partnership with DEED and stakeholders.

In 2025, SBOE initiated a comprehensive review of AEC to assess progress and determine next steps. Through the work of its standing committees, SBOE examined statewide data, implementation efforts, and outcomes across each priority area. The review affirmed meaningful progress while also identifying the need for greater focus, alignment, and measurable impact to ensure all students achieve at high levels.

In January 2026, SBOE reaffirmed its commitment to AEC through formal resolution, maintaining the five strategic priorities as the foundation for continued improvement. SBOE directed DEED to develop a strategic plan grounded in these priorities and establish clear, measurable goals to strengthen accountability and guide the next phase of work.

This strategic plan reflects that direction. It builds on nearly a decade of statewide collaboration and shifts the focus from broad strategy to a defined set of three-year SMART goals. These goals are grounded in data, aligned across the system, and designed to drive measurable improvements in student outcomes.

Strategic Priority 1

Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

K-3 Literacy Benchmark Achievement

The number of Kindergarten-Grade 3 students performing at or above benchmark on the literacy screener will increase by 10 percent from the End-of-Year 2026 baseline by End-of-Year 2029, as measured by the mCLASS DIBELS 8 Curriculum-Based Measures.

Recent data show increases in the percentage of students performing at or above benchmark across Kindergarten through Grade 3. In 2023–2024, the percentage of students at or above benchmark increased from 41 percent at Beginning-of-Year (BOY) to 57 percent at End-of-Year (EOY). In 2024–2025, this increased from 44 percent at BOY to 59 percent at EOY¹.

These data indicate that students are making progress within the school year, with increasing percentages of students meeting benchmark expectations by the end of the year. However, EOY performance remains below 60 percent, indicating that a significant proportion of students are not yet meeting benchmark expectations.

Curriculum-based measures such as mCLASS DIBELS 8 provide timely, instructionally relevant data that allow educators to monitor development of foundational literacy skills throughout the year. Performance is reflected through the DIBELS 8 composite score, which indicates whether students are on track to meet end-of-year expectations. These measures assess critical skills such as phonemic awareness, decoding, accuracy, and fluency, supporting timely instructional response.

The data generated through these measures support implementation of the core components of the Alaska Reads Act, including universal screening, targeted intervention, and ongoing progress monitoring within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Consistent implementation of these components is essential to accelerating student progress and increasing the percentage of students who meet benchmark expectations by the end of Grade 3.

K-3 mCLASS Composite Scores Over Time



¹ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), Alaska Reads Act Evaluation Report: Year 2 (2026) McLaws DIBELS 8 assessment framework (Amplify)



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

Grade 3 Literacy Proficiency

The number of Grade 3 students scoring proficient or above in English Language Arts (ELA) will increase by five percent from the Spring 2026 baseline by Spring 2029, as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR).

This goal is aligned to Alaska’s ELA standards, which require students to demonstrate proficiency in reading comprehension, foundational skills, and the ability to analyze and respond to grade-level text independently.

Statewide data from AK STAR indicate that a significant proportion of Grade 3 students are not yet meeting grade-level expectations in ELA. While performance has shown incremental improvement, overall proficiency remains below desired levels, reinforcing the need for a focused and accelerated approach to early literacy.

Grade 3 represents a critical transition point where students are expected to independently apply foundational skills and language comprehension to read and understand increasingly complex text across content areas. Students who do not reach proficiency by this stage are at increased risk of falling behind as academic demands increase.

Recent statewide performance trends in Grade 3 ELA proficiency reflect modest but positive growth over the past three school years. In School Year 2023, 27.28% of students scored proficient or above. This increased slightly to 27.89% in School Year 2024 and continued to rise to 28.68% in School Year 2025, demonstrating gradual improvement in third grade reading achievement statewide. While these data indicate early progress, the rate of improvement must accelerate to ensure more students meet grade-level expectations by the end of third grade.

Grade 3 AK STAR ELA Proficiency Trends

Percent of Students Proficient or Above

Recent performance trends for Grade 3 reflect modest but positive growth²



² Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), AK STAR Assessment Results (Spring 2023–Spring 2025 statewide results, English Language Arts, Grades 3–9).

A sustained and aligned approach grounded in the science of reading is essential to improving outcomes. Foundational literacy skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, must be systematically developed and monitored. Curriculum-based measures such as mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition provide timely, instructionally relevant data to guide instruction and intervention and to ensure students are on track prior to Grade 3.

Building on the PK–3 foundation established through the Alaska Reads Act, continued emphasis on high-quality instruction, data-informed decision-making, and targeted support within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is essential. Strengthening core instruction, aligning supports to student need, and maintaining coherence across early grades will accelerate progress.

A focused and cohesive approach, aligning instruction, assessment, and supports across grades, will increase the number of students reading proficiently by the end of Grade 3, supporting the SBOE’s goal and positioning students for success in later grades.

Strategic Priority 2

Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Perkins CTE Concentrators

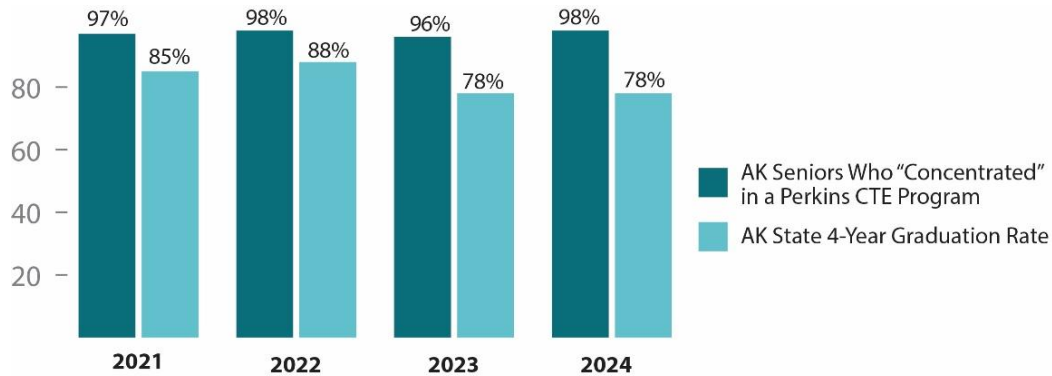
High school students who complete two credits of Perkins-approved CTE courses in a program of study (CTE concentrators) will increase by 25 percent over three years from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported in the Carl Perkins All-In-One Reports and Summer OASIS submissions.

Statewide data show that Alaska students who concentrate in a Perkins CTE program graduate at significantly higher rates than the statewide average graduation rate. Over the past several years, CTE concentrator graduation rates have remained between 96 and 98 percent, compared with overall statewide graduation rates ranging from 78 to 88 percent. A CTE concentrator is defined as a student who completes two consecutive courses within a single Perkins-approved CTE Program of Study.

In 2023–2024, 1,426 Alaska high school seniors were CTE concentrators, and 1,397 of those students graduated, representing a 98 percent graduation rate. Statewide, the total four-year senior cohort included 9,728 students, with 7,618 graduates, resulting in a 78 percent overall graduation rate. This means 14.7 percent of the 2023–2024 senior cohort were CTE concentrators.³ These data demonstrate that CTE concentrators graduate at much higher rates than the statewide average. This pattern is also consistent with national research showing that students who complete a sequence of CTE coursework are more likely to graduate, maintain stronger engagement in school, and experience positive education and workforce outcomes. There are meaningful CTE programs not funded nor reported through Perkins programs that may not be reflected in the outcome data for this goal.

³ State of Alaska Annual Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Data Reporting and Summer OASIS submission.

Alaska Graduation Rate Compared to Students who “Concentrated” in a Perkins CTE Program



These outcomes should be interpreted as correlational rather than causal relationships. Students who become CTE concentrators may also differ from non-concentrators in motivation, interests, available supports, or other background characteristics. Several studies examining concentrator outcomes report meaningful positive associations but do not attribute these outcomes solely to CTE participation.^{4,5} At the same time, a smaller body of research provides early evidence that structured CTE pathways may contribute to improved graduation and postsecondary outcomes.^{6,7} Overall, the literature supports CTE as a promising pathway for increasing student success in high school and in post-secondary pathways.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Alaska Performance Scholarship

High school graduates eligible for the Alaska Performance Scholarship through Option B, which includes 2 credits of CTE coursework, will increase by six percent from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported in the Summer OASIS submissions.

Statewide data indicate increasing student participation in CTE pathways aligned to Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) eligibility. Strengthening access to CTE coursework, ensuring availability of aligned programs of study, and increasing awareness of APS eligibility options are

⁴ Regional Education Laboratory Central. (2020). High school career and technical education participation and postsecondary outcomes in Nebraska and South Dakota (REL 2020-040). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>

⁵ Lorange, J. (2023). The impact of career and technical education concentration on the success of high school students. *Journal of Career and Technical Education*, 38(1), 1–24. <https://journalcte.org/articles/10.21061/jcte.487>

⁶ Gottfried, M. A., Taylor, E. S., Dizon-Ross, E., & Cook, M. (2024). The causal impact of attending a career technical high school on student outcomes (EdWorkingPaper No. 24-1312). Annenberg Institute at Brown University. <https://edworkingpapers.com/ai24-1312>

⁷ Dougherty, S. M. (2018). The effect of career and technical education on human capital accumulation: Causal evidence from Massachusetts. *Education Finance and Policy*, 13(2), 119–148. https://doi.org/10.1162/edfp_a_00224

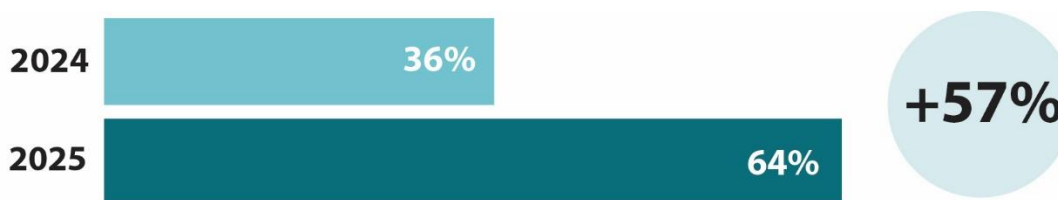
essential to expanding student participation in career-connected learning and postsecondary pathways.

The APS is a merit-based program that provides financial support to eligible Alaska students pursuing postsecondary education and training. Beginning in the 2023–2024 school year, APS eligibility requirements were updated to expand qualifying coursework to include CTE pathways. Under Curriculum Option B, students may meet requirements by completing two credits within the same subject area, including World Language, Alaska Native Language, Fine Arts, Cultural Heritage, or CTE, with CTE requiring a sequence of increasingly rigorous coursework within a career cluster.

In the first two years of implementation, participation in Option B has increased significantly. In SY2024, 1,656 of 4,631 APS recipients (36 percent) were eligible through Option B. In SY2025, 2,595 of 4,040 APS recipients (64 percent) were eligible through Option B. This represents substantial growth in both the number and proportion of students accessing APS through CTE-aligned coursework. Outcome data for this goal does not include private school and home school students that qualify for APS through an alternative process.

Expansion of APS Access Through CTE Coursework

Participation in APS Option B



	2024	2025
Senior Cohort	9,728	9,929
APS Recipients	4,631	4,040
Eligible via Option B	1,656	2,595

Reported by DEED from annual OASIS data collection⁸

These data underscore the need for sustained, aligned supports to expand access to CTE pathways and APS eligibility. A focused approach grounded in increasing availability of CTE coursework, supported through statewide guidance and data monitoring, and reinforced through consistent implementation of aligned programs of study will be essential to increasing student participation in career-connected and post-secondary opportunities.

⁸ These APS eligibility counts are measured through identified eligibility as submitted through the bulk submission Summer OASIS data collection every year in July. After OASIS submission, APS eligibility corrections are processed that are not included in these counts.

Strategic Priority 3

Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Literacy

The number of Grade 3-9 students scoring proficient or above in English Language Arts (ELA) will increase by six percent from the Spring 2026 baseline by Spring 2029, as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR).

Statewide data from the AK STAR indicate a significant proportion of students in grades 3–9 are not meeting grade-level expectations in ELA. Strengthening access to grade-level content, improving instructional coherence, and ensuring consistent use of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials are essential to closing the achievement gap.

Grade 3 represents a critical transition point, where students move from learning to read to applying reading skills for comprehension, analysis, and content learning across disciplines. Students who do not reach proficiency by this point are at increased risk of falling further behind as academic demands intensify.

In SY2025, 32.69 percent of students in grades 3–9 scored proficient or advanced in ELA. While some grade levels demonstrate improvement, overall performance remains low across grades.

AK STAR English/Language Arts
Percent Proficient or Advanced by Grade Level⁹

	2023	2024	2025
3	27.28	27.89	28.68
4	31.88	30.76	32.95
5	35.43	37.43	38.82
6	35.92	35.4	35.15
7	29.77	28.61	30.08
8	30.26	29.52	32.53
9	32.03	30.46	30.32
All	31.8	31.5	32.69

+1.19
Overall Increase

Percent Proficient or Advanced

Lower Higher

⁹ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), AK STAR Assessment Results (Spring 2023–Spring 2025 statewide results, English Language Arts, Grades 3–9).

These data indicate the need for sustained, aligned literacy supports across grades 3–9. While the Alaska Reads Act establishes a strong foundation in early literacy through a focused PK–3 approach, continued emphasis is necessary to ensure students successfully transition to reading to learn. A focused approach grounded in grade-level standards, delivered through high-quality instructional materials, and supported by targeted interventions is necessary to ensure all students can engage with increasingly complex texts and academic content.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Math

The number of Grade 3-9 students scoring proficient or above in Mathematics will increase by six percentage points from the Spring 2026 baseline by Spring 2029, as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR).

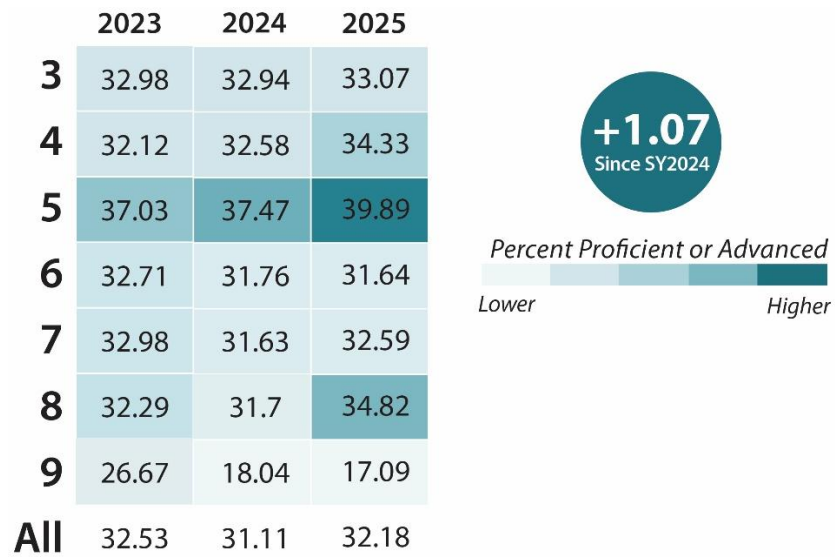
Statewide data from the AK STAR indicate that a significant proportion of students in grades 3–9 are not meeting grade-level expectations in mathematics. Strengthening access to grade-level content, improving instructional coherence, and ensuring consistent use of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials are essential to closing the achievement gap in mathematics.

Mathematics proficiency is cumulative in nature, with each grade building on prior conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. Gaps in foundational skills can compound over time, making it increasingly difficult for students to access grade-level content in later grades. This is particularly evident in middle school, where students are expected to apply mathematical reasoning to more complex problem solving and real-world applications.

In SY2025, 32.18 percent of students in grades 3–9 scored proficient or advanced in mathematics. While some grade levels demonstrate modest improvement, overall performance remains low, with notable declines in upper grades.

AK STAR Mathematics

Percent Proficient or Advanced by Grade Level¹⁰



These data highlight the need for sustained, aligned mathematics supports across grades 3–9. While early grade improvements are emerging in some areas, performance in later grades, particularly grade 9, indicates significant gaps in readiness for high school mathematics.

A focused approach grounded in grade-level standards, supported by high-quality instructional materials, and reinforced through targeted interventions will be essential. Strengthening instructional practices in foundational numeracy, ensuring coherence across grade levels, and supporting educators in delivering rigorous, standards-aligned instruction will be critical to improving outcomes and closing the achievement gap in mathematics.

¹⁰ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), AK STAR Assessment Results (Spring 2023–Spring 2025 statewide results, Mathematics, Grades 3–9).

Strategic Priority 4

Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Education Career Pathway Participation

The percentage of high school seniors who complete two consecutive Perkins-approved CTE courses or an approved dual credit sequence within an Education career pathway will increase by 25 percent over three years from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported in the district Carl Perkins All-In-One Reports and the Career and Technical Student Organization report.

The TRR Playbook published in August 2023, detailed six key strategies for improving teacher turnover.¹¹ Strategy 5, Alternative Certification Implementation Strategies, recommends creating articulated career ladders for paraprofessionals. Model 5a3. Expanded Educator Pathways of the TRR Playbook (pg. 37) explicitly details how high school career exploration can lead into expanded education pathways as a model for increasing recruitment of potential, local educators.

Additionally, statewide data show that Alaska students who concentrate in a Perkins CTE program graduate at significantly higher rates than the statewide average graduation rate. The Educators Rising CTE Program of Study (CTEP), as well as dual credit/dual enrollment education pathway concentrators, are high school pathways that can lead to higher graduation rates as well as laying a foundation for both traditional and alternative teacher preparation pathways.

Student to Teacher pathway participation will be tracked through Perkins Education Concentrator participation data. In the 2023-2024 school year, Perkins reporting indicated 29 graduating seniors had participated in an Education Concentrator, with 26 graduating seniors participating in 2024-2025.¹² The Educators Rising program also provides Student to Teacher pathway options for districts, with 193 student participants in 2023-2024 school year and 189 participating in 2024-2025.¹³ Expanding structures and systems for districts to engage in educator CTEPs and creating articulated pathways from educator CTEPs to education preparation programs, will support Alaska students in better understanding the education field and options for pursuing education careers.

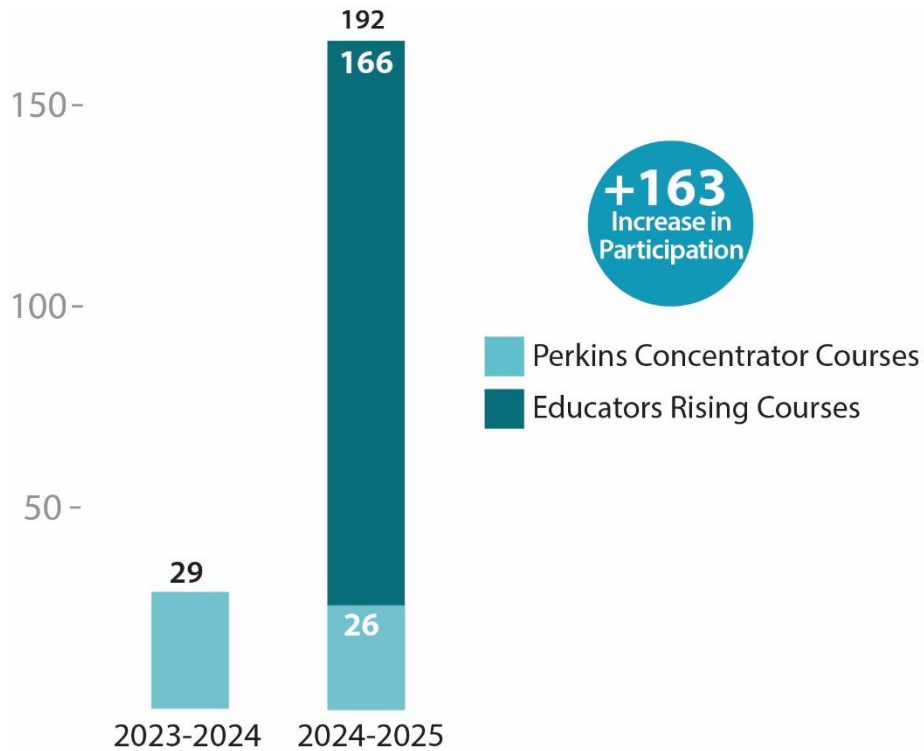
¹¹ Adams, Barbara. Alaska's Teacher Retention and Recruitment Playbook: Strategies and Support for Implementing the TRR Action Plan Recommendations. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2023.

¹² State of Alaska Annual Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Data Reporting, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

¹³ State of Alaska Career and Technical Student Organization Data Reporting, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

Student to Teacher Pathways

Student Participation Counts



Increasing access to Perkins-approved Education Career and Technical Education pathways, Educators Rising programs, and dual credit opportunities will support greater student exposure to the education profession and strengthen awareness of education career options. Continued collaboration among districts, post-secondary institutions, and statewide partners will be important to supporting the development and implementation of student-to-teacher pathways across Alaska.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Educator Apprenticeship Program

The percentage of educators participating in either a U.S. Department of Labor-approved apprenticeship pathway or the Green to Teach pathway to certification will increase by 25 percent over three years from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported to the Alaska Office of Apprenticeship and DEED.

Alaska’s Teacher Retention and Recruitment Playbook: Strategies and Support for Implementing the TRR Action Plan Recommendations (TRR Playbook), published in August 2023, detailed six key strategies for improving teacher turnover. Strategy 5, Alternative Certification Implementation Strategies, recommends creating career ladders for paraprofessionals, “Teacher retention and recruitment challenges are prompting the need to take a fresh look at access to all (education) certification programs in an effort to increase access to local teachers, increase entry level and career ladder opportunities, and support Grow-Your-Own programs (GYO).”¹⁴

As of 2026, 46 states have implemented Teacher Registered Apprenticeships as a teacher preparation pathway. Apprenticeships USA states, “Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven training model that can provide a critical talent pipeline for the education system by streamlining and combining on-the-job (or in classroom) learning with the related academic instruction.”¹⁵ The Regional Education Laboratory Northwest 2024 apprenticeship summary describes the standard characteristics of educator apprenticeship programs as, “structured programs that combine on-the-job learning with a mentor teacher and formal academic instruction.”¹⁶

DEED, in partnership with Alaska districts, universities, and regional education organizations, pursued registered apprenticeship as an avenue to support GYO efforts for Alaska. DEED was approved as a Teacher Registered Apprenticeship sponsor in September 2024. DEED then added Principal Registered Apprenticeship to the state sponsorship in September 2025, becoming one of the first states to launch a Principal Registered Apprenticeship program.

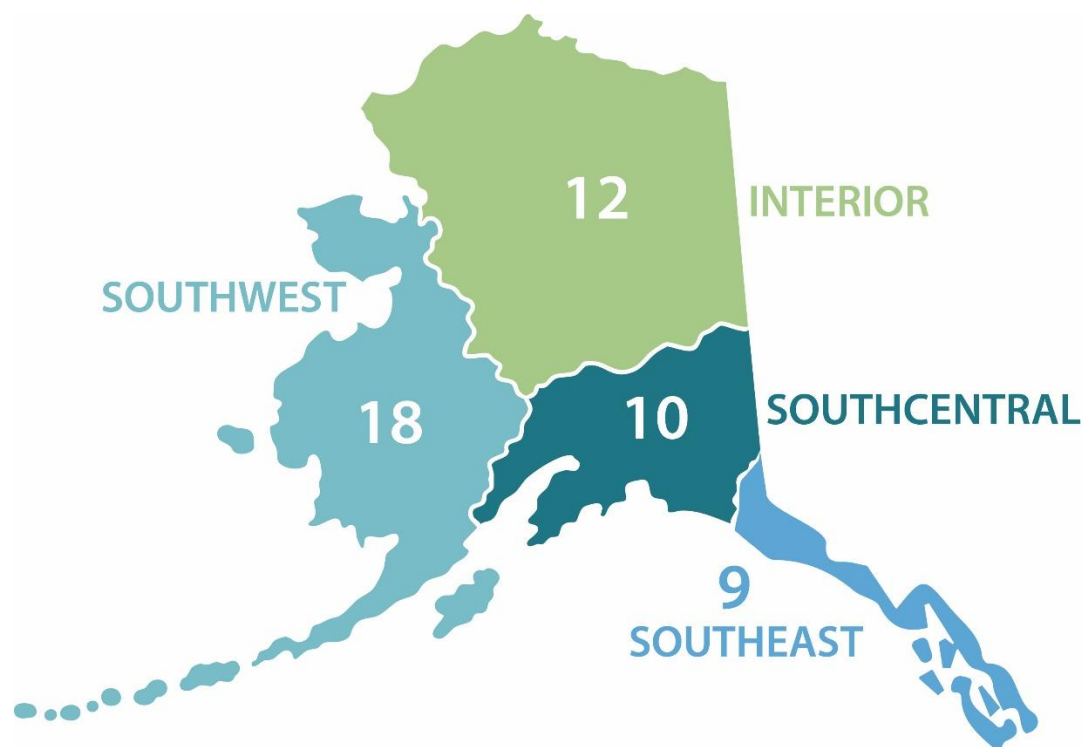
Across Alaska, there are currently 82 enrolled Teacher Apprentices, with district representation across the entire state, including both urban and rural districts. In May 2026, DEED is launching the first cohort of Principal Apprenticeship with 12 apprentices enrolled in the University of Alaska Anchorage pilot program.

¹⁴ Adams, Barbara. Alaska’s Teacher Retention and Recruitment Playbook: Strategies and Support for Implementing the TRR Action Plan Recommendations. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. 2023. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CQ7SqWKJr4Y23stpysYjvgLs_-KV42O0CZYpLLjgytw/edit?tab=t.0

¹⁵ Apprenticeships USA. Apprenticeship Industries: Education. 2026. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-industries/education>

¹⁶ Regional Education Laboratory Northwest. 2024. Characteristics of Teacher Apprenticeship Programs and Outcomes of Teacher Residency Programs. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://ies.ed.gov/use-work/resource-library/resource/other-resource/teacher-apprenticeship-programs>

DEED Sponsored Teacher Apprenticeship Statewide Distribution, Spring 2026



In addition to Registered Apprenticeship, DEED is also working with the Anchorage School District to pilot the Green to Teach initiative, a post-baccalaureate option for Skill Bridge transitioning service members to transition to the education field, or for family of service members to achieve certification. This program will be launched in 2027.

As these alternative pathway programs are new and at the pilot stage, both at the local and national levels, initial goals will be to grow program participation and collect participant data for future analysis. As of May 2026, no teacher candidates have graduated from an Alaska Teacher Apprenticeship program; candidates will begin graduating in Spring of 2027. DEED will establish data metrics during early implementation to measure program performance over time and determine effectiveness and retention of educators prepared through these alternative pathways.

Strategic Priority 5

Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.



SMART Goal
FY2027-2029

3-Year Bullying and Harassment Reduction

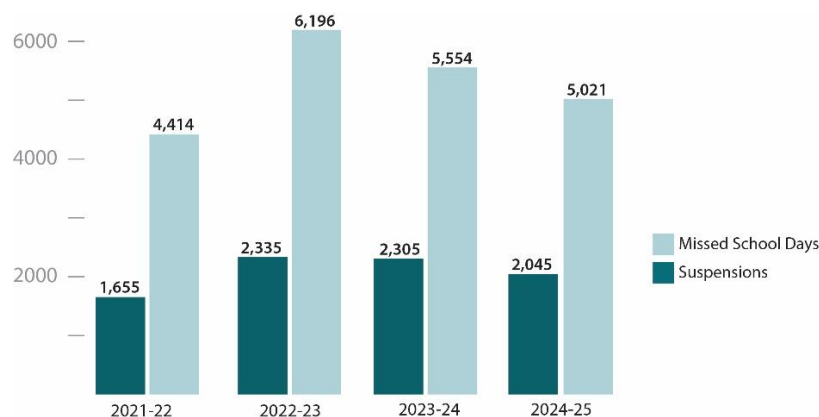
The percentage of students involved in bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying incidents resulting in suspensions or expulsions will decrease by nine percent from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported in the bullying, suspension, and expulsions data.

Statewide data indicate that incidents of bullying and harassment continue to impact a significant number of students and disrupt the learning environment. Strengthening schoolwide systems for behavior, establishing consistent expectations, and ensuring effective prevention and response practices are essential to improving school climate and student safety.

Bullying and harassment represent a breakdown in safe and supportive learning environments. When these incidents occur, they interrupt instructional time, affect student engagement, and can contribute to broader challenges in attendance and academic performance. Ensuring students have access to safe, predictable environments is foundational to their ability to fully participate in learning.

In SY2025, there were 2,045 reported incidents of bullying and harassment resulting in suspension, accounting for more than 5,000 missed instructional days statewide. While incidents have declined from prior years, overall levels remain elevated and continue to impact student learning.

Students Suspended for Bullying/Harassment - Statewide¹⁷



¹⁷ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), Suspensions and Expulsions Data Collection for the 2024-2025 School Year

These data underscore the need for sustained, aligned supports to improve school climate and reduce incidents of bullying and harassment. A focused approach grounded in consistent behavioral expectations, supported through statewide guidance, technical assistance, and data monitoring, and reinforced through evidence-based frameworks such as multi-tiered systems of support and positive behavioral interventions and supports will be essential. Supporting districts in strengthening policies and practices related to student conduct, including clear expectations for personal device use during the school day, and ensuring consistent implementation of schoolwide behavior systems will be critical to ensuring safe and supportive learning environments for all students.



SMART Goal FY2027-2029

3-Year Chronic Absenteeism

The percentage of students identified as chronically absent will decrease by six percent from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported in the State of Alaska annual accountability reporting system.

Statewide data indicate that a significant number of students are chronically absent, limiting consistent access to instruction and disrupting learning continuity. Strengthening attendance systems, establishing consistent expectations, and ensuring effective prevention and response practices are essential to improving student engagement and academic outcomes.

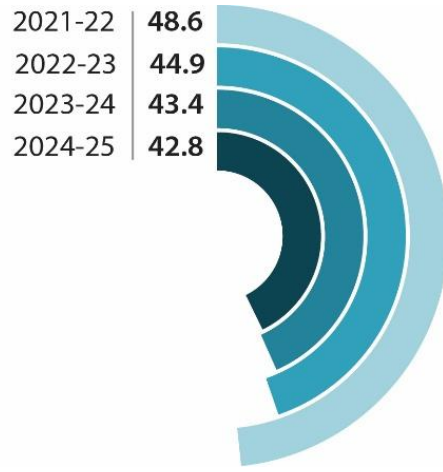
Chronic absenteeism, defined as a student being absent for 10 percent or more of the total school days in which the student is enrolled during the school year for any reason (excused or unexcused), represents a breakdown in consistent access to learning. When students miss significant amounts of instructional time, it affects their ability to maintain grade-level progress, remain engaged in school, and successfully transition across grade levels. Ensuring students consistently attend school is foundational to their ability to fully participate in learning.

In addition to individual impacts, high rates of absenteeism can disrupt the instructional environment for all students. Frequent absences require adjustments to pacing and instructional delivery, reducing continuity of instruction and affecting the overall pace of learning across the classroom.

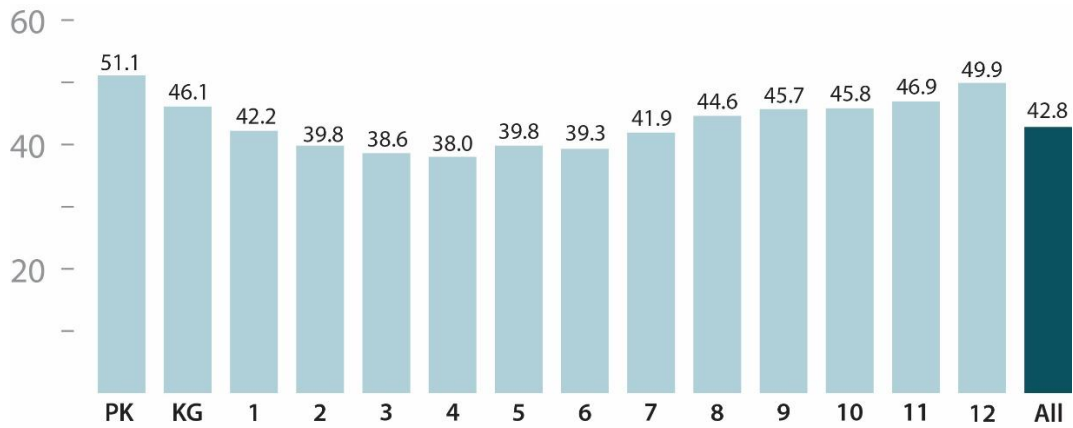
In SY2025, 42.8 percent of students were identified as chronically absent. While rates have declined over the past four years, overall levels remain high and continue to impact student learning statewide. Variation across grade levels indicates attendance challenges are not evenly distributed.¹⁸

¹⁸ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED), Summer OASIS Data Collection for the 2024-2025 school year.

Statewide Chronic Absenteeism Rates



Percentage of Chronically Absent Alaska Students by Grade | 2024-2025



These data underscore the need for sustained, aligned supports to improve student attendance. A focused approach grounded in consistent attendance expectations, supported through statewide guidance, data monitoring, and early identification of attendance patterns will be essential. Supporting districts in strengthening attendance systems, reducing barriers to attendance, and ensuring consistent implementation of attendance practices will be critical to improving student engagement and attendance outcomes.

Conclusion

This strategic plan establishes a clear and focused direction for improving student outcomes across Alaska. Grounded in the five strategic priorities of Alaska's Education Challenge (AEC), the plan translates statewide priorities into a defined set of measurable, three-year SMART goals designed to drive meaningful progress for all students.

Consistent with its commitment to transparency and stakeholder engagement, SBOE will release this draft plan for a period of public comment. This process will provide educators, families, communities, and partners across the state with the opportunity to inform and strengthen the plan prior to final adoption.

Following the public comment period, the State Board of Education (SBOE) will consider adoption of the final strategic plan. Once adopted, the plan will guide the work of the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and serve as the foundation for aligning priorities, resources, and supports across the department.

DEED will align its initiatives, technical assistance, and internal systems to support implementation of these goals. This coordinated approach is intended to ensure districts and schools are supported in improving student outcomes through consistent, focused efforts statewide.

Progress toward each goal will be monitored through clearly defined measures, providing a framework for accountability and continuous improvement. DEED will regularly track and report progress, using data to inform adjustments and maintain a strong focus on results. Through this work, SBOE and DEED will continue to advance a more aligned, accountable, and outcome-driven education system, ensuring every student is supported to succeed in school and beyond.