

State Board of Education & Early Development
Draft Meeting Minutes
June 3-4, 2026
Virtual Meeting

Wednesday June 3, 2026

Chair Stockhausen called the meeting to order at 1:08pm.

Roll was called, and the following members were present to provide a quorum: Member Barbara Tyndall, Member Kimberly Bergey, Member Pamela Dupras, First Vice Chair James Fields, Member Kathryn McCollum, Member Joy Cogburn-Smith, Student Advisor Amber Sherman, Student Advisor-Elect Joshua Bolling and Chair Sally Stockhausen. Excused absence, Military Advisor Lt. Colonel James Fowley.

Chair Stockhausen called a quorum.

Professional Development

Agenda Item 1 – State Board of Education Committee Meetings

The board convened into committee meetings.

3A. Reading by 3rd Grade

3B. Career Technical Education and Culturally Relevant Education

3C. Closing the Achievement Gap

3D. Educator Workforce

3E. Safety and Wellbeing

Agenda Item 2 – Committee Reports and Discussion

2A. Reading by 3rd Grade

Member McCollum reported that the committee had a productive discussion and expressed confidence in the goals developed to support the strategic priority of ensuring all students read at grade level by the end of third grade.

The committee refined the wording of its first SMART goal, K–3 Literacy Benchmark Achievement, which aims to increase by 10% the number of kindergarten through third-grade students performing at or above benchmark on the literacy screener, using the end-of-year 2026 baseline through 2029, as measured by M-Class DIBELS and curriculum-based assessments.

The second SMART goal, Grade 3 Literacy Proficiency, focuses on students' ability to apply foundational reading skills. The goal is to increase by 5% the number of third-grade students scoring proficient or above in English Language Arts, based on the Spring 2026 baseline by Spring 2029, as measured by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR).

McCollum noted that the committee believes these goals are strong, meaningful, and provide a clear direction for DEED's literacy work moving forward.

2B. Career Technical Education and Culturally Relevant Education

Member Bergey presented the committee's work under Strategic Priority 2, which focuses on expanding career, technical, and culturally relevant education to better meet student and workforce needs.

The committee developed two SMART goals:

1. CTE Concentrators: Increase by 25% the number of high school students completing at least two credits in a Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Perkins-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study over three years, using the 2026 baseline through 2029, as reported through Perkins and Summer OASIS submissions.
2. Alaska Performance Scholarship Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) Option B Eligibility: Increase by 6% the number of Alaska high school graduates qualifying for APS through Option B, which includes two CTE credits, from the 2026 baseline by 2029, as reported through Summer OASIS.

The committee emphasized that both goals reflect only a portion of student participation. The CTE concentrator data captures only students in federally funded Perkins programs and does not include many students participating in district-funded or partnership-funded CTE programs. Similarly, APS data may not fully capture private school students.

Commissioner Bishop provided additional context, explaining that much of the reporting is tied to federal and state statutory requirements. While broader data collection would provide a fuller picture, DEED's ability to gather additional information is limited by existing laws and reporting structures. She noted this is not due to unwillingness from districts or private schools, but rather the burden of additional reporting requirements.

2C. Closing the Achievement Gap

Member Dupras presented the committee's work under Strategic Priority 3, which focuses on closing the achievement gap by ensuring equitable access to rigorous educational opportunities and resources.

The committee's work addresses both literacy and mathematics, with a focus on student performance in grades 3 through 9 as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR).

Dupras noted that the committee engaged in discussions similar to those in the Reading by 3rd Grade priority, particularly around refining the language of the SMART goals to clearly identify the number of students in grades 3–9 being measured.

She shared that the committee is encouraged by the development of these SMART goals, viewing them as an important step toward providing clearer guidance and support for schools across Alaska in addressing achievement gaps in both reading and math.

2D. Educator Workforce

Member James Fields presented the committee's work under Strategic Priority 4, focused on preparing, attracting, and retaining effective education professionals in Alaska.

The committee's two SMART goals center on building a stronger homegrown educator workforce by creating pathways for Alaskans to enter the profession:

1. Education Career Pathway Participation: Increase by 25% the number of high school seniors completing two consecutive Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Perkins-approved CTE courses or an approved dual-credit sequence within an education career pathway, using the 2026 baseline through 2029. Fields noted there are already approximately 29 seniors participating, showing early progress.
2. Educator Apprenticeship Enrollment: Increase by 25% the number of participants enrolled in either a United States Department of Labor U.S. Department of Labor-approved apprenticeship pathway or the Green to Teach pathway certification program, also from the 2026 baseline through 2029.

Fields highlighted encouraging momentum in these efforts, noting that more than 80 participants are already engaged in the apprenticeship pathway, and that the Green to Teach program, launched as a pilot by the Anchorage School District, is designed to help military-connected individuals transition into teaching careers.

He emphasized that these goals build on existing progress and reflect a practical strategy to strengthen Alaska's educator pipeline by investing in Alaskans who can serve in their own communities.

2E. Safety and Wellbeing

Member Barbara Tyndall presented the committee's work under Strategic Priority 5, which focuses on ensuring all students have a safe and healthy learning environment.

The committee established two SMART goals:

1. **Bullying and Harassment Reduction:** Reduce by 9% the number of students involved in bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying incidents resulting in suspensions or expulsions, using the 2026 baseline through 2029, as reported in statewide bullying, suspension, and expulsion data. Tyndall noted that while challenges remain, the data shows a decline over the past two years, indicating progress.
2. **Chronic Absenteeism Reduction:** Reduce by 6% the number of students identified as chronically absent, based on the 2026 baseline by 2029, as measured through the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development State of Alaska Annual Accountability Reporting System. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of enrolled school days, whether excused or unexcused.

Tyndall shared that chronic absenteeism rates have steadily improved, dropping from 48.6% to 42.8% in recent years. She also noted attendance trends vary by grade level, with higher rates in pre-kindergarten, improving in elementary grades, and rising again beginning around seventh grade.

She emphasized that both goals are clear, straightforward, and critical to student success, and the committee felt no revisions were needed.

Agenda Item 3 – Teacher Turnover and Preliminary Educator Exit and Stay

Dr. Dayna DeFeo from the University of Alaska Anchorage presented preliminary findings from a statewide study on teacher and principal turnover in Alaska, followed by discussion with the State Board of Education and DEED leadership.

The research combines DEED administrative data (licensing and staffing records) to track where educators move year to year and identify patterns in retention and turnover. Findings show that while most educators remain in their roles, turnover has generally increased since 2013, with variation by school type, region, and assignment. Rural schools, Title I schools, and special education positions continue to experience higher turnover.

A key clarification from DeFeo noted that special education turnover is measured at the position **level**, meaning educators leaving a SPED assignment may move to another teaching role, not necessarily leaving the profession entirely.

Board members raised the impact of school closures and consolidations, suggesting future analysis should distinguish between true exits and reassignments, track educators who are rehired after closures, and consider school size and staffing ratios as potential factors influencing turnover. DEED leadership noted that many of these dynamics are influenced by enrollment shifts, funding structures, and statutory reporting requirements, and that districts often reassign rather than lose staff during consolidations.

DeFeo agreed that future analysis could better capture these nuances, including linking turnover to school closures and distinguishing school-level vs. district-level movement.

The presentation then shifted to preliminary findings from a statewide teacher exit and retention survey, developed in response to a Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force recommendation. The survey received a strong 27% response rate, which researchers noted is unusually high for educator surveys.

Key survey findings include:

- Most teachers reported plans to stay in education (about 91%), with 83% planning to remain in their current job
- About 23% indicated plans to retire
- Roughly 8% planned to leave teaching entirely
- Many educators face significant outside pressures, including second jobs, student debt, military family status, and ongoing education while teaching

Teachers rated both importance and satisfaction across school and community factors:

- Salary and retirement benefits were among the most important factors
- Retirement benefits, healthcare costs, workload, leadership, substitute coverage, and assessment systems emerged as areas of lower satisfaction
- Leadership and working conditions were repeatedly identified as influential in retention decisions
- Housing and community factors also stood out, especially in rural areas

A key finding was that teachers broadly agree on what matters most, but satisfaction varies more across community conditions than school characteristics.

Board members asked follow-up questions about:

- Differences between early-career and veteran educators (suggested focus: under 3 years experience)
- Whether exit survey data could identify educators who would return under different conditions
- The role of housing affordability and availability, especially in rural Alaska
- Whether similar surveys should be conducted for principals, given leadership's importance to retention

DeFeo responded that additional breakdowns (by experience level, family status, region, and community type) are possible with existing data, and that principal surveys are being considered but require careful sampling due to small population size.

Overall, the discussion emphasized that teacher turnover is multifactorial and context-dependent, shaped by staffing structures, rural conditions, housing, leadership, workload, and broader demographic and enrollment trends.

Agenda Item 4 – Traumatic Brain Injury Legislation

Presented by David Kracke, J.D. Oregon's Brain Injury Advocate Coordinator, Center on Brain Injury Research and Training, University of Oregon. Melissa McCart, Ed.D. Center on Brain Injury Research and Training, Department of Psychology, University of Oregon.

The presentation focused on proposed legislation and school procedures to support students returning to school after a concussion or traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Key Points

- Traumatic brain injuries are common among Alaska students, particularly due to sports, outdoor activities, vehicle accidents, falls, and other injuries.
- While all states have "return-to-play" concussion protocols for student athletes, presenters argued that schools have not done enough to support students' "return-to-learn" needs after a brain injury.
- Oregon recently passed legislation (HB 3007 / ORS 336.495) requiring schools to create an Immediate and Temporary Accommodation Plan (ITAP) for students diagnosed with a concussion or brain injury.

What Oregon Law Requires

- Schools must develop an ITAP when notified that a student has sustained a concussion or brain injury.
- Accommodations may address:
 - Academic needs

- Social and emotional supports
- Behavioral supports
- Physical activity restrictions to prevent re-injury
- Schools have flexibility in how accommodations are implemented to fit local circumstances.
- A qualified healthcare provider's diagnosis generally serves as the trigger for the plan.
- Schools may also provide accommodations when they reasonably believe a student needs support, even without formal documentation.

ITAP Process

- Immediate restrictions are placed on activities that could risk another concussion.
- Schools generally have up to 10 school days to establish an ITAP.
- Student progress is reviewed within five days after implementation and periodically thereafter.
- A Brain Injury Management Team coordinates supports, monitors progress, and communicates with families and staff.
- Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible.

Relationship to 504 Plans and IEPs

- Most students recover fully and only need temporary accommodations.
- Research cited during the presentation indicated that approximately 86% of students recover without long-term effects.
- Students with ongoing symptoms may transition to:
 - A 504 Plan, or
 - An Individualized Education Program (IEP) if needed.

Alaska Considerations

- Presenters noted that Alaska experiences higher rates of brain injury than most states, making the issue particularly relevant.
- They emphasized that Alaska should develop its own approach rather than simply adopting Oregon's law.
- The Oregon model was presented as a framework that could be adapted to Alaska's unique educational environments, including rural and remote communities.

Board Discussion

Board members expressed strong support for exploring legislation because:

- Many students may currently be overlooked if parents or schools are unaware of available supports.
- Existing systems primarily help students who qualify for special education or 504 plans, while many students with temporary brain injuries receive little formal assistance.
- A standardized process would ensure students receive support regardless of where they attend school.
- Members recognized the need for collaboration among educators, superintendents, healthcare providers, state agencies, and legislators.

Outcome

The State Board and Commissioner Deena Bishop expressed interest in helping build partnerships and explore an Alaska-specific legislative effort. Presenters emphasized that successful legislation would need to be led by Alaska stakeholders, with Oregon serving as a resource for technical assistance and guidance.

Agenda Item 5 – Professional Teaching Practices Commission

Melody Mann, Executive Director of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC), provided an overview of the commission's role, responsibilities, and recent activities.

Purpose and Structure of PTPC

- PTPC is an independent commission responsible for enforcing Alaska's educator Code of Ethics and ensuring professional standards among educators.
- Unlike many states where a state board makes final disciplinary decisions, Alaska's PTPC has the authority to determine and order sanctions directly.
- The commission's ultimate goal is student safety while supporting the retention of effective educational professionals.

- The commission consists of nine members, though there are currently two vacancies: one principal seat and one teacher seat.

Responsibilities

The Executive Director's duties include:

- Receiving and reviewing complaints.
- Conducting investigations.
- Preparing reports and recommendations for commission review.
- Performing background checks related to educator certification.
- Recommending denial of certification when applicants are dishonest about criminal history or sanctions from other states.

FY2025 Activity

According to the annual report:

- 39 complaints were accepted for investigation.
- Multiple sanctions were issued.
- No formal hearings were required during the year.
- PTPC shares sanction information with school districts, district leadership, DEED, teacher certification staff, and the national educator discipline clearinghouse to prevent sanctioned educators from moving between states without disclosure.

Professional Development and Outreach

Mann regularly provides ethics and professional standards training to:

- Student teachers and interns.
- School districts.
- University leadership programs.
- Aspiring principals and superintendents.

The PTPC website offers resources including:

- The PTPC Handbook.
- Annual reports.
- Newsletters.
- Information about the investigative process and ethical standards.

Discussion on Trends and Complaints

Board Member Pamela Dupras asked whether trends are emerging from complaints and sanctions.

Mann explained:

- PTPC is beginning a deeper review of historical case data to identify patterns in sanctions, dismissals, and mitigating circumstances.
- The commission wants to ensure sanctions are applied consistently.
- One notable trend is the increase in breach-of-contract complaints since the pandemic.
- Historically, breach-of-contract complaints were more common in rural districts, but complaints are now occurring at similar or higher rates in larger urban districts.
- The only violations that districts are legally required to report are cases involving physical or sexual abuse of a student. Other ethics violations may be reported but are not mandatory.

Board Discussion

Board Chair Sally Stockhausen asked about the impact of having a vacant principal seat on the commission.

Mann noted:

- The vacancy has not affected recent cases because the evidence in those cases was clear.
- However, having representatives from different educational roles is valuable because they bring unique perspectives regarding professional responsibilities and expectations.

Conclusion

Board members thanked Mann and the commission for carrying out difficult but essential work to:

- Protect students.
- Maintain ethical standards for educators.
- Ensure due process and consistency in disciplinary decisions.
- Support public confidence in Alaska's education system.

At 5:23pm Chair Stockhausen called recess until next morning at 8:30am.

Thursday June 4, 2026

Chair Stockhausen called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Roll was called, and the following members were present to provide a quorum: Member Barbara Tyndall, Member Kimberly Bergey, Member Pamela Dupras, First Vice Chair James Fields, Member Kathryn McCollum, Member Joy Cogburn-Smith, Student Advisor-Elect Joshua Bolling and Chair Sally Stockhausen. Excused absent: Military Advisor Lt. Colonel James Fowley.

Chair Stockhausen called a quorum. The board pledged allegiance to the flag, followed by an invocation by First Vice Chair Fields.

Member Bergey motioned, and First Vice Chair Fields seconded the following motion: I move to adopt agenda as is. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

There were no potential conflicts of interest disclosed.

Public Comment

Dr. Aparna Palmer, Chancellor of the University of Alaska Southeast, spoke in support of the proposed Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Languages degree. She explained that the program was developed through collaboration between the School of Education and the School of Arts and Sciences and is designed to prepare fluent Indigenous language speakers to become effective teachers. The program will provide students with the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and professional preparation needed to teach Alaska Native languages in Pre-K through 12th grade settings. Dr. Palmer noted that the program has been thoroughly reviewed and approved through university governance, accreditation, and Board of Regents processes. She emphasized that the degree will help address Alaska's shortage of Indigenous language teachers, provide a pathway to teacher certification for graduates and current language instructors, and support the preservation and revitalization of Alaska Native languages, cultures, and traditions.

Agenda Item 6 – Board Member Oath of Office

New State Board of Education Member Joy Cogburn-Smith was sworn in by Chair Stockhausen. She currently serves as the Director for the Northwest Arctic Borough School District located in Kotzebue, Alaska.

Agenda Item 7 – University of Alaska Southeast, Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Languages Program

The University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) presented its proposed Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Languages (MATIL) program for State Board approval. Kelly Manning, Deputy Director of the Division of Innovation and Education Excellence, explained that the program would receive temporary approval under UAS's current educator accreditation while awaiting reaccreditation. The fully remote program is designed to address the growing demand for certified Indigenous language teachers by providing a pathway for fluent speakers to earn teaching credentials and transition from district-specific Type M certificates to fully portable Type A teaching certification.

Acting Dean Dr. Angela Lunda emphasized that the program addresses a statewide shortage of Indigenous language educators, noting that Alaska currently has 124 Type M language teachers but far greater demand as more districts implement Indigenous language immersion programs. She explained that applicants must already be fluent in an Alaska Native language and hold a bachelor's degree. The program focuses on teacher preparation, including pedagogy, curriculum development, child development, and 500 hours of supervised student teaching, rather than language acquisition.

Dr. Lunda highlighted that the program was developed through extensive collaboration with the Alaska College of Education Consortium, DEED, Alaska Native organizations, and Indigenous language programs across the country. It has received strong support from the University of Alaska Board of Regents, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, education leaders, and Alaska Native organizations. She also noted that the program can be implemented using existing UAS faculty, making it fiscally responsible while generating additional tuition revenue.

The proposed degree aligns with Alaska Teacher Standards, Alaska Native Cultural Standards for Educators, and the Council for Alaska Native Languages Action Plan, which calls for expanding Indigenous language instruction statewide. Dr. Lunda emphasized that preparing teachers from their own communities will improve educator retention in rural Alaska while strengthening cultural identity, language revitalization, and student well-being. The 39-credit graduate program will be delivered primarily through synchronous distance education with hybrid options for Juneau-based students. Graduates must meet the same rigorous licensure requirements as other Alaska teachers, including passing the Praxis Core, completing a background check, developing a professional teaching portfolio, and successfully completing student teaching. UAS anticipates enrolling an initial cohort of six to ten students, with more than 30 prospective applicants already expressing interest. Dr. Lunda concluded that while the program will not fully meet the statewide need for Indigenous language teachers, it represents an important first step toward expanding Alaska's certified Indigenous educator workforce.

Board members expressed strong support for the proposed Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Languages program, highlighting its potential to strengthen Alaska's educator workforce while preserving Indigenous languages, cultures, and communities. Members emphasized that the program creates a pathway for fluent speakers to become fully certified teachers and supports culturally responsive education across the state.

Discussion focused on how the program's success would be measured over time. UAS explained that student completion, employment, graduate outcomes, and employer feedback would be tracked through its existing accreditation and program assessment processes. The university also acknowledged the importance of evaluating the program's long-term impact on language revitalization and cultural preservation.

Board members also discussed the program's approach to multilingual education and literacy. UAS described how the curriculum incorporates reading, writing, listening, and speaking in Alaska Native languages while recognizing the varying stages of written language development among the state's Indigenous languages. The university confirmed that literacy instruction is included in the program and that coursework is being aligned with the requirements of the Alaska Reads Act to ensure graduates are prepared to support early literacy instruction.

Agenda Item 8 – Mt. Edgecumbe High School Ad Hoc Committee

The Mt. Edgecumbe School Improvement Ad Hoc Committee, led by Paul Reid of DEED's Office of Education Advocacy, provided an update on its formation and planned work. The committee includes a State Board member, a Mt. Edgecumbe Advisory Board member, student government representatives, a tribal representative, and seats for parents and an alumnus. Its work will be informed by student, staff, and parent surveys, which received 186 student responses, 14 of 18 staff responses, and 60 parent responses. The committee plans to meet virtually from June through September, with each meeting focused on a specific topic and the overall goal of developing recommendations for the State Board's October meeting.

DEED is also working on related improvements outside the ad hoc committee, including assessments of Mt. Edgecumbe's facilities, programming, food services, and other operations, as well as updates to student, staff, and operating handbooks. The Board discussed the importance of transparency while protecting confidential information, particularly names and individual survey responses. The committee meetings will be recorded and transcribed under the Open Meetings Act, while survey information may be shared as a summary rather than individual responses to protect students, parents, and staff.

Board members emphasized the need for frank discussion, confidentiality where appropriate, and a clear focus for each meeting. Commissioner Bishop clarified that the committee's purpose is not simply to address past issues or the current year, but to establish a path for the school's long-term improvement through stronger supervision, leadership, communication, facilities, and departmental support. DEED emphasized that Mt. Edgecumbe remains a priority and that the department is committed to sustained involvement and partnership to strengthen the school and support its students, staff, and longstanding tradition.

Commissioner Bishop emphasized the importance of regular progress reporting and accountability to ensure that the changes at Mt. Edgecumbe High School are producing measurable results. Chair Stockhausen suggested that future meetings include a formal presentation from Superintendent Langford to highlight the school's successes, ongoing improvements, and progress.

Agenda Item 9 – Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board Members

Superintendent Langford presented two candidates to fill the two open Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board positions. Douglas Walrith was recommended as the parent representative, bringing extensive educational leadership experience, while Candace Nelson was recommended as the alumni representative, with experience in strategic leadership, Alaska Native governance, and senior management. Board members expressed strong support for both candidates and their potential contributions to the Advisory Board.

Agenda Item 10 – Career & Technical Education Committee Awards Recognition Program

The CTE Committee reported receiving nine nominations from seven programs for the CTE Awards Recognition Program and noted plans to broaden outreach to encourage additional nominations. The committee recognized programs demonstrating strong student engagement and work-based learning, including Alaska Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) for statewide health career opportunities and HOSA leadership; Soldotna High School's student broadcasting program for providing authentic media and broadcasting experience; and Sitka High School's Construction Program for hands-on construction training and community partnerships. Partners for Progress was also recognized for providing hands-on technical training aligned with local workforce needs and maximizing shared CTE facilities for both student and adult education.

Agenda Item 11 – State Board of Education & Early Development Strategic Plan SMART Goals

The State Board reviewed the draft Strategic Plan SMART Goals, which build on Alaska's Education Challenge and shift from broad strategic priorities to specific, measurable, and time-bound goals for FY2027–FY2029. The five priorities focus on improving K–3 literacy; increasing CTE participation and culturally relevant education; closing achievement gaps in ELA and mathematics; preparing, attracting, and retaining effective educators; and improving student safety, well-being, and attendance.

The Board discussed measurable targets for each priority, including increases in literacy benchmarks, CTE participation, educator pathways, and academic proficiency, as well as reductions in bullying, harassment, and chronic absenteeism. DEED will monitor progress using existing statewide data and report results to the Board. The draft plan and SMART goals will be released for public comment before the Board considers final adoption, after which DEED will align implementation, district support, and progress monitoring with the adopted priorities.

Agenda Item 12 – Mt. Edgecumbe High School Budget Review

Commissioner Bishop, Deputy Commissioner Morrison, and MEHS Superintendent David Langford presented the FY2027 Mt. Edgecumbe High School budget, noting that DEED had addressed a prior significant budget overage and implemented improved budgeting and financial management practices. Two enrollment scenarios of 275 and 375 average daily membership (ADM) were presented, with the 375 ADM scenario providing a balanced budget of approximately \$12.5 million. The 275 ADM scenario would require additional adjustments and underscores the importance of rebuilding enrollment.

Superintendent David Langford provided an overview of the FY2027 budget and highlighted planned capital improvements, including dormitory windows and furniture, dining hall and kitchen renovations, equipment and laundry upgrades, wiring and internet improvements, and new dormitory roofs. The budget also supports dual enrollment, AmeriCorps positions, renewed dormitory and food service contracts, and new academic and dormitory leadership. Superintendent Langford reported that rebuilding enrollment and strengthening school culture remain priorities, with 203 returning students and 247 new applications currently identified. Additional priorities include curriculum planning, improved administrative processes, expanded summer use of campus facilities, and continued focus on student achievement and well-being.

Agenda Item 13 – Questions Regarding Standing Reports

- 13A. Innovation & Education Excellence**
- 13B. Libraries, Archives & Museums**
- 13C. Finance & Support Services**
- 13D. Mt. Edgecumbe High School**
- 13E. Attorney General**
- 13F. Office of Education Advocacy**
- 13G. Alaska Commission on Post Secondary Education**
- 13H. Alaska State Council on the Arts**

Member Fields asked whether DEED could provide a report on the rising costs of school facility maintenance and operations, potentially including a 10-year comparison of maintenance staffing and expenses. Deputy Commissioner Morrison explained that operations and maintenance costs can be identified through district financial reporting, although differences in how districts report expenses may present challenges. Director Heineken noted that DEED has previously provided reports on maintenance and operations costs and agreed to provide the information to the Board. She also highlighted HB 28, which would establish a grant program beginning in FY2028 to help districts offset utility costs based on prior three-year averages, along with additional energy relief funding included in the operating bill.

Business Meeting

Agenda Item 14 – Commissioner End of Year Report

Commissioner Deena Bishop provided an update on early literacy outcomes under the Alaska Reads Act. Although the data had not yet been formally certified by the state, DEED had completed preliminary checks to ensure student information was accurate. The data show continued improvement in K–3 literacy, with fewer students entering and leaving the school year significantly below benchmark. Overall, 60% of K–3 students are currently meeting grade-level expectations, with a goal of reaching 70% over the next three years.

Bishop highlighted that 3,771 additional students moved to at or above benchmark, while 4,264 students moved out of the well-below-benchmark category during the year. Progress monitoring between required assessments has also increased, allowing teachers to determine whether instructional interventions are improving student outcomes. Professional development related to literacy and the science of reading continues to expand, with thousands of educators participating in training and calibration activities.

Alaska's literacy growth is also comparing favorably nationally. Third-grade students are now showing growth that outpaces the national rate, while kindergarten students continue to demonstrate growth above expected national levels. Bishop emphasized that the improvements reflect the collective efforts of teachers, parents, schools, districts, DEED staff, and education partners across the state.

Bishop reiterated the importance of the science of reading, particularly phonemic awareness, phonics, and the ability to decode words as foundational skills for reading comprehension. She noted that comprehension strategies cannot fully compensate when students cannot accurately read the words themselves. A more detailed, internally verified report with individual grade-level data will be provided in the next reporting cycle.

The Commissioner then transitioned to a broader end-of-year overview of DEED's work, noting that the department balances the State Board's goals and legislative priorities with the ongoing responsibilities of each division. Bishop and Deputy Commissioner Karen Morrison worked with division directors to compile data demonstrating the work accomplished throughout the year. The presentation concluded with a celebration of the department's teams and their contributions to advancing public education in Alaska.

Agenda Item 15 – Approval of University of Alaska Southeast, Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Languages Program (MATIL)

Member Dupras motioned, and Member Fields seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development provisionally approve the University of Alaska Southeast Master of Arts in Teaching Indigenous Language program. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 16 – Approval of Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board Members

Member Fields motioned, and Member Bergey seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development appoint the presented Parent Representative and the presented Alumni Representative for term A on the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board. Doug Walrath and Candace Nielsen. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 17 – Approval of Career & Technical Education Committee Awards Recognition Program

Member McCollum motioned, and Member Bergey seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development award the presented nominees for the Career and Technical Education Program Recognition. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 18 – Approval of Public Comment for State Board of Education & Early Development Strategic Plan SMART Goals

Member Dupras motioned, and Member Bergey seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development release the draft Alaska's Education Challenge Strategic Plan SMART Goals for a period of public comment. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 19 – Approval of Selection of Meeting Dates and Locations

Member Fields motioned, and Member Dupras seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development to approve the following schedule of meeting dates, location, and format (virtual meeting vs. in-person) for the 2026-2027 school year. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 20 – Review Subcommittee Appointments

Agenda Item 21 – Approval of Selection of SBOE Officers

Member Fields nominated Member Stockhausen for the Chair of the State Board of Education & Early Development for a term beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027. Member Tyndall seconded the motion. Member Stockhausen accepted the nomination and thanked the board for their patience while she has been

learning new role as chair during the past year. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Member Fields nominated Member Dupras as First Vice Chair of the State Board of Education & Early Development for a term beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027. Member McCollum seconded the motion. Member Dupras accepted the nomination. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Member Bergey nominated Member Fields as Second Vice Chair of the State Board of Education & Early Development for a term beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027. Member Tyndall seconded the motion. Member Fields accepted the nomination. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda item 22 – Consent Agenda to Approve the Minutes of March 10-11, 2026 board meeting

Member Fields motioned, and Member Bergey seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of approval of the minutes of the March 10-11, 2026, board meeting. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 23 – Executive Session for the Department of Education & Early Development Commissioner Evaluation

Member Bergey motioned, and Member Fields seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development convene in Executive Session to evaluate the performance of the Commissioner of Education and Early Development. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Board Comments

Board members expressed appreciation to DEED staff, presenters, educators, community partners, and fellow board members for their work and for providing data and information to support the Board's policymaking. Members praised the Commissioner's end-of-year presentation and the department's efforts to make complex data accessible and useful. They also welcomed new board member Joy Cogburn-Smith and thanked outgoing Student Advisor Amber Sherman for her service and advocacy on student well-being, Indigenous language preservation, and expanded educational opportunities.

Several members highlighted the Indigenous language immersion program as a significant accomplishment of the meeting and expressed enthusiasm for its continued development and participation. Members also recognized the importance of DEED staff working throughout communities across Alaska to access local expertise and strengthen community outreach. The CTE Committee thanked programs that submitted nominations for the CTE Awards and encouraged additional programs to participate so outstanding work across the state can be recognized.

Members also acknowledged the work of Mt. Edgecumbe High School, particularly Superintendent. Langford, staff, and students, in navigating a challenging year with significant change and public attention. Board members expressed optimism about the school's continued progress and emphasized keeping students at the center of the Board's work through collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Finally, Chair Sally Stockhausen congratulated and welcomed board members and expressed support for continued work on the traumatic brain injury initiative, including potential legislation to improve supports for students with brain injuries in school settings. She encouraged DEED and the Board to remain engaged as the initiative develops.

The board adjourned at 2:01 p.m.