

# LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER

I am pleased to present the Alaska Standards for Quality Schools in this brochure. These standards describe the qualities that make an excellent Alaska school.

Alaskans spent several years investigating just what these qualities are. We began with a review of the educational research to find the common qualities that all high quality schools exhibit. Over time, the State Board of Education & Early Development, various committees, the leaders of educational organizations, parents, and many other Alaskans contributed to this work. The State Board adopted these standards as regulations in 1997.

The Standards for Quality Schools are designed to be used as the basis for creating strong, vibrant and effective schools.

The Standards for Quality Schools are part of a major statewide school improvement movement. Hundreds of Alaskans have worked with the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, the State Board of Education & Early Development, and me on this initiative to improve the academic achievement of students. The school improvement efforts are aimed at:

- Required standards in core academic subjects
- A system of tests and assessments to make sure students are meeting the standards
- Standards for professional educators—both teachers and administrators
- Quality partnerships between schools, parents, businesses, and communities, and
- Standards for quality schools

Sincerely,



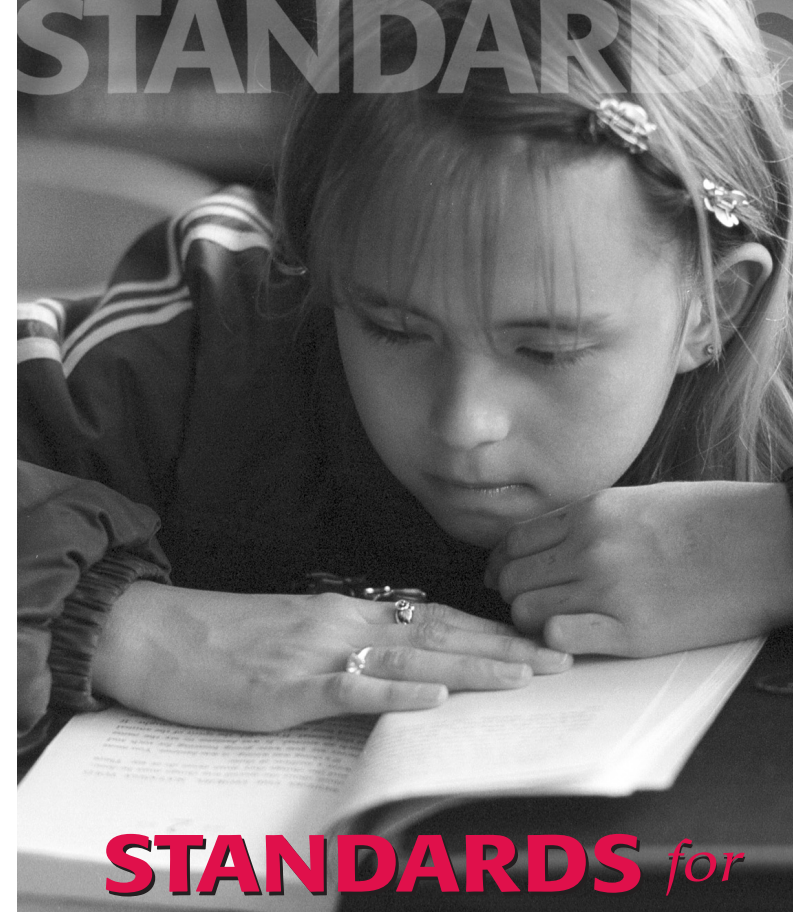
Roger Sampson  
Commissioner

For further information about these standards or other efforts to improve the quality of Alaska's education workforce, please contact us at:



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# STANDARDS for ALASKA'S SCHOOLS



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- 1 Classroom and instructional strategies support and promote student learning focused on the attainment of high standards by all students.**

*A school demonstrates this standard by giving evidence that it:*

- bases curriculum, instruction, and assessment on clear student standards and objectives;
- has established student standards that are meaningful, agreed upon, and emphasize the importance of learning;
- assesses student performance in multiple ways; and
- holds high expectations for the achievement of all students.

- 2 A climate of high expectations exists not only for students, but also for all staff, and high expectations are communicated to everyone in the community that the school**

**erves, with incentives, recognition, and rewards in place to promote excellence.**

- 3 School time is used for learning.**

- 4 Fair discipline practices and policies are established, communicated, and consistently enforced.**

- 5 The school environment is supportive and physically safe.**

- 6 Appropriate technology is used to apply academic skills to simulate real life, work-place situations in addition to performing research and exploration.**

- 7 All staff are involved in ongoing and continuous staff development that focuses on school improvement goals and student performance standards.**

- 8 Strong leadership that uses established research to guide the instructional program is in evidence.**

- 9 Resources are focused on established student standards and school improvement efforts to guide the instructional program.**

- 10 The decision-making process for school plans and goals includes everyone in the community that the school serves.**

- 11 Programs and support are provided to help high needs students achieve school success.**

- 12 The school goals and staff behavior promote equity and respect for diversity among students, teachers, administrators, families, and community members of different socio-economic status and cultural background.**

- 13 Non-English-speaking and limited-English proficient students are provided with a strong academic core program that supports the students' first language.**

- 14 Partnerships and collaboration are established between the school and parents, families, businesses, and other community members.**

*A school demonstrates this standard by giving evidence that:*

- various types of involvement promote a variety of opportunities for school, families, and community to work together;
- collaboration between the school and agencies, businesses, and the community supports special programs for high needs students and families; and
- staff and school procedures promote community connections and cross-cultural communications with parents and families.

