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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2016

Department Seeks Public Engagement in State Plan to Implement the Every Student Succeeds Act

JUNEAU -- The Department of Education & Early Development will hold interactive webinars to gather the public's input on how to craft an education plan for Alaska that meets the state's unique needs and challenges. The new federal K-12 law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, requires states to develop a plan to implement the law.

"The new law is an opportunity for Alaskans to decide for ourselves how to assess students, hold schools accountable, and improve student achievement," said Interim Commissioner Susan McCauley.

"The department is embarking on a multi-month process to engage Alaskans in conversations about standards and assessments, accountability systems, and school support and improvement – the three key elements required by the Every Student Succeeds Act," Dr. McCauley said.

Empowering local control of educational decisions is the first strategic priority of the State Board of Education & Early Development. That includes forming strong partnerships with stakeholders and improving the process for public input.

The webinars will reach out to stakeholders from across Alaska, such as families, community members, business leaders, Native organizations, and educators. The webinars will provide an overview of the Every Student Succeeds Act and allow participants to engage virtually. The goal is to generate ideas, recommendations, and feedback on the three key elements of the state plan.

The webinars are identical. The schedule is:

- Wednesday, May 25, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
- Thursday, June 2, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 8, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, June 11, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- Monday, June 13, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Attached to this news release are PDFs about how to connect to the webinars.

If you have questions about how to attend the webinars, contact Erin Hardin at 907-465-6535 or erin.hardin@alaska.gov

If you have questions about Alaska's plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act, contact Margaret MacKinnon at 465-2970 or Margaret.mackinnon@alaska.gov

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