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Commissioner

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Department of Education
and Early Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Regulations Regarding Science, Computer Science, and Digital Literacy Standards

JUNEAU -- The State Board of Education and Early Development, meeting March 28-29 in Juneau, sent out for public comment proposed regulations that update the K-12 science standards, update the technology standards as digital literacy standards, and add computer science standards as a new content area.

Alaska's current science standards and technology standards were last reviewed and revised in 2006. Knowledge of computer science principles is an increasingly critical workforce-readiness skill. The proposed regulations would not require the establishment of a computer science program in schools, but would create a unified foundation for school districts with existing programs and for those that choose to develop programs.

The board also sent out for public comment proposed regulations that adopt the latest school and school system accreditation documents published by AdvancED. The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) recognizes school accreditation status as determined by AdvancED Northwest.

The board adopted amendments to regulations regarding the sub-interval scores on the Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) assessment for grade 9 math. The adopted amendments update the grade 9 math sub-interval scores that are used to calculate student growth within Alaska's new accountability system. The board previously adopted regulations amending the assessment achievement level scores on the grade 9 math PEAKS assessment, as the test was revised during the 2017-18 school year to emphasize Algebra 1 concepts.

The board also adopted amendments to regulations regarding teacher certification. The adopted amendments add three basic competency exams to the list of approved exams in Alaska in an effort to continue decreasing barriers for educators prepared outside of Alaska to gain Alaska certification.

The board approved ten-year renewals of charters for Eagle Academy Charter School and STreAM Academy Charter School in the Anchorage School District, and Kaleidoscope Charter School in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.

The board directed DEED staff to work with the Governor’s office and the Departments of Law and Natural Resources to further investigate the City and Borough of Sitka’s request to purchase an approximately 3.0 acre parcel of land owned by DEED and located at 1190 Seward Avenue in Sitka. The City and Borough of Sitka would like to construct a seaplane base on the property.

The board approved the appointments of Aaron Leggett and Charles Diters to three-year terms on the Alaska State Museum Collections Advisory Committee, and the Commissioner’s appointments of Dr. Niki Tshibaka as Assistant Commissioner and Linda Mattson as Executive Secretary.

The board welcomed Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Jeremiah Hammill to the military advisor seat on the board. Lieutenant General Thomas Bussiere, Commander of the Alaskan Command, appointed LTC Hammill to the seat to replace the board’s outgoing military advisor, Colonel Spencer Van Meter.

The board approved the final annual list of capital projects eligible for funding under the school construction grant and major maintenance grant funds, and the minutes from the December 18, 2018, February 4, 2019, and February 14, 2019 board meetings.

Lastly, the board issued a statement in a unanimous vote regarding Alaska’s current fiscal challenges and its enduring commitment to meet Alaska’s Education Challenge. The full statement can be viewed at <https://education.alaska.gov/news/releases/2019/press-release-032919.pdf>.

The packet for the March 28-29 board meeting is available at https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/pdf/board-packet-031119.pdf.

The next board meeting will be held on April 24 by audio conference.

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