

Dr. Michael Johnson  
*Commissioner*

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Department of Education  
and Early Development

Juneau, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DEED Awarded \$5M Federal Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant**

Goal to Develop Statewide Mental Health Services Model for Schools

JUNEAU – The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)’s Health and Safety team has been awarded a \$5 million five-year federal grant by the U.S. Department of Education to expand delivering mental health services to students who have experienced trauma and are struggling in school as a result, Alaska Education Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson announced today.

“The grant establishes a meaningful step forward to support the implementation of the [Alaska’s Education Challenge](#) goal to improve the safety and well-being of our students,” said Commissioner Johnson. “We know that by partnering with families, communities, and tribes we can improve the essential conditions necessary for student learning.”

Tragically, Alaskan students endure extremely high rates of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Commissioner Johnson noted that “one in two of Alaska’s youth have lived through one or more ACEs by the time they begin kindergarten, and two in three will have one or more ACEs by the time they graduate.”<sup>1</sup>

“Public safety is one of the highest priorities of my administration,” said Governor Michael J. Dunleavy. “I will continue to work with the Department of Education and Early Development to make sure we identify the issues that impact student outcomes.”

The funding will enable DEED to oversee and facilitate a robust partnership between the Alaska Child Trauma Center and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to increase low-income, at-risk students’ access to mental health services. Additionally, DEED will be able to develop a trauma-specific mental health services model that can be replicated across the state.

“The school district is thrilled to partner with DEED and Fairbanks Community Mental Health to provide these critical services to students. We are so grateful to have partner agencies to help us meet the needs of our children and families,” said Dr. Karen Gaborik, Superintendent of Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

**EDUCATION  
& EARLY DEVELOPMENT**

Alaska’s application for the federal [Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Program](#) was one of only a handful of states selected. The grant provides \$1 million per year to DEED over the next five years.

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*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 505 public schools across the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*

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1           2011/12 National Survey of Children’s Health. Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI), “2011-2012 NSCH: Child Health Indicator and Subgroups SAS Codebook, Version 1.0” 2013, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. [www.childhealthdata.org](http://www.childhealthdata.org).