

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner



Department of Education
and Early Development

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Juneau, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2020

DEED and AASB Release a Trauma-Engaged Toolkit for Alaska Schools During the Pandemic and Beyond

JUNEAU – The Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) and the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) are unveiling a new resource for Alaska schools, the “[Transforming Schools Toolkit](#)”. This online resource is a companion guide to the “Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska,” released in 2019. The toolkit provides activities, tools and resources for each of the eleven components of the framework.

AASB and DEED are releasing the Transforming Schools Toolkit resources in phases, taking into account district priorities during their COVID-19 response. “Our students, families, and school staff are facing unsettling challenges during this pandemic,” said Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson. “The resources provided in this toolkit can help inform the supports, practices, and policies that our students will need now and in the future.”

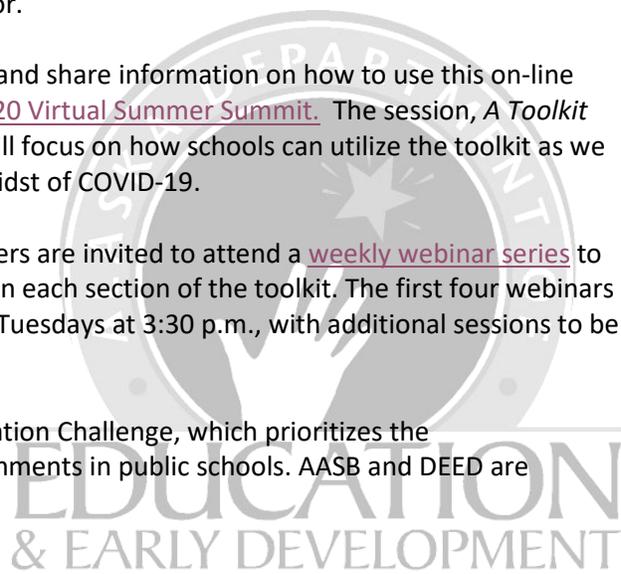
The toolkit includes Alaska-specific and national trauma-engaged strategies for district staff. The first phase of the toolkit release includes an introduction to four of the eleven sections, including: Deconstructing Trauma, Self-Care, Family Partnerships, and Relationship Building. As school districts look to foster supportive relationships between members of the school community in the midst of COVID-19, the Relationship Building section puts ready-to-use resources in educators' hands.

“Providing clear, actionable resources like the toolkit can help inform how we support our students and partner with families not just during this time of uncertainty, but for the long-term,” said Lori Grassgreen, AASB’s Community Engagement Director.

AASB, DEED, and school district partners will unveil and share information on how to use this on-line toolkit on August 25th, at the [Alaska Smart Start 2020 Virtual Summer Summit](#). The session, *A Toolkit for Trauma-Engaged Practice During a Pandemic*, will focus on how schools can utilize the toolkit as we prepare to start the 2020-2021 school year in the midst of COVID-19.

District leaders, school staff, and community members are invited to attend a [weekly webinar series](#) to learn more about the tools and resources available in each section of the toolkit. The first four webinars will take place September 15 through October 6 on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m., with additional sessions to be scheduled as new sections are introduced.

This partnership embodies the spirit of Alaska Education Challenge, which prioritizes the implementation of trauma-engaged learning environments in public schools. AASB and DEED are



grateful to district staff, community partners, the Alaska Afterschool Network, and partner organizations for their invaluable contributions to the Toolkit for all Alaskan schools.

*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 503 public schools across Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*



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