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Commissioner

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Department of Education  
and Early Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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## **DEED Announces Federal Literacy Development Sub-Grant Recipients**

JUNEAU -- The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) announced in October 2019 that it received a \$20.7 million five-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education to expand the state's efforts to improve literacy skills for all students. In addition to using grant funds to develop and implement a comprehensive state literacy program, competitive sub grants were offered to school districts for projects to advance literacy skills.

"This is a timely opportunity for the state and school districts to fund comprehensive literacy programs," said Commissioner Johnson. "Currently, Alaska ranks last in the nation for fourth-grade reading proficiency. The Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant, along with the Alaska Reads Act, will provide support for students, families, and educators as we all work together to improve our reading outcomes."

"Reading is the foundation for educational and lifelong success," said Governor Mike Dunleavy. "As we've seen from statewide and national assessments, Alaska's performance falls short in reading proficiency. This grant opportunity supports our statewide initiative to improve literacy and educational outcomes in Alaska."

Of twenty-six applications, sixteen school districts were selected: Alaska Gateway, Aleutians East Borough, Anchorage, Bering Strait, Denali Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Juneau, Kodiak Island Borough, Kuspuk, Lake and Peninsula, Lower Yukon, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Nenana, Nome, Southeast Island, and Yukon-Koyukuk.

School district sizes range from small (10-300 students) to large (over 1,000 students), with projects focusing on literacy development for children from birth through grade 12. Project highlights include professional development in effective reading instruction for teachers, hiring reading specialists, incorporating new and innovative reading instruction strategies, increasing family engagement, and reading support outside of the school year timeframe.

The federal CLSD grant provides funding to DEED over five school years, starting with \$4.9M in the current school year (2019-2020). For the following four school years, \$3.9M will be distributed to DEED each year. Details about the grant are available on the [Federal Register](#).

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