

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner



Department of Education
and Early Development

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Juneau, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 7, 2021

DEED Releases 2021 Statewide Assessment Results

Low participation rates due to COVID-19 warrant caution comparing results to prior years

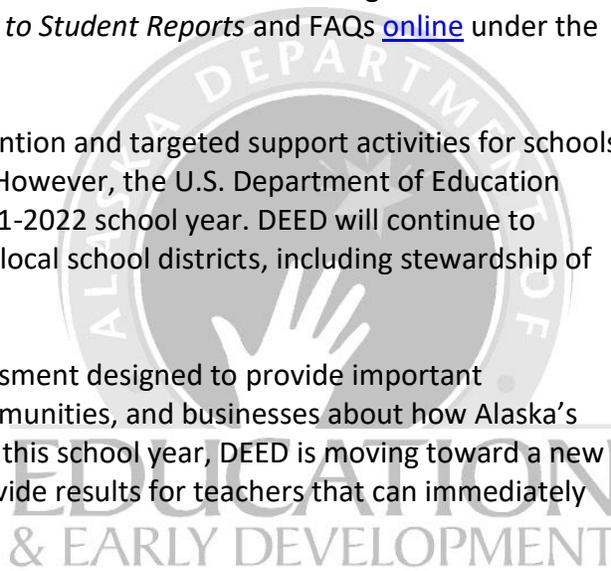
JUNEAU – Tuesday the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) released statewide, district, school, and subgroup level results from the 2021 administration of the Performance Evaluation for Alaska’s Schools (PEAKS) assessment. These results are now available online. School districts have until September 30 to distribute student-level reports to parents and educators.

Approximately 44,400 students participated in the Spring 2021 administration of PEAKS. That is about 64% of students enrolled in the test grades of 3-9. DEED extended flexibilities including extending the testing hours to evenings and weekends, reducing reporting requirement, and extending the testing window by a week to help schools safely assess as many students as possible given the mitigation practices in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Even with these flexibilities, participation rates varied significantly from district to district and among demographic categories.

Given the low overall participation rate and the high variability in participation among student groups, DEED cautions against comparing 2021 PEAKS data to previous years at the statewide level. The results are still valuable for assessing performance at the school and individual student levels. Parents and educators can use individual student data from PEAKS, along with other local assessments, to inform decisions about instructional needs during the 2021-2022 school year. DEED has published a *Parent Guide to Student Reports* and FAQs [online](#) under the “results” tab.

Typically, summative assessments guide intervention and targeted support activities for schools as directed by the Every Student Succeeds Act. However, the U.S. Department of Education waived accountability requirements for the 2021-2022 school year. DEED will continue to support ongoing school improvement efforts in local school districts, including stewardship of federal COVID relief funds.

PEAKS has been the statewide summative assessment designed to provide important data for parents, educators, policy makers, communities, and businesses about how Alaska’s schools and districts are performing. Beginning this school year, DEED is moving toward a new approach to statewide assessment that will provide results for teachers that can immediately



inform instruction, will better display student growth and needs, and align with interim assessments administered independently by most of Alaska’s school districts.

PEAKS results are available on [DEED’s Assessment Results webpage](#).

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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.**”*

Media Contact: [Grant Robinson](#), Public Information Officer, (907) 500-4983