

Public comment received on proposed amendments to
4 AAC 06.739 (b), achievement levels for English Language Arts and
Mathematics;
4 AAC 06.822 (b), accountability sub scores.

Comments received from December 8 through December 26, 2023

From: Christina Moore <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:12 PM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)

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This is disgusting. How much more are they going to dumb down schoolwork? This has been going on for years and it needs to stop. Instead of lowering the standards for kids how about expecting them to meet the expectations they should. Instead of handing them iPads for schoolwork how about you go back to using books? Go back to having them write their assignments. Go back to homework. Lowering the standards of what they should be doing is actually more harmful than making them do what they should be doing and if a kid needs to be held back then that's what you do. How are they going to function in the world and workforce if they are getting substandard education? Instead of fixing the problem you are making it worse

From: Jessica Miller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:05 PM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Lowering educational standards

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to the proposal to lower the scoring standards that show whether students are proficient in reading. I believe it would be a complete disservice to our students to make this change, regardless of the fact that the score difference is minimal. Our students deserve better than this. If our schools are having issues getting students to the current standard, then that is what needs to be addressed. You don't just lower the standard to say that they are doing well, when in fact they are not. How is this benefiting them for the future? I believe this would just set our students up for failure.

Sincerely,

Jessica Miller

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From: Loa Carroll [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:04 PM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Math and Reading Standards

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To Whom it may concern,

I am adamantly opposed to reducing the standards for the students in the State of Alaska in both math and reading.

The students have been cheated out of solid reading education with the whole language program that duped an entire nation into thinking that children would guess or use their life experience to figure out what words they were supposed to be reading.

What we have done to our children is almost unforgiveable.

Teachers need COACHING.

Teachers need HELP.

Teachers must buckle down and start from the beginning and work harder than they ever have before to make up for all the lost time with these students!

Reducing the scores to include lower numbers is cheating. It's cheating the child out of an education that is equal to all other education programming throughout the United States. It's cheating the general public out of a prepared workforce that is supposed to grow up and eventually take the helm as we all age! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING? You can't decrease the standards, lower the mark, and then walk away feeling satisfied that our students are being dumbed down because they haven't had enough time with solid curriculum and solid teachers who know what they are doing and then doing it.

NO MORE COMPLAINING FROM TEACHERS. You signed up for a job, now roll up your sleeves and get busy. If you need to focus every moment of a child's day on reading remediation, and mathematics remediation, then DO IT.

As far as mathematics is concerned, the State of Alaska needs to completely RETHINK their math curriculum, just like reading. I am grateful that we have returned to phonics, and we need to be returning to number sense and developing basic math skills before trying to jump around to abstract ideas and concepts. Children's brains aren't ready for most of these abstract concepts, and so we have another epic failure at hand because someone sold us a bill of goods on some "new" math that has turned out to be, once again, dumbing down our society.

This is not a game. We have 12 short years to teach our children and to prepare them for entering into the workforce. They need to be prepared. At 71% not-proficient rate, none of them will be college

bound, and the United States of America is posturing to have educational accomplishments rivaling third world countries. How sad, with the amount of money and resources available.

This is all about proficient level students, not advanced level, or low-end struggling level, so I am speaking about the middle of the bell curve, where the majority of our students fall. DO NOT LOWER THE EXPECTATIONS . We are giving our children freedom and power when we give them an education.

How dare we give them less-than. How dare we give them not-enough.

Shame on all of us for thinking that we can do less, expect less, produce less, and provide less.

The Common Core State Standards are being met across the nation and there is no excuse for Alaska.

Please hold the line and bring the students up to proficient and beyond!

We can do this!

Thank you,

Loa Carroll-Hubbard

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: JONES, SHANNON [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:47 PM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Lowering Student Standards

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To whom it may concern,

The new proposal to lower standards for students to achieve proficiency status is a huge mistake! We need to do whatever it takes to change the way it's being taught, maybe stop worrying about how we are classified and focus on teaching it in a different way. So, what I'm here to say is, they can't learn, so let's lower the bar? It's the board's duty to see what is in the best interest of the students; did you know there is so much material out on the internet about children and development. The writer/ Author, Maria Montessori, wrote "The Absorbent Mind". She said little kids from birth to 7 yrs. are capable of just taking in so much like a sponge. Do better for our children and worry less about how we look.

Sincerely,
Shannon Jones

From: Alaska Online Public Notices <noreply@state.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:37 PM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: New Comment on NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN achievement levels for English Language Arts and Mathematics and CHANGES IN accountability sub scores

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

A new comment has been submitted on the public notice [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN achievement levels for English Language Arts and Mathematics and CHANGES IN accountability sub scores.](#)

Submitted:

12/21/2023 9:36:48 PM

Gary Nelson Carlos
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Anonymous User

Comment:

Schools are failing to teach to the higher standards of excellence we have experienced in yester years. How do the educators pat themselves on the back and say they are doing a good job??? By lowering the standard's goalpost to reflect a passing score.
How about improving the quality of education instead of dumbing down the State of Alaska's students???

You can review all comments on this notice by [clicking here](#).

[Alaska Online Public Notices](#)

From: Susan Steele <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:31 AM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Concerns and Suggestions Regarding Cut Scores and Proficiency Levels

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Dear State of Alaska School Board,

I am writing to tell you how much I appreciate the ongoing efforts to modify the cut scores in Alaska's educational assessments. It is heartening to see a commitment to refining the evaluation process. However, I want to share some concerns and suggestions regarding the current cut scores and proficiency levels.

I've recently reviewed the AK Star Summative NWEA linking study, which indicates that the current cut scores correlate a 3rd-grade proficient student to the 71-83rd percentile. While I hope a new study is released to cross-walk the proposed cut scores, Alaska may need more than this slight reduction in proficiency ranges. The cut scores are nowhere near a realistic standard.

Considering that the percentage of students in Alaska performing at or above the NAEP Proficient level was 26 percent in 2022, I am concerned about the negative implications of setting the bar for proficiency as high as the 70th percentile. This high threshold is likely to portray most Alaska students as not proficient inadvertently.

Moreover, the complexity of challenges faced by districts in Alaska, particularly those in remote areas, must be addressed. I echo the sentiment that comparing reading scores between students in remote and rural areas with those in urban settings oversimplifies the myriad factors influencing academic performance. The unique challenges, such as resource disparities, socioeconomic variances, cultural and linguistic diversity, and limitations in educational infrastructure, need to be considered.

Educator expectations play a crucial role in student outcomes. And it's essential to acknowledge that despite their best efforts, many districts grapple with recruitment and retention issues and multiple simultaneous changes, including implementing the science of reading mandates and adapting to new curricula and assessments.

Please consider how these changes negatively impact districts, particularly in remote areas with compounding challenges. From this point forward, I recommend adopting a measured approach, allowing districts to become proficient in managing substantial changes before introducing new mandates.

Finally, I encourage revisiting the cut scores to even lower proficiency bands. While autonomy in setting proficiency standards is a valuable aspect of state education policy, it is crucial to strike a balance that ensures realistic and attainable goals for all students and districts.

I appreciate your attention to these matters and your dedication to enhancing education in Alaska. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,
Susan

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Susan R. Steele, Ed.S. – Director of *Special Projects*

Lower Yukon School District (LYSD)



lysd.org

