

State Board of Education & Early Development
Draft Minutes
June 4-5, 2024
Alaska Technical Center
Kotzebue, AK

Tuesday June 4, 2024

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 11:57 a.m.

Work Session

Agenda Item 1 – Bag Transfer and 100MB Impacts

Assistant Attorney General Susan Sonneborn provided an update on the Internet Speed Bill HB, which increases the maximum internet speed allowed under the Broadband Assistance Grant Program from 25 to 100 megabits per second. The bill passed on March 25 and became effective on March 28. The Department of Law and DEED are working on updating regulations to reflect this change. If there's a conflict between regulation and statute, the statute takes precedence. The new 100 megabits per second limit is now in effect. The initial review of the regulation project is expected by June 10, after which it will be presented to the board for approval and public comment. Following any necessary changes, the regulations will be brought back to the board for final adoption.

Agenda Item 2 – Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board Member Selection

Superintendent Suzzuk Huntington of Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) recommended two candidates for 3-year terms on the MEHS Advisory Board: one alumni representative, Harold Amos, a 1969 graduate with extensive experience and a unique alumni perspective, and one parent representative, Dorothy Chase, the longest-serving board member whose experience provides valuable continuity. Huntington explained that the selection process involved consulting with administrators and considering factors like geography, life and work experience, and availability. Member Stockhausen asked about the protocol if a parent representative's child graduates before their term ends; Huntington clarified that the parent could continue to serve for one additional year if their term isn't completed.

Agenda Item 3 – State Board of Education Committee Meetings

- 3A. Reading Committee – Sally Stockhausen, Committee Chair
- 3B. CRCTE & Cultural Education Committee – Lorri Van Diest, Committee Chair
- 4B Safety & Wellbeing Committee – Lorri Van Diest, Committee Chair
- 5B Tribal Compacting Committee – Pamela Dupras, Committee Chair
- 6B Effective Educators Committee – Sally Stockhausen, Committee Chair

Break for Lunch. Meeting reconvened at 2:37pm.

Agenda Item 4 – State Board of Education Committee Reports and Discussion

Reading Committee – Committee Chair Sally Stockhausen discussed the importance of continuing to support the Reading Symposium and advocated for its inclusion in future budgets. She also highlighted the valuable support provided by the Alaska Reads Initiative (ARI) across the state. The Reading Committee decided to hold monthly meetings focused on specific topics to better prepare for advocacy, particularly during the legislative session, emphasizing the importance of securing funding to support school districts.

CRCTE & Cultural Education Committee – Committee Chair Lorri Van Diest discussed the Career Guides initiative, where the Departments of Education and Labor have partnered to hire three career guides, who will be stationed at regional job centers in Fairbanks, Ketchikan, and Bethel. The committee is

enthusiastic about this effort and plans to advocate for its statewide expansion. Additionally, the committee will continue recognizing outstanding Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by awarding the State Board of Education Exemplary CTE awards to deserving teachers and groups.

Safety and Wellbeing Committee – Committee Chair Barbara Tyndall outlined the committee's new goals. The first goal is to enhance Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and Trauma Engaged School Integration, a framework aimed at addressing students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs, currently being implemented in 33 schools across 8 data-driven districts. The second goal focuses on improving school safety and strengthening connections, covering various measures to create a supportive environment. The final goal is to reduce absenteeism, as Alaska currently has the highest absenteeism rate in the country.

Tribal Compacting Committee – Committee Chair Pamela Dupras acknowledged Joel Isaak's significant efforts in advancing the process through legislation, which is now under review by legal and the Governor's Office to ensure readiness for the next legislative session. Commissioner Bishop noted that the draft legislation is addressing statutory requirements beyond education and is undergoing necessary checks and balances.

Effective Educators Committee – Committee Chair Sally Stockhausen reported that the main goals over the past few years have been to eliminate barriers and create pathways for teacher certification. The TeachAK program, which has recently transitioned from paper to digital, is now online but still has some developing features, such as the district portal to track certification progress. The Department is also working to improve website usability. A key development is the upcoming apprenticeship program, with a framework being prepared, focusing on recruiting and training quality mentors and collaborating with universities. Significant progress has been made in these areas compared to a year ago.

Agenda Item 5 – Paul Fuhs, Alaska Resource Education

Paul Fuhs, Project Manager for Sustainable Alaska, discussed developing financial literacy and civics courses to help students understand the role of resources in Alaska's economy and its impact on individuals, communities, and the state. This initiative, discussed with the legislature and state agencies, aims to use the new virtual education consortium to deliver this content cost efficiently to schools, especially to rural schools. With recent funding to double internet speeds and the advent of Starlink, the program can support teachers effectively. The curriculum would complement the Alaska history standards, including perspectives on indigenous resource use and historical impacts. The proposed curriculum, tentatively called "Alaska's Journey to Sustainable Development," aims to incorporate lessons learned from past mistakes and highlight progress in sustainability. Fuhs sought the board's approval to work with the Commissioner on developing this program, with draft materials to be reviewed later for potential inclusion in state history standards.

Agenda Item 6 – Northwest Arctic Borough School District Update

Superintendent Terri Walker introduced the Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NWABSD) Board members and thanked them for their service. She provided an update on NWABSD's mission to create a learning environment that inspires and challenges students and employees, and its vision to equip students with the knowledge and skills for a successful future. She outlined the district's Strategic Plan, which includes six main goals: 1) School and Culture, 2) Operational Improvement, 3) Instructional Support, 4) Wellness, 5) Growing Our Own, and 6) Board Development. Walker highlighted key programs such as the Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program (ANSEP), the Youth Leader Program with Teck Alaska, integration of Language & Culture in the curriculum, the Alaska Reads Act, and the Grow Your Own initiative.

Agenda Item 7 – Commissioner's Year End Report and Major Project Updates

Commissioner Bishop presented the Department's progress over the past year, outlining the education priorities for 2023-2025: 1) Strengthening reading skills by third grade, 2) Tribal Compacting for Culturally Based Education, 3) Teacher Retention & Recruitment (TRR), 4) Parental Rights & Public School Choice, and 5) High School/Post-Secondary Connections through CTE & Workforce Development. The Commissioner highlighted the Alaska Reads Act and the mCLASS DIBELS 8 screener, which has

significantly improved student test scores.

23-24 mCLASS DIBELS 8 Highlights

- 51/53 Alaska Districts using mCLASS DIBELS 8 screener
- Staff administering the assessment must attend an initial training (currently ~2400 teachers trained)
- Last year ~48K assessments administered to students at BOY, MOY and EOY
- 74% of students who scored Well-Below Benchmark were progress monitored at least 1 time between MOY and EOY (85%+ Anchorage, Bristol Bay, Kodiak, Nome, Petersburg, Sitka, Valdez, Wrangell, Yupit)
- Data meetings after each screening to track progress, completion and growth
- AK specific resources, newsletters and website support the overall implementation of mCLASS DIBELS 8

Alaska as Compared to Rest of Nation

Change from Beginning of Year (BOY) to End of Year (EOY)			
Grade	State	At Risk (Well Below Benchmark)	On Track (At/Above Bench)
Kindergarten	Alaska	-30 %pts	+36 %pts
	Rest of Nation	-20 %pts	+29 %pts
1st Grade	Alaska	-14 %pts	+19 %pts
	Rest of Nation	-10 %pts	+17 %pts
2nd Grade	Alaska	-11 %pts	+10 %pts
	Rest of Nation	-9 %pts	+9 %pts
3rd Grade	Alaska	0 %pts	0 %pts
	Rest of Nation	-2 %pts	+4 %pts

Bishop also discussed the Alaska Distance Learning Consortium, which offers Asynchronous Courses, Professional Development, Virtual Services, and a Digital Library. Efforts to improve Teacher Retention & Recruitment include developing a statewide framework, streamlining certification, and expanding outreach, including a promotional video to attract teachers. Additionally, there was a proposal to revise regulations for student advisory board members for clearer language. Concerns about student attendance, particularly in primary schools, were addressed, with a suggestion to collaborate on setting goals and solutions with districts.

Recess

Wednesday June 5, 2024

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

Roll was called, and the following members were present to provide a quorum: Member Pamela Dupras, Military Advisor James Fowley, Second Vice Chair Sally Stockhausen, Member Barbara Tyndall, First Vice Chair Lorri Van Deist, Student Advisor Elect Joshua Pak, and Chair James Fields.

Chair Fields called a quorum. Member Dupras gave the invocation, and the board pledged allegiance to the flag.

First Vice Chair Van Diest motioned, and Member Stockhausen seconded, a motion to adopt the June 4-5, 2024. Without further discussion the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote. There were no potential conflicts of interest identified by board members.

Public Comment

Paul Fuhs thanked the board for their decision regarding boys participating in girls' sports. He shared that

his 17-year-old daughter, who plays on a top competitive team, is concerned about potential severe injuries due to differences in speed and size. He emphasized that student safety must be a top priority.

Work Session

Agenda Item 8 – Legislative and Budget Update

Laurel Shoop, DEED Legislative Liaison, provided an update on the 33rd Alaska State Legislature's second session, which was highly active with a focus on education. The Department tracked 77 bills—45 House and 32 Senate—during the 243 days of the session. Out of these, three bills have become law, and five are pending the Governor's review. Key legislative developments include:

- **HB 69:** Facilitates the city of Canada's change in status and affects school board representation.
- **SB 25:** Repeals the Curriculum Improvement and Best Practices Fund.
- **HB 193:** Increases school broadband speed funding from 25 to 100 megabits per second.
- **HB 26:** Renames and relocates the Alaska Native Language Council and increases its membership.
- **HB 148:** Expands Head Start funding, modifies the Alaska Performance Scholarship, and reauthorizes technical and vocational education programs.
- **HB 202:** Mandates naloxone training and availability in schools and updates correspondence program regulations.
- **HB 230:** Removes limits on in-state teaching experience and allows for additional grants to nationally certified teachers.
- **SB 22:** Establishes Juneteenth as a legal holiday.

Tama Carson, DEED Administrative Services Director provided the board with an update on the department's FY25 budget that was passed by the legislature and is currently with Governor for his consideration. The FY25 budget includes fully funded K-12 Foundation Programs, increased funding for K-3 students, and various grants and support programs. Notable changes include adjustments to funding for CTE, reductions in some grant areas, and support for Mt. Edgecumbe High School operations. Capital projects for school construction and major maintenance are also addressed, with specific funds allocated for various projects.

Agenda Item 9 – State Board of Education Culturally Relevant Career & Technical Education Committee Awards for Recognition Program

SBOE Member Van Diest, and chair of the Culturally Relevant Career & Technical Education Committee Awards, provided an update on the program, now in its second year. The awards recognize exemplary CTE programs in Alaska, focusing on student engagement and work-based learning.

- **Effective Student Engagement:** Awards were given to Kusilvak Career Academy and the Engineering Pathway of Lower Kuskokwim School District.
- **Work-Based Learning:** The Youth to Work Program Coastal Village Region Fund received this award.
- **Combined Awards:** The Alaska Transition Outcomes Project by SERRC and the Welding Program at Yukon Coyote School District were recognized for both student engagement and work-based learning.

The program had 9 applicants, and all districts are encouraged to submit nominations.

Agenda Item 10 – Questions Regarding Standing Reports

10A. Innovation and Education Excellence (IEE) – Kathy Moffitt, Director

Member Van Diest inquired about the percentage of teachers completing the Keys to Literacy course. Director Moffitt reported that about 80% of teachers are trained in the Science of Reading, with the Keys to Literacy course available both asynchronously and with mandatory face-to-face meetings. Certification requires a pre-test and post-test, and efforts are underway with the University of Alaska Southeast to approve related courses.

Regarding AK STAR test results, Director Moffitt stated that summative tests will be administered in the spring, with data expected to be released in August.

Van Diest also asked about UAA's registered apprenticeship program and its integration with early childhood credentials. Monica Goyette explained that UAA and Kodiak College have partnered with the Bristol Bay Regional Technical Education Consortium to offer the first approved teacher registered apprenticeship in Alaska. The program includes three levels: early childhood, an associate degree, and a bachelor's degree, with four school districts as employers.

10B. Alyeska Reading Institute (ARI) – Carol Boatman, Director

Member Van Diest inquired about the Summer School program. Director Boatman reported that 159 students are enrolled in summer tutoring, with 15 educators providing remote instruction through You Fly. The program includes 34 third graders who will receive 20 hours of tutoring over the summer, starting today and running until late June. Each student gets one-hour sessions five days a week and has access to a personalized reading boost account through Amplify.

Member Dupras asked about additional teacher training and routines. Director Boatman clarified that while routines are part of You Fly, they are adding methods to enhance student engagement, such as using different techniques for phonemic awareness to better support learning in a virtual setting.

10E. Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) – Suzuk Huntington, Superintendent

Chair Fields inquired about the US Coast Guard's interest in purchasing lots from Mt. Edgecumbe, specifically regarding one lot they were not interested in. Lori Weed, School Finance Manager, explained that the Coast Guard is still interested in purchasing the lot they are leasing and the adjacent parcels C and C1. However, they have withdrawn their interest in the smaller, non-waterfront lot that was previously under consideration for lease.

10F. Attorney General – Susan Sonneborn, Assistant Attorney General

Assistant Attorney General Susan Sonneborn updated on two key issues:

1. **Maintenance of Equity Provision:** This provision, part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), requires states to maintain or increase per-pupil funding for high-needs districts. The US Department of Education (USDOE) has alleged that Alaska is noncompliant, with claims of owed funds varying from \$8 million to \$30 million before settling at \$17 million. The State argues it has complied, citing an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA). Currently, the USDOE has labeled Alaska's ARPA grant as high risk but has not withheld funds. The Governor has yet to act on a budget bill (HB 268) that includes almost \$12 million to address this dispute.
2. **Alexander Case Correspondence Litigation:** The case challenges the constitutionality of funding statutes for correspondence programs, particularly for private school tuition. The court ruled the statutes unconstitutional, and a stay of the decision was granted through June 30, 2024. The State's request for a longer stay was denied, and an appeal to the Alaska Supreme Court was also denied. HB 202 includes temporary provisions for correspondence programs, and DEED is working with legal and government offices to ensure continuity.

10:33am Alaska Technical Center tour and break for lunch. Meeting reconvened at 1:12pm.

Business Meeting

Agenda Item 11 – Selection of Meeting Dates, Locations, and Topics

Member Van Diest motioned, and Member Dupras seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the following schedule of meeting dates for the 2024-2025 school year: July 1, 2024 a virtual meeting. October 8-9, 2024 a quarterly meeting in-person at the MatSu School District. December 5, 2024 a virtual meeting for a Commissioner’s report. January 22, 2025 a virtual meeting, the special Legislative and Budget report. March 10-11, 2025 an in-person quarterly meeting in Juneau. June 3-4, 2025 an in-person quarterly meeting with a location to be determined. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 12 – Subcommittee Appointments

Chair Fields announced that there were no changes at this time for subcommittee appointments.

Agenda Item 13 – Selection of Officers

Commissioner Bishop asked to take nominations for the Chair of the State Board of Education and Early Development. Member Van Diest motioned, and Member Fields seconded the following motion: I move to nominate James Fields for Chair of the State Board of Education and Early Development for the year of 2024-2025. Without further discussion and no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Van Diest motioned and Member Tyndall seconded the following motion: I move to nominate Sally Stockhausen as First Vice Chair of the State Board of Education and Early Development for the school year of 2024-2025. Without further discussion and no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Tyndall motioned and Member Stockhausen seconded the following motion: I move to nominate Lorri Van Diest as Second Vice Chair of the State Board of Education and Early Development for the school year 2024-2025. Without further discussion and no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 14 – Consent Agenda

14A. Approve the minutes of the February 28, 2024 meeting

Second Vice Chair Van Diest motioned, and Member Dupras seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting approval of the minutes of the February 28, 2024 board meeting. Without further discussion the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 15 – Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board Member Selection

Member Dupras motioned, and Member Tyndall seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development to appoint Howard Amos as the Alumni Representative and Dorothy Chase as the Parent Representative for term B on the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board. Without further discussion the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 16 – State Board of Education’s Culturally Relevant Career & Technical Education Committee Awards for Recognition Program

Member Dupras motioned and Second Vice Chair Van Diest seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development award the following five nominees for the Culturally Relevant Career and Technical Education Program Recognition: 1) Kusilvak Career Academy; 2) Engineering Pathway; 3) Youth-to-Work Program; 4) Alaska Transaction Outcomes Project; 5) Welding Program. Without further discussion the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 17 – Executive Session

17A. DEED Commissioner Evaluation

Chair Fields motioned, and Second Vice Chair Van Diest seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development to convene an executive session to evaluate the performance of

the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development.

Chair Fields moved to come out of Executive Session, and Second Vice Chair Van Diest seconded with no objection. Chair Fields thanked Commissioner Bishop for her service and everything she has done over the past 10 months.

Board Comments

Member Tyndall expressed her admiration for the progress in Career and Technical Education (CTE) across the state and thanked everyone involved.

Student Advisor Elect Joshua Pak expressed gratitude for the opportunity and commitment to serving Alaskan students for an excellent education.

Military Advisor Lt. Col. Fowley thanked the Alaska Technical Center staff and DEED for their support and acknowledged Member Griffin for his mentorship.

Member Dupras highlighted the inspiring visit to a remote community and praised Commissioner Bishop's leadership, expressing optimism for Alaska's students.

First Vice Chair Stockhausen appreciated the event's organization, Kotzebue's hospitality, and looked forward to the advancement of the apprenticeship framework.

Second Chair Van Diest valued the facility tour, in-person meetings, and deep connections made, and expressed gratitude to Commissioner Bishop, Bob Griffin, and Felix Myers for their contributions.

Chair Fields thanked Bob Griffin and Felix Myers for their service, welcomed Joshua Pak as the new Student Advisor, and commended DEED staff and educators for their dedication and progress in educating Alaska's youth.

The board adjourned at 2:44 p.m.