

House Bill 69

This bill passed and became law last year on June 21, 2023. The passage of this bill provides a mechanism for a first-class city with a population of 400 or less to change their governmental organization status to a second-class city.

The City of Tanana submitted a petition to become a second-class city.

On March 12, 2024, the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs Local Boundary Commission met and approved the City of Tanana's petition to become a second-class city.

A public process was held for the reapportionment of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District to expand the local school board membership for representation reapportionment.

Commissioner Bishop approved the apportionment of the Yukon-Koyukuk School Board on May 20, 2024.

The City of Tanana and its school are part of the REAA Yukon Koyukuk School District as of July 1, 2024.

Senate Bill 25

This bill became law last year on September 11, 2023, and repealed Curriculum Improvement and Best Practices Fund, which has not been funded since inception.

House Bill 193

On March 28 of this year, the Governor signed HB 193 which amended the School Broadband Assistance Grants (BAG) program statutes to provide Alaska school districts with funding to assist eligible schools in their district reach up to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed for internet services. Previously, the cap was 25 megabits per second download speed. This bill will help students across Alaska by providing better internet connectivity for their education. The School BAG grants awarded this year helped XXX schools achieve increased internet speeds.

Other bills being considered by the Governor

Next, is a summary of the 5 other bills that have passed that were reviewed by the Governor for consideration. The Governor has three options when a bill has passed the legislature:

1. sign the bill to become law,
2. allow the bill to pass into law without signature,
3. or veto.

House Bill 26

HB 26 passed the legislature this session and was allowed to pass into law without signature by the Governor. HB 26 renames the "Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council" to the "Council for Alaska Native Languages", and moves the Council from the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development to the Department of Education and Early Development.

This bill increases the number of voting members of the Council from five (5) to seven (7). Four additional native languages¹ were added as official languages to Alaska Statutes. Tanana was removed as an official language but made more specific with the additions of Lower and Middle Tanana languages.

House Bill 148

HB 148 passed the legislature and was signed by the Governor on June 26, 2024. This bill effectively impacts the department in three ways.

1. Early Childhood Education: requires the State to provide funding for Head Start program federal match requirements pro rata.
2. Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) Program modifies the APS program by expanding eligibility criteria, adjusting award amounts, and introducing new provisions for scholarship recipients' ongoing eligibility and performance assessment.
3. Technical and Vocational Education: Reauthorized the Alaska Workforce Investment Board Technical and Vocational Education program. DEED provides a pass-through grant to the Galena Interior Learning Academy

¹ Cup'ig, Sahcheeg xut'een xneege' (Middle Tanana), Benhti Kokhwt'ana Kenaga' (Lower Tanana), and Wetał (Ts'etsa'ut).

based on a percentage allocation from the legislature. The bill also alters regulations governing the Alaska Technical and Vocational Education Program by removing a provision related to setting standards for administrative costs of grants, aiming to clarify and streamline administrative processes.

House Bill 202

HB 202 was signed by the Governor on August 30, 2024. This law directs school districts to have staff trained to administer naloxone nasal spray on site during school events when students or staff are on site to help prevent opioid overdoses. Training to be provided by the Department of Health. Trained staff must also be present during each school-sponsored event, whether on site or off school grounds. The bill clarifies that the school district, school, nor individual will not be liable for civil damages for an injury to another individual from a failure to possess or maintain an opioid overdose drug under this section².

The bill also requires that the Department of Health provide schools at least two doses of naloxone spray to be available on site and at school sponsored events.

This bill was amended to also include correspondence program changes in uncodified law, meaning, this section of the law will automatically be repealed on June 30, 2025. Annual student allotments supporting individual learning plans are required to be reported to the department. The bill also mandates the adoption of regulations by the State Board of Education and Early Development to report to the legislature information about correspondence programs, including demographics, allotment fund accounting disbursements, curricula review, and assessment and proficiency scores. The reporting to comply with this section of uncodified law will be required to be transmitted to the department by December 1st, 2024 for the 2023-2024 school year's audited financial statements.

² Adds new section to article 3, AS 14.30.145 *Opioid overdose drugs*

House Bill 230

This bill passed into law without Governor signature on August 26, 2024. This bill removed the statutory limitation on number of years of teaching experience³ that may be substituted for in-state teaching experience on the teacher salary scale.

This bill allows a teacher certificated upon retirement the ability to teach as a long-term substitute teacher for not more than 165 consecutive days of a school term.⁴

This bill also provides language to allow DEED or the school district to provide \$5,000 grants to nationally certificated teachers.⁵

Senate Bill 22

This bill established Juneteenth – also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day – as a legal state holiday observed on June 19th.⁶ The Governor signed this bill into law on June 27, 2024.

The Legislature passed the capital and operating budgets and adjourned sine die on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. My colleague, Director Carson, will provide a budget update to you shortly.

Thank you again to my colleagues and to our leadership for their hard work this legislative session. I hope this information was helpful. Thank you for providing the opportunity to present the legislative update to you today.

³ Repeals AS 14.20.220 (e) and (g) which states:

For teachers holding **bachelors' degrees, not more than six years of school experience outside the state** may be substituted for a like period of school experience in the state when a teacher's position on the salary scale is established, and, for teachers holding **masters' degrees, not more than eight years of school experience outside the state** may be substituted for a like period of school experience in the state when a teacher's position on the salary scale is established.

And

In this section, "school experience" means a full-time elementary or secondary teacher in a public or nonpublic school as defined in AS 14.25.220.

⁴ [AS 14.20.020](#) (g) which states:

The department shall issue a teacher certificate to a person who possessed a valid Alaska teacher certificate upon retirement. A teacher certificate issued under this subsection is valid for the life of the retired teacher and qualifies the holder as a substitute teacher in the state.

⁵ Adds new subsection AS 14.20.225 *Teacher incentive payments and reimbursement of costs relating to national board certification.*

⁶ [AS 44.12.010](#) *Legal holidays*