



## Resolution of the State Board of Education & Early Development

### **On the Effective Date of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination**

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is committed to providing a public school system which produces qualified workers and competent citizens who have met high and rigorous academic standards; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska and Alaska school districts, educators, and parents have been working diligently to develop those standards; and,

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education & Early Development supports the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination as one means of assessing student mastery of state standards in reading, writing, and mathematics; and,

WHEREAS, the State Board believes that ALL children, including students with special needs, limited English proficiency and transient students, military dependents and students who enroll in Alaska late in their high school careers, must have the opportunity to learn in a public education system that recognizes and supports the abilities and individual learning styles of our children; and,

WHEREAS, the opportunity to learn requires qualified teachers, safe schools, curricula aligned to standards, and the opportunity to complete as much as possible the sequence of benchmark examinations in grades 3, 6, and 8; and,

WHEREAS, the state needs to provide the necessary resources to provide those opportunities to Alaska's current high school Class of 2002, the first class required to pass the exam to qualify for a high school diploma; and,

WHEREAS, it is probable that thousands of students will be denied diplomas in 2002 on the basis of a test our public school system has not yet prepared them to pass; so,

THEREFORE, the State Board of Education & Early Development urges Governor Knowles and the Alaska Legislature to adjust the effective date of the high stakes element of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination to 2006, while still administering the test;

In the intervening four years, so that all Alaskan students have a fair opportunity to meet Alaska's high and rigorous standards,

- ◆ The exam should continue to be administered and refined;
- ◆ Students should be held accountable for test results by such means as having the exams they have passed posted on their transcripts.

The State should:

- ◆ Implement a variety of means for Alaska to successfully compete to attract and retain high quality teachers;
- ◆ Provide resources to extend the school year to include additional days for professional development related to standards based teaching, assessment and reteaching, and to compensate for instructional days devoted to state testing;
- ◆ Ensure that Alaska students no matter where they live have access to qualified teachers, teaching in their areas of preparation;
- ◆ Ensure that all Alaska students attend schools that are safe and adequately equipped;
- ◆ Provide opportunities for students with special needs to fairly demonstrate their achievement of state standards;
- ◆ Provide a fair process for military and other transient students to meet state standards and achieve an Alaska diploma;
- ◆ Provide districts with fully funded quality schools grants in order to support their work to prepare students; specifically,

School Districts should:

- ◆ Align their curriculum, instruction, and local assessments to state standards in reading, writing, and math;
- ◆ Provide effective professional development focused on teaching to standards and preparing students to succeed on the benchmark assessments and High School Graduation Qualifying Exam;
- ◆ Provide summer school and other remedial opportunities;
- ◆ Develop data-driven school improvement plans to help all students meet Alaska standards.

So, furthermore, the State Board of Education & Early Development urges Governor Knowles, the Alaska Legislature and all Alaskans to work together to provide the time and resources necessary to achieve high standards for all students and not risk the dismantling of the Quality Schools Initiative by a hasty implementation of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination.



Chair, State Board of Education & Early Development  
December 9, 2000