



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** State Board of Education & Early Development  
**Date:** February 14, 2023

**Thru:** Heidi Teshner, Acting Commissioner  
**Telephone:** (907) 269-4583

**From:** Susan McKenzie, Director  
Division of Innovation and  
Education Excellence  
**Subject:** Agenda 14A. Division of  
Innovation and Education  
Excellence Standing Report

## Division of Innovation and Education Excellence March 2023 Board Report

The Division of Innovation and Education Excellence (IEE) is dedicated to providing an excellent education for every student every day by focusing division efforts around the five priorities of [Alaska's Education Challenge](#); providing oversight of state and federally funded programs to ensure quality and equity of student services; and providing excellent technical assistance and support to districts statewide.

The IEE Division encompasses nine teams that manage a wide range of programs and activities for the State. These teams include the Academic Support Team, the Assessment Team, the Career and Technical Education Team, the COVID Support Team, the Early Learning Team, the ESEA Federal Programs Team, the Health and Safety Team, the School Recognition and Support Team, the Special Education Team, and the Teacher Certification Team. In addition, staff from each of these teams have been very involved in supporting the department COVID Fiscal Team work.

Included in the IEE Board Report are highlights of work with initiatives, compliance work, and support to districts as it relates to the Alaska Education Challenge priorities.

## **Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #1: Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade**

### **Academic Support Team**

- The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has a new Reading Resource webpage to support communication, professional development, and department reading initiatives relating to the Alaska Strategic Reading Plan and Alaska Reads Act. It can be accessed at: <https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources>.
- The Academic Support Team published its sixth Alaska Reading Newsletter on January 20th. The publication is distributed to approximately 1,100 Alaska Educators as of January of 2023. The newsletters are archived and available to access on the Reading Resource Webpage at: <https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources/reading-newsletters>.
- Webinars centered around components of the Alaska Reads Act are being held weekly between January and May. Recordings of each webinar, along with slide decks and department-developed resources are available at: <https://education.alaska.gov/akreads/webinar-schedules>. In addition to webinars, many district-level presentations have been requested.
- DEED adopted the literacy screener, mCLASS by Amplify in late fall of 2022. The literacy screener uses Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), 8<sup>th</sup> edition for the screening. Eighteen school districts are currently participating in the pilot program. The pilot program allows DEED and districts to navigate the implementation of a new statewide assessment. There has been a 23% increase in districts expressing plans to choose mCLASS with DIBELS 8th edition as their district's literacy screener beginning in the fall of 2023. Currently, 70% of districts anticipate using the state-adopted literacy screener.
- On October 27<sup>th</sup>, DEED announced an initiative to support the purchase of evidence-based core reading instruction for the Alaska Reads Act. The English Language Arts (ELA) Core Curriculum Grant is bringing evidence-based core ELA material to 28,690 students, which is 48.64% of Alaska K-5 students. The districts participating in the program and adopting new materials for the 2023/2024 school year are: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, Juneau, Lower Yukon, North Slope, Petersburg, Dillingham, Kuspuk, Southeast Island, and Galena. Districts participated in a full day professional development on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Assessment**

- The Assessments Team collaborated with the Academic Support Team and vendor Amplify to begin the mCLASS pilot with 18 districts across the state. Districts received planning support, educators participated in training, and the middle-of-year testing window was opened from January 16 – February 3, 2023. The pilot results will inform the planning for full implementation of mCLASS as the statewide literacy screener beginning in the 2023-24 school year.

### **COVID Support Team**

- The COVID Support Team has disseminated Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs

- Competitive grants awarded to ten education entities.
  - Grants are being used to extend educational opportunities and mitigate learning loss due to COVID-19.
- The COVID Support Team has disseminated Evidence-Based After School Programs
  - Competitive grants awarded to seven education entities.
    - Grants are being used to extend the school day to address learning gaps and learning loss due to COVID-19.

### **Data and Accountability**

- Report Card to the Public – The report card has been published on the DEED website. The state Report Card can be found here (<https://education.alaska.gov/compass/Report/2021-2022/>). School and District Report Cards can be found here (<https://education.alaska.gov/compass/report-card>).
- Accountability System - The accountability system and school designation calculations have been completed using data from the 2021-2022 school year. School designations were distributed to district superintendents on December 13, 2022. In collaboration with the School Recognition and Support team, two information webinars were held to review the accountability system and to present next steps in school improvement efforts.
  - As a reminder, ED issued an accountability addendum template in December 2021. The addendum was submitted to the US Department of Education (US ED) on July 12, 2022 and DEED received approval on August 8, 2022.
  - The addendum provided for the following changes
    - Extend long-term goals by two years
      - Academic Achievement
      - Graduation Rates
      - Progress in Achieving English Learner Proficiency
    - Prior year data was not used to reach a minimum number of 10 students per indicator
    - Combined grades Kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade spans together for each indicator
    - Growth indicator was not included in this year’s system but will appear again in the following school year
    - Third Grade ELA replaced the Growth indicator for elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools
    - School years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 did not count towards time in designation status
- Participation Rate Data Collection
  - Snapshot of summative and alternate assessment participation
  - Collect student demographics for reporting and accountability
  - Source of data for the accountability system’s Academic Achievement and Growth indicators
- EdFacts – Submission of 50 data files to US ED
- Enrollment data for the 2022-2023 are available <https://education.alaska.gov/data-center>
  - Select ‘Statistics & Reports’ from the menu on the left

## **Early Learning**

- The DEED Early Education Advisory Committee met and submitted proposed Early Education Program Standards to DEED Leadership
  - Group included professionals and parents in the early education community, including Department of Health, Head Start, School Districts, Mental Health, and Quality Recognition Improvement System (QRIS) staff

## **ESEA Federal Programs**

- In partnership with Keys to Literacy, DEED is providing a free professional development course for educators that meets the required foundational reading skills addressed in the Alaska Reads Act. The offered professional development course for teachers filled up quickly and will take place between February and May 2023. During this time, Alaska Pre-K to Grade 3 educators will participate in a hybrid-online course titled “Keys to Beginning Reading” that totals 48.5 hours. Participants will spend time completing modules in an asynchronous online course and also attend virtual-live meetings facilitated by Keys to Literacy trainers.
- In partnership with NWEA® and Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education® (CORE®), DEED is providing a joint learning, collaboration, and coaching opportunity that will empower 50 Alaska education leaders to understand effective literacy instruction. The leadership course will provide participants with fundamental knowledge in effective standards-aligned and research-based reading instruction and assessment practices for all learners to support their school and district plans in the science of reading, as required by the Alaska Reads Act. The offered professional development course for leaders filled up quickly and will take place between February and June 2023. The leadership course comprises seven highly engaging sessions in which participants will learn about key elements of the science of reading and explore alignment to current systems.
- See more information on Science of Reading instruction by following this link to the new DEED professional development webpage: <https://education.alaska.gov/alaska-reading-resources/DEED-Professional-Development>

## **School Recognition and Support**

- Alaska’s 2023 Literacy Blueprint has been a partner project between the Academic Support Team and the School Recognition and Support Team
  - DEED is currently working to update Alaska’s literacy blueprint. Alaska’s last literacy blueprint was written in 2011.
  - The purpose of this work is to provide a comprehensive framework for how Alaskans develop effective systems to ensure Alaska’s children receive a strong literacy education. It is designed to provide guidance to policymakers, local education agencies, school and community leaders, educators, and families about ways to support all children in becoming literate; and prepared to fully participate in their chosen work and activities of personal interest in the 21st century.
  - A stakeholder group has been instrumental in providing guidance on the draft, ensuring clear communication and ease of readability.
  - The stakeholder group comprises 13 members from across Alaska with expertise in birth to college.

- DEED has contracted a facilitator and partnered with Region 16 Comprehensive Center to assist in the update.
- The updated literacy blueprint will serve as one single document that summarizes the many literacy efforts within the state.
  - The state elements of current literacy efforts include Alaska’s Education Challenge and the Alaska Reads Act.
  - The federal requirements include collaboration with early childhood programs and institutes of higher education, needs assessment with current level of student achievement, and an implementation plan around evidence-based practices.
- The Alaska state literacy blueprint team of stakeholders has been assembled to ensure the literacy plan is in alignment with the vision and goals of the state, local education agencies, and communities.
- Literacy, standards, and assessment experts have facilitated alignment and evaluation work in order to provide processes and evaluation tools appropriate for the task.
- Alaska’s Literacy Blueprint is scheduled to be printed and available to all attendees at the Alaska Science of Reading Symposium, April 2023.

**Alaska’s Education Challenge Priority #2:  
Increase career, technical and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.**

**Academic Support Team**

- The English Language Arts Core Curriculum Grant brought 52 leaders from participating districts for a full day of professional development in *culturally relevant instruction* aligned with the needs of their districts and students. Establishing a baseline of defining culturally relevant education in each district and for each educator laid the groundwork for the day. The ELA program materials were analyzed regarding the depth of cultural relevance and which elements would need to be strategically scaffolded to align with the unique culture of each district’s student profile. Preliminary discussions also occurred to define the areas for which professional development would be necessary for new teachers, veteran teachers, and district staff in the implementation process of adopting a new curriculum to meet the requirements of culturally relevant education.

**Career and Technical Education**

- The annual DEED Spring Perkins/CTE Workshop occurred February 8-10 in Anchorage with more than 60 participants from around the state. Representatives from 28 school districts, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, University campuses, the State Board of Education, and other industry and advocacy groups contributed to the work.
  - The State Board of Education’s CTE Program Recognition initiative was introduced
  - The CTE team delivered technical training to support the annual Perkins application process

- A facilitated collaborative session was held with all participants to identify the current state and future opportunities of Alaska CTE through a SWOT Analysis
- Partners delivered updates on initiatives that support district programs such as Alaska Education Exchange, AK Student Information System, Career and Technical Student Organizations, and available COVID stimulus grants
- For FY23 DEED will increase the minimum Perkins grant available to our smallest districts award by 33%. About half of Alaska districts receive the minimum annual Perkins allocation of \$15,000.
- Work on an Alaska Computer Science State Plan continues by Faye Tanner and a committee of stakeholders.

### **COVID Support Team**

- Competitive COVID grants for Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs have been used to extend career, technical, and culturally relevant instruction beyond the school year.
  - Grants are being used to provide dual credit opportunities to students.
- Competitive COVID grants for Evidence-Based After School Programs have been used to support extended school day to provide additional career and technical opportunities for students.

### **Special Education**

- The Special Education Team provided remedial and targeted training at the Alaska State Special Education Conference, February 4<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup> in Anchorage. Questions concerning the potential effect of the Reads Act on special education populations were addressed based on the act and proposed regulatory guidance. Questions were received in the area for all sessions conducted:
  - Session on the State Special Education Handbook (SpEd team)
  - Session on the Special Education Paperwork review process (Referral to IEP) (SpEd team)
  - Session on Special Education Compliance Monitoring (SpEd team)
  - Session on Alaska's Statewide Assessment System: A Balanced Approach (Assessments team)
- The Special Education team has secured an instructor to address specifically how to process the suspected increase of student's experiencing Dyslexia, which will be presented at the Spring Special Education Director's training March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in Anchorage.

## **Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #3:**

**Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.**

### **Academic Support Team**

- The DEED Math and Science Content Specialist has launched a math professional learning catalog. The kick-off webinar occurred on January 11th. Eighty-seven educators representing 31 districts signed up for the webinar or to view the recording. Since then, 70 K-12 educators have enrolled in the various courses, trainings, and webinars. These

include 40 for the Math Recovery Course in early numeracy, 15 in the graduate level advancement courses, and 15 in the Grassroots workshops that cover a variety of math topics. These educators represent 23 districts across the state. The complete list of opportunities is available in the [Professional Learning Opportunities Catalog](#).

## Assessment

- The Assessments Team, in partnership with assessment vendors, prepared for the Spring 2023 administration of all assessments.
  - The AK STAR and Alaska Science Assessments will be administered for the second year during the test window of March 27 – April 28, 2023.
  - The Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) is administered to English learners throughout the state from February 1 – March 31, 2023.
  - The Alternate Assessment will be administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities from March 20 – May 5, 2023.
- The Assessments Team continued to provide presentations and responses to questions about the 2022 results and the AK STAR test design.
  - Additional resources were compiled by NWEA to address questions about the linking between MAP Growth and AK STAR as well as to validate the AK STAR results from Spring 2022.
    - [AK STAR Projected Proficiency Explained](#)
    - [AK STAR Spring 2022 Scores Explained](#)
  - A summary brief was compiled and shared to inform stakeholders about the intentional shifts in the AK STAR test design.
    - [AK STAR A Connected Approach](#)
- Key activities since fall 2022 include:
  - The Assessments Team, in partnership with assessment vendors, Data Recognition Corp (DRC) and NWEA, conducted assessment development activities in preparation for the Spring 2023 administration.
    - In partnership with NWEA, the team finalized the assessment design for the computer adaptive test.
    - Assessment and content leads from DEED reviewed test blueprints, simulations, test items and forms to ensure standards-aligned content and adherence to DEEDs goals for the AK STAR.
    - Assessment leads reviewed the assessment platform and provided input on adaptations to meet educator and student needs.
    - Assessment leads collaborated to develop student and educator readiness resources to include manuals, quick guides, training materials, student tutorials, and practice tests. Many of the resources were released in January 2023 and all District Test Coordinators (DTCs) were trained at an in-person meeting on February 8-10, 2023.
  - The Assessment Team hosted a focus group with district assessment leads around the topic of assessment reports and reporting processes. By gathering input and needs from this group of vested educators, the team is able to collaborate with vendors to make meaningful enhancements to the reports, systems, and processes for assessment reporting.

- DEED and NWEA continued the Certified Facilitator Program with the third in-person meeting in Anchorage on February 6-7, 2023. The training focused on classroom-based assessments and provided a network for collaboration within and across similar-sized districts.

### **Early Learning**

- The Early Learning team is convening a pyramid model State Leadership Team. The team encompasses public and private leaders and convenes for the purpose of creating a system for educators to meet the social emotional and behavioral needs of students

### **ESEA Federal Programs**

- The Alaska Out-of-School Time (AK OST) Conference--co-hosted by DEED, the Alaska Afterschool Network, and Department of Health—took place November 16 to 18 in Anchorage. There were 157 attendees from 30 different communities across Alaska. The AK OST conference included two pre-conference workshops (Planning with Data, and SPARK Afterschool), two keynote presenters, and thirty-eight workshop presentations. Two of the presentations and one of the keynotes were specifically in support of Alaska's Reading Initiative and the Alaska Reads Act.
  - **96%** of participants **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that they gained new knowledge and skills
  - **96%** of participants **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that they strengthened their ability to work with diverse student, families and or staff
  - **99%** of participants **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that they increased their awareness of available resources
  - **96%** of participants **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that they expanded their professional network connections and/or feel more connected to the out-of-school time profession
- DEED participates in the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC). IMEC provides high quality professional development and networking opportunities focused on critical issues that have been identified for improvement of migratory children's academic achievement. Each IMEC meeting occurs in a different state and the hosting state has the opportunity to showcase their state's Migrant Education Program. Alaska will be hosting the Interstate Migrant Education Council meeting on September 20-22, 2023, in Juneau. The department and select school districts from across the state will highlight some of the quality Migrant Education programming occurring in Alaska. The department is in the initial planning phase for this meeting.
- Several districts have reached out to DEED regarding English Learner (EL) exit criteria and have expressed desire to have more than one path to exiting EL status. Currently, EL students must obtain a certain score on the ACCESS for ELLs assessments. The DEED EL Team has researched the exit criteria of other states, disseminated a survey to districts about their thoughts on expanding exit criteria, and have shared the results of that survey with several advisory groups. DEED is now preparing for the next steps of organizing a stakeholder group to explore this potential option further. By allowing EL students to demonstrate their English Language Proficiency (ELP) in multiple ways, this provides those students greater opportunity to exit EL status and spend more time in academic content classes by reducing time spent assessing for ELP and, potentially, reducing the time spent out of content classrooms as they receive language assistance services.

- The McKinney-Vento Act Request for Applications (RFA) will be released at the end of February 2023. The authority for the administration of this grant is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Program. In Alaska, DEED has been authorized to receive and distribute the federal funds appropriated for this program. The McKinney-Vento Act guarantees a free, appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth by removing barriers to their enrollment and attendance in school and supporting their educational success. The funding awarded through the McKinney-Vento RFA helps school districts provide immediate enrollment of homeless children who are not already enrolled, provide school stability for students experiencing homelessness, promote school (or GED) success and completion for homeless students, support collaboration between school districts and social service agencies serving homeless students, ensure that homeless students are provided services in such a way that they are not isolated or stigmatized, and provide opportunities for parent involvement in enrollment decisions.

### **School Recognition and Support**

- FY2024 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Designations
  - Alaska's Accountability System derived the following school designations from SY 2021-2022 data and indicators:
    - 34 schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) lowest 5%,
      - 16 schools designated CSI 5% in 2018
      - 9 schools designated CSI 5% in 2019
      - 9 schools designated CSI 5% in 2022
    - 33 schools identified as CSI Grad Rate, with a graduation rate less than or equal to 66.67%.
    - 54 schools identified as Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), based on equity gap for any of nine identified student groups.
      - Performance threshold is determined by lowest 5% of schools
      - 2022 Performance threshold is index score of 6.21
    - 3 schools identified as Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), based on equity gap for any of nine identified student groups three years in a row.
    - 374 schools are Universal Support, wherein they do not qualify for additional assistance, are welcome to partake in the Empowerment Process, but are not required to do so.
- Supports for ESSA Designated Schools: Empowerment Process for Successful School Improvement
  - DEED, in partnership with Region 16 Comprehensive Center, continues to implement the Empowerment Process for Successful School Improvement to all of our CSI/TSI designated schools for FY2023, and has begun the induction of our schools newly designated per the state's Accountability System for FY2024.
    - DEED hosts regular, bi-weekly webinars to all schools interested in the Empowerment Process to support school improvement, regardless of ESSA designation status.

- Three districts have reached out to share their desire for all their schools, not just those that are designated, to go through the Empowerment Process and create Successful School Improvement Plans.
  - The DEED SRS Webpage has been updated to include a myriad of resources for designated schools, including:
    - webinar schedule and recordings,
    - digital documents of all planning tools,
    - a digital copy of Alaska’s Empowerment Playbook,
    - Canvas modules to take people through the Playbook in 10-20 minute segments,
    - contact information for the School Improvement team, and
    - additional resources developed through stakeholder engagement.
- Schools receive tiered support per their designation status as determined through our state ESSA plan:
  - All designated schools will have access to regular webinars or technical assistance calls to our school improvement specialist.
  - All designated schools will receive a printed or digital copy of Alaska’s Empowerment Playbook, including a step-by-step approach to community and asset-based school improvement, planning templates, and model agendas/exemplars.
  - TSI/CSI Grad Rate schools received \$25,000 each in 1003(a) grants for planning and implementation.
  - CSI lowest 5% received \$50,000 in 1003(a) grants for planning and implementation.
  - CSI lowest 5% received additional assistance in planning through Empowerment Specialists, a contracted position specific to this process as developed by DEED, R16, and ADI (Academic Development Institute).
  - Schools designated in FY2023 with no current designation status will receive a \$10,000 planning grant to be used to support the School and Community review process and plan creation.

### **Special Education**

- Inconsistent test scores with special education populations continues to result from inconsistent application of the student’s accommodations to be used during assessments. To address this inconsistency, the Special Education Team is providing technical assistance and support through webinars, face to face trainings, and weekly opportunities for development. Special Education Directors are informed of accommodation requirements and the necessity to ensure the requirements are being provided consistently and uniformly for each student qualifying for special education services.

### **Teacher Certification**

- Seal of Biliteracy: DEED staff has designed an embossed seal, established a webpage, and provided information to districts concerning this new opportunity for Alaska students. More information is about Alaska’s Seal of Biliteracy is available [here](#).

**Alaska’s Education Challenge Priority #4:  
Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.**

**Academic Support Team**

- The Science of Reading Symposium is coming up on April 28th-30th. Information can be accessed here: <http://aksorsymposium.org>. Registration opened in mid-December and the 1000 seats were filled in less than two weeks. The waiting list was capped at 250 people. Planning has already started for next year with the goal of securing a larger venue to accommodate more participants. In addition to the Symposium, the following pre-conference sessions will be offered: Alaska Native Language Summit, School Improvement, Multi-Tier Systems of Support Refresh, Alaska Reads Act for Leaders, English Language Arts Core Curriculum Grant Initiative, and Family Engagement (sponsored by the Alaska Association of School Boards).

**ESEA Federal Programs**

- DEED is currently finalizing the schedule & participant list for a “facilitated eWorkshop” hosted by WIDA. This is a 15-week professional learning course entitled “Reading Supports for Multilingual Learners” and can accommodate up to 40 educators. This workshop will begin in late February 2023.

**Health & Safety**

- **eLearning:** The following chart shows the number of course completions for our highest trafficked health and safety eLearning courses for educators as well as the student facing courses on suicide prevention and those under the Alaska Safe Children’s Act.
- Course Update: The eLearning course *E-Cigarette Use Among Alaska Teens* was updated with new state resources and recent data relating to use.
- The Overcoming ACEs in Alaska eLearning module (The first of 13 available to school staff) has been reviewed and submitted for updates to be produced. The module now references the trauma-engaged school framework resources that did not exist when it was first published in 2017. It also updates the data in the course and points to other resources that have become available since its first release.

<b>DEED Online eLearning Courses</b>	<b>Oct. - Dec. 2022</b>	<b>Lifetime Numbers</b>
Part A: Suicide Awareness	1,389	24,809
Part B: Suicide Prevention	826	13,024
Part C Suicide Intervention	484	8,370
Part D: Responding to Suicide- Postvention Guidelines	280	6,731
Overcoming ACEs in Alaskan Schools	145	2,678
Trauma-Engaged and Practicing Schools	53	1,253
Trauma-Sensitive Schools	123	1,771
Classroom Practices	50	830

Emotional Intelligence	33	703
Family Partnerships	12	505
Mind-Body Connections	41	633
Childhood Traumatic Grief	55	751
Self-Regulation	40	690
Self-Care	48	666
Trauma-Engaged Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health	22	228
Overcoming Stress and Anxiety in Alaskan Schools (Released Spring 21)	53	371
Opioids 101 and the Opioid Epidemic 101	12	184
Narcan Administration for an Opioid Epidemic	24	268
E-Cigarette Use Among Alaska Teens (Released Summer 21)	27	160
Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Training for Educators	876	31,913
Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse & Neglect	1,534	33,259
Prenatal Alcohol and Drug Related Disabilities	1,640	24,842
Navigating Transitions (student courses)	32	1,058
Bree's Law (student courses)	435	8,377
<b>Total Course Completions</b>	<b>8,234</b>	<b>164,074</b>

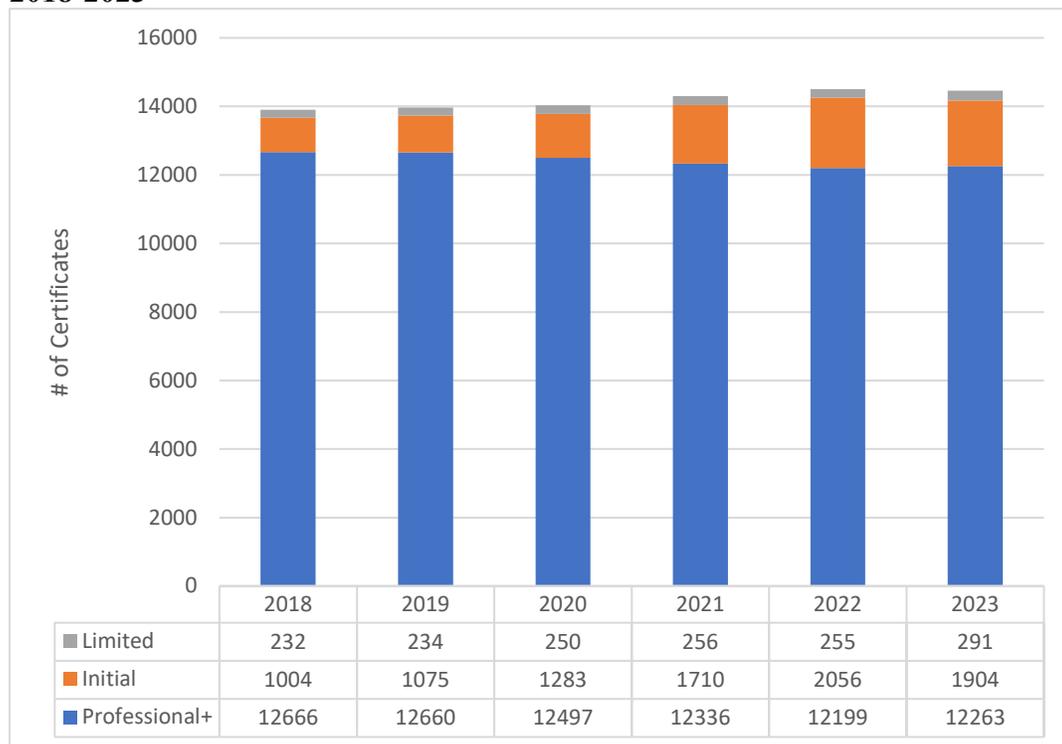
### Special Education

- The Special Education team is pursuing a federal grant for developing a “Grow Your Own” program for special education teachers. The project will provide opportunities for paraprofessionals to be employed within their districts while working toward earning a special education teaching certificate. The ultimate program goal is to reduce turnover in hard to fill positions by providing district paraprofessionals the opportunity to further their education and live and work in their communities.
  - An instructional component for Reading Literacy is included in this grant application.

## Teacher Certification

- During the past six months, the Teacher Certification Team has relocated its workspace twice. The Teacher Certification Office is now located on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the State Office Building at 333 Willoughby Avenue.  
Throughout these moves, the team has been able to maintain excellent customer service and its exemplary processing times. Typically, Alaska’s Teacher Certification Office can complete the first review of educators’ application in less than two weeks. Alaska outpaces all the teacher certification offices on the west coast in this area.
- TEACH-AK Update  
The Educator Application and Certification Hub of Alaska (TEACH-AK) project to move most of the Teacher Certification Office’s applications and other services to a web-based environment has faced a few challenges; competing priorities, staffing issues and technical difficulties. The vendor has provided a revised timeline with the expected go-live date of mid-April.
- Alaska Teacher Recruitment & Retention (TRR) Action Plan Implementation  
The Alaska Teacher Recruitment & Retention Implementation Subcommittee meetings are scheduled to wrap-up this spring. Final recommendations are expected this fall. Recordings of subcommittee meeting, research documents, and other information about the TRR Action Plan Implementation can be found [here](https://education.alaska.gov/trr) (https://education.alaska.gov/trr).
- Longitudinal data concerning Alaska certified educators has been requested by various stakeholders and policy makers. Below is state level data concerning certified educators in Alaska that has been recently shared.

### Alaska Teaching Certificates 2018-2023



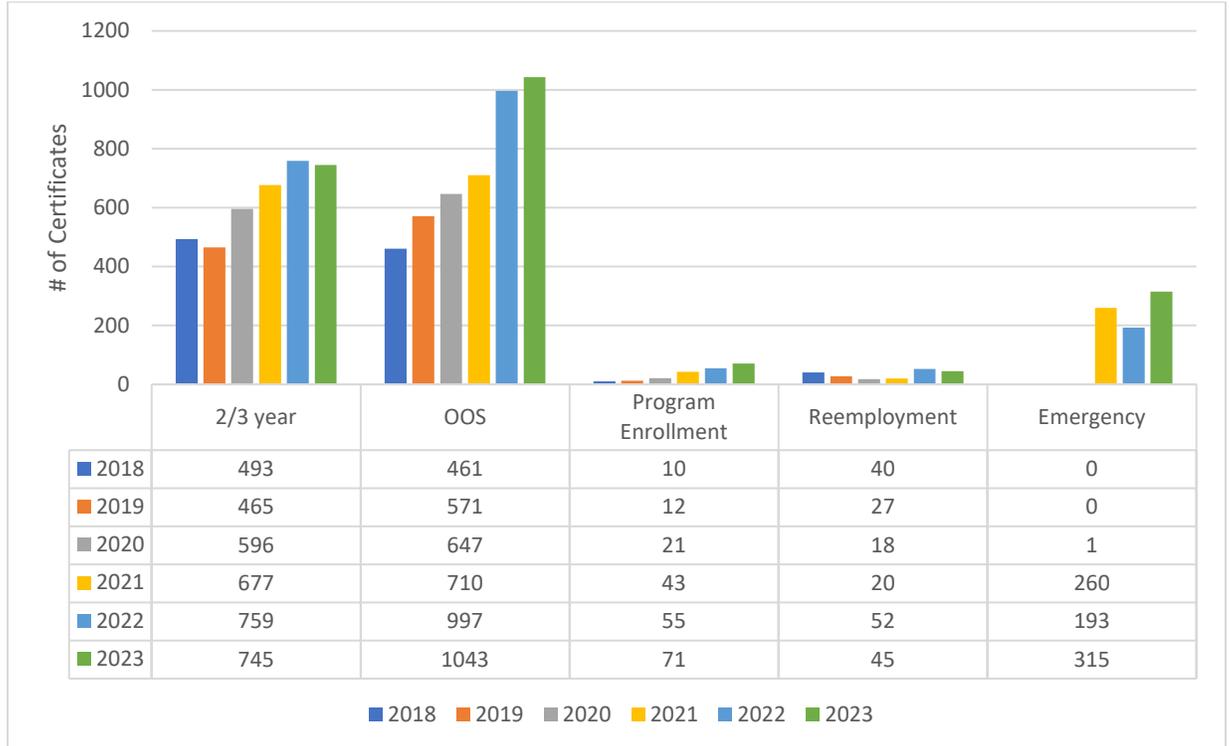
Source: Department of Education & Early Development, Teacher Certification Database.  
 Teacher with active certificates on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year from 2018 to 2023.

Definitions:

Categories	Certificate Types Included
Limited	Type M, Type I: Instructional Assistant, Type W: World Language Certificates
Initial	Initial 2/3 years, Initial Out-of-State, Initial Program Enrollment, Initial Reemployment, and the Emergency Certificates
Professional+	Professional (Alaska’s regular certificate), the Lifetime/Retired, and the Master Certificates

From 2018 to 2023, there have been approximately 14,000 individuals holding active teaching certificates in Alaska.

### Initial & Emergency Teaching Certificates 2018 – 2023



Source: Department of Education & Early Development, Teacher Certification Database.  
 Teacher certificates that are active on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year from 2018 to 2023

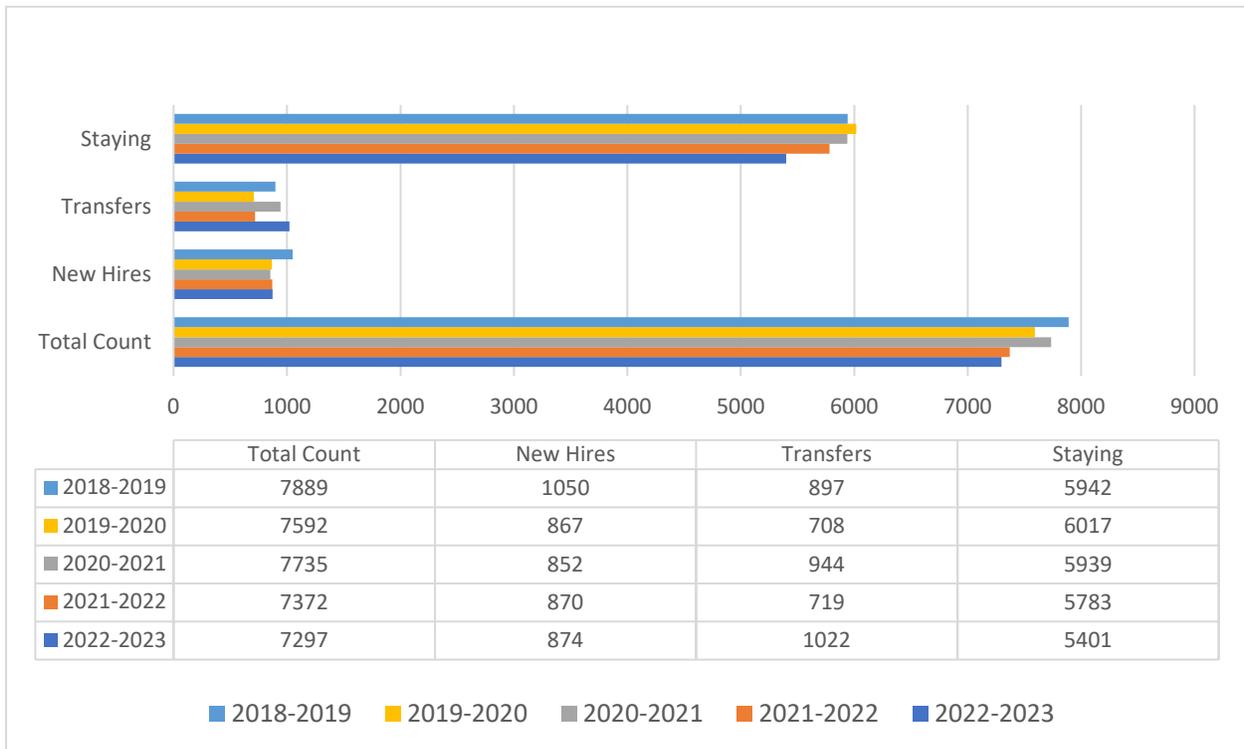
Definitions:

Certificate Types	Description
Initial 2/3-year	AS 14.20.020 Educators who have not satisfied Alaska studies and Alaska multicultural coursework at the time of application.
Initial Out-of-State (OOS)	AS 14.20.015 Educators applying with a valid, regular certificate from another state.

Initial Program Enrollment	AS 14.20.022 Subject-matter expert limited certificate. Educators holding at least a bachelor’s degree and enrolled in a teacher preparation program. Requires district sponsorship.
Initial Reemployment	AS 14.20.017 Educators returning to teach in Alaska who do not meet the current requirement for regular certification.
Emergency	AS 14.20.020(b)(2) Requires district sponsorship.

From 2018 to 2023, the number of educators holding three of the four categories of Initial certificates has increased. The number of educators holding the Initial 2/3-year has increased by 50%, the number holding an Initial Out-of-State has increased by 150%, and the number holding an Initial Program enrollment by has increased by 700%.

**Alaska Statewide Teacher Count: SY 2018-2019 to SY 2022-2023**



Source: Department of Education & Early Development Annual October 1<sup>st</sup> Certified Staff Accounting.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, school districts must submit to the department their October 1<sup>st</sup> Certified Staff Accounting Report. The reports from SY2018-2019 to SY2022-2023 show the statewide number of teachers declining by approximately 600 during this period.

## **Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #5:**

### **Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.**

#### **ESEA Federal Programs**

- United Way of Anchorage (UWA) has partnered with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and school districts across the state to expand outreach to our students who are experiencing homelessness. UWA is using their Alaska 2-1-1 Call Center to connect students and families across Alaska with a contact at their school district/LEA, and identify, assist with navigation, and provide information about wrap-around supports and services fitting the needs of the student and family.

#### **Health & Safety**

- Healthy Schools Learning Collaborative
  - The collaborative work regarding supporting schools responding to significant on-school vaping issues continues. Partnerships between DEED and the Tobacco Prevention and Control Team at the Department of Health (DOH) has been focused on giving schools resources to educate about e-cigarettes and potential alternatives to suspension for districts who want them. This has been a nearly three-year project that will continue into the foreseeable future.
  - Preparation for the submission of a competitive grant to the CDC (School-Based Interventions to Promote Equity and Improve Health, Academic Achievement, and Well-Being of Students) to support nutrition, physical activities, and emotional supports is being completed by DOH. DEED will work closely with the team at DOH on strategies. This will be a five-year grant working with a rural district on these needs.
- Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)
  - DEED has launched two Cohorts in our PBIS project in the last two school years. In order for students to be able to learn effectively, they need to feel safe, respected, and be responsive to their teachers and peers. PBIS provides the routines and systems to provide this solid foundation. Alaska Education's Challenge Priority 5 addresses the need for a safe and healthy school environment. This training exposes school teams to a behavioral framework that will support growth in positive behavior and school culture, leading to systemic change in schools.
  - During the first year of this project, we had 9 districts and 17 schools in the project. Districts included: Alaska Gateway (3 schools), Bristol Bay (1 school), Kodiak Island (1 school), Kuspuk (4 schools), Lower Kuskokwim (3 schools), Nome (1 school), Northwest Arctic (1 school), Yukon Flats (1 school), and Yupiit (3 schools). We reached 2,360 students and 202 staff.
  - During the second year we added two more districts: North Slope (8 schools) and Southwest Region (4 schools). We also continued with the following Cohort 1 districts, adding more schools to some districts: Alaska Gateway (3 schools), Bristol Bay (2 schools), Kodiak Island (1 school), Kuspuk (9 schools), Lower Kuskokwim (3 schools), Nome (1 school), and Northwest Arctic (1 school). We will reach 4086 students and 709 staff in year 2.

- This project is being done in collaboration with the NWPBIS Network. They provide monthly training and coaching sessions to staff of the schools involved.
- Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska
  - The Trauma Engaged schools professional learning community (DEED, AASB, DOH) continues to meet twice monthly to support Transforming Schools: Trauma Engaged schools' resources, training, evaluation and coordination. The survey of schools regarding their use of the DEED and partner created material closed in December. With support from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and AASB incentives were offered for completion and approximately 60% of the nearly 500 schools responded. The Regional Education Lab Northwest will be analyzing these data to better understand how schools are using these and other resources to meet this component of the Education Challenge. We are exploring how to analyze district data to make that available to them as well.
- Alaska Safe Children's Act: The Alaska Safe Children's Act (informally known as Erin's and Bree's Law) requires schools to cover the topics of child sexual abuse and teen dating violence.
  - DEED created a curriculum in response to legislative action. This curriculum is for students in grades 7 through 12 and is called Bree's Law Education. It meets the full requirements for student training under the Alaska Safe Children's Act, including requirements for Bree's Law and Erin's Law.
  - There are now two versions of the curriculum (A and B) for each grade band. The two versions allow the curricula to be used in consecutive years providing variety in the lessons and scenarios while covering the same content. Assessment of the curriculum and associated materials is being planned with focus groups of teachers. These will be conducted in the spring of 2023.

### **Special Education**

- The special education team has developed an increased working relationship with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education through increasing the involvement of the Special Education Advisory Panel of the council to review and comment on the state special Education indicators and targets for these indicators. The Annual Progress Report for special education has been submitted to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and is currently under review.