**DEED to request waiver to 21st CCLC restrictions; public comment period closes October 7**

Due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Education is offering states flexibility in their federally-funded programs in order to best meet the needs of students, families, and educators during this national emergency.

Currently, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Section 4201(b)(1)(A) restricts activities provided by programs funded under the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (21st CCLC) to activities provided only “during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before and after school or during summer recess).” The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development plans to apply for a waiver to the above restriction, for the 20-21 school year only, which will advance student academic achievement by authorizing academic enrichment activities and other allowable 21st CCLC activities to occur during times when school is in session. This will include times when students are attending school remotely, virtually, and/or through independent completion of classwork instead of in person due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. All other requirements of a 21st CCLC program will continue to apply, and programs will, of course, be allowed to continue to additionally or exclusively provide 21st CCLC programming during hours when school is not in session.

Through this announcement, the Alaska Department of Education and Early is providing the public, school districts, and 21st CCLC grantees in Alaska with notice and an opportunity to comment on the plan to pursue the waiver described above. Comments are due via email to courtney.preziosi@alaska.gov by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.