



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Governor Unveils Work Ready/College Ready Program**

August 27, 2007, Anchorage, Alaska – Governor Sarah Palin today announced a new program as part of her administration's commitment to Alaska's workforce development. The Work Ready/College Ready program allows students and adult job-seekers to gauge their readiness for work, college and occupational training, and to improve the basic skills valued by employers and educators. The Alaska Departments of Education and Early Development, and Labor and Workforce Development are program sponsors.

Work Ready/College Ready provides an opportunity for Alaskans to be assessed in three basic skill areas – applied math, reading for information and locating information in graphic formats – that are critical to transitioning from high school to the workplace, college or occupational training.

"This is the type of partnership I envisioned when I took office and pledged that Alaskans would be prepared for jobs," Governor Sarah Palin said. "It shows what can be accomplished when school, work, business and industry speak the same language and share the same goals for work readiness."

After an assessment, participants can enroll in web-based courses to improve their performance in certain skills. The training is individualized, self-paced, targeted to the basic transitional skills and delivered in a work-related, applied context. The assessments and curriculum – which are all available online – may be accessed through the public schools, at home or in any state job center.

Participants can receive a nationally recognized Career Readiness Certificate that demonstrates their basic workplace skills. More than 40 states issue the certificates, which business, industry and some postsecondary institutions recognize as a valuable credential.

"The skills needed to enter many vocations are similar to the skills needed to get into college. By 2010, three-quarters of jobs will require some type of training after high school," said Roger Sampson, who recently stepped down as Education Commissioner and who championed the program. "Work Ready/College Ready lets students know what level of skill they need for the occupations they're interested in, how well they match up in those skill levels, and it provides training to reach their goal."

The state will bear the costs of providing the assessments and the curriculum through contracts with providers. The state has contracted with Worldwide Interactive Network Inc. (WIN) of Kingston, Tenn., to provide benchmark assessments and curriculum.

Through its WorkKeys product, ACT Inc. will provide the summative assessments for the Career Readiness Certificate. ACT will also provide profiles of the skill levels needed to enter more than 12,000 individual jobs in 400 occupational areas.

The State Board of Education and Early Development has opened a period of public comment through Nov. 9 on the proposed regulations to implement Work Ready/College Ready in the public schools. The proposed regulations can be seen at: [www.eed.state.ak.us/regs/comment.html](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/regs/comment.html).

For more information on Work Ready/College Ready, contact Marcia Olson, Career and Technical Education Program Specialist, 907-465-8704, or Eric Fry, EED Information Officer, 907-465-2851.

Also see: [www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/CTE/workready.html](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/CTE/workready.html).

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