

Larry LeDoux
Commissioner
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500
www.eed.state.ak.us



Eric Fry
Information Officer
907.465.2851
cell: 907.321.5564
eric.fry@alaska.gov

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State Board of Education approves Alaska Education Plan

JUNEAU -- The State Board of Education & Early Development, meeting March 19 and 20 in Juneau, amended and approved the Alaska Education Plan.

The State Board also approved two regulation packages and sent out for public comment two other regulation packages.

The approved version of the Alaska Education Plan, dated March 19, 2009, is available at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/edsummit/home.html>. It incorporates many of the public's comments on the draft plan. The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development is working with groups of Alaskans to develop more detailed action plans to achieve the plan's goals.

"The Alaska Education Plan provides the basis for accountability to the public. It is our roadmap," said Education Commissioner Larry LeDoux. "The plan began with the nearly 450 Alaskans who met in November at the Statewide Education Summit to provide a vision for education in Alaska. They took into account the thoughts of several thousand Alaskans who responded to surveys.

"The summit participants told us what Alaska high school graduates should know and be able to do as a result of their public education. The participants provided fundamental goals for our schools and delineated broad actions that would lead us to these goals. Our task now is to refine the action steps, set priorities, and measure our performance against these goals," Commissioner LeDoux said.

The State Board also approved a regulation to delay the effective date of the Alaska Career Ready program one year, to the 2010-2011 school year. The program requires schools to assess students in grades 6, 8 and 11 in reading for information, applied mathematics, and locating information in graphical formats -- subjects that employers and universities say are important for jobs and postsecondary education.



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The State Board approved a regulation that simplifies the application process and reporting requirements for districts that receive state quality school grants of \$10,000 or less.

The State Board sent out for public comment proposed regulations that will align Alaska's Title I (low-income) regulations with those of the federal government.

The State Board sent out for public comment proposed regulations that will allow school districts to accept autism diagnoses by advanced nurse practitioners. Current regulations allow districts to consider diagnoses only by psychiatrists or other physicians or psychologists. As part of the same regulation package, the State Board sent out for public comment a regulation that aligns state regulations on parental consent with federal regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The State Board approved waivers for the Hydaburg, Lower Yukon and Southeast Island school districts from the state requirement that they spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction, as shown by their audits. These waivers related to audits of fiscal year 2008 expenditures.

The State Board amended and approved the new Mount Edgecumbe High School Policy Manual. MEHS is a state-operated boarding school in Sitka.

The State Board approved the renewal of charters for the Eagle Academy Charter School in Eagle River and the Ayaprun Elituarvik Charter School in Bethel.

The State Board named Joan Antonson to a new three-year term and Addison Field to a one-year term (to complete the term of a member who resigned) on the state Museum Collections Advisory Committee.

The meeting packet is available at http://www.eed.state.ak.us/State_Board/.

For more information, contact Information Officer Eric Fry at 907-465-2851 or eric.fry@alaska.gov.

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