

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 two regulations

JUNEAU -- The State Board of Education & Early Development, meeting June 11-12 in Fairbanks, approved two regulation packages and opened a period of public comment for three proposed regulation packages.

The board adopted regulations to:

- Bring Alaska's regulations in line with federal regulations regarding school improvement. These regulations specify that schools needing improvement for two consecutive years must notify parents, no later than 14 days before the school year starts, that they can transfer their students to a school that is not designated as needing improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act. Also under the regulations, restructured governance of persistently low-performing schools may include any arrangement that makes fundamental reforms to improve student academic achievement and that have substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate progress under No Child Left Behind. The regulations also clarify that schools' notices to parents of available tutoring services be clear and concise.
- Allow advanced nurse practitioners who are state-authorized to practice in pediatrics, family health or family psychiatric/mental health to diagnose autism for the purpose of establishing a students' eligibility for special education and related services. Eligible advanced nurse practitioners must have a written plan in effect that includes pediatric neurodevelopment in the clinical scope of practice.

The board opened a period of public comment for proposed regulations to:

- Adopt the terms "cognitive impairment," "cognitively impaired" and "cognitive disability," in place of "mental retardation."
- Adopt the graduation outcomes in the Alaska Education Plan as the regulations describing skills for graduating students.

A large, faint watermark logo of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development is visible in the background. It features a circular emblem with a hand reaching up, surrounded by the text "ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT". Below the emblem, the text "EDUCATION & EARLY DEVELOPMENT" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font.

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& EARLY DEVELOPMENT

- Clarify that the Anchorage School District, which operates the Alaska School for the Deaf under an agreement with the state, is not responsible for providing transportation services to students who reside outside the district but wish to attend the school.

The board set the dates for its meetings in the 2009-2010 school year. They are: September 8-10, 2009, in Galena; October 26, 2009, by teleconference; December 10-11, 2009, in Anchorage; January 25, 2010, by teleconference; March 25-26, 2010, in Juneau; and June 10-11, 2010, in Kodiak.

The board elected as officers Esther Cox, Chair; Phillip Schneider, First Vice-Chair; and Geri Benshoof, Second Vice-Chair. Terms run July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

The board approved for one year the elementary education teacher preparation programs at Alaska Pacific University.

For more information: Eric Fry, information officer, 907-465-2851, eric.fry@alaska.gov.

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