



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Education
& Early Development

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

333 Willoughby Ave., 9th Floor, SOB
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500
Main: 907.465.2800
TTY/TDD: 907.465.2815
Fax: 907.465.4156

November 18, 2022

Dear Education Stakeholders,

First, thank you for your continued engagement and feedback on the draft Alaska Reads Act regulations and the work being done at the Department of Education & Early Development to further support the implementation of the Act. As you know, the Alaska Reads Act becomes effective July 1, 2023.

In response to recent conversations and feedback received with regard to required science of reading training or testing for educators working with students in grades kindergarten through three, the department will be proposing timeline changes into draft regulations.

Based on how the law is written, it was understood that:

- Teachers who begin teaching students in grades kindergarten through three on or after the effective date of the Act, July 1, 2023, would need to meet these requirements for the 2023-24 school year, and,
- Teachers who began teaching students in grades kindergarten through three before the effective date of the Act, July 1, 2023, would have until July 1, 2024, to meet these requirements.

We heard you and recognized that this is an extremely tight timeline to get staff trained, so upon further examination, and after additional conversations around the intent of the law, it has been determined that the Alaska Reads Act does allow for some flexibility in these timelines, so this training does not need to be fulfilled prior to July 1, 2023. This is good news!

To provide consistency and some relief, the department will propose that the draft regulations reflect the training requirement for new and veteran educators be fulfilled by July 1, 2025. In addition, the department is working to provide opportunities for obtaining the required training, with courses estimated to begin by Spring 2023.

Thank you again for your continued engagement and feedback on this very important piece of Alaska's Education Challenge to get all students reading on grade level by the end of third grade.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heidi Teshner".

Heidi Teshner
Acting Commissioner