Early Education and Parents as Teachers

Early Education Programs

The Alaska Reads Act establishes programs to support the establishment of high-quality early education programs in school districts for 4 and 5-year-old children. Section 14.03.410 of HB 114 states:

"The department shall provide training and assistance to develop and improve district-wide early education programs that comply with standards adopted by the board."

Early Education Program supports include:

- A three-year grant program for districts for the development and improvement of district-wide elementary education programs. Districts will be prioritized for funding based on low performance rating in the department ranking system which is based on the accountability system.
- The adoption of Early Education Program Standards for districts outlining the components of a high-quality early education program that meets Head Start Program Standards and other federal standards required for early education programs to receive federal funding.
- The opportunity for districts to receive .5 ADM foundation formula funds for district early education programs that meet the Early Education Program Standards. This funding formula opportunity is available to both districts who receive early education grants and existing programs that are not eligible for the grant.

Parents as Teachers

Additionally, the Alaska Reads Act codifies the existing Parents as Teachers Program and supports the partnership between the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Early Development in the implementation of the program. Section 14.03.420 states:

"The department shall design and implement a statewide Parents as Teachers program for the benefit of children who are under five years of age."

The Parents as Teachers program consists of

- Evidence-based systems that involve parents and follow best practice for high-quality early childhood education with strong family engagement and education and health supports.