

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #111 (2007-08)

October 22, 2007

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT'S MANDATED ALASKA  
READING COURSE

*ASD GOAL: Establish and maintain an effective learning environment.*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of the Legislative Subcommittee that the School Board adopt the attached resolution opposing the State Board of Education and Early Development's proposed regulation regarding a mandated Alaska reading course.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The State Board of Education and Early Development has made available for public comment a proposed regulation requiring all Type A certificated teachers and administrators to take a specific state-developed three-credit reading course to maintain their certification regardless of their area of endorsement.

The course was developed in relative isolation and does not recognize the tremendous achievements in reading being made across the state and certainly in the Anchorage School District. Ironically, of the three academic areas assessed in determining Adequate Yearly Progress under No Child Left Behind, reading is the area receiving the highest marks and showing the greatest growth.

New teachers to our state face an ever-increasing number of requirements in order to maintain their certification beyond Initial Certification, which is valid for only two or three years depending upon individual circumstances. In addition to completing an approved teacher preparation program, they must pass a Praxis II examination, take a three-credit Alaska studies course, take a three-credit multicultural studies course, and submit and pass two video

performance reviews. This is already a tremendous burden on our new educators who are working hard to learn their new craft. To add another three-credit course, this one in reading and for which there are no options like there are for Alaska studies and multicultural studies, would be overwhelming.

CC/RG/JF

Prepared and Approved by: Jeff Friedman, Chair, Legislative Committee

**ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD**  
ASDR 2007-2008-07

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT'S MANDATED ALASKA READING COURSE**

**WHEREAS**, proposed changes to 4 AAC 12.305(b) and 4 AAC 12.405 would require all teachers to successfully complete the Alaska Reading course or pass assessments to measure their ability to teach reading to receive or renew their certification; and

**WHEREAS**, this requirement will also apply to all administrators who choose to retain their teaching certificate, and

**WHEREAS**, time and money available for professional development is limited and should be directed towards each teacher's and school district's unique needs rather than a one size fits all model; and

**WHEREAS**, the logistics of administering the reading course and assessments to all of our certificated staff will require an onerous commitment of time and money by teachers, school districts, and the Department that could be better spent elsewhere; and

**WHEREAS**, required school and district improvement plans already address strategies to improve reading scores where appropriate; and

**WHEREAS**, a one-size-fits-all approach to reading instruction does not honor a district's right to choose the scientifically-based curriculum that best meets its students' needs nor does it recognize the substantial investment in curricula and professional development districts have already invested or the results obtained; and

**WHEREAS**, the theoretical possibility that all teachers will have opportunities to teach reading will likely fall victim to the practical reality of the daily demands of teaching the required course content in an ever declining amount of classroom time; and

**WHEREAS**, teacher recruitment and retention is a serious problem that will only be increased by a requirement that for many teachers will be of little or no relevance to their individual professional development needs;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Anchorage School Board strongly opposes the proposed regulation changes that would require taking the Alaska Reading course or passing the proposed reading assessments.

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

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Tim Steele, President

Macon Roberts  
Jeff Friedman  
Crystal Kennedy

John Steiner  
Mary Marks  
Chris Tuck

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Carol Comeau, Superintendent