

# Alaska Municipal League; Conference of Mayors Winter Legislative Conference

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development  
Deena Bishop, Ed.D., Commissioner  
February 17, 2026



# Alaska State Constitution Education Clause

## Section 7.1 | Public Education

The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.

## AS 14.07.168. Report to the Legislature

Not later than the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the bylaws of the board. The report must include:

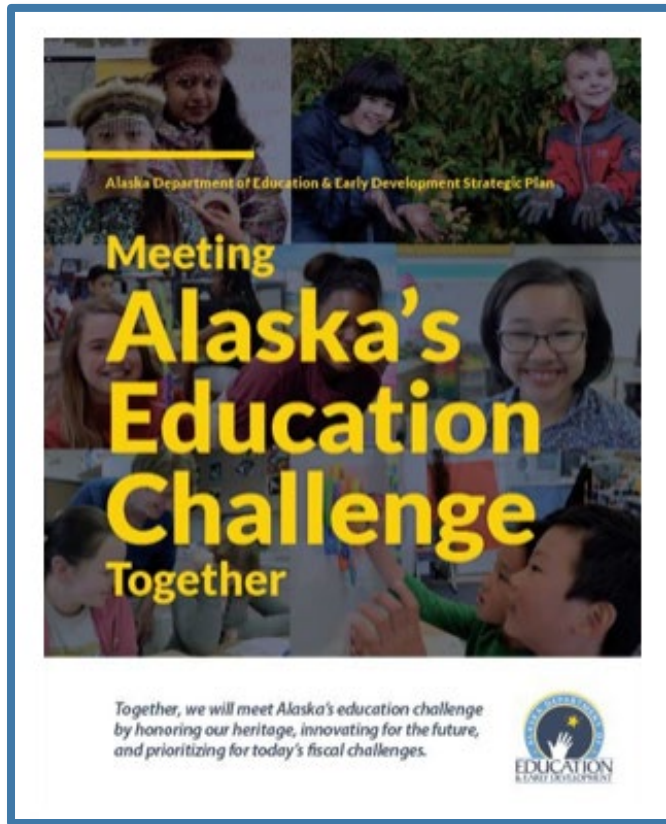
1. A summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015
2. Program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125
3. Additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and maintain the public education system

# Mission, Vision, and Purpose

Mission	Vision	Purpose
<p>An excellent education for every student every day.</p>	<p>All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them.</p> <p>- Alaska Statute 14.03.015</p>	<p>DEED exists to provide <b>information, resources, and leadership</b> to support an excellent education for every student every day.</p>

# **Alaska Education Challenge Review**

# Alaska's Education Challenge



## Five Shared Strategic Priorities:

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes

# Alaska's Education Challenge Review Report

## What progress looks like 2025

### Priority highlights

### Progress since 2017

The original Alaska Education Challenge outcome targets that define success for the priority

A narrative review of statewide efforts, major policy actions, and system improvements since the launch of the Alaska Education Challenge

Data indicators of success and opportunities for growth

*Alaska's Education Challenge Review Report – Full Report:*  
[https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge/20251205\\_Report\\_Alaska\\_Ed\\_Challenge\\_Review.pdf](https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge/20251205_Report_Alaska_Ed_Challenge_Review.pdf)

# Strategic Priority 1

*Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.*

## What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- K–3 reading measures submitted to the department will show positive trends
- The number of students in grades 3–5 who are proficient on the statewide English language arts assessment will double
- The number of students in grades 3–5 who are proficient on the statewide math assessment will double, since research suggests that reading ability is one of the best predictors of strong math skills
- Student absenteeism rates will be reduced by at least 20 percent

# Strategic Priority 1

*Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.*

## Progress Highlights



**Passage of the Alaska Reads Act (2022):** Established a statewide framework to ensure every student reads proficiently by the end of third grade



**Implementation of Key Components:** District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs) in all districts, the Department Reading Program (DRP) for intensive support to the lowest-performing schools, and Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) to engage families in literacy progress



**Statewide K–3 Literacy Screening:** Implemented the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) 8<sup>th</sup> Edition literacy screener statewide, providing consistent, reliable data across all districts



**Professional Learning Expansion:** Trained more than 1,200 educators annually through the Science of Reading Symposium and expanded statewide access to literacy professional development



**Alaska Native Language Literacy and Instruction:** Adopted the Alaska Native Language Arts K–<sup>2</sup> Literacy Standards and development of Indigenous language literacy screeners to support early reading in Alaska Native languages

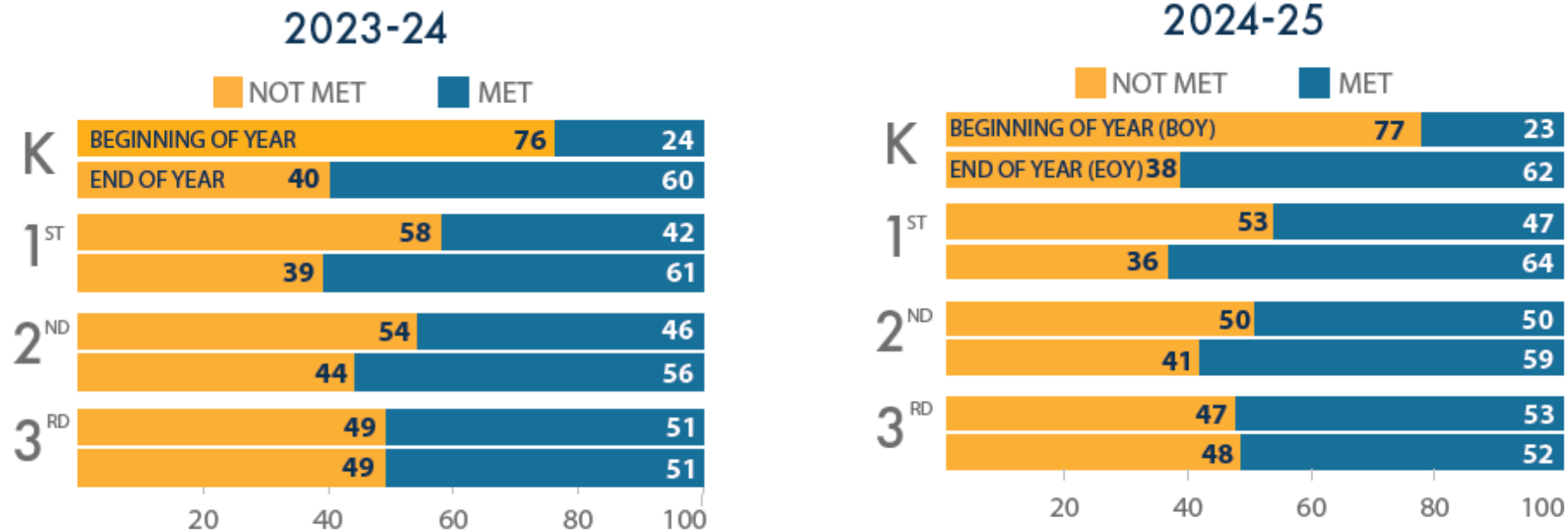
# Strategic Priority 1

Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.



## Early Indicators of Success under the Alaska Reads Act

### Alaska Grade Level Skill Achievement



**KG INCREASED STUDENT LEARNING FROM 24% TO 60%**

**KG INCREASED STUDENT LEARNING FROM 23% TO 62%**

Source: Data from the mCLASS® DIBELS® 8th Edition Early Literacy Screener, Alaska and national user bases, prepared by Amplify Education, Inc., using beginning- and end-of-year results, June 2025.

Reference: SBOE Report to Legislature, page 37.

## Strategic Priority 2

*Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.*

### What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- The number of students who, upon graduation, have earned dual credit, obtained an industry certification, or completed Advanced Placement coursework will increase by at least 15 percent
- The overall four-year graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent
- The overall five-year graduation rate will increase to at least 93 percent
- The number of students participating in CTE Programs of Study will increase by at least 20 percent

# Strategic Priority 2

*Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.*

## Progress Highlights

CTE

**Expansion of CTE Programs:** Awarded new CTE Program of Study (CTEP) grants in 2024 to strengthen district offerings and develop pathways in high-demand industries



**Collaboration and Partnerships:** Supported statewide collaboration through two annual CTE conferences, regional consortia such as the Bristol Bay Regional CTE Consortium (BBRCTE), and partnerships with Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the University of Alaska (UA), and industry leaders



**Student Leadership and Engagement:** Reestablished and expanded Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) and launched annual SBOE CTE Recognition Awards to highlight exemplary programs statewide



**Career Guide Demonstration Project:** Partnered with DOLWD, BBRCTE, Sealaska Heritage Institute, and rootEd Alliance to expand career advising and postsecondary planning for rural and remote students

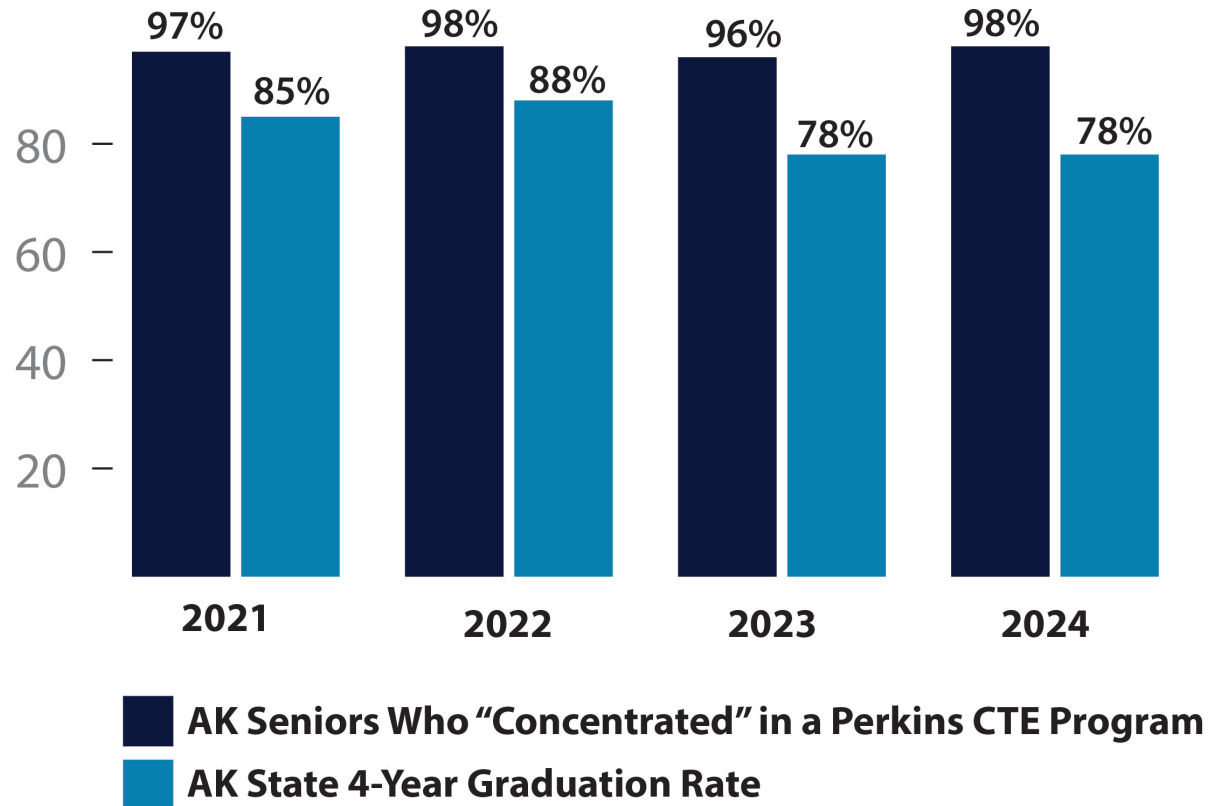


**Policy and Legislative Progress:** Enacted House Bill 148 (2024), expanding Alaska Performance Scholarship eligibility to include CTE coursework and strengthening access to career-focused pathways

## Strategic Priority 2

*Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.*

### Alaska Graduation Rate Compared to Students who “Concentrated” in a Perkins CTE Program



Reference: Alaska Education Challenge Review Report, page 19.

## Strategic Priority 3

*Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.*

### What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- The current performance gaps in English language arts and math for all student subgroups will be reduced by at least 45 percent
- The current gaps in graduation rates for all student subgroups will be reduced by at least 50 percent
- The proficiency rate for English learner students will increase to at least 65 percent
- The number of students in each subgroup who are required to take remedial classes upon entering college will be reduced by at least 50 percent

# Strategic Priority 3

*Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.*

## Progress Highlights



**Standards and Instructional Support:** Expanded access to evidence-based strategies and materials across all content areas, including new standards in social studies and ongoing literacy initiatives from pre-K through grade 12



**Science of Reading Implementation:** Extended Alaska Reads Act literacy structures to pre-K through grade three, supported by statewide Science of Reading training and literacy screeners for all K–5 students



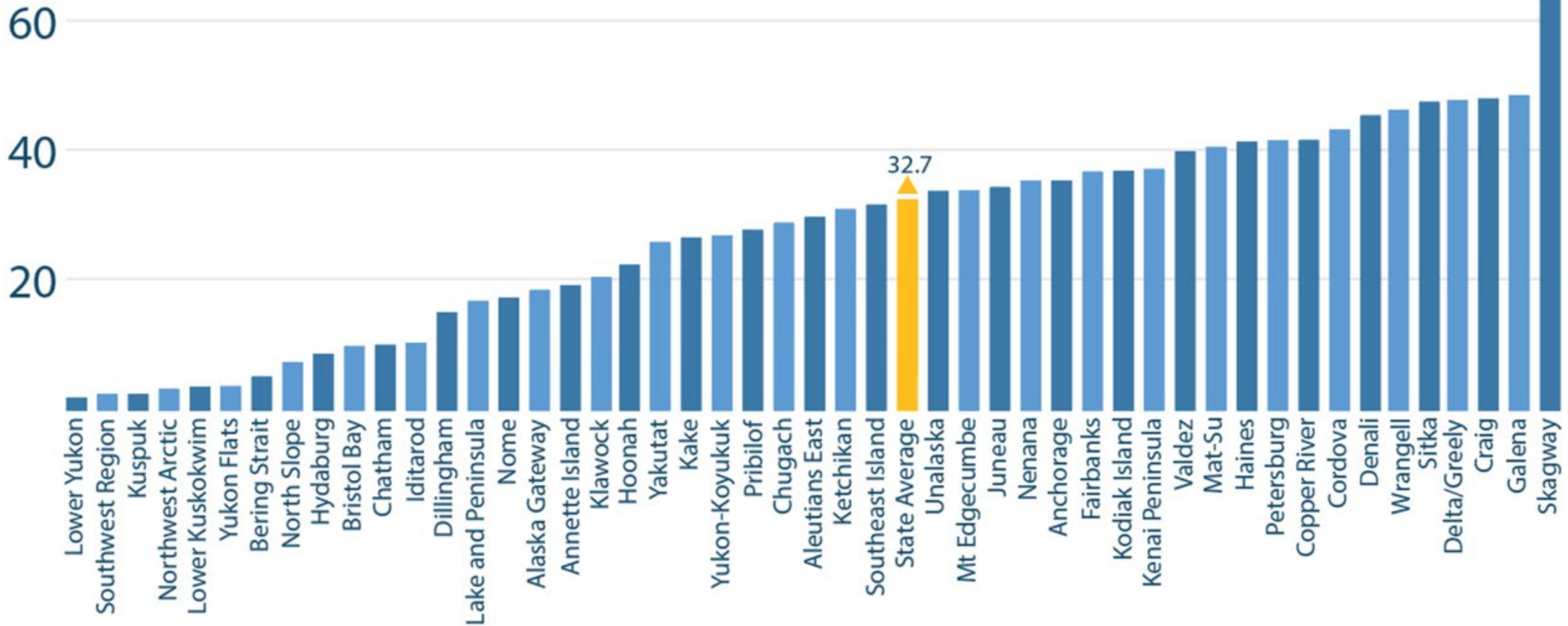
**Attendance and Engagement:** Launched the *Strive for 5 – Attend School All Week* statewide campaign to reduce chronic absenteeism and implemented Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) programs in 14 districts and 46 schools



**State–Tribal Partnerships and Culturally Relevant Education:** Advanced Tribal Compacting legislation and partnerships with five pilot tribes to promote culturally relevant governance and learning strategies.

# 2025 AK STAR District Level Student Achievement Results

## English/Language Arts



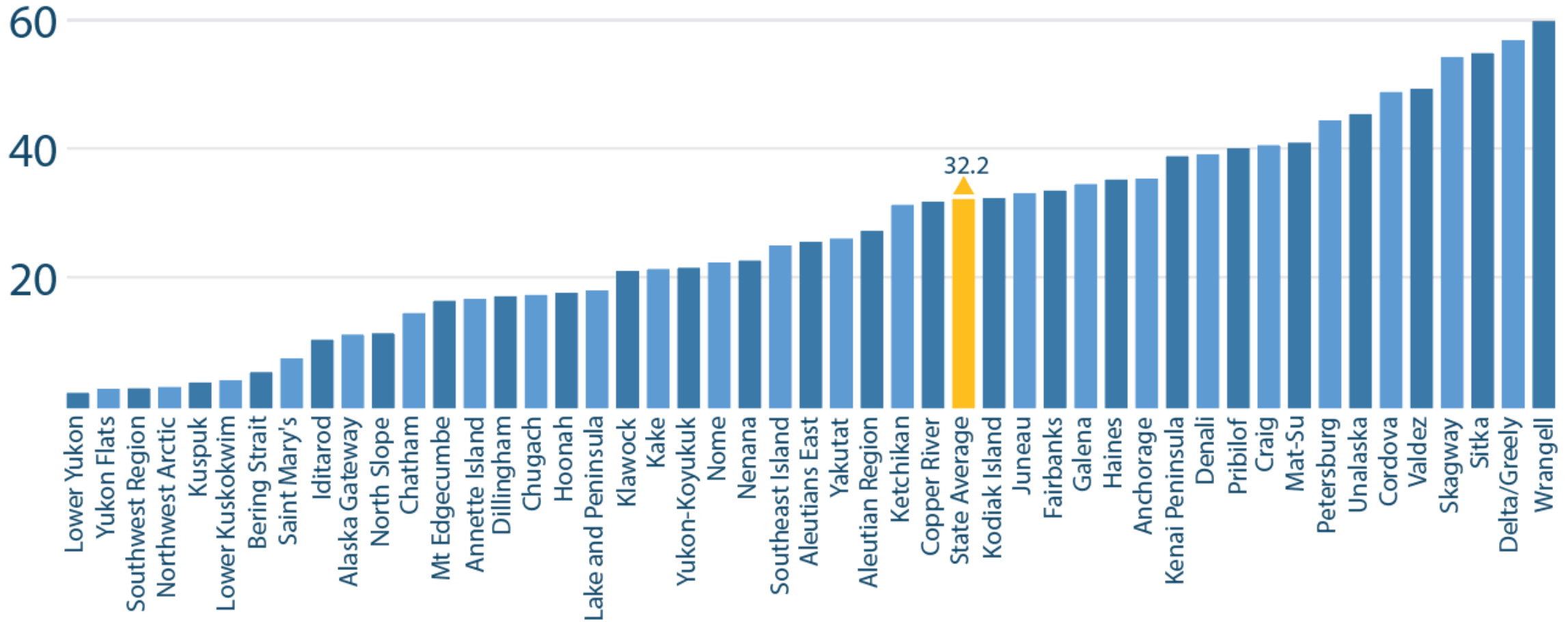
Districts not displayed due to sample size: Aleutian Region, Kashunmamiut, Pelican, Saint Mary's, Yupiit

Source: Data from the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) spring 2025 assessment administration provided by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA).

Reference: SBOE Report to Legislature, page 33.

# 2025 AK STAR District Level Student Achievement Results

## Mathematics



*Districts not displayed due to sample size: Bristol Bay, Hydaburg, Kashunmamiut, Pelican, Yupiit*

Source: Data from the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) spring 2025 assessment administration provided by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA).

Reference: SBOE Report to Legislature, page 33.

# Statewide Four-Year Graduation Rate

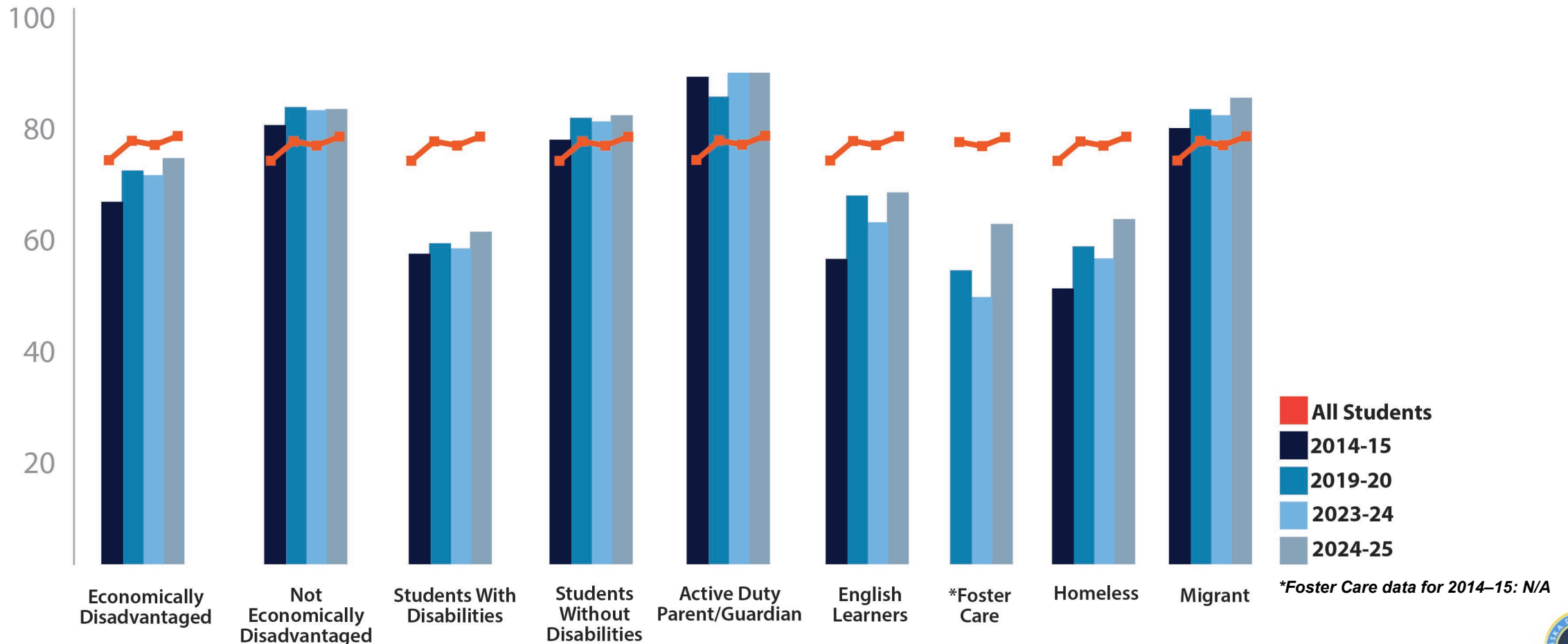
*Percent by Calendar Year*



# Strategic Priority 3

Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.

## Closing the Achievement Gap | Graduation Rates | Student Programs/Support



\*Foster Care data for 2014-15: N/A

# Strategic Priority 4

*Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.*

## What Progress Looks Like by 2025



Of new teachers in Alaska will have completed their teacher preparation program through an Alaska University



Of educators new to Alaska or the profession will participate in a cohort-based induction program with culturally responsive and trauma-informed training, and mentor support

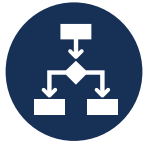


Of Alaska school districts will experience less than 15 annual educator turnover (including within-district moves)

# Strategic Priority 4

*Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.*

## Progress Highlights



**Grow-Your-Own Pathways:** Established the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Pathway (T-RAP) and Principal Registered Apprenticeship Pathway (P-RAP) to expand CTE-aligned, earn-while-you-learn routes into the profession and grow Alaska’s homegrown educator workforce



**Educators Rising Expansion:** Increased participation in Educators Rising from 96 students in 2017–18 to 189 students in 2024–25, supporting district-based programs that introduce high school students to education careers and align with university teacher preparation pathways



**Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Initiative:** Launched by the Governor of Alaska in 2020 to strengthen the state’s educator workforce, the TRR Action Plan (2021) and Playbook (2023) outline coordinated strategies across stakeholder groups, supported by ongoing statewide outreach and engagement



**Certification Modernization:** Modernized Alaska’s electronic teacher certification system, reducing processing times and enhancing customer service for educators and districts through streamlined online workflows and transparent application tracking

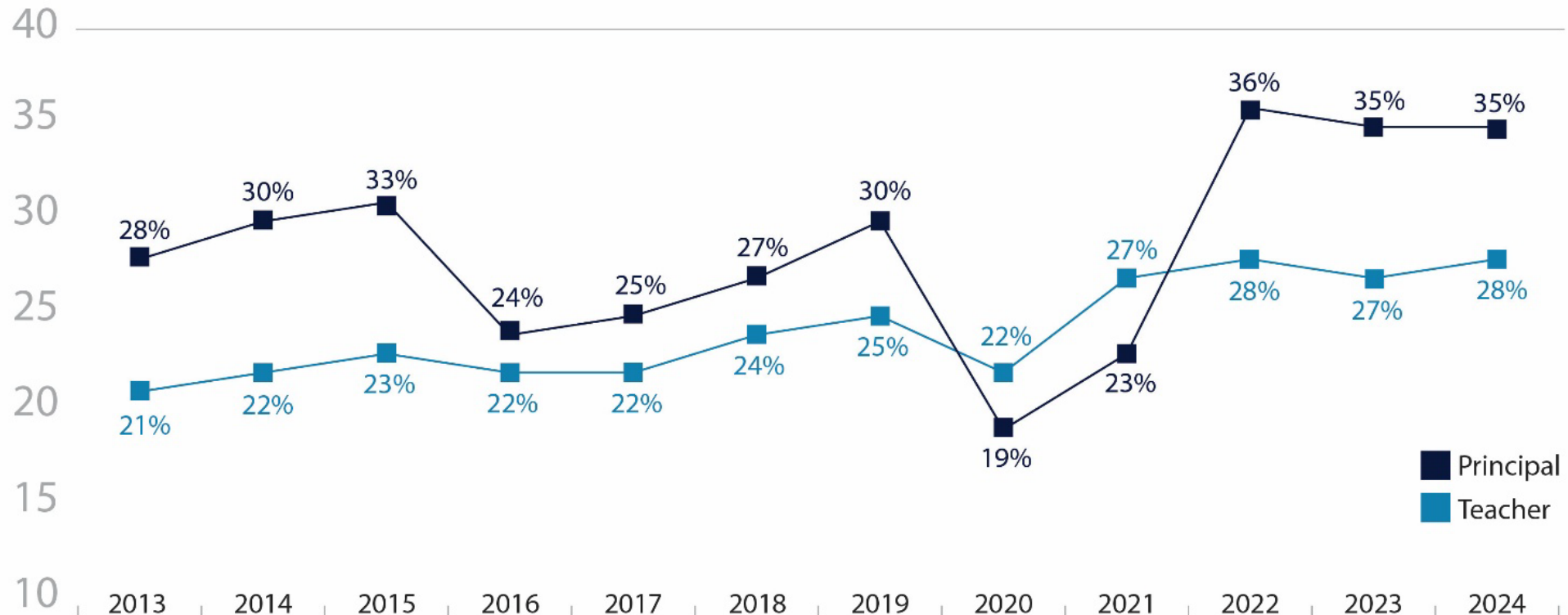


**Regulatory Alignment and SBOE Action:** Since 2017, the State Board of Education has approved 23 regulation changes that expanded alternative certification routes, established new certificates and endorsements, aligned teacher assessments and reciprocity provisions, and streamlined certification processes to strengthen Alaska’s educator workforce

# Strategic Priority 4

*Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.*

## Alaska Trends in Teacher and Principal Turnover | 2013-2024

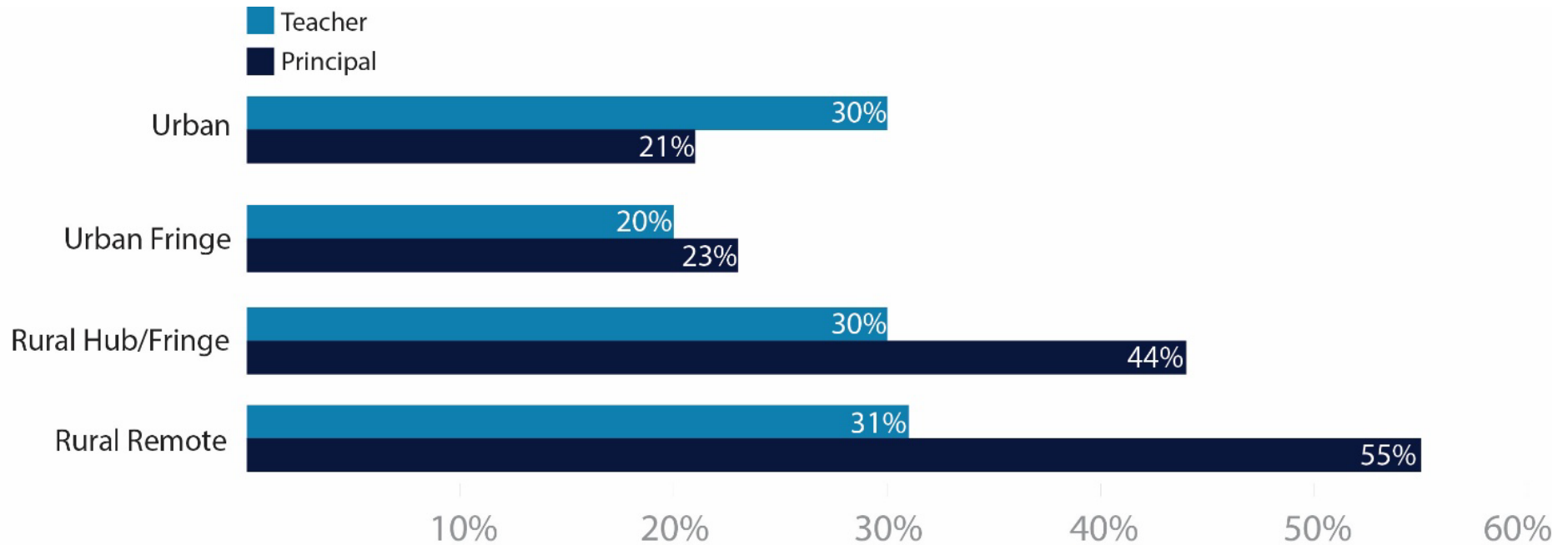


# Strategic Priority 4

*Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.*

## Alaska Teacher Turnover & Data Trends

### Teacher and Principal Turnover by School Locale | 2024

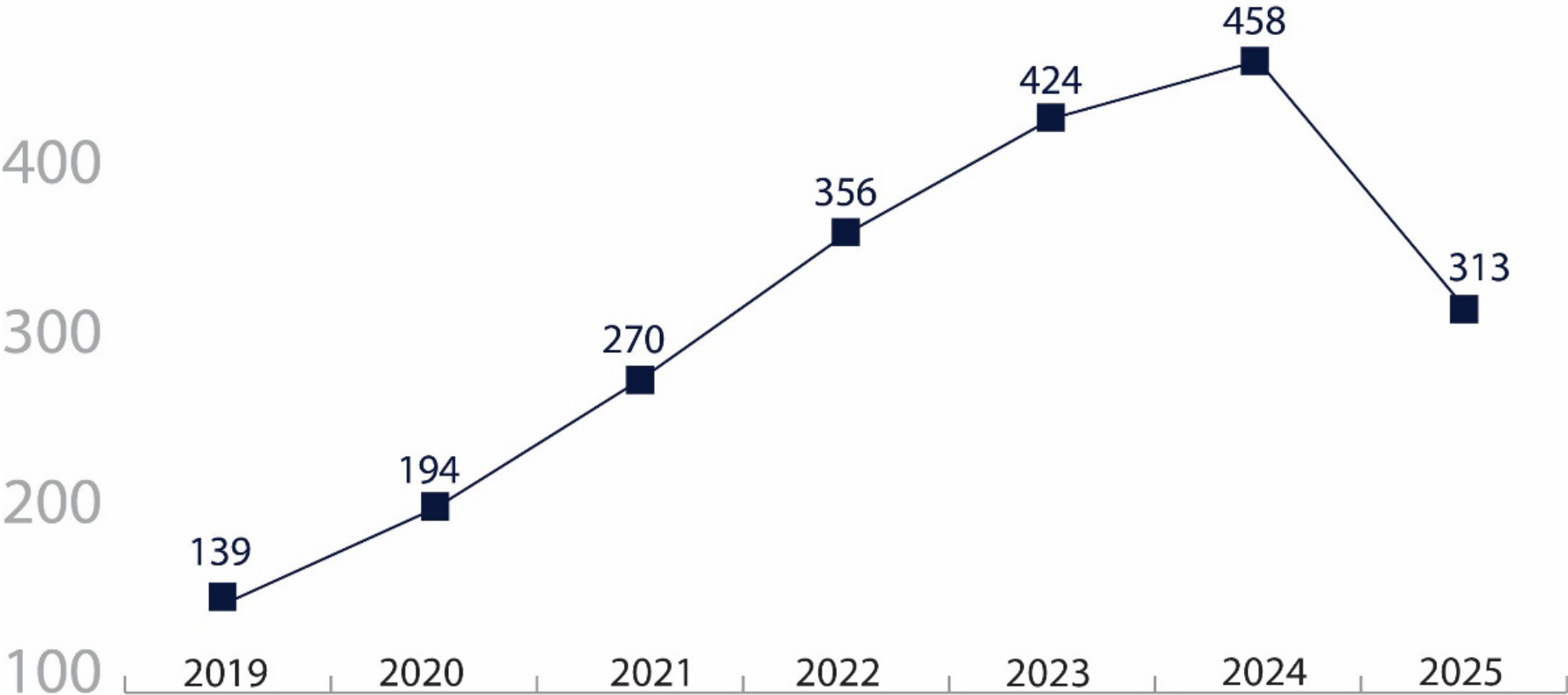


Source: *Teacher & Principal Turnover in Alaska*, presentation to the State Board of Education & Early Development, University of Alaska Anchorage, Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), December 3, 2025.

Reference: *SBOE Report to Legislature*, page 41.

# First Day Teacher Vacancies

FTE | 2019-2025



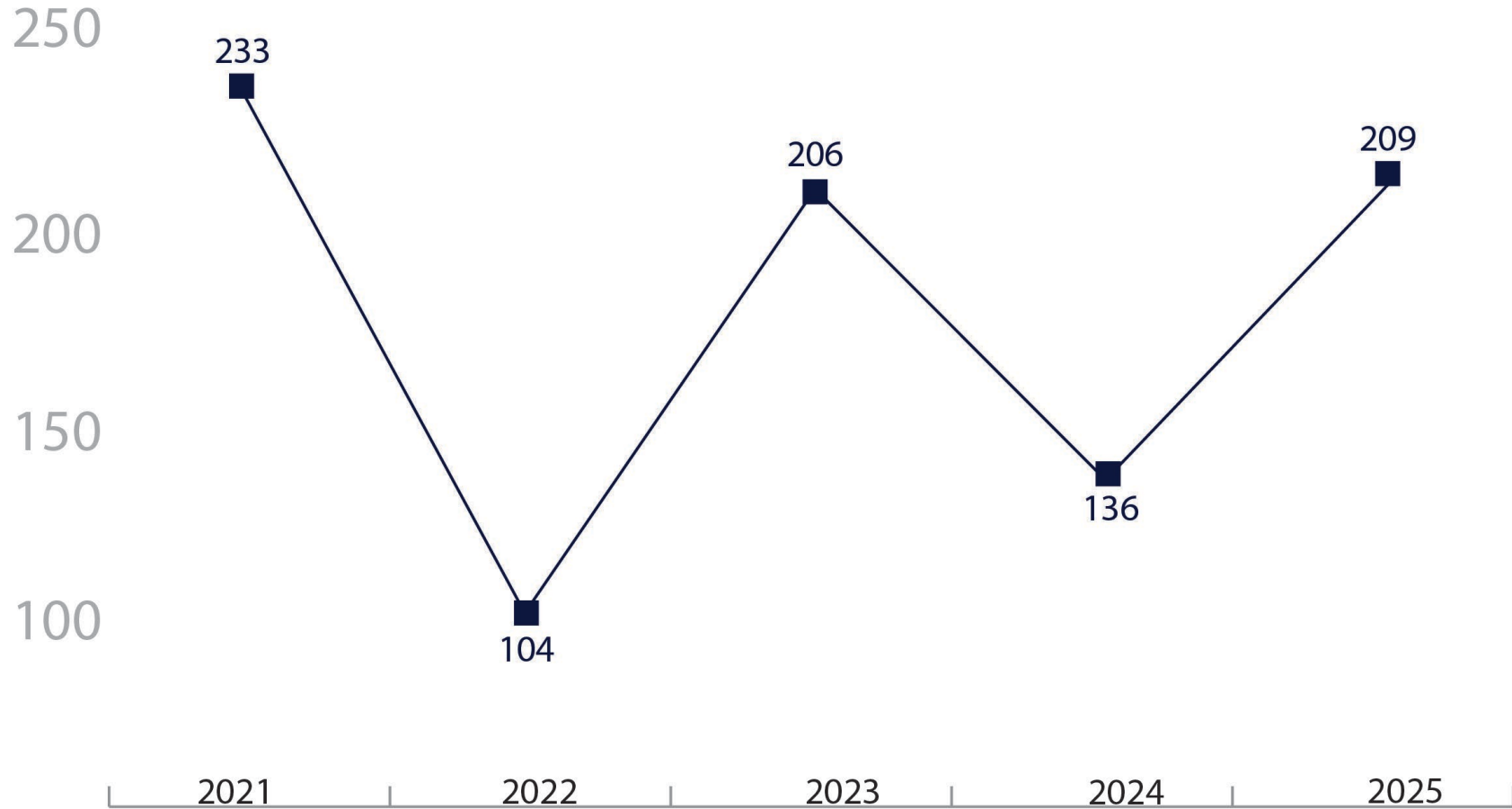
Source: District Fall Staff Accounting Report – Total of 6,765 Teachers

Reference: SBOE Report to Legislature, page 42.



# Emergency Certified Teacher Count

*FTE | 2021-2025*



# Educators Serving on Work Visas

Alaska's schools continue to benefit from the contributions of internationally recruited educators who help districts fill positions that would otherwise remain vacant.



## Strategic Priority 5

*Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities and tribes.*

### What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- The number of students who report on the 2025 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) that they did not go to school on one or more of the last 30 days because they felt unsafe will decrease by 35 percent
- The number of students suspended from school for non-violent and non-safety-related incidents in a given school year will decrease by at least 15 percent

# Strategic Priority 5

*Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities and tribes.*

## Progress Highlights



**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):** Expanded PBIS implementation to 45 schools in 14 districts, promoting positive school climate and behavior. DEED also supports Anchorage School District's (ASD) rollout using Title IV-A funds, with 45 ASD schools now participating



**Trauma-Engaged Schools and Practices:** Continued statewide training and coaching to help schools implement the Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska. Nearly 15,000 copies have been distributed, and an online Trauma Toolkit provides ongoing professional learning and resources for school teams



**Attendance Initiative:** Launched the Strive for 5 – Attend School All Week campaign to address chronic absenteeism through coordinated outreach, data sharing, and district-level resources that emphasize consistent attendance as critical to academic success

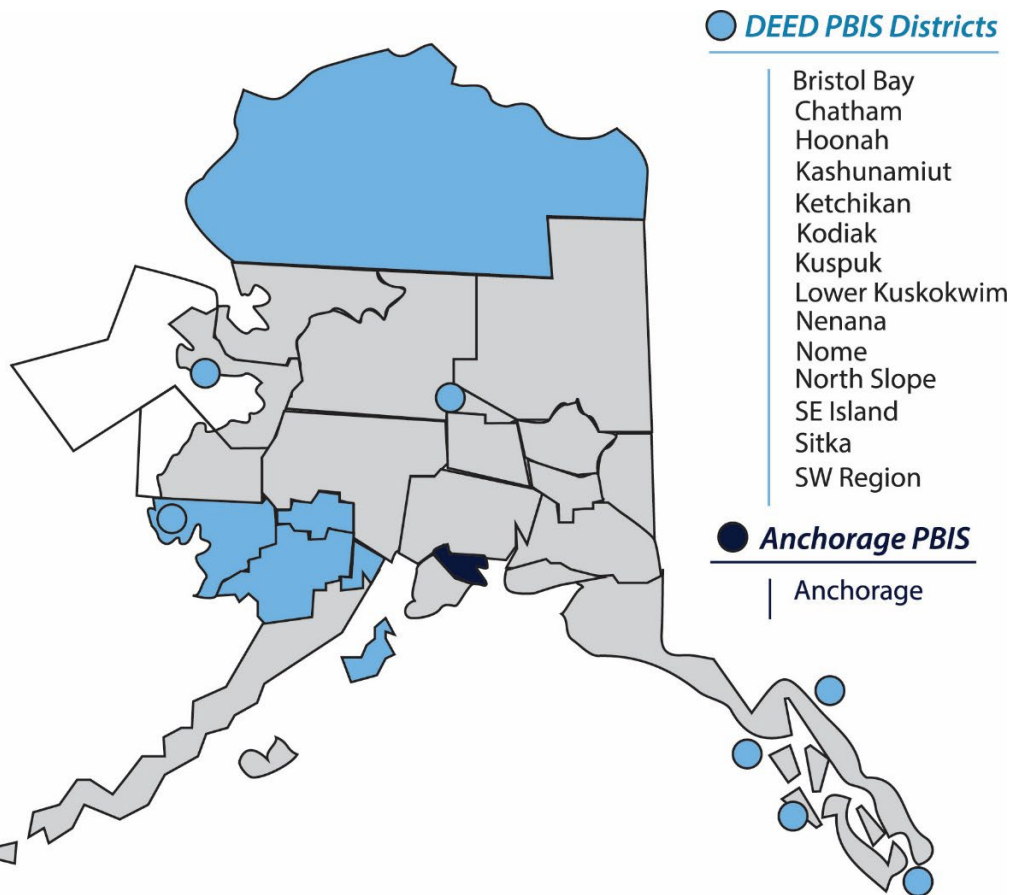


**Protecting the Learning Environment:** The SBOE adopted a 2024 resolution encouraging districts to limit student cell phone use, followed by passage of HB 57 (2025), which restricts device use during instructional hours to reduce distractions, support student engagement, and protect focused learning environments

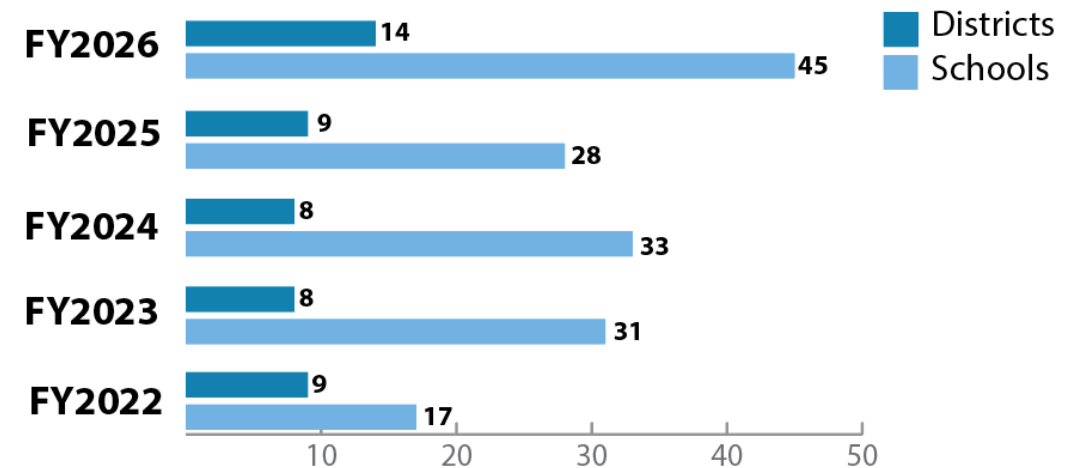
# Strategic Priority 5

*Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities and tribes.*

## DEED Supported Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports



**# of Districts Participating in DEED/PBIS**  
*By Fiscal Year*



# Building on Progress Toward Educational Excellence

- Progress has been made toward the Alaska Education Challenge goals, but continued effort is needed to ensure every student reads proficiently, graduates prepared, and is supported by a strong, stable educator workforce
- Maintain the five strategic priorities of the AEC as the framework for continued statewide improvement
- Through the SBOE standing committees, develop specific, measurable goals aligned to these priorities to guide DEED's strategic direction, strengthen accountability, and align fiscal and human resources

# | Other Department Functions

# Affiliated Boards, Commissions, and Statewide Institutions

**Alaska Commission on  
Postsecondary Education (ACPE)**

Supports Alaskans in accessing postsecondary education and training through financial aid programs, workforce alignment, and statewide college and career advising

**Alaska State Council on the Arts  
(ASCA)**

Advances arts education, cultural preservation, and community well-being by funding and supporting arts programs, partnerships, and creative initiatives statewide

**Division of Libraries, Archives,  
and Museums (LAM)**

Preserves and provides access to Alaska's historical, cultural, and informational resources through statewide library services, archives, and museum programs that support lifelong learning

**Professional Teaching Practices  
Commission (PTPC)**

Upholds ethical and professional standards for Alaska educators by investigating complaints and taking disciplinary action in accordance with state law

**Mt. Edgecumbe High School**

Operates as Alaska's statewide public boarding high school, providing students from across the state with expanded academic, cultural, and leadership opportunities

# Divisions within DEED

## **Division of Administrative Services**

Provides centralized operational support including human resources, budgeting, procurement, grants management, travel, and information technology coordination to ensure efficient and compliant department operations

## **Division of Finance & Support Services**

Oversees school finance, facilities, and child nutrition programs to ensure equitable funding, safe school infrastructure, and access to nutritious meals statewide

## **Division of Innovation and Education Excellence**

Leads statewide efforts focused on student achievement, accountability, and continuous improvement through policy, data, program oversight, and technical assistance to districts

# Discussion

*Questions and Comments?*



# Contact Information

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**Department of Education and Early Development**

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# Stay Connected

## Find us online:

- Our website: [education.alaska.gov](http://education.alaska.gov)
- Facebook and Twitter: @AlaskaDEED

## Give us a call:

- Main line: 907 465 2800
- Teacher Certification: 907 465 2831