

# ALASKA'S *Education* CHALLENGE

*Together, we will meet Alaska's education challenge by honoring our heritage, innovating for the future, and prioritizing for today's fiscal challenges.*

## **WHY:**

Alaska faces obstacles to student achievement unlike those that exist in any other state in the nation. Alaska's Education Challenge is to address our student achievement gaps and increase our graduation rates by making sure that every student across our state has equal opportunities to learn and succeed.

There have been many attempts to improve parts of Alaska's education system over the past two decades. These well-meaning initiatives have been done a piece at a time rather than as part of a comprehensive effort to improve Alaska's system of public education. All Alaskans want better outcomes for our students, so it is time we accept this challenge and face it together. Improving the quality of educational opportunities for our students will take time, so now is the time to start.

## **WHAT:**

Alaska's Education Challenge is a comprehensive analysis and reconsideration of our system of public education. The ultimate goal is for students to achieve and be prepared for career and/or college. Our efforts will look at providing an excellent education for every student in the most efficient manner possible. Alaskans want an effective education system that is affordable and sustainable even in these difficult times. Through a process of gathering public input, the Governor's State Board of Education has already identified five priorities for Alaska's public education system.

The Chair of the State Board of Education will designate two state board members to co-chair each committee, as well as a DEED employee for staff support. Students, parents, educators, board members, business leaders, tribal representatives, and legislators will be invited to serve on the committees and participate in meetings. Each committee will prepare a set of recommendations for the State Board of Education to consider for its final report.

## **WHEN:**

Alaskans can submit their priorities for meeting Alaska's Education Challenge through a survey that will open on February 1 at [gov.alaska.gov/education-challenge](http://gov.alaska.gov/education-challenge). The committees will be named by the Commissioner no later than March 31. Each committee will hold a series of public meetings April through September. Final committee recommendations will be sent to the full State Board of Education for review by November 1, and will be made available for public comment. The final recommendations for meeting Alaska's Education Challenge will be sent to Governor Walker and the Legislature by December 29, 2017.

## **Five Priorities**

- 1 *Improve Student Learning*
- 2 *Ensure Excellent Educators*
- 3 *Modernize the Education System*
- 4 *Inspire Tribal and Community Ownership*
- 5 *Promote Safety and Well-Being*

## **HOW:**

The State Board of Education will lead a process of listening, gathering input, and reporting information to inform strategies to improve Alaska's public education system. The Commissioner of Education and Early Development (DEED) will establish five committees to gather input from a broad range of Alaskans regarding the above priorities.

1. *Student Learning Committee*
2. *Educator Excellence Committee*
3. *Modernization and Finance Committee*
4. *Tribal and Community Ownership Committee*
5. *Safety and Well-Being Committee*