



## **Title 14. EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND MUSEUMS**

### **Chapter 14.03. PUBLIC SCHOOLS GENERALLY**

#### **Sec. 14.03.010. Establishment of school system.**

There is established in the state a system of public schools to be administered and maintained as provided in this title.

#### **Sec. 14.03.015. State education policy.**

It is the policy of this state that the purpose of education is to help ensure that 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.

#### **Sec. 14.03.020. School year.**

The school year begins on the first day of July and ends on the 30th day of June.

#### **Sec. 14.03.030. School term.**

A school term begins and ends on the dates fixed by the governing body of a school district. A school term shall include not less than 180 days in session, unless with the approval of the commissioner,

(1) a day used for in-service training of teachers is substituted for a day in session, up to a maximum of 10 days;

(2) an "emergency closure day" is substituted for a day in session because of conditions posing a threat to the health or safety of students;

(3) a school board adopts a school term of not less than 150 days for a school if the commissioner finds that

(A) the shorter term is necessary for abating health hazards in the school; and

(B) the school board has submitted an acceptable plan under which students will receive the approximate educational equivalent of a 180-day term; or

(4) the school board adopts a school term of not less than 170 days for a school if the commissioner finds that the school board has submitted an acceptable plan under which students will receive the approximate educational equivalent of a 180-day term.

#### **Sec. 14.03.040. Day in session.**

Each day within the school term is a day in session except Saturdays, Sundays, and days designated as holidays by or according to AS 14.03.050. A school board may approve Saturdays as a day in session. The day in session in every school shall be at least four hours long, exclusive of intermissions, for the

first, second, and third grades and five hours, exclusive of intermissions, for all other grades. The commissioner may approve a shorter day in session for any grade. The period of the day in session shall be devoted to the instruction of pupils or to study periods for the pupils.

Sec. 14.03.050. School holidays.

(a) Public schools may not be in session on school holidays, which are Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day immediately following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Memorial Day, and the Fourth of July. If one of these holidays falls on a Saturday, the Friday immediately preceding is a school holiday. If one of these holidays falls on a Sunday, the Monday immediately following is a school holiday. A teacher may not be required to perform employment services on these holidays, nor may the salary of a teacher be diminished because the teacher does not perform employment services on a school holiday.

(b) The public schools shall be in session on all other holidays falling upon school days and shall conduct appropriate exercises in recognition of the day.

(c) The governing body of the school district may declare additional holidays.

Sec. 14.03.060. Elementary, junior high, and secondary schools.

(a) An elementary school consists of grades kindergarten through grade eight or any appropriate combination of grades within this range.

(b) A secondary school consists of grades seven through 12 or any appropriate combination of grades within this range. The establishment of one or two grades beyond the 12th grade is optional with the governing body of the school district.

(c) Grades seven through eight, nine, and ten or any appropriate combination of grades within this range may be organized as a junior high school.

(d) This section does not prevent a high school from issuing a diploma to a student who has completed the 12th grade.

Sec. 14.03.070. School age.

A child who is six years of age before August 15 following the beginning of the school year, and who is under the age of 20 and has not completed the 12th grade, is of school age.

Sec. 14.03.075. Secondary pupil competency testing. [Effective January 1, 2002]..

(a) A pupil may not be issued a secondary school diploma unless the pupil passes a competency examination in the areas of reading, English, and mathematics. The department shall determine the form and contents of the examination and shall score completed examinations. A pupil who fails to pass the examination required under this subsection and who is no longer in attendance shall receive a certificate of attendance from the school district indicating the years of attendance and that the pupil has not passed a competency examination or received a diploma.

(b) A pupil who fails the examination required under this section may be reexamined. A reexamination may not be offered more often than once every three months and must occur within three

years after the date the pupil is no longer in attendance. A pupil who passes the reexamination and who meets any other graduation requirements shall receive a diploma from the school district.

Sec. 14.03.080. Right to attend school.

(a) A child of school age is entitled to attend public school without payment of tuition during the school term in the school district in which the child is a resident subject to the provisions of [AS 14.14.110](#) and [14.14.120](#).

(b) A person over school age may be admitted to the public school in the school district in which the person is a resident at the discretion of the governing body of the school district. A person over school age may be charged tuition by the governing body of the school district.

(c) A child under school age may be admitted to the public school in the school district of which the child is a resident at the discretion of the governing body of the school district if the child meets minimum standards prescribed by the board evidencing that the child has the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform satisfactorily for the educational program being offered.

(d) A child who is five years of age before August 15 following the beginning of the school year, and who is under school age, may enter a public school kindergarten.

(e) A child under school age shall be admitted to school in the district of which the child is a resident if immediately before the child became a resident of the district, the child was legally enrolled in the public schools of another district or state.

(f) This section does not require a school district to admit a child or person currently under suspension or expulsion under [AS 14.03.160](#) in that or another school district.

Sec. 14.03.083. Contracting for services.

(a) A school district may contract for educational services provided to students in the district by an agency that is accredited by the department under [AS 14.07.020](#) and (b) of this section.

(b) The department shall adopt regulations and establish program standards for educational services that may be contracted for by a school district.

(c) Expenses incurred by the department in accrediting the agency and program shall be borne by the agency seeking accreditation.

Sec. 14.03.085. Procurement preference for recycled Alaska products.

A school district shall comply with [AS 29.71.050](#), except that in AS 29.71.050(b), "[AS 29.71.040](#)" is read as "[AS 36.15.050](#)," and in AS 29.71.050(a) - (c) and (e), "municipal" and "municipality" are read as "school district." In this section, "school district" does not include regional educational attendance areas.

Sec. 14.03.090. Partisan, sectarian, or denominational doctrines prohibited.

Partisan, sectarian, or denominational doctrines may not be advocated in a public school during the hours the school is in session. A teacher or school board violating this section may not receive public

money.

Sec. 14.03.095. Part-time school attendance.

(a) Except as provided in (b) of this section, a governing body shall, upon request, allow a child, including a child who is also enrolled at a private school, is a correspondence student, or is being home schooled, to enroll as a part-time student in the district.

(b) A governing body is not required to allow part-time enrollment if

(1) the enrollment would be denied even if the enrollee were a full-time student; or

(2) the enrollment would result in an expenditure of public funds for the direct benefit of a private educational institution.

(c) Part-time enrollment under this section does not constitute attendance for the purposes of [AS 14.30.010](#) (a).

Sec. 14.03.100. Use of school facilities.

The governing body of a school district may allow the use of school facilities for any legal gatherings or assemblies. The governing body shall adopt bylaws that will ensure reasonable and impartial use of the facilities.

Sec. 14.03.105. Search of school lockers.

(a) Subject to (b) of this section, a locker or other container provided in a school by the school or the school district may be searched and examined with the permission of the chief administrative officer of the school or the school district or the designee of the chief administrative officer to determine compliance with school regulations, school district regulations, and local, state, and federal laws. A search or examination under this section may not be more intrusive than reasonably necessary to meet the objectives of the search.

(b) Notices in letters at least two inches high stating the right and the intention of school and school district officers to permit searches and examinations under (a) of this section shall be posted in prominent locations throughout a school.

(c) Nothing in this section limits the ability of a peace officer, chief administrative officer, or other appropriate person, acting in compliance with local, state, or federal laws, to search a locker or other container provided in a public or private school by the school district.

Sec. 14.03.110. Questionnaires and surveys administered in public schools.

A school district, principal or other person in charge of a public school, or teacher in a public school may not administer or permit to be administered in a school a questionnaire or survey, whether anonymous or not, that inquires into private family affairs of the student not a matter of public record or subject to public observation unless written permission is obtained from the student's parent or guardian.

Sec. 14.03.120. Education planning.

(a) A district shall annually file with the department, and make available to the public, a report that

- (1) establishes district goals and priorities for improving education in the district;
- (2) includes a plan for achieving district goals and priorities; and
- (3) includes a means of measuring the achievement of district goals and priorities.

(b) The department shall summarize the reports submitted under (a) of this section as a statewide report, provide a copy to the governor, and notify the legislature that the report is available.

(c) A district shall make efforts to encourage students, parents, teachers, and other members of the community to participate in the preparation of the report submitted under (a) of this section.

(d) Each public school shall, by May 31 of each year, prepare a report on the school's performance and the performance of the school's students. The report shall be presented to parents, students, and community members at a public meeting and forwarded to the chief school administrator of the district.

(e) A district shall, by October 31 of each year, provide to the state board, and make available to the public, a report on the performance of each public school and public school students in the district. The report must be entitled "School District Report Card To The Public" and must be prepared on a form prescribed by the department. The report must include

(1) the percent of district students in the top and bottom quarter of standardized national achievement examinations; results under this paragraph shall be disclosed in a manner that does not reveal the individual identities of students;

(2) the percent of students who are not promoted to the next grade;

(3) student, parent, and community member comments on the school's performance;

(4) the annual percent change in enrollment and the percent of enrollment change due to student transfers into and out of the district;

(5) attendance, retention, and graduation rates;

(6) the ways in which meaningful parent involvement in school performance was achieved;

(7) a summary and evaluation of the environmental education curriculum described in [AS 14.30.380](#) ;

(8) other indicators of school performance required by the state board; and

(9) other indicators of school performance selected by the district.

(f) The department shall, by January 15 of each year, provide to the governor, and make available to the public and the legislature, a summary comparison of the reports submitted under (e) of this section in the previous year. The summary comparison shall be prepared in a manner that allows school performance to be measured against state and district education goals established in prior years. The department shall notify the legislature that the summary comparison is available.

(g) In this section, "district" has the meaning given in [AS 14.17.250](#) .

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