STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Virtual Meeting
Regulatory Revisions - Administrative Order 360

Chapter 33 - Special Programs

PUBLIC COMMENT

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P R O C E E D I N G S

JAKE ALMEIDA: Okay, good morning, everyone. I'd like to welcome you to today's Administrative Order, or AO, 360 stakeholder input session on Chapter 33, Special Programs regulations. Thank you for joining us.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear directly from stakeholders and members of the public regarding regulatory burdens or barriers you believe should be addressed as part of Alaska's AO 360 reform project.

Your input is critical in helping us shape meaningful changes that support students and schools. And to honor your time today, the session will end promptly on the hour.

These stakeholder meetings are opportunities for us to listen to your perspectives before any regulations are drafted, amended, or repealed. This is not the formal public comment process under the Administrative Procedure Act, or APA. That process will begin later after draft regulations have undergone legal review and have been formally approved for public comment.

As part of our regulatory reform plan, the department must create a list of all the comments

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we receive during the stakeholder process along with whether we intend to implement each recommendation that you as stakeholders make. And if we don't adopt a recommendation, we are required to explain why not.

So as an overview for today we'll first hear a short overview of the regulations for this meeting, and then we'll move into the comment period where you may share your input.

Verbal feedback will be recorded, summarized, and included in our department's reform plan, and written feedback will also be accepted for 30 days following this session. So please refer to the chat for information on submitting written feedback. And, again, you will see a link for a sign-up sheet to provide verbal comment once the regulations have been given an overview, so we encourage you to sign up on that.

So with that, I will now hand it over to Heather Heineken who is our director of finance and support services for the department, and she will give you an overview of what these regulations are in this chapter. Over to you, Heather.

HEATHER HEINEKEN: Thank you, Jake. Good morning. Chapter 33 of 4 AAC establishes special programs administered by the Department of Education

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and Early Development. The chapter is organized into several articles. Today's focus is on Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6.

Article 1, special schools, establishes the framework for statewide designated special schools and charter schools. It includes provisions for residential schools, such as Mt. Edgecumbe, and district-operated statewide residential programs, outlines administrations requirements, and defines the department's authority over special programs.

It also establishes the process for charter school applications, amendments, operations, contracts, renewals, and performance accountability along with the charter school grant program.

Article 2 covers grants for the improvement of school performance. This establishes the department's authority to award grants to districts for improving student performance and school outcomes. It includes eligibility requirements, application procedures, requirements for district or school improvement plans, expectations for measurable results, timeliness, and how the department monitors use of funds and progress towards goals.

Article 3 is our quality schools funding grants. This establishes the quality schools grant

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program intended to support statewide school improvement efforts. It covers criterias districts must meet to qualify, the purpose of the funding, required components such as performance-based planning, local reporting, and how the department determines awards and monitors the use of these grants.

Article 4 covers correspondence study programs. It establishes requirements for a district operating correspondence programs. This includes rules for student enrollment, allotment accounts, use of public funds for instructional material and services, curriculum oversight, student progress documentation, teacher involvement, and department authority to review, audit, place programs on a corrective action, or require repayment for non-compliance.

And finally Article 6, funding for the improvement of Internet speed at public schools. This establishes a program to support broadband and Internet speed improvements in public schools, most commonly known as "the beg." It includes eligibility for funding, how districts apply, allowable project types such as infrastructure grades or bandwidth increases, prioritization for rural or high cost areas, and the department's role in improving, monitoring, and reporting on funded projects. Thank you, Jake.

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JAKE ALMEIDA: All right, thank you so much for that, Heather.

So we are now in the comment section of this stakeholder meeting. And we still have people joining us, so I'll just keep refreshing. You were just given an overview of what these regulations, and the last link posted in the chat that you will see is the sign-up sheet to give comment on these regulations.

Everyone will have two minutes, and we just ask that you provide your name, any affiliation, and provide your comment in two minutes to ensure everyone has a chance to give comment. We can answer specific questions you may have, but we're of course just first hear to listen and won't engage necessarily in any back and forth.

And again, we encourage you to use the sign-up sheet. You just fill out a couple fields of information, then I see your name on the sheet and acknowledge you as people's names pop up on there.

If you are unable to use the link, there is also the raise hand icon on the bottom of this Zoom meeting on your task bar, you can also click on that, and we'll knowledge you and give you two minutes to speak.

And so at this time we're just awaiting

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people to fill out the sign-up sheet or raise their hand to give comment, and we will just be on standby until then. Thank you so much.

(Pause)

JAKE ALMEIDA: For those of you just joining us, I just want to give another quick reminder that we're in the comment section of the stakeholder meeting. And there is a link in the chat, and I'm going to have our public information officer drop it one more time, and there will be a link to sign up to give comment on these regulations for Chapter 33.

If you can't use the link, you can also just click on the raise hand icon and we'll acknowledge you that way as well to give your comment on these regulations. Otherwise, we will just wait to see if anyone has any comment, thank you.

(Pause)

JAKE ALMEIDA: All right, I would like to thank everyone for joining us today. We will now conclude this public stakeholder meeting for Chapter 33, Special Programs regulations.

For those of us still in this meeting, we will be back at 4 o'clock to allow the same window of opportunity on these regulations. And for those watching this recording afterwards, if you want to

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submit feedback regarding these regulations, you can go to our website at education.alaska.gov/ao360 and your comments will still be submitted for the record that way. So thank you all, and we will now conclude this meeting.

(Meeting concluded)

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