

Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education Legislative Update



Tuesday, January 18th began the 27th Alaska Legislative session in Juneau. During this session, the GCDSE is keeping you up-to-date by monitoring legislative action and tracking bills that relate to issues concerning health, education, disabilities, and services in the State of Alaska.

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Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Senator Olson Introduces HUB Funding

Senator Donny Olson added \$325,000 to the budget for the Alaska Complex Behavioral Collaborative, also known as the HUB. On March 23 the Senate Finance Committee took public testimony from interested families and individuals concerned with this issue.

The collaborative will establish high level consultation services for individuals who behavior is complex and puts them at high risk of removal from their local community or sent out of state. The goal of the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative is to develop in-state capacity to meet the needs of individuals with challenging behaviors



Upcoming Committee and Bill Hearings

March 25th

8:00am

SB 6: Prekindergarten School Programs/Plans
Senate Education
BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
(Teleconference)

1:00pm

HJR 4: Constitutional Amendment to Provide State Transportation
House Judicial
Room 120 State Capitol
(Teleconference)

March 30th

1:30pm

SB 74: Autism Insurance Coverage
Senate HSS

HB 198: SESA

A bill to change the funding for the Special Education Service Agency (SESA), HB 198 was scheduled to be heard on Wednesday, 23 March, at 8:00am. SESA is an agency designed to aide persons experiencing disabilities in communities which are unequipped to give them the support they need in order to successfully remain in their home communities with their natural support system. The Council supports the revisions to the funding for SESA so that the agency may continue to support Alaskans.

SB 10: HSGQE Repeal

Introduced by Senator Bettye Davis, this bill repeals the requirement for a High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE), or "exit exam," before a student may graduate High School. Although a student may fulfill the state required courses and credit hours, without passing the exam they will be unable to graduate and join the workforce or pursue higher education. The Council supports the repeal of HSGQE so that students experiencing disabilities will not be limited or excluded because of it.

Alaska Autism Resource Center

House HSS Finance Sub-Committee removed \$150,000 from the Governor's budget for the Alaska Autism Resource Center. The Senate Finance Committee has kept the \$150,000 in their budget so far. The Council supports permanent funding for the Alaska Autism Resource Center (AARC). AARC has been a long time priority of the Council.

The Alaska Autism Resource Center (AARC) assists families who have a child with an autism spectrum disorder to navigate their way through funding and treatment resources in order to best ensure the well-being of their child. AARC also provides training on ASD for school districts, early intervention/infant learning programs, behavioral health centers, home and community-based services providers and the general public