

HOUSE BILL NO. 23

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES CRAWFORD AND GARA

Introduced: 1/20/09

Referred: Education, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing a grant program to support voluntary class size reduction."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Time to Teach Act.

6 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.17 is amended by adding a new section to read:

7 **Sec. 14.17.485. Class size reduction funding.** (a) As a component of and in
8 addition to other available public school funding, a school is eligible to receive a class
9 size reduction funding grant under this section in an amount that would increase the
10 base student allocation under AS 14.17.470 to \$8,000 for each student enrolled in
11 grades kindergarten through three in the school. The department shall annually
12 increase the amount of the base student allocation described under this subsection to
13 the extent of increases during the second preceding calendar year in the Consumer
14 Price Index for all urban consumers for the Anchorage metropolitan area compiled by
15 the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor. The index for

1 January 2003 is the reference base index.

2 (b) A school is eligible to receive a class size reduction funding grant under
3 (a) of this section if the governing body of the district approves a policy to require a
4 class size of not more than 15 students, as adjusted under (c) of this section, in grades
5 kindergarten through three and the governing body of the district enters into and
6 complies with an agreement with the school on a form approved by the department
7 that

8 (1) covers a minimum of a five-year period in which the reduced class
9 size is maintained;

10 (2) requires the completion of a study that

11 (A) tracks the academic progress and achievement of students
12 attending a school in the district with a reduced class size under this section;
13 and

14 (B) compares the academic progress and achievement outcome
15 of students enrolled in a school without a reduced class size with the academic
16 progress and achievement of those students taught in a classroom with a
17 reduced class size under this section; and

18 (3) requires the employment of a teacher who possesses a valid teacher
19 certificate in a reduced size classroom who is qualified to teach in an area of the
20 expertise of the teacher and the employment of at least one special education aide
21 assigned to a classroom with a student with a disability.

22 (c) For purposes of calculating the class size under this section, a student who
23 is identified by the district as a child with a disability counts as two students.

24 (d) The department and a parent of a child enrolled in a school in the district
25 may file a complaint in a court of competent jurisdiction for an injunction to require a
26 district to comply with and enforce the class size requirements of this section,
27 including an order to hire additional eligible classroom teachers necessary to meet the
28 maximum class size under (b) of this section.

29 (e) For purposes of the reduction required under AS 14.17.400(b), funding
30 authorized under (a) of this section is treated the same as the state share of public
31 school funding under AS 14.17.410.

- 1 (f) In this section,
- 2 (1) "child with a disability" has the meaning given in AS 14.30.350;
- 3 (2) "class size" means a group of students taught in a regular classroom
- 4 by one classroom teacher who possesses a valid teacher certificate; "class size" does
- 5 not include team teaching by two or more classroom teachers in one classroom of
- 6 more than one group of students if the group exceeds 15 students.