

**Alaska Growth Proposal  
Adequate Yearly Progress  
Supporting Evidence Submission  
March 2006**

Organization of Document: This document provides evidence as requested in a letter by Assistant Secretary Henry L. Johnson on March 10, 2006 regarding the Alaska growth model. Closed bullet items which follow the principles are the statement of request from the letter; open bullets outline Alaska's response. If additional evidence is submitted, the open bullets will direct the reader to see items specifically included in this submission.

Principle 1. Universal Proficiency

- Please provide cut scores for each performance level on the State assessments.
  - See items: **Prof Levels**
  - Note: Alaska will establish the proficiency levels for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade assessment in summer 2006. The committee meets in May and the board will take action on the recommendations in June and July.
  
- Clarify how the standard deviation mentioned on page 3 of the proposal pertains to the assessment performance levels.
  - When including information on Alaska's scale score (100-600), knowledge of the standard deviation assists in further understanding Alaska's current assessment system. Knowledge of the proficiency levels, as outlined in the submission with this document, along with detailed knowledge of our scale scores is meant to be useful. No change is being proposed as a result of the growth model application. Alaska intended to provide information about the assessment system that serves as a foundation for the accountability system. Peer reviewers may examine scale score information in detail in the technical report for the grade 3-9 assessment at: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/techreports.html> and refer to page 59 on the core "Technical Report" on that web page.
  
- Please provide a rationale for the application of the confidence interval.
  - Alaska is not asking to incorporate a confidence interval in any manner that is not consistent with the currently approved method of determining adequate yearly progress in the approved Accountability Workbook. Alaska uses a confidence interval as a statistical operation to account for differences in school size. Alaska has many schools with fewer than 20 students, yet some comprehensive high schools have more than 2000 students. Alaska does not have a minimum number of students required for accountability at the school as a whole level, only at the subgroup level. As a result, there will be schools that have as few as 10 students (minimum size school for funding purposes) held accountable. The

confidence interval used in Alaska creates fair and universal accountability.

#### Principle 4: Inclusion of All Students

- Please clarify whether the growth model will be applied to all students in every school in the State.
  - Alaska will apply the growth model to all students in every school within the state. Every school in the state, regardless of adequate yearly progress designation, will know the number and percent of proficient students, the number and percent of students who are on track to be proficient, and the number and percent of students who are not proficient in language arts and mathematics.
- Please clarify how the model applies full academic year and how growth will be attributed to students transitioning from elementary school to middle school, and middle school to high school.
  - Growth in student performance will be attributed to the school in which the student is testing, if the student has fulfilled the requirements for full academic year. Full academic year is from October 1 to the first day of testing in April, which is near the end of the school year. The scores, and the growth of those scores from the previous school year, will be attributed to the student and the school where the student satisfies full academic year requirements during the year upon which the calculation is based.

#### Principle 6: Tracking Student Progress

- Provide additional information on match rates for subgroups of students.
- Provide additional information regarding quality assurance procedures used to maintain the student matching system.
- Provide additional information regarding the inclusion of demographic information in the State data system
  - See items: Technical Manual for the Alaska Student Identification System, Fall Online Alaska Student Information System (OASIS) handbook, Participation Rate handbook, Summer OASIS handbook.
  - The department implemented the Alaska Student Identification System (AKSID) in spring 2002. All student-level information that is submitted to the department must include the AKSID Number. This requirement went into law in summer 2002.
  - The state regulation and the editing process is outlined below:

#### **4 AAC (Alaska Administrative Code) 07.060. Student records**

**(7) beginning August 31, 2002, a unique 10-digit individual student identification number issued by the department; the student identification number must appear in**

**each electronic record containing student-level information that is reported to the department; the student identification number must appear on each student examination booklet administered under 4 AAC 06.712, 4 AAC 06.730, 4 AAC 06.737, and 4 AAC 06.755.**

Alaska has a student population of 133,288. The number of students per grade level ranges from 9,564 to 11,405. The number of students in Alaska allows the state to conduct edit checks until we are confident that we have a 100% match rate. We look for nonexistent numbers, wrong numbers, and inconsistencies in names and birth dates. We correct erroneous data by using information available from previous data submissions and by working directly with each Local Education Agency (LEA).

We receive multiple data submissions each year from LEAs in which they are required to use the state student identification number and other data elements related to individual students. These submissions include: Fall OASIS, which provides information for state foundational funding; Participation Rate, which is used to determine information regarding full academic year and other AYP accountability information; Summer OASIS, which provides information on individual student data to determine attendance and graduation rate; and assessment data collections (including pre-code files). When the state receives any student level file we run the edit checks listed below.

- 1) Check for valid AKSID.
  - A) If missing, we run the student through ID system to
    - i) correct to existing number; or
    - ii) issue a new number for the initial entry student (after contacting district for clarification).
  - B) If the number is valid, we run the following checks:
    - i) run first name, last name, middle name, and birth date against the ID system to check for match
      - a) if a four point match is met we accept the record; or
      - b) if there is less than a four point match, the record is flagged and checked manually.
- 2) Check for duplicate AKSID Numbers.
  - A) If a duplicate is found (same student, multiple records), we confirm with districts, or accept it if it's valid for that data collection.
  - B) If duplicate records are flagged and logic is not accepted, records are checked manually to search for corrections.

When the check on AKSID numbers is complete and all of the AKSID numbers are deemed valid, we run the checks listed here to see if any students have a valid, but incorrect number.

- 1) Same AKSID, Different Last Name
- 2) Same AKSID, Different First Name
- 3) Same AKSID, Different Date Of Birth

- 4) Check AKSID against Previous Bad Number Field (we store these as a reference in case districts have previously used bad numbers)

When the AKSID number checks are complete, we run the district, school, and demographic edit checks listed here.

- 1) Invalid School Number
- 2) Missing Gender Code
- 3) Missing Race/Ethnicity Code
- 4) Missing codes for Disability, LEP, ED, and Migrant

When this is complete, we check trends to see whether or not individual demographic matches should be conducted. For example, if a school reports 25 disabled students in grades 3-5 in the fall but only report 15 students on the first day of testing, matches are performed on the two data files. The match lists are sent to the district offices to be reviewed and responses are required to explain the differences.

We also run additional ad-hoc queries in the Student ID records to find inconsistencies. These checks are listed below:

- 1) incomplete names (Johnath = Johnathan; Elizab=Elizabeth)
- 2) traditional names by gender (i.e., Robert=F; Mary=M)
- 3) duplicates missed by the duplication logic when students were entered into the system (e.g., transposed numbers in the date of birth, transposed first and last names, and valid but incorrect dates of birth)
- 4) grade counts against age ranges in OASIS to find invalid birth dates or invalid grades
- 5) spelling variations for names that may be the same but are stored differently (e.g., Van der Fleet, Vander Fleet, Van DerFleet)

The student ID System uses a “four point check” to check for duplicates upon initial entry into the State ID System. The FirstName, LastName, DateOfBirth, and GenderID fields are used to perform duplicate checking and are required as input fields. Any records not duplicating on all four fields will allow for the generation of a new number. Users are prompted with a list of potential duplicates that require manual acceptance or rejection upon both the manual entry and batch process entry procedures.

### **Differentiated Subgroup Size**

Alaska currently measures performance of all schools regardless of size at the “school as a whole” level, which is the reason we have a 99% confidence interval. For subgroup performance Alaska has a group size of 20, except for the subgroups of students with disabilities and limited English proficient students, which have a group size of 40. The Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development will meet in a special meeting on March 27 to consider putting out for public comment a regulation that will eliminate the

differentiated group size. The board will take final action on the regulation in late spring following the required public comment period.

This commitment by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development demonstrates Alaska's commitment to Secretary Spellings' bright line principles. Alaska understands that if the minimum group size is different than twenty, an amendment proposal to the accountability workbook will be required by April 1, 2006.