

Invitation for Public Comment

Chugach

Regional Education Attendance Area School Board Recasting

Alaska Statutes at AS 14.08.051(c) require that within 90 days of the Federal decennial census, the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development, in consultation with the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development and the local communities, must review the school board apportionment scheme of each Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) to determine if it meets the standards contained at AS 14.08.051(a). The standard is that each school board member must represent, “as nearly as practicable, an equal number of persons.”

A generally accepted standard for equal representation is that the population represented by each school board member not vary more than plus or minus five percent from the average. The average is determined by taking the total population of the REAA and dividing it by the total number of school board seats. When current representation varies by more than plus or minus five percent, the Commissioner must recast the boundaries of each section to more closely meet the standard.

Under the existing school board apportionment scheme for the Chugach REAA, the overall deviation is 65.95 percent. Accordingly, to more closely meet the equal representation standard, the options identified below (*see attached map*) are being put forth for discussion and public comment. One of these options, or an option identified through the public comment process, may be recommended to the Commissioner for adoption as a replacement for the existing apportionment scheme.

Chugach REAA has three sections containing a total of five school board seats. Section I has two seats and includes the City of Whittier. Section II has two seats and includes the community of Tatitlek, the areas surrounding Tatitlek and the area east of Valdez. Section III has one seat and contains the community of Chenega and areas north and west of the community.

- Option B adds areas north and west of Chenega to Section I, retains areas northeast of Chenega within Section III, and adds areas east of Valdez and south of Tatitlek to Section III. Under Option B, three seats are allocated to Section I and one seat apiece to Sections II and III. Option B has an overall deviation of 2.95%.
- Option C moves the areas north and west of Chenega into Section I and combines Chenega, Tatitlek, and all other areas into Section II. Option C

allocates three seats to Section I and two seats to Section II. Option C has an overall deviation of 0.17%.

Based on the REAA's demographic, socio-economic, linguistic, transportation, cultural, and communication considerations, the recommendation for the Chugach REAA is to implement Option B.

More information on the REAA recasting can be found at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/>

If you are interested in the apportionment of the Chugach REAA school board, you are invited to submit comments. You may do so verbally or in writing.

Verbal comments may be submitted by calling 907-465-5541 on October 11-15, 2021, between the hours of 10:00 am and noon, or by voicemail at that number.

Written comments should be emailed to reaa.recast.2020@alaska.gov or mailed to:

Attn: REAA Recasting
Robert Pearson
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
PO Box 110809
Juneau AK 99811-0809

A public hearing on all recommendations will be held on Oct. 14, 2021 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm by electronic means. The public hearing can be accessed by going to:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83069788829?pwd=N0VRTXE5Y2l4cVBCem9oTjRpMkR3Zz09>

Written comments must be received by October 15, 2021. Notice can be viewed on the State of Alaska web site at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/News.aspx>