

## Invitation for Public Comment

### Lower Kuskokwim

#### 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 Lower Kuskokwim REAA, the overall deviation is 23.28 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.

Lower Kuskokwim REAA has five sections containing a total of nine school board seats. Section I has one seat and includes the Cities of Nightmute and Toksook Bay and the communities of Mertarvik, Newtok, and Tununak. Section II has one seat includes the Cities of Chefornak and Mekoryuk and the communities of Kipnuk and Kwigillingok. Section III has two seats and includes the Cities of Kwethluk, Napakiak, Napaskiak and Nunapitchuk and the communities of Atmautluak, Kasigluk, Oscarville, and Tuntutuliak. Section IV has four seats and includes the City of Bethel. Section V has one seat and includes the Cities of Eek, Goodnews Bay, Platinum, and Quinhagak and the community of Kongiganak.

- Option B reduces the number of sections from five to four. Section I has one seat and includes Chefornak, Newtok, Mekoryuk, Toksook Bay, and

- Tununak. Section II has two seats and includes Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, Kwigillingok, Platinum, Quinhagak, and Tuntutuliak. Section III has two seats and includes Atmautluak, Kasigluk, Kwethluk, Mertarvik, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Nightmute, Nunapitchuk, and Oscarville. Section IV has four seats and includes Bethel. Option B has an overall deviation of 23.55%.
- Option C also reduces the number of sections from five to four. Section I has one seat and includes Mekoryuk, Mertarvik, Newtok, Nightmute, Toksook Bay, and Tununak. Section II has two seats and includes Chefnak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, Kwigillingok, Platinum, and Quinhagak. Section III has two seats and includes Atmautluak, Kasigluk, Kwethluk, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Nunapitchuk, Oscarville, and Tuntutuliak. Section IV has four seats and includes Bethel. Option C has an overall deviation of 19.31%.

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

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 Lower Kuskokwim 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](mailto: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=N0VRTXE5Y2l4cVBCem9oTjRpM DA3Zz09>

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>