



*Creating change that improves the lives of Alaskans with disabilities.*

## Support a \$150,000 increment to the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education

### FY 25 Council's Budget in Governor's Proposed: \$1,688.6

- \$966.5.4 Federal – Only \$527,570 is identified (our DD Council Award). After six years, a \$380,000/year federal “Living Well on the Last Frontier” grant ends. We recommend keeping this level of authority in the budget in case we find new federal grant opportunities.
- \$493.2. IA Receipts--\$336.6 identified: \$103.6 from DOH/SDS for ICC; \$85.0 from DEED for SEAP; \$148.0 from DEED for new employment grant. We recommend keeping additional authority amount, so the Council can renegotiate our Interagency Receipts, also called Reimbursable Service Agreements (RSA's)
- \$29.6 GFMH-- Governor reduced \$50.0 to \$29.6. We recommend adding \$50.0 back plus \$100.0 additional funding.
- MHTARR: \$199.3 Joint staffing grant (SOI) for 100% of GCDSE Research Analyst (100%) and partial HHS Planner Position III. Only the Trust can allocate MHTARR funds, and the Council will seek to renegotiate the level of funding next year.

### What Does the Council Do?

The Council is a state board of up to 26 members (24 currently) and has five duties spelled out under statute. The state laws that govern the Council are Programs for People with Disabilities (AS 47.80), Education for Exceptional Children (AS 14.30.231), Special Education Service Agency (AS 14.30.600), Services for Developmentally Delayed or Disabled Children (AS 47.20.060), and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AS 47.30.031).

**State Council on Development Disabilities:** Under the federal **Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act**, the Council serves as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Council works to address identified needs by conducting advocacy, systems change, and capacity building efforts that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion. Key activities include conducting outreach, providing training and technical assistance, removing barriers, developing coalitions, encouraging citizen participation, and keeping

## GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

policymakers informed about disability issues. The Council is also responsible for developing a five-year plan. Under federal law the plan must provide assurances that there will be reasonable State financial participation in the cost of carrying out the plan. In the current year, the federal government provides \$527,570 annually to perform this duty, matched by \$75,000 in state GFMH funds. Congress has not fixed the amount of funding for DD Council's for next fiscal year, but we expect it to stay the same or be reduced slightly.

**Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities:** Under the federal **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**, the Council serves as the Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities which advises and assists Alaska's statewide **Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program**, a program funded under DOH/SDS, contributing \$103,206 of federal funds to support the ICC. This Reimbursable Services Agreement (RSA) has been as high as \$130,000 in the past. The Council will renegotiate the level of funding for ICC duties with SDS/DOH for next fiscal year.

**Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP):** Under the federal **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**, the Council serves as Alaska's Special Education Advisory Panel which advises and assists Alaska's statewide Special Education program administered through the **Department of Education & Early Development (DEED)**. DEED provides \$85,000 in federal funding to support the Council's duties as the SEAP. This RSA has been as high as \$100,000 in the past. The Council will renegotiate the level of funding for SEAP duties with DEED for next fiscal year.

**Governing Body of the Special Education Service Agency (SESA):** Members of the Council are the majority of the governing board for the Special Education Services Agency, which supports the effective education of students with low incidence disabilities throughout Alaska. The Council receives no extra funding to support this duty, but SESA pays for their own board meeting costs and travel for our council members who serve double duty on their board.

**Statutory advisory board for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA or Trust).** The Council represents Alaskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to the Trust. The Trust provides \$184,500 to support Council staff as it relates to Trust related duties. The Council will seek to increase AMHTA support next year as it relates to Trust duties and activities.

***Ask: To close the Council's projected budget gap in FY 25, reinstate the \$50 GFMH that the Governor reduced in the proposed FY 25 operating budget and add \$100.0 in GFMH for total of \$179.6 GFMH***

Note: Although the Council intends to seek out additional grants and supports next year and in future years, it should be noted that in 48 years of existence, the Council has needed very little GF dollars to operate. This is because we have been very successful in obtaining outside funding and grants. It has only been in the past few years that the State has needed to contribute any GFMH dollars to our budget, being around 5% of the overall budget for the Council. This request puts it just around 10% in FY 25.