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ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement for House Bill 405

The current competency test does not allow for all students to prove their academic capabilities. The Department of Education (DOE) is in the process of determining what benchmarks will be used to score the High school competency test in reading, writing, and mathematics. The current written test does not address students who learn differently nor does it fairly measure students with special needs.

HB 405 would allow DOE the flexibility to adequately determine a student's academic ability. This legislation allows for more than one method to evaluate a student's competency. Currently DOE can only use a written competency tool, but if HB 405 is enacted, oral competency and other academic methods could be used to give a student its best chance for overall success.