Frequently Asked Questions About the
Alaska Computer Science Standards

Q: What *is* computer science?

A: Computer science is an established discipline at the collegiate and post-graduate levels. It is best defined as "the study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their applications, and their impact on society." All students need to understand a world that is increasingly influenced by technology and to apply computing as a tool for learning and expression across a variety of disciplines and interests.

Q: Why does Alaska need computer science standards?

A: There is an urgent need to improve the level of public understanding of computer science as an academic and professional field. To successfully function in society, every citizen in the 21st century must understand, at the minimum, the principles of computer science. A commitment to implementing K–12 computer science standards in Alaska will aid in creating this broad public understanding and also help meet the evolving needs of the Alaskan workforce.

Q: How were these standards developed?

A: The Alaska Computer Science Standards are based on the Computer Science Teachers Association's Interim K–12 Computer Science Standards. K-12 educators from around the state, institutions of higher education, as well as industry were engaged as part of the standards creation process.

Q: Was there an opportunity for the general public to submit feedback on the standards during the development process?

A: Yes. The *Alaska Computer Science Standards* had a public feedback period prior to their finalization. The standards were made available via the State Board of Education's website. Public comment and feedback was gathered from direct emails, in writing, and via oral testimony. In addition to the public feedback, teachers, scientific and educator organizations, higher education faculty, scientists, and business community members reviewed drafts at specific intervals.