



# Representative Andi Story

## Alaska State Legislature

### Sponsor Statement House Bill 28, Version H (34-LS0303\H) April 22, 2026

#### ***“An Act establishing a student loan repayment pilot program; and providing for an effective date.”***

House Bill 28 includes several education funding measures intended to inject much-needed resources into Alaska’s schools and classrooms. The bill also includes a new pilot program to help alleviate Alaska’s ongoing teacher shortage.

HB 28 creates a three-year pilot program to help teachers in hard-to-fill roles in Alaska repay their student loans. Eligible teachers could receive up to \$5,000 a year for three years in student loan repayment grants.

In response to skyrocketing energy costs, HB 28 authorizes a \$43.7 million one-time energy cost relief payment to school districts. This will allow districts to purchase electricity and heating fuel for the upcoming school year without diverting funding from the classroom. In response to high gas prices, HB 28 authorizes a 10 percent increase in state per-pupil transportation funding.

Additionally, HB 28 supports the Task Force on Education Funding's top priority by commissioning a comprehensive, research-based education funding study that will serve as a critical tool for evaluating the adequacy of established funding factors and base student funding in Alaska. This study will serve as a first step toward updating Alaska’s Foundation Formula for public education funding.

HB 28 also includes reporting requirements for Alaska’s correspondence study programs and a provision allowing Alaska’s only Educational Resource Center to hire retired teachers and certified staff without jeopardizing their retirement.

Finally, HB 28 repeals the conditional-effect language in House Bill 57 that became law in 2025. The conditional-effect language tied reading proficiency grants for K-6 students and additional funding for career and technical education to the enactment of a highly digitized business tax. Removing the conditional-effect language will allow Alaska’s school districts to benefit from \$21.8 million in reading proficiency grants and an estimated \$9.7 million in additional career and technical education funding.

Version H of House Bill 28 supports Alaska’s vital public education system with much-needed resources and sound policies to attract and retain high-quality teachers and help kids to read.

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