

Davis-Ramoth Memorial School



April 1, 2011

Senate Finance Committee Members
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Senators Stedman and Hoffman and the entire Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of Davis-Ramoth Memorial School of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District located in Selawik, and asking you to make education a funding priority. Our Selawik school community includes parents and concerned community members who recognize the vital role of public education and the need to maintain its core purpose. We are very aware of the painful choices that must be made as you go through the budget process and we ask that you consider the long-term repercussions of depriving our children of an adequate education.

The State of Alaska has the responsibility of funding school districts adequately and this has never been more urgent than the present time with needed support for increased Base Student Allocation, Career Tech programs and the higher level of service required to reach federally mandated AYP requirements in rural villages. Because of the State's budget difficulties, your committee is considering not providing the funding needed to cover many required costs, instead opting to defer funding with the passage of the School District and Municipal Energy Relief bill providing for future relief. SB84 provides for additional funding over 3-years that will assist districts in addressing increasing costs and will help to invigorate vocational/career tech. The alternative, SB97, is a good solution for high energy costs and when the money becomes available in Fy13 would be a welcome tool to assist school districts and communities with high energy costs. 2013 is a lengthy amount of time to wait for needed funding causing the following detrimental issues:

- By not providing full funding you are depleting our school of critical classroom resources, including the loss of three certified teachers.
- Anything less than full funding places additional financial burdens on our school.
- The lack of priority placed on fully funding our schools for the costs incurred in implementing vital programs, including physical education and alternative education, suggests that the programs themselves are not of a high priority, giving reason to the argument that Alaska's legislature needs to review and sustain only the critical programs that it can afford to fund on an annual basis.

Davis-Ramoth Memorial School has a diverse membership that is united by support for maintaining full educational funding. We all have different positions on common issues but are united in the belief that during an economic crisis our State Leaders should make Education a priority. We want the following solutions considered:

- All unfunded programs should be immediately suspended and reviewed for their relevance.
- All programs deemed irrelevant or with duplicity shall be immediately eliminated

- The Legislature should adopt SB84 to fully fund current education programs.
- Education programs deemed necessary shall be prioritized and only fully funded programs will be required by the State Department of Education.
- School districts may continue to expect full funding via the State on State required programs for costs incurred.
- The Legislature should increase funding and staffing levels.

We are all feeling the strain and making tremendous sacrifices. We need you, our Elected Leaders, to publicly acknowledge that you understand the current situation and are committed to working together in finding solutions. We want you to take a leadership role in finding and implementing real results. This will require personal sacrifices that may reach into your comfort zones; just remember it is for the betterment of our State. This is your time to be our children's hero and make the hard decisions that will ultimately end Alaska's economic decline and start us back on the road to prosperity.

We appreciate your attention in this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Eddie R. Campbell, Jr., Ed. D.
Principal

Murray Richmond

From: Lon Garrison [Lon_Garrison@nsraa.org]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 12:50 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Cc: crose@aasb.org; Crystal Kennedy; prophet@ptialaska.net; smallfry@ptialaska.net; Mollie Kabler; pookc@mail.ssd.k12.ak.us; bradshaws@mail.ssd.k12.ak.us; Mike and Andi Story
Subject: Support for SB84 from Lon Garrison, Sitka School Board President

Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As a member of the Sitka School Board and a parent of a child in the Sitka school district I am imploring you to support increased education funding by supporting **SB84**. This is the only bill the legislature has put forward that continues the good work accomplished by the Education Funding Task Force begun in the summer of 2007. For the past three years, school boards have had the ability to budget knowing what the state would be contributing and knowing that the increases included in that package provided funds that helped to address increasing costs. Now as FY2012 approaches, we find ourselves right back where we had hoped we would not be: what can we expect from the state? Is there a plan? SB 84 continues that plan with moderate increases in the BSA over three years that barely keep up with the rate of inflation. We need to be able to know in advance what our funding picture looks like in order to plan appropriately. We are in jeopardy of eliminating programs such as extracurricular activities, music, art and so on if we cannot keep up with escalating costs. We may not even be able to provide the rigor of coursework the Governor is so keen on demanding for the Alaska Performance Scholarships, a program put forward as a way to motivate students to do better. Fewer resources mean fewer choices.

School districts and school boards face a variety of challenges in our constitutionally mandated charge to educate all of Alaska's children no matter who they are, where they come from, and whether they are prepared to learn. In Sitka it is a responsibility we take seriously and with zeal because we know **it is the right thing to do**. This is the essence of a free public education.

SB84 also provides funding that is intended to go directly to career and technical education(CTE) (voc-ed as we used to call it) as a block grant and we enthusiastically support this. In Sitka, we have maintained an excellent CTE curriculum that can readily use these funds and potentially expand its offerings. We know that upwards of 80% of our students may not choose a college path of post secondary education. This gives us the opportunity to continue or better yet, improve what we offer those students. Alaska will need these graduates to eventually fill the many skilled trades positions that are crucial to our economy and success.

On Sunday March 27th, I listened to Karen Rehfeld, Budget Director for the Parnell administration tell those of us attending the AASB legislative fly-in that the state is likely to receive nearly \$2 billion in excess revenue for FY2011 and another \$2 billion in excess revenue in FY2012. So there is a good chance the state could see an additional \$4 billion in the next 2 years. The current fiscal note for SB84 is just over \$95 million dollars for all three years combined! **Only 2.3% of the projected surplus!** I can't buy the argument we cannot afford this. We cannot afford to miss the opportunity to invest in our future each and every year, one student at a time!

Senators, let me be plain, to not support passage of SB84 is wrong. Please, explain to me how not doing this helps Sitka? How this won't help kids in this state and how this is not good for your constituents? Senators, you are in a critically important position as a leadership committee and we look to your leadership at this moment. The senate has been the only body in this session to show leadership and forethought regarding education. Please don't let us down. I have appreciated your measured and what I considered thoughtful

approach to our state budget. The state has work to do and education is one of the cornerstones of its constitutional responsibilities. Why can you not help but be compelled to continue that good work?

Respectfully yours,

Lon Garrison

President, Sitka School Board

Work: 747-6850

Cell: 738-9093

Murray Richmond

From: Watkins, Bill [Bill.Watkins@kodiakschools.org]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 12:46 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

April 1, 2011

Dear Senator Thomas,

As both a parent and a school administrator, and a resident of Alaska for 47 years, I see the youth of Alaska as our most important resource. I ask you to please support SB 84 to provide a long-term solution for maintaining and sustaining quality education programs in our great state.

While SB 97 may provide a short-term solution in FY 13 if the price of oil is more than \$89.00 a barrel, it is a very risky solution. We all know that oil prices are volatile and unpredictable, and for that reason our children's educational funding should not be dependent on the price of oil, which is affected by many international issues outside of our control.

Currently, school districts are doing everything they can to provide students with a "whole" education, one that includes Career and Technical Studies (Vocational) the arts, and music. To sustain quality CTE, Art, Music and Physical Education programs, districts must have a consistent funding formula. Connecting funding to the price of oil will allow districts to fund CTE, Music, Arts and Physical Education when the price of oil is above \$89.00 a barrel. However, when the price of oil decreases below \$89.00 per barrel the first programs to be cut will be CTE, Music, arts and physical education.

SB 84 provides for additional funding over 3-years that will assist all districts in addressing ever increasing inflationary costs and help invigorate vocational/career tech education. SB 97 is also a good solution for high-energy costs and when it's available in 2013 would assist school districts and communities with high-energy costs. Without SB 84, we would not have any consistency in the delivery of CTE, Music, Art and Physical Education programs.

On another note, I have heard legislators speak to the need for districts to cut administration as a solution for balancing the budget. As a high school principal providing oversight for 800 students, please know that I wear many other hats. I am also the director of two alternative programs, I manage over \$500,000 in grants that support these programs, and I am the CTE director and the director of secondary education. I am one administrator taking on the responsibilities of three full-time administrators. Most of my administrative colleagues in Alaska take on many more responsibilities than just providing leadership and supervision for one school or one program.

Without SB 84, our district will be forced to cut seven teaching positions and two administrative positions. In addition, with fewer teachers and administrators I will need to eliminate vocational/CTE choices from the Master Schedule.

For the sake of Alaska Youth please support SB 84

Sincerely,

Bill Watkins
KHS Principal
907 942 3171

Murray Richmond

From: scrawfor@alaska.net
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 12:22 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

Please consider supporting SB 84 for the Senate and moving on to the House. Our kids need this 3 year funding guarantee and voc tech training. Our kids and grandkids don't wait for the price of oil to settle but need these funds now.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Crawford

Kenai

Murray Richmond

From: Sally McLaughlin [tsmclaughlin@hughes.net]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 12:15 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; senator.lesil.mcguire@legis.ak.us; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Senate Bill 84

Dear Senators;

I am writing to ask for your support for SB 84. Our district is presently cutting teachers, considering classified staff reductions and non-replacement of retiring teachers to cope with the proposed flat funding for next year.

Our district has made academic improvements in our students' performance based on last year's SBA test results. At least one of our struggling schools has made AYP for two years in a row for the first time. The potential for losing ground is very high if our staffing is reduced due to flat funding; reduced class sizes equate to better test results. Given the recent state budget projections of 2.5 to 3.0 billion in increased state revenue due to higher oil prices, the logic for holding the line is less logical. We realize there are always competing interests for the existing funds, but K-12 public education serves our future by helping prepare our current students for taking our place as they grow up and take their rightful place in our wonderful state. Please do not let them down.

Here are some to the reasons to support SB 84:

- Alaska is receiving a strong financial return from high oil prices and it is appropriate to invest more in Alaska's future through K-12 education.
- The tremendous benefits that districts, teachers, support staff, families and students enjoyed with our recent three-year forward funding package that allowed for more precise budget planning and eliminated much of the upheaval that occurs with staff layoffs and program reductions.
- SB84 provides for additional funding over 3-years that will assist all districts in addressing ever increasing inflationary costs and help invigorate vocational/career tech.
- SB97 is a good solution for high energy costs and when available in Fy13 would be a welcome tool to assist school districts and communities with high energy costs.

Thank you for your consideration on this very important piece of legislation. I appreciate your efforts to put children first!

Sally McLaughlin
President, Chatham Regional School Board
Gustavus, AK

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 10:07 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84
Attachments: image003.jpg

From: Kathy Gearhart [<mailto:kgearhart@crsd.k12.ak.us>]

Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:57 AM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens

Subject: SB84

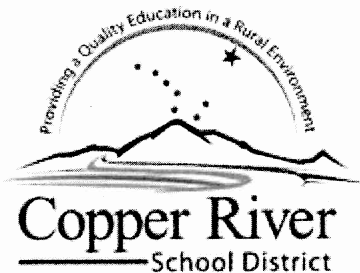
Dear Senators,

Thank you for your hard work in Juneau to ensure the well-being of this great State.

I would like to share my thoughts with you on SB84. I have worked for Copper River School District for seven years now and the budget has always been a worrisome affair for the coming school year. With the continuing increase in energy costs, pay increases, and health benefits our district has had to continue to make budget cuts to balance each year. As you know, the education of our children is so important to the future of our country. SB84 would allow all school districts to plan for that future in a more efficient and effective way.

As Alaska benefits from the high cost of oil, please consider SB97 as well to help school districts deal with the rising cost of energy.

Sincerely,



Kathy Gearhart
Superintendent/Board Secretary
P.O. Box 108
Glennallen, Alaska 99588
(907) 822-3234 ext. 223
Fax (907) 822-3949

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:46 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: Leslie Evenden [<mailto:dldmevenden@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:35 AM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis

Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 84. This bill is critical for our schools to be able to plan and guarantee a level of funding that they can count on.

I am the mother of two children in the Haines School District and appreciate your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Leslie Evenden

PO Box 244

Haines, Alaska 99827

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:46 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: No on SB 97; Yes on SB 84

From: Lynnette Dihle [<mailto:dihles@gci.net>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:29 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Governor@gov.state.ak.us; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: No on SB 97; Yes on SB 84

Dear Govenor, Senate Finance Committee and Juneau Legislators,

Thank you for your work and dedication.

We came to Alaska in 1975, two years after we were married. We are parents of Alaskan adult children, and grandparents of 3 local children. We have worked in the field of education as teachers, and counselors in the schools, and community since 1978. We do not like wasting money. We understand what quality education is and much of what it takes to get there. We basically understand the fiscal challenges of our country and state.

We **SUPPORT SB 84.** We **DO NOT SUPPORT SB 97.** It is too little, if at all, and late. We urge you to be the legislative leaders of our wonderful state of Alaska that views children as our most valuable resource.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Lynnette and Nils Dihle
2454 Engineers Cutoff (since 1978)
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:27 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84

From: William Mcleod [<mailto:wmcleod@dlgsd.org>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:23 AM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Senartor.Donny.Olson@legis.state.ak.us; Senator.Johnny.Ellis@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: dcscd@dlgsd.org; Kimberly Williams; Deon Lopez; Izetta Chambers; Bernina Venua; Kyle Belleque; Alice Ruby; Keggie
Subject: SB84

Hello Senators,

On behalf of Dillingham City School District I want to thank each of you for your previous support of education funding. I am sure you have received many correspondence regarding the reasons for approving SB84 and continuing support for educational funding. Our district is one that has struggled with student achievement, limited resources, and many demands on our limited resources. That being said we are in the process of implementing significant instructional changes that are based on the Alaska Standards, current research, and best practices. We are starting to see significant improvement such as **increasing our graduation rate from around 50% for several previous years to 70% last year. Student improvement is increasing with our current initiatives** and we expect this years annual assessments to reflect this. We initially forecast our FY12 budget on a modest increase to the student base allocation of \$100 which included two new staff positions (a reading specialist and a K-2 instructional aide) that we know is needed to help our struggling learners. We focused these positions on our youngest kids (k, 1, & 2) knowing if we do more to help them get up to grade level proficiency by the 3rd grade they will have a much higher opportunity for academic success. The reality of removing this modest increase from the budget we submitted to the City of Dillingham has been the reduction of these needed positions. I am asking each of you to support a modest increases for education funding in SB84 and thus significantly helping DCSD meet the needs our kids.

Respectfully,

William (Bill) McLeod,
Superintendent DCSD

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:18 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

From: Scott Butterfield [<mailto:sbutterfield@chathamisd.org>]

Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:11 AM

To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens

Subject: Senate Bill 84

Dear Senators;

I am writing to seek your support for SB 84. Our district is presently cutting two teachers, not rehiring one other retiring teacher and is also looking at classified hour reductions or layoffs to cope with the proposed flat funding for next year.

Our district has made academic improvements in our students' performance based on last year's SBA test results. Angoon has made AYP for two straight years where it never made AYP before. This is no small achievement! The potential for losing ground is present if our staffing is reduced due to flat funding. Given the recent state budget projections of 2.5 to 3.0 billion in increased state revenue, due to higher oil prices, the logic for holding the line is less logical. We realize there are always competing interests for the existing funds, but K-12 public education serves our future by helping prepare our current students for taking our place as they grow up and take their rightful place in our wonderful state. Please do not let them down.

Here are some to the reasons to support SB 84:

- Alaska is receiving a strong financial return from high oil prices and it is appropriate to invest more in Alaska's future through K-12 education.
- The tremendous benefits that districts, teachers, support staff, families and students enjoyed with our recent three-year forward funding package that allowed for more precise budget planning and eliminated much of the upheaval that occurs with staff layoffs and program reductions.
- SB84 provides for additional funding over 3-years that will assist all districts in addressing ever increasing inflationary costs and help invigorate vocational/career tech.
- SB97 is a good solution for high energy costs and when available in Fy13 would be a welcome tool to assist school districts and communities with high energy costs.

Thank you for your consideration on this very important piece of legislation.

Thank You,



Scott Butterfield, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Chatham School District
907-788-3302 ext. 3112

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 9:14 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for Senate Bill 84

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Davis [<mailto:mdavis@cordovasd.org>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 8:46 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 84

This email is to encourage your support for Senate Bill 84. This 3 year forward funding would allow districts to plan their budgets more precisely. It would help to invigorate our vocational education programs which haven't been funded sufficiently in the past. Districts have faced increase energy costs and have had to cut staff in order to meet these costs. Our district has had to cut teachers at all levels due to budget cuts. We have had the support of the community to renovate our grade school, but due to these cuts, we can't afford to hire a maintenance person to keep the building well-maintained.

Please consider supporting this bill as a critical investment in our children's future.

Mary Davis
Mt. Eccles Elementary School

January 14, 2011

Alaska Legislature Education Committee Chairs
Senator Joe Thomas / Senator Kevin Meyer
Representative Alan Dick
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Senators Thomas and Meyer, Representative Dick:

I'm writing on behalf of the Alaska Business Education Compact (ABEC) with congratulations on your committee appointments and thanks for your participation in the 27th Alaska Legislature. The Education committees you will lead are critical to preparing Alaskans for the future, both as part of the workforce and for their own success in life.

In 2010 a major effort was made to put together a plan for Career and Technical Education in Alaska. Endorsed by the Board of Education, Alaska Workforce Investment Board and the UA Board of Regents, the collaborative plan of the DOLWD, DEED and UA is now a blueprint for preparing our Alaskan students for successful and economic careers. The Alaska Business Education Compact was among many groups in Alaska to both support the initiative and to participate in the development. From our perspective, the CTE plan is a great step forward in attaining the goals of the state in educating Alaskans. The collaboration of the state departments and the university marks a long overdue step in assuring articulation among the major players in delivering education to Alaskans for a clear career pathway.

The Vocational Technical Education Providers (VTEP, a sub-committee of AWIB) and the ABEC led an effort to inform legislators, business and industry and other groups across Alaska about the plan and supported efforts to help allocate funding to support the plan. Those efforts included supporting bills (like HB 317) to route funding from the state to CTE programs as well as communications to school districts regarding budget planning and information to business communities about support for the plan.

Partners in the effort included business and industry associations, school districts and education associations. Part of the information process included packaging of letters of support from over 50 entities from across the state, urging the state and the local communities to provide strong career and technical education for all students in all regions.

While the Legislative bills have not yet addressed the allocation issue of funding, we would encourage the education committees to look at the previous bills and some new approaches. At

the local level, many districts are already including support in their budgets and bonds for the infrastructure to deliver CTE per the plan: as examples, with their board support, ASD and Mat-Su are working with their local governance entities to assure that the CTE is strengthened in their regions.

There is strong support from the ABEC and other business / industry organizations to enhance and support the basic elements of the CTE plan. That support should include such integral concepts as the following:

- Designated state funding for CTE should be provided with categorical designation in the funding formula or a budget appropriation from the legislature to the locally controlled school districts or institutions with intent to support CTE.
- Increase and Enhance Industry Financial Support by way of allowing tax incentive for a broad type of business entities that financially support CTE programs.
- CTE Programs of Study should be industry driven and validated and should lead to a certification and/or placement in a post-secondary program. They should be developed, implemented, and evaluated, based on their ability to link students to high wage, high skill, or high demand occupations.
- CTE Course Credits should be able (as applicable) to qualify for core academic status (i.e. math, science) to enable students to use these credits to meet graduation requirements and qualifications for the Alaska Performance Scholarships. The requirement for instructors to attain highly qualified teacher status for the core subject area should be sufficiently flexible to include industry-qualified CTE instructors.
- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development should have an adequate administrative support unit specified for administering, regulating, and monitoring CTE in Alaska.

The Alaska Business Education Compact would like to reiterate our continuing advocacy of the CTE plan as an integral part of the state's education plan. We hope to work to provide insights to the Legislature from the Business / Industry sectors as well as to continue the dialogue of employers, educators, parents and communities. We would offer to assist the legislative committees in developing the appropriate bills and processes

Dave Rees, Facilitator



Alaska Business Education Compact

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 8:14 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: School Funding

-----Original Message-----

From: Ex_Steve [mailto:Ex_Steve@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 10:09 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Representative Charisse Millett; Rep. Pete Petersen; Rep. Anna Fairclough; Rep. Berta Gardner; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Doogan; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Sharon Cissna; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lesil McGuire
Cc: School Board; Carl F.N. Rose; bjohnson@alaskaacsa.org; Comeau_Carol
Subject: School Funding

Elected officials,

Having seen Anchorage Superintendent Comeau's email to you, please also accept my thanks for your long-time efforts in support of our community and state through funding of education. As a 30 year Eagle River resident, with a special needs son who was provided excellent educational opportunities in ASD, and as uncle to seven nephews and nieces (all current ASD students or graduates), I have directly experienced the difference your efforts and those of your predecessors have made for our community.

My urging your support of Senate Bills 84 and 97 is motivated by my strong interest in our community, and is informed by 28 years of teaching and administrative work with ASD. I'm retiring this June, and expect to live in this area the rest of my life. Although my professional life will no longer be directly impacted by K-12 funding decisions, the quality of the place I call home clearly will diminish if the cuts our current FY12 budget reflect go into effect. It is no secret that education is the smartest investment we can make for the future of our community in a highly competitive global economy. Your actions now in support of increased school funding would make a substantial difference in the return on our current investment.

The ASD Board, superintendent and her leadership team have worked incredibly hard to minimize negative impacts to nearly 50,000 students in making those cuts. Nonetheless, there remains vital work the current budget cannot support. As the curriculum coordinator responsible for K-12 social studies, I can assure you that our students and teachers need more support than is possible with available resources. Like others in the curriculum department, I consistently seek and frequently obtain grant funding to strengthen that situation. ARRA (federal stimulus) funding the past two years made possible some critically needed curriculum support. The current budget cannot provide for other curriculum work that is long overdue. Those projects directly impact students and teachers, because they involve updating instructional materials and providing professional development.

Your passage of Senate Bills 84 and 97 would allow ASD leadership to seriously consider such projects through budget prioritization. I know they will act in the best interest of our students in that process, investing in what is perceived as most urgently needed. Thanks in advance for your serious consideration of this legislation.

Sincerely, Steve Ex

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 8:13 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support Senate Bill 84

From: Shelagh Sands [<mailto:shelaghsands@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:39 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis

Subject: Support Senate Bill 84

Dear Senators,

I am a parent of three children, two who are in the Juneau School District, one who is at Dartmouth and made it there from the same district. I am begging you to support Senate Bill 84. Our schools cannot cut another million dollars from their budget. We will lose our Elementary Art position, which services over 1200 kids. We will lose a high school counselor that serves 400 hundred kids, plus many more programs and teachers.

I am the President of the Arts For Kids board. I have worked diligently to place and fund the Elementary Art Program that exists in our schools. Before this it had been 25 years since we had elementary art throughout our district. Kids need to have things like art to stay in school. It has been documented that art increases math and science scores.

Please realize that if you don't keep kids in school they cost the government more later in life. It is wise to fund our children now and keep forward funding education.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope you see the future for our children by supporting this bill to raise SBA.

Shelagh Sands

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:11 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: CONSTITUENT - Funding for Education, Senate Bill No. 84
Attachments: What I Learned at School - NYTimes.pdf

From: Art Gelvin [<mailto:amgelvin@acsalaska.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 11:13 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Funding for Education, Senate Bill No. 84

Dear Senator Thomas:

Recently, a friend shared an article with me that was posted on the New York Times website, which caused me to want to share it with my friends and it is something that I'd like to share with you. If you have a few minutes, please read this article, and maybe reflect on who was the most influential teacher in your education.

Funding for schools is of the utmost importance and any increase in school funding will help our schools. I see many classrooms that are overcrowded; my daughter is currently in a fourth grade class with 32 students. Schools are holding fundraisers and collecting aluminum cans to buy construction paper and basic supplies. Teachers' are spending money out of their own pockets for educational tools that the District won't or can't supply. There is a lack of resources to help those kids with emotional and physical needs, especially when dealing with a deployed parent, who is away for a year in Iraq or Afghanistan.

I urge you to support Senate Bill No. 84. The increase that is within the bill allows the school district's funding to keep pace with inflation and maybe the increased cost of utilities. I urge you to keep increasing the funding for education. Our teachers' work hard with the resources that they have, they are not the "glorified baby sitters" as some would view them, but are caring people who want to make a difference.

Regards,

Arthur (Art) Gelvin
PO Box 83588
Fairbanks, AK 99708

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March 30, 2011

What I Learned at School

By **MARIE MYUNG-OK LEE**

Providence, R.I.

THE tumult over state budgets and collective bargaining rights for public employees has spilled over into resentment toward public school teachers, who are increasingly derided as “glorified baby sitters” whose pay exceeds the value of the work they do.

But how exactly do we measure the value of a teacher?

As a writer, I often receive feedback from readers I have never met. But the other day, I received a most unexpected message in response to one of my essays:

“I am so proud of you and all you have accomplished. I shared your opinion from The L.A. Times with my family and reminisced about you as my student at Hibbing High School.”

It was signed Margaret Leibfried, who was my English teacher — a teacher who appeared at a critical juncture in my life and helped me believe that I could become a writer.

Thirty years ago, in Hibbing, a town in northern Minnesota that is home to the world’s largest open-pit iron mine, I entered high school as a bookish introvert made all the more shy because I was the school’s only nonwhite student. I always felt in danger of being swept away by a sea of statuesque blond athletes. By 10th grade, I’d developed a Quasimodo-like posture and crabwise walk, hoping to escape being teased as a “brain” or a “chink,” and then finding being ignored almost equally painful. I spent a lot of time alone, reading and scribbling stories.

Ms. Leibfried taught American literature and composition grammar, which involved the usual — memorizing vocabulary and diagramming sentences — but also, thrillingly, reading novels.

Thrilling to me, that is. Many of my classmates expressed disdain for novels because they were “not real.” For once, I didn’t care what they thought. Ms. Leibfried seemed to notice

my interest in both reading and writing, and she took the time to draw me out; she even offered reading suggestions, like one of her favorite novels, “The Bell Jar.”

That year’s big project was a book report, to be read aloud to the class. However, Ms. Leibfried took me aside and suggested I do something “a little different.” Instead of a report, I was to pick a passage from a book, memorize it and recite it in front of the class.

While I longed for the safety and routine of the report, I was curious how this new assignment might work out. By then obsessed with “The Bell Jar,” I chose a passage that I thought showed off the protagonist’s growing depression as well as Sylvia Plath’s sly humor.

The morning of the presentations, I remember my palms sweating so badly as I walked to the front of the class that I held my hands cupped in prayer formation, so I wouldn’t wipe them on my shirt.

I saw the days of the year stretching ahead like a series of bright, white boxes, and separating one box from another was sleep, like a black shade. Only for me, the long perspective of shades that set off one box from the next had suddenly snapped up, and I could see day after day glaring ahead of me like a white, broad, infinitely desolate avenue.

It seemed silly to wash one day when I would only have to wash again the next.

It made me tired just to think of it.

I wanted to do everything once and for all and be through with it.

Dr. Gordon twiddled a silver pencil. “Your mother tells me you are upset.”

I finished and, to my surprise, the class broke out in applause. “As a writer and a good reader, Marie has picked out a particularly sensitive piece of prose and delivered it beautifully,” Ms. Leibfried said, beaming. I felt, maybe for the first time, confident.

Ms. Leibfried was followed the next year by Mrs. Borman, quiet, elderly and almost as shy as I was. She surprised everyone when she excused me from her grammar class, saying my time would be spent more productively writing in the library. I took the work seriously, and on a whim submitted an essay I’d come up with to Seventeen Magazine. When they published it, it was big news for the high school — it was even announced on the P.A. system. Mrs. Borman wasn’t mentioned, nor did she ever take any credit; in her mind she

was just doing her job.

I can now appreciate how much courage it must have taken for those teachers to let me deviate so broadly from the lesson plan. With today's pressure on teachers to "teach to the test," I wonder if any would or could take the time to coax out the potential in a single, shy student.

If we want to understand how much teachers are worth, we should remember how much we were formed by our own schooldays. Good teaching helps make productive and fully realized adults — a result that won't show up in each semester's test scores and statistics.

That's easy to forget, as budget battles rage and teacher performance is viewed through the cold metrics of the balance sheet. While the love of literature and confidence I gained from Ms. Leibfried's class shaped my career and my life, after only four short years at Hibbing High School, she was laid off because of budget cuts, and never taught again.

Marie Myung-Ok Lee, the author of the novel "Somebody's Daughter," teaches writing at Brown.



**WRANGELL
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
DISTRICT OFFICE

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

P.O. BOX 2319
WRANGELL, ALASKA 99929
Telephone (907) 874-2347
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April 1, 2011

Honorable Senator Joe Thomas
State Capitol
Juneau, AK. 99801

Dear Senator Thomas:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 84, which would increase the Base Student Allocation for K-12 education and provide additional funds for vocational and career education. Base Student Allocation increases and an increase in support for high school vocational and career education classes are crucial for districts to "maintain" programs. Our health insurance, liability insurance, salaries, energy costs increase annually. This amount will not keep up with all of our inflationary costs. However, if we can at least stay close to inflation the cuts we have to make will be easier.

Also being forward funded is the only common sense way to run the state's business. With tenured teacher contracts rolling over in March, for a district not to know how much money it will have is extremely dangerous.

I also appreciate your insight for Alaska's worker preparation. We should be training our own people to take the jobs that are available in state. Adding a dedicated amount to the Vocational allotment is a good thing.

Without this additional money we will be forced to cut programs and services. I strongly support both parts of this bill and thank you for leadership in proposing it.

Sincerely yours,

Larry "Woody" Wilson
Superintendent

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:08 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: AASSP supports CSSB84

From: AASSP [<mailto:aassp@alaskaprincipal.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 9:08 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: AASSP supports CSSB84

ATTN:
Sen. Joe Thomas
Senate Finance Committee

Dear Senator Thomas:

I understand the Senate Finance Committee will be allowing testimony on Wednesday, April 6, 2011 on CSSB 84, a bill introduced by the Senate Education Committee that provides for a new multi-year funding formula with annual increases in the base student allocation (BSA). The provision in this bill would also allow districts to offer a vibrant career and technical education curriculum; something industry leaders have said is a priority if Alaska is to have a qualified workforce and a diverse economy. SB 84 will be very important in furthering the implementation of the state Career and Technical Education Plan

The Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals supports SB84 as written. We support this bill because it will allow the continuation of the recommendations that were part of the 2007 Joint Legislative Education Task Force. The prior funding plan included annual increases in the BSA. This was extremely helpful for district and school planning for instruction and helped schools avoid unnecessary layoffs and disruption due to funding uncertainty each spring.

AASSP acknowledges that SB 97 appears to be attractive as it would provide relief to school districts when oil prices are anticipated to be high. However, SB 97 does not provide schools with the the needed multi-year funding predictability in the BSA or predictable vocational funding that would allow districts to plan, implement and evaluate expanded vocational/CTE programs.

SB84 provides schools with certainty each year that the previous funding plan provided in annual defined BSA increases to keep pace with inflation for health insurance, food service, transportation and other costs. This certainty would ensure wise school district budget decisions that reduce the impact of cuts to instructional programs and reduce the disruption caused by lay-offs that are avoidable with funding certainty.

SB84 is a reasonable bill that will ensure no ground is lost in the progress districts have made over the past three years to offer a rigorous core curriculum. The Alaska Association of Secondary School

Principals supports SB84 and appreciates your efforts to move this bill forward so that schools can continue progress made the past three years.

Sincerely,

Andre' Layral
Executive Director
Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals
P.O. Box 83530
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Office: 907-458-8880
FAX: 907-458-8889
Email: aassp@alaskaprincipal.org
Web Page www.alaskaprincipal.org

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:08 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support education

From: luke dihle [<mailto:lukeolaf@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 9:07 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: Support education

I'm a lifelong Alaskan who loves this great state I work, play and raise a family in. I have one child in the JSD and two more that will be in JSD soon. I'm writing to state my support of education. With all the recent talk about cutting billions of dollars from unconscionably rich oil companies it greatly saddens me that in the same breath we would not adequately fund education for the children of Alaska. I hope your conscious leads you when considering this issue.

Luke Dihle

April 4, 2011

Honorable Senator Joe Thomas
Senate Finance Committee

Senator Thomas,

I am a concerned parent of two students in the Anchorage School System.

I understand you are involved in an important piece of legislation, School Funding Bill SB84; that would provide a modest increase in the base student allocation for the next three fiscal years.

I would like to ask you to consider the importance of strong educational system and vote to ensure proper funding is included in SB84 when it is voted on during the current session.

I understand there are other bills in consideration; however, I don't believe they provide a solid funding that ensures our schools have the resources they need to provide for our children.

I appreciate your consideration and hope I can count on your vote in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Faith
5270 Heritage Heights Drive
Anchorage, AK 99516

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:06 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

-----Original Message-----

From: Christian Martens, Heather [<mailto:Heather.ChristianMartens@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 7:48 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Senate Bill 84

Dear Senator Thomas:

I am a Special Education Director in Kodiak, AK. Many students receiving Special Education services have very limited career options with coursework which prepare them only for college. As public education in most states moved from a balanced pre collegiate/vocational curriculum, Alaska remained a strong advocate for vocational training. Students in Kodiak have enjoyed several strong vocational programs. However, those programs are overtaxed. Kodiak High School offers many vocational programs during zero hour (before school.) All students do not have access to zero hour due to lack of transportation or family commitments. An improved funding stream is needed to develop additional programs outside our outstanding welding, shipbuilding, automotive, and culinary arts programs. An improved funding stream is also needed to create increased opportunities in our established programs.

Kodiak Island Borough School District is a fiscally responsible district. We squeeze all the instruction possible out of our BSA. With an increase in the BSA, we can continue to support instruction which will help our students meet the rigorous and increasing targets set by our state.

Thank you for your time,
Heather Christian Martens, PhD
Special Services Administrator
Kodiak Island Borough School District

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:06 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84 and I need you to read this

From: Sherry L. Blizzard [<mailto:sherry.blizzard@k12northstar.org>]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 7:03 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Rep. David Guttenberg; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Bob Miller; Sen. John Coghill

Subject: SB 84 and I need you to read this

The increase in the base student allocation in the last few years has helped our school district fund programs that are making huge differences in our children's lives. Math is the best example I can give. In my school there are a number of students who fail to learn when class sizes are too large. Every day I see 5-6 different at-risk students going to math tutoring class at 8:30 a.m.--their own time! They WOULD NOT be passing a math class without this one-on-one instruction.

. We will go backwards if this allocation does not keep up with

inflation. Understand that every child is unique, they do not learn new concepts in a one mold-fits-all concept.

. Kids are Alaska's future. We should fund programs that are making all the difference in our children's lives now, and in the future.

. Vocational and technical training are critical to Alaska's future.

These programs not only keep kids in school, they also provide a trained workforce for our economy and support business. If vocational and technical training is not funded, individuals will suffer, and Alaska's economy will

suffer. Every year I am asked to write a letter of recommendation for a student who wants to be admitted to a school to learn auto mechanics, or nursing. Not every student wishes to pursue college, we need to keep the appropriate curriculum open for them to succeed.

. Please support Senate Bill 84.

Sincerely,

Sherry Blizzard

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:04 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84

From: moorelori@lycos.com [<mailto:moorelori@lycos.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 5:27 PM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens

Subject: SB84

Dear Senator,

I am a resident of Noatak, AK in the Northwest Arctic Borough and I am urging you to support the passage of SB84. Without the funding that comes with this bill, crucial teaching positions will be cut in the high school and our children will have very few class selections. The teachers have been working to improve our children's achievement and test scores have started rising. With the loss of teaching positions, our children will lose ground. Again, I ask you to please support SB84!

Sincerely,

Lori Moore

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:04 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support SB84

From: Robert J. Kirk [<mailto:rkirk@maniilaq.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 4:34 PM
To: Senator.Bert.Steadman@legis.state.ak.us; Senator.Lymon.Hoffman@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Support SB84

Senators,

I would like to communicate my support to fund SB84. With 2 Children in the Noatak School, I would like to see them have the best opportunity to learn in my hometown. Increased funding would allow them to receive more time with a teacher that may otherwise not be able to return to teach. Increasing the load on teachers would reduce their opportunity to receive quality learning. I am sending this urgent message on behalf of many constituents who are unable to voice their concerns over the potential to lose teachers in our community.

Respectfully,

Robert J. Kirk

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:04 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB 84

From: mike6154488802@gmail.com [<mailto:mike6154488802@gmail.com>] **On Behalf Of** Mike Brawner
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 4:15 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: Support for SB 84

Thank you for your support of education and the future of Alaska's kids! I urge your support of SB 84. This bill provides much needed stability for planning and the program development process and it addresses the much-needed support of high school vocational education. As I observe the dramatically increasing oil prices and other basic costs of operating a school district, an increase Base Student Allocation (BSA) with a 3-year formula could not come at a more critical time.

I strongly support this very vital legislation.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

From: Reed, Bob [<mailto:Bob.Reed@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 4:02 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Senate Bill 84

To Senator Thomas:

Please be sure to support Senate 84. We need a multi-year increase to the base student allocation from the state.

Thanks.

Bob Reed

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84

From: Dwight Taylor [<mailto:taylor46@acsalaska.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:46 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB84

Thanks you for your work on our behalf in the state legislature. Please pass SB84. Restore the \$110 funding increase and always forward fund education. Our children are the states most important resource

Dwight Taylor
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

"The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary." (Vince Lombardi)
"You get the best out of others when you give the best of yourself" (Harry Firestone)

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

-----Original Message-----

From: Langfitt, Diane [<mailto:Diane.Langfitt@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:39 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Senator.Lyman.Hoffman@leis.state.ak.us; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: Senate Bill 84

I am from Kodiak and I urge your support for Senate Bill 84. Adequate funding for education should be one of the top priorities of the state legislature. Thank you for all of the work you do on behalf of the youth of Alaska.

Diane Langfitt

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support of Senate Bill 84

-----Original Message-----

From: Jones, Kristin [<mailto:Kristin.Jones@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:33 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support of Senate Bill 84

I'm Kris Jones I would like to ask that you support Senate Bill 84. Thank You.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: support for SB84

-----Original Message-----

From: Dorner, Kimberlee [<mailto:Kimberlee.Dorner@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:17 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: support for SB84

My name is Kim Dorner and I would like to express my support of raising the base student allocation for public schools. This is an important legislative issue that deserves your consideration. As you know, any 'one shot' monies (while better than nothing) don't help us invest in sustainable programming to improve our schools. One time monies don't help us increase funding available for salary increases (which we need to stay competitive and retain and recruit quality educators to a state). Funding that doesn't allow school districts the local control that they need to make improvements over time is not very helpful. At a time when education is under the gun to raise standards, have 100% of our students proficient, and keep up with federal and state mandates; it is impossible for us to move forward if we are not given increases that allow us to expand programs to meet student needs.

The costs go up- just like they do for every government program annually. Yet, the dollars we have to make it all happen remain the same. It doesn't add up and I believe students suffer and programs get cut so that we can barely keep our heads above water. I am aware that there is a limited amount of money and that we need to be fiscally responsible as a state but really if it's a problem- then I will gladly pay a state income tax or you can have my dividend but PLEASE we have to be able to meet our students where they are to give them the best hope for the future that they can have. We've cut it all- right here at home. There is less art, music, PE, theater, vocational programs, social studies, science, health now then there was 15 years ago and that is just SAD. You can't ask us to do MORE for kids on less money annually because a dollar 10 years ago was worth more than today.

I am an educator in Kodiak because I want to invest in my community and I want to raise my children in the place I call home but they deserve a better than 'average' education and since when are we striving for 'average?' I want the BEST. I am willing to pay for the BEST, and I want to work for the BEST.

Ok- thank you for all of your hard work and commitment to Alaska's schools.

Kim Dorner

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 1:03 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: base allocation

From: Doug Dorner [<mailto:dougdorner@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:16 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: base allocation

Hi,

I would like to express my support for raising the base allocation given to schools per student. I've heard that in lieu of this you are considering a one time payment. I do not accept this as a solution. One time moneys can not replace the base allocation. It can not give the stability and foundation to build long lasting and meaningful programs.

Please fight for the future of education in Alaska, please support increasing the base student allocation.

Thanks,
Doug Dorner
907-486-5407

Catherine Reardon

From: rjsnoatak@inutek.net
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 10:25 AM
To: senator.donny.olson@legis.state.ak.us; sentator.bert.stedman@legis.state.as.us; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Our community implores your help

Senators, Donny, Bert, Lyman, Joe, Lesil, Dennis, Johnny, and Gary:

Please read these 3 short paragraphs that I've written following a Alaska School Council meeting just yesterday and incorporate them into the bigger picture of our great State's need for educational support and the passing of SB84. When it gets to paragraph 3, I am practically in tears and despair as I contemplate the struggle that our community(ies) face with an enormous imbalance of resources to unmet need. We need YOUR help.

Tina, Please include these comments from the community concerns of the ASC Napaaqtugmiut School meeting held on April 4, 2011.

As a parent when I went to the school at the end of the school day I was approached by 2 community members that said a School Board meeting was in progress that regarded 2 teachers being cut. I assumed one to be Jr. High teacher Darlene Campbell who had spoken of taking a sabbatical and was told the other was Timm Nelson, Jr. High/High School teacher. Seeing that the library was quite full including students, I was prompted to take part since I knew that our students and staff needed help, not "cuts". I had volunteered and subbed for the school this year and last year did school practicums, with any less help our children would have little chance of meeting adequate progress goals and in my opinion actually receive less than adequate education.

2 things I heard were quite appalling to me: 1, that Timm Nelson had received only this morning an e-mail from the NWABSD that said he was being offered either a volunteer transfer to Buckland or to accept an involuntary transfer if he wished to remain in the district. The appalling/shocking part of this news was he had only 24 hours in which to respond; I am sure there are many reasons and other sides we might not be privy to know, but where is the courtesy in this? Timm is highly involved in our students and community lives. He is well accepted and just now getting to a point of where after a couple of years of learning can make a tremendous impact; longevity and less turnover is proven to be a key factor in being able to reach a population effectively.

The other detriment to this happening, is it appears that "ok...Darlene Campbell is leaving, so let's not fill that position". Losing one junior high teacher could be bad enough and is unacceptable but cut another one who also happens to teach high school would leave only 1 teacher to cover our entire junior high population and only 2 teachers to cover all of the high school. 3 teachers in a village of 500+ to adequately instruct all of our jr high/senior high students? We want our kids to be ready and succeed in college? We want our kids to grab a hold of professions and role model success for future generations? I'm sorry, but 3 teachers do not have the resources, time or expertise in areas to give adequate education to our most valuable resource.

Please accept my comments as a desperate outreach and attempt to right what could be a possible and terrible wrong. Thank you.

Robert Sheldon
Parent and community member
PO Box 77
Noatak, AK 99761
907-485-2297