

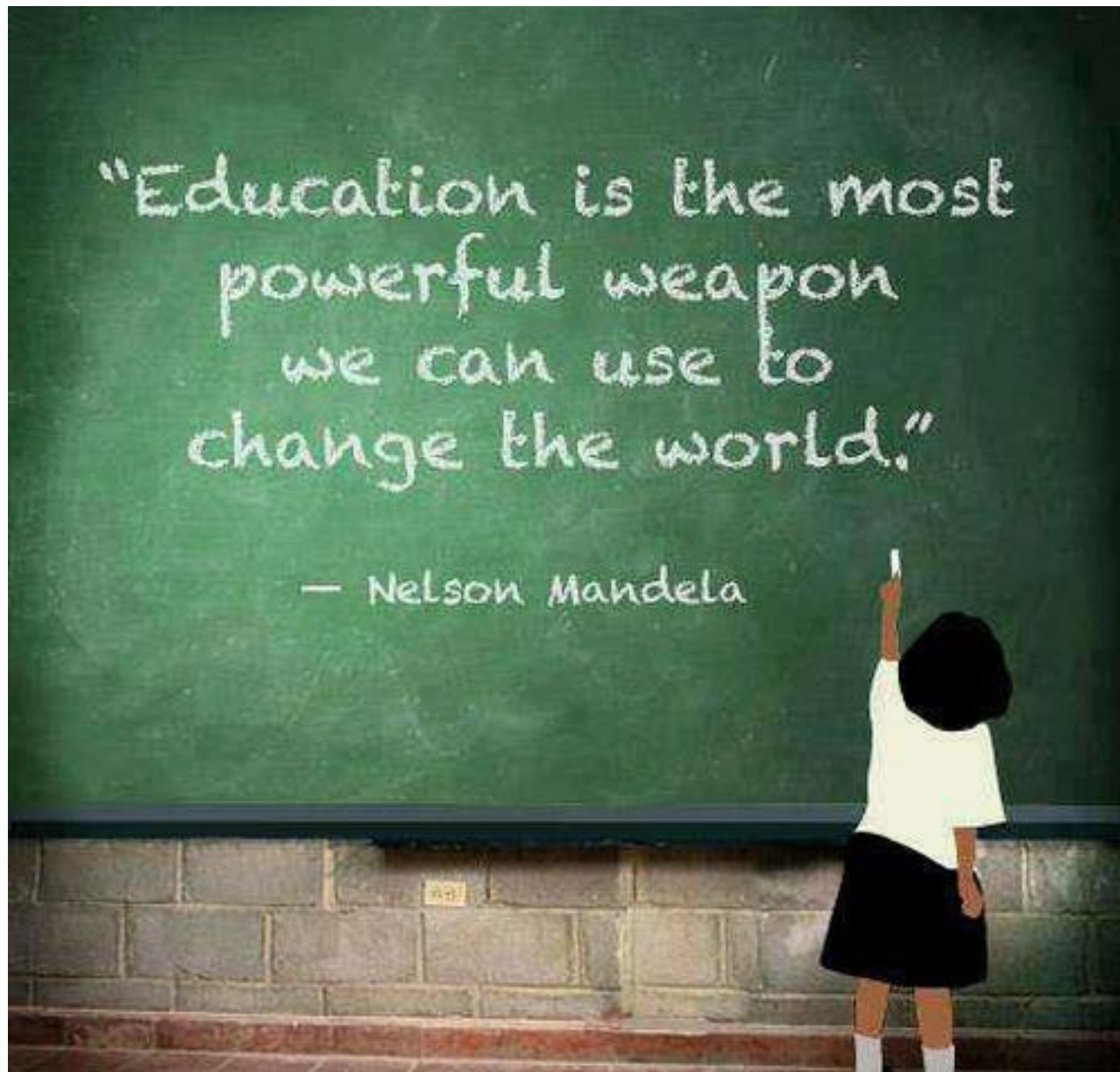
Education Matters:



IT'S TIME TO INCREASE THE BSA

"Education is the most
powerful weapon
we can use to
change the world."

— Nelson Mandela



HB 339: A Modest Increase

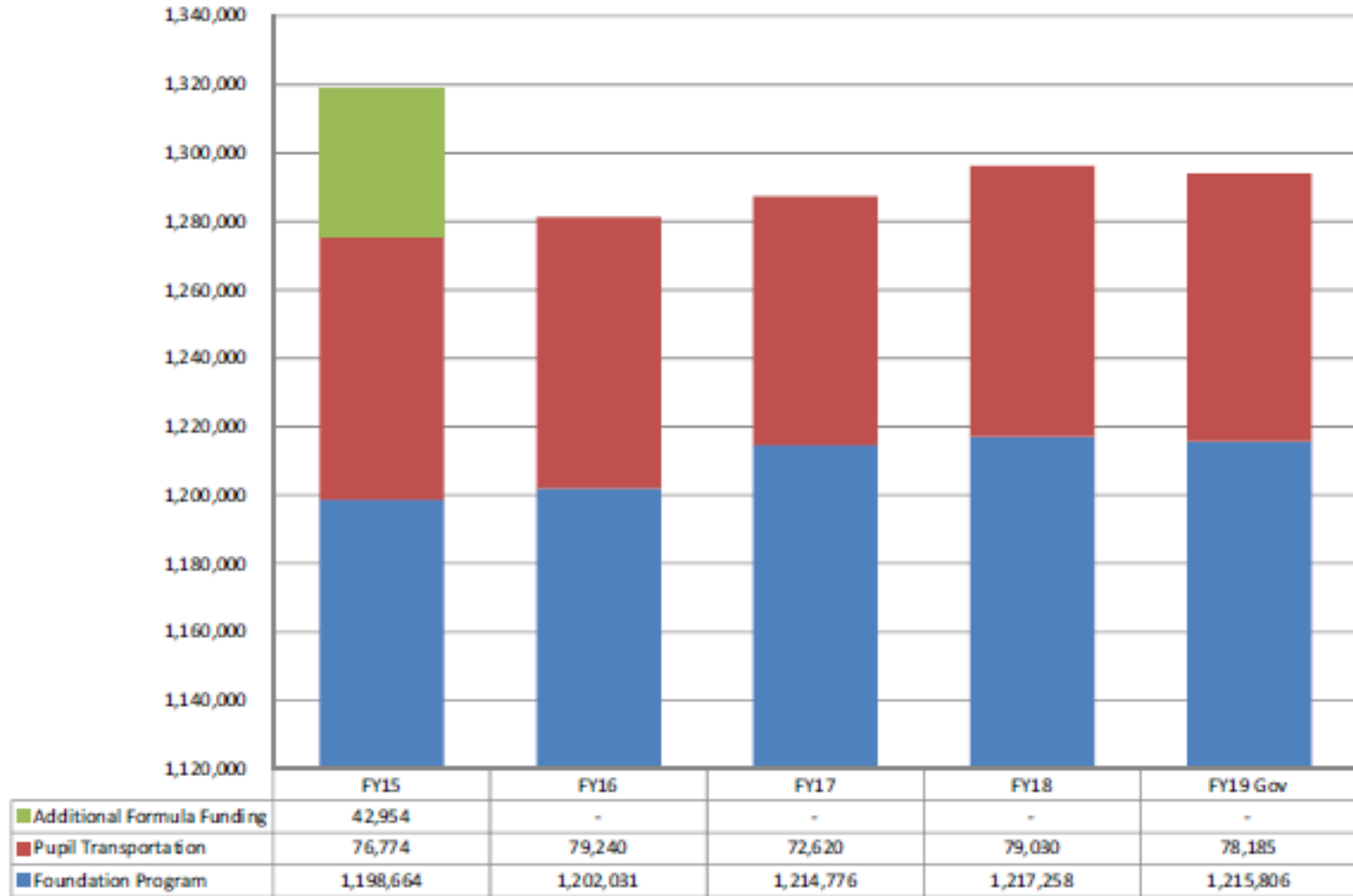
This bill would increase the BSA by \$100, or 0.1%.

It is co-sponsored by Education Chair Drummond and Reps. Spohnholz, Kawasaki, Tuck, Josephson, Parish, Tarr, Zulkosky, Lincoln, and Guttenberg.

Juneau Superintendent Dr. Mark Miller Puts it Well

“Over the past five years, the BSA has been nearly flat. Over that same time, my operating expenses from the general fund have increased nearly 10% . . . We have used our general fund balance to survive the last couple of years ... we are now being forced to consider severe cuts to try to fill a \$3 million hole.”

K-12 Formula Funding, FY15-19 (Nominal dollars)



1/12/2018

Legislative Finance Division

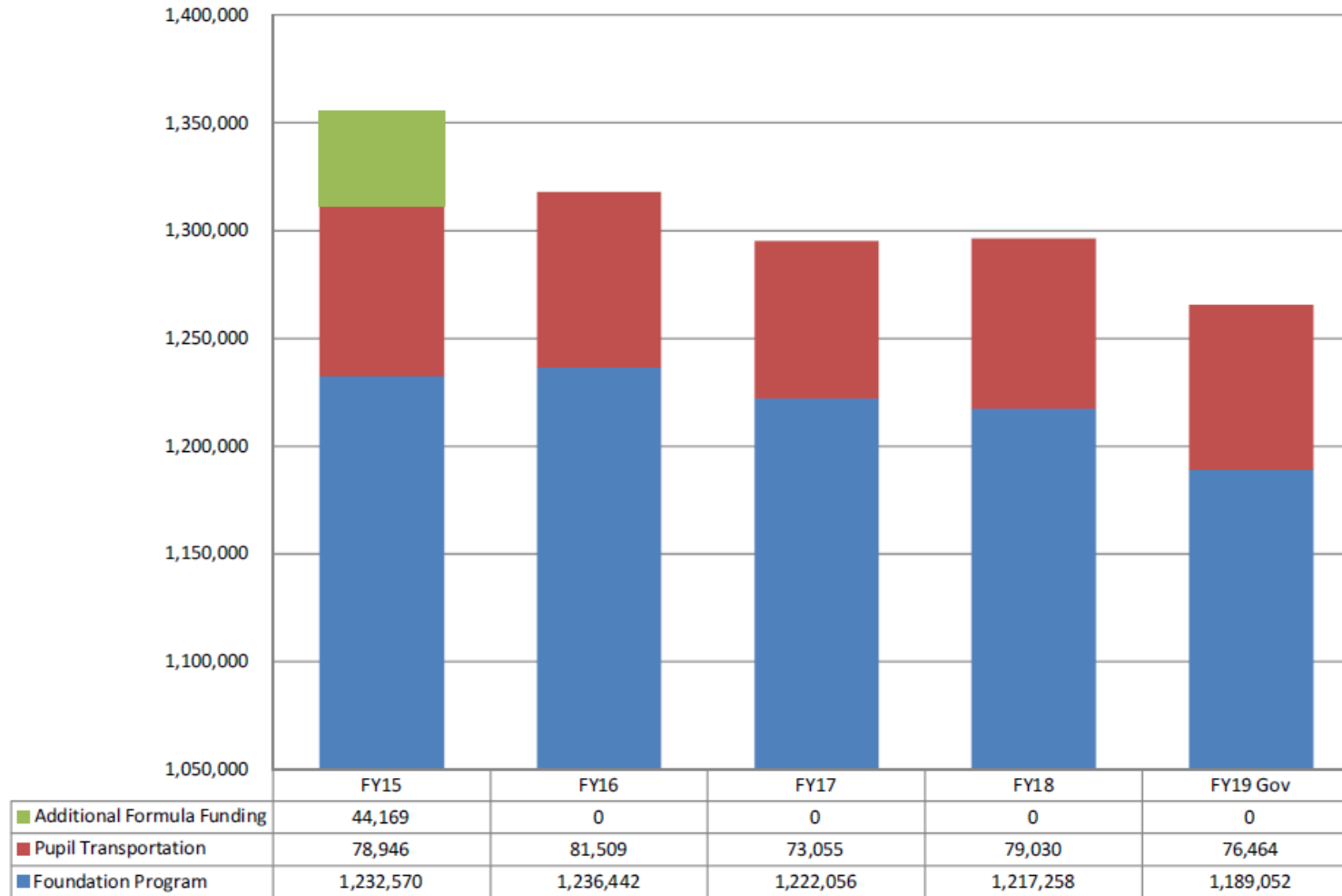
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Why Has School Funding Declined Since FY 2015?

- \$43 million added in FY 15 was deleted from the budget in FY 16.
- This was only partially offset by \$50 BSA increases in FY 16 and FY 17, each of which added \$12.6 million.
- Overall, funding through the BSA has fallen by roughly \$17 million. When you add in changes due to student counts & local contributions, the loss since FY 15 is about \$25 million.

**The Loss is Greater
When You Consider Inflation:
\$90 Million**

K-12 Formula Funding, FY15-19 (In FY18 Dollars)



1/12/2018

Legislative Finance Division

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Fairbanks: Down to the Bone

- Anticipates a 2018-2019 revenue shortfall of \$8.2 million.
- Equates to 50 FTE positions
- “Have sliced and diced to the point that we are unable to continue to make horizontal cuts. We are looking at program cuts now.” – Lisa Pierce, CFO
- Have eliminated 231 positions since 2009

In Anchorage, Cuts Have Hit Classrooms & Students

Since 2013,

- 394 FTE positions have been cut (a 9.3% reduction)
- 216 of these were teachers
- The remaining were mostly teacher assistants
- Classroom sizes have increased and will continue to do so.

At The Same Time in Anchorage. . .

- Special education enrollment is up 3.2%
- Intensive needs enrollment is up 8.6%
- Preschool enrollment is up 34%
- And many fixed costs, such as health care, have skyrocketed.

School Board Member

To avoid additional teacher cuts, Anchorage has taken away course planning periods for teachers.

Estimated cuts from future flat funding:

- 91 more FTE teacher losses in FY 19
- 107 more FTE teacher losses in FY20

Admin and support already cut by 28.5%, includes teacher training.

One Teacher's Story

- Recently met a middle school science teacher from Anchorage
- Her classroom size has increased from 28 to 32 students
- She says it has finally crossed the line
- Can't fairly teach individual students who need help

Juneau Budget Reductions

- \$11 million in cuts since 2011
- 92 FT positions were eliminated, including 26 teachers, 2 middle school counselors, 1 elementary instructional coach, 1 science instructional coaches, 6.5 special education para-educators, 1 education technology coordinator, etc . . .
- Face another \$3.5 million hole this coming year with flat funding

Mat-Su Faces Similar Cuts

- Cut \$8.4 million in FY 18, a loss of 87 FTE positions from their roll-over budget, including 18 teachers
- Expect to face an additional \$8 million deficit in FY 19
- Warn “further budget cuts threaten the quality of education.” – Dr. Monica Goyette, Superintendent
- Fortunately, enrollment increases and use of savings have buffered these losses. But that is unsustainable.

Impacts in Nome Schools

- Expect to cut 10 positions next year, including 4 teacher aides, 1 librarian, 1 pre-K teacher, 1 social worker, 1 career counselor, and 1 behavioral specialist
- Eliminate summer school
- Cut \$50,000 from student activities
- Eliminate all GF staff travel for professional development

Impacts in Kenai and Kodiak

- Kenai Peninsula schools project a \$3.3 million deficit in FY 19. Have already reduced expenditures by \$7.9 million, including loss of 27 staff, over last 4 years. If flat funding, will be forced to cut 11.5 FTE teaching staff.
- Kodiak has cut \$2.1 million and 18 teaching positions since FY 17. Flat funding in FY 19 will necessitate cutting 9 more teachers and 7 professional staff. Means “bigger class sizes and fewer options for students.” – Sandy Dawes, Business Manager, Kodiak Schools.

Impacts to Lake & Pen

- The Lake and Peninsula School District has reduced its instructional year by 20 days. This year, they will cut positions, including teachers.
- “Simply put, with each year of flat funding, we are offering a less comprehensive education to our students. We have cut our inefficiencies and niceties, and now it is simply core services that are left, services that honestly cannot be cut.” -- Ty Mase, Superintendent

Impacts in Other Bristol Bay Communities

- The Bristol Bay School District has cut elementary staff and now combines grades K/1, 2/3 and 4/5.
- Secondary staff are now teach grades 6-12.
- Music, art and language have been reduced.
- Pre-K was eliminated, but has been re-instated with short-term grant funds.
- Teachers had a 0% increase to there salaries in FY 17 and 18.

Impacts in Sitka

- Sitka schools face a \$2.3 million deficit, 12% of their operating budget. “A conservative estimate has our class sizes increasing by up to 60% if additional revenue is not available to us.” – Mary Wagner, Superintendent.
- FY 16 utilizes and health care costs combined went up 102%, for a total cost of over \$1 million.
- “The question looming in front of us is how many teacher positions do we cut, having made up the deficits of preceding years with every imaginable non-instructional cut. A \$100/student BSA increase would preserve funding for nearly 3 teachers.” -- Jennifer McNichol, Board Chair

The Story is the Same Around Alaska

Let's hear from a couple teachers and students.



Sarah Birrmanns, Award-Winning Educator

“ Nine years ago, when I started teaching in Anchorage, I saw 65 students a day. I was full-time. This year I see 108 students a day and I am a .6 part-time employee with no insurance. My husband and I are both award-winning educators. We are leaving in 2-3 years if things don't improve. Teachers and students need relief. Please help.” – BP Teacher of Excellence 2017

Jen Huvar, Teaching Assistant

“While budget cuts are felt to some degree every year, this year they feel especially dramatic – like we’ve reached a tipping point. Class sizes across core subjects now exceed 30 students in many cases. I was assigned to one science class with 34 students . . . with tables and chairs for only 30. The classes are simply too big for optimal learning . . . or even adequate learning.”

Wrangell High School Student

School no longer provides 3 years of foreign language, which is required by some colleges. Consequently, I take non-interactive, on-line courses and watch videos with no teacher engagement.

Educational Opportunities Lost Are Lost Forever

Students can not come back to repeat the 4th grade . . .
once we fix the budget crisis.



Academic opportunity is simply lost.

Many Superintendents Have Written In Support of HB 339

- Anchorage
- Fairbanks
- Mat-Su
- Kenai Peninsula
- Bristol Bay
- Juneau
- Southwest Region
- Lake & Peninsula
- Cordova
- Hydaburg
- Kuspuk
- Iditarod
- Petersburg
- Craig
- Sitka
- Aleutian Region
- Delta/Greely
- Haines
- Kodiak
- Chatham

These Organizations Also Urge Action This Year

- Alaska Association of School Boards
- Alaska PTA
- NEA-Alaska
- NAACP Education Committee

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a dense bamboo forest. The bamboo stalks are tall, slender, and light green, creating a strong sense of verticality. Sunlight filters through the dense canopy of green leaves at the top, creating a dappled light effect. A single, thicker tree trunk is visible in the lower-left foreground, leaning diagonally across the frame.

**An investment in
knowledge pays the best
interest.**

Benjamin Franklin

Thank You



A message from Anchorage students: #WeAreWorthIt