

Hi, my name is Tommy Pearson and I'm a freshman at Juneau-Douglas High School. I would like to say that I overwhelmingly support this bill, and from the perspective of a student that will be affected by it, I think this is an immensely needed change for the state. Every year there are more and more budget cuts and these just lead to more and more activities and classes that we lose. For instance, when I was growing up and going through elementary school and middle school, I was looking forward to taking Japanese in high school, a language I had been dying to take for forever. Then, right as I was about to get there, the district cut the class because of funding issues. And it's not just electives and languages that are being affected, it's core classes like math, science and English that are being hurt too. Just this year, in my math class, they ended up having to funnel 4 or 5 periods worth of geometry students into just 2 periods of algebra 2. This had the unfortunate effect of oversaturating our class, and nearly forcing our teacher to make students, who had signed up to be in honors, to drop down into the regular class, which was pretty full itself. And even if he didn't have to drop those kids, the remaining 32 student class size makes it hard for the teacher to give individual help to students in need. With a higher BSA, it would allow our school to lower our class sizes and help make a more personal experience for the students and help improve our ability to learn the subject matter.

Thank you for your time.

I am writing to request that the legislature work together to provide a balanced, responsible budget that includes appropriate funding for necessary public services such as education. Oil taxes need to be restructured to improve revenue for Alaskans. We are currently unnecessarily subsidizing oil companies. Some specific education-related actions I would like to see include:

HB205

- 1) At a minimum, provide the \$30 million in education funding that was in last year's budget.
- 2) Continue to forward-fund education to provide predictability and stability for Alaskans, and help retain high-quality teachers.

HB236

I am in favor of an increased Base Student Allocation. I think we need to go further and make provisions to index it for inflation. Years of "flat-funding" have actually been cuts.

Thank you,

Heather Williams
Senate District M, House District 25

Dear House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my support for any and all increases to the BSA. Annually, the cost of providing a quality education increases, as a result of inflation, health insurance premium increases, and other unavoidable economic factors. This means that a flat BSA is a real annual funding reduction of 3% or more. At the same time, the Legislature imposes unfunded mandates such as the Alaska Safe Children's Act and the proposed mental health education requirement. As a former health teacher, I strongly support these measures, but it is very difficult to simply add in instruction in these areas at every grade level. Small grants to buy curriculum and training do help, but they don't help with the structural changes needed. What do we really need to do this well? A dedicated health teacher at every school. But small grants can't get you there. A BSA increase is the best approach to ensure a quality, well-rounded education.

Thank you for your service in the Legislature and your commitment to Alaska's future.

Sarah Ferrency
Co-Assistant Superintendent
Sitka School District

February 24th, 2020
To whom it may concern,

My name is Faith Collins, I am a senior at Cordova Jr./Sr. High School and I am writing to you to address HB236. As a student that has attended this school from jr. high to senior year, I want to leave knowing future students will have more learning opportunities than I did.

Seeing this bill pass would allow CHS to expand the classes into something greater, with more variety and learning opportunities. Currently, the same classes at CHS are offered every year, which is fine, they are classes that teach students the required material and they go and do it again next year. What I would like to see with these classes is a little more pizzazz, or some life brought to them, because right now the repeating classes feel dull and burnt out. I would like to see some new curriculum added to the courses, or maybe an updated textbook. The passing of HB236 would be able to give us that and bring life back to these classes.

I ask you to pass HB236, as it will fund our school and others alike to expand on classes and teaching curriculum. This is only a two year investment, and if it doesn't seem to change anything it will be over in two years. So how much damage can really be done from passing this bill? I would say not much in my opinion. I see only positive outcomes from the passing of HB236, so I urge you to do so.

Sincerely,



Faith Collins

Elected Officials,

Please cast your vote in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation.

Our neighborhood elementary has removed Health and Social Emotional Learning programs to deal with continued cuts. Although I agree with the prioritization of academics, I believe our students need support in becoming socially integrated parts of our community. Taking care of themselves physically and emotionally are foundations for the rest of their lives. I have many concerns with the size and administration of school budgets in AK; however, I'd still gladly give my PFD and pay more in taxes to continue building up and supporting our kids, our teachers and our schools.

I urge you to support HB 236.

Regards,

Mike Driscoll
Anchorage, Alaska

I am writing in support of HB 236 to increase the Base Student Allocation to include inflation proofing and prevent cuts to our public schools.

I am more than willing to help pay for this with a reduced PFD and a state income tax. I'm opposed to a state sales tax since many communities rely on this income to help pay for local infrastructure. I would also advocate for re-visiting our taxes, royalties and subsidies to oil companies. We need to be growing our permanent fund to help support our shared infrastructure.

Thank you
Gayle Trivette
Juneau, AK 99801

Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to request an increase in the Base Student Allocation for the well-being of our public schools. As a senior at Juneau-Douglas High School: https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_Yadaa.at&d=DwIFaQ&c=Q8iJasR7RZ-JOFd9RXD9ZA&r=RlagVIPNbt6tdKHH3bX2Ih79xPLOOZlgj2O3zeFsfX0&m=wW9hQ0GleyeMMR9q3SGVIPGpyN764V5prQNoiiKj_E8&s=sYWTAqZ_4pgewuQjDyT75vgo4Mol1j0VaVUb409IGaU&e= Kalé, I've witnessed my school and others in the state have our programs and staff gutted by flat funding, and I know that we can't keep facing large budget cuts and still have a robust K-12 public education system.

Although I'm a senior, I have sisters in elementary and middle school who will be here for several more years and will bear the effects of the Legislature's actions.

Please support Rep. Story's bill to increase the BSA. At a time like this, our future generation must be fully equipped to tackle the many challenges we will face when we're in your shoes one day- and that comes from having a strong and fulfilling education.

Thank you,
Stella Tallmon
Constituent of House District 33

Good morning! I am a teacher who lives in Wasilla but teaches in Bush Alaska. I am all for increasing the BSA for our students because of a number of items. First, the cost of all school items has gone up tremendously. Books have gone up to over \$80 per book! Since I teach in the Bush, shipping costs are astronomical, too. I believe that our students – our future – need the best education that we can give them so please increase the BSA to ensure their success. I want my future to be in good hands since they will be looking out for me, our state, and our country! Thank you. Faith Moeller, 6th Grade Math/Science instructor, KHMS (Northwest Arctic Borough School District)

I am a registered voter in Ketchikan and support passage of HB236. The State of Alaska needs to increase the BSA to help support education in the state.

Sincerely,
Norma Thompson

02/24/20
To whom it may concern,

I am writing to ask that you approve HB236, an act relating to increasing the Base Student Allocation.

I am a senior at Cordova Highschool, I believe that raising Base Student Allocation will give students a better opportunity for greater education. Giving more funds to schools in Alaska will bring better books and equipment for our students to receive more hands on learning.

I enjoy physics. When we were in physics we struggled with reliable equipment this brought a negative effect on students' learning. If we were to have new equipment our students could spend more time using hands on techniques providing students with better education.

In conclusion, A higher BSA will benefit Alaskan schools in a variety of ways. As a graduating senior, I very much support higher financial support for schools in Alaska.

Gage Frohnafel
Cordova Jr./Sr. High School

To My Legislators,

I am a Kindergarten/first grade teacher at Sayéik:Gastineau Community School here in Juneau. I have seen the funding cuts cost our students in real time. We have fewer staff, which means more children per adult. Kids do not do their best learning when packed into classrooms and without individual attention and support. The most at-risk students are the ones I'm most worried about--the services that get stripped away without additional staff directly impact our most vulnerable kids. Teacher burnout and turnover is also on the rise and I believe it has a lot to do with the lack of support. Our technology is becoming outdated with no plans to keep current, yet we are asked to prepare students for a digital world. We need an increase to the BSA to support students, teachers, and staff across our state. What we really need is a multi-year plan so that funding isn't dumped off on the next year and at risk every session. PLEASE SUPPORT OUR KIDS.

Thank you for your time. Please vote to support an increase in the BSA.

Tanya Roust

K/1 Teacher

Sayéik: Gastineau Community School

907-796-5075

February 25, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to ask that you approve HB236, an act relating to increasing the Base Student Allocation. As a student at Cordova Jr./Sr. High School, I would like to see this bill be passed to improve the future of my school.

Adding to the funding at schools around Alaska would open up many opportunities to students. Increased funding could benefit music, class instruction, and class options. I participate in the music program at my school, and have been since fifth grade. The school does not own a full sized tuba, which is difficult for our band because we cannot sound the way we would like to. My music teacher asked for a full sized tuba to be included in the school's budget, but it did not make the cut. If this bill was passed, I believe we would see our music program grow. Not only would the music program grow, the academics of our school could also be improved. With a larger budget, we could possibly get more lab equipment for science experiments, or offer a language class other than Spanish. I have had to take a French class online because it cannot be offered in our school. In the future, I would love to see more language classes offered by teachers, not only online, at Cordova High School.

I ask that you support HB236. It will help the students in Alaska have the best opportunities possible. Before making your decision on how to vote on this bill, I encourage you to consider the youth of Alaska. We are the key to the future of our state and I believe that this bill will help the youth of Alaska become the best they can be. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,
Ria Smyke

HB206 would increase the base student allocation (BSA) by \$115 per student (\$30M total) in FY21 and by another \$110 in FY22. The \$115 increase would just replace the \$30M legislative operating grant we got in lieu of increasing the BSA for the current fiscal year, and the subsequent \$110 just maintains real funding net of inflation in FY22. If this bill doesn't pass, we will face a \$30M cut statewide in base funding for education, which erode our ability to educate students even more.

I am in support of passing HB206 and decreasing Administrative Costs with restrictions to that funding to support student learning and the learning environment.

Crisi Matthews
Homer, AK 99603

I am writing in favor of HB 236. Please vote to approve this bill, as our youth deserve a well funded education. As it is now staff and students are both being stressed by budget cuts.

Amy Stonorov

Dear House Education Committee Members and Chairperson,

I am writing to show my support of HB236. As an educator in rural Alaska, I live and work in the native village of Nunapitchuk. At our school we are consistently lacking the resources required for our students continued success. As a classroom teacher for the past three years, I have noticed the consistent lack of resources, specifically this year in regards to classroom supplies. This year I have taught a world history class with 23 students, whilst only having 10 textbooks. As you can imagine, this lack of physical resources caused serious issues within our classroom. In another class this year, I have 18 students and only 8 textbooks. In my classes I always encourage collaboration, however; students are only able to work together so much. Take a moment and think of the frustration a student feels when they must share a book every single day in order to complete their assignments in class.

In addition, I have also had to personally purchase multiple items and resources for my classroom. I know that my colleagues have also done the same- some to the tune of \$1,000 in a single year. As educators we understand that our students learn best in a fun, and engaging environment- to this end, we are then forced to spend our personal funds in an attempt to create that environment for our students.

Increasing the BSA would allow for not only my rural school, but all schools within Alaska to remedy some of these issues. As an educator I understand that one increase in the BSA will not immediately solve all of our problems, but I do believe that this is a step in the right direction. I am asking earnestly that you report favorably on SB236.

Thank you for your continued service to our great state,

--

Cory 'Aigailnguq' Hughes,
Region IV Director, AK-NEA
Area 3 Director, LKNEA

Certified Secondary Social Studies

Anna Tobeluk School Memorial School
Nunapitchuk, Alaska

02/24/2020
Harry Mangrobang
Cordova, Alaska, 99574

Dear to whom it may concern,

I am writing to ask that you approve HB236, an act releasing to increasing the Base Student Allocation, it helps provide the school what it needs like more resources for classes and other activities. It would not only make education better for a day but will make education better every year.

It will help the students to learn more and acquire more skills, there would be more resources to help students to learn more and better tools to use in science labs, more variety of classes and options other than the same basic classes offered every year, and more resources that the school needs. As a student, I ask that you approve it because every year I am always offered the same class and other classes that I am not interested in and there aren't any other classes left beside those. I don't have a choice but to pick it so that I have seven classes I need to take for the whole year. With increasing the Student Allocation, it would help the school to have more classes for students to pick by their interest.

I am asking you to support this letter because I believe that increasing the Student Allocation will help the students gain a better education due to the resources they will get. They would also learn and develop more skills. The more resources the school has the better the education the students will get. Thank you for taking the time to go through this.

Sincerely,
Harry

February 24, 2020
Christian Adams
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear Representative,

I am writing to ask for the approval of House Bill 236, that would increase the Base Student Allocation for the next two years. I am from Cordova High School, and am a senior, and while this bill will not directly affect me in my years to come, I am always looking to improve my school in any way that I can.

My school along with many others have recently had issues with funding, with cut ferry services resulting in more expensive travel for sports and other activities, in this past year we have had even more expenses to cover which is why I feel it is important to approve this bill and relieve some of the pressure from the schools for these next few years. When funding becomes an issue programs begin to get cut such as art and music programs, and Cordova always excels in these fields and it is important that we continue to let students have access to these programs. The more opportunities for students the better.

Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge my writing to you, and letting me express my support of this bill. I believe that HB236 has the potential to improve schools in Alaska, and express my support for this bill to be passed.

Sincerely,
Christian Adams

Greetings Honorable Alaska Legislators,

On behalf of my family, friends and the thousands of Alaskan students, I strongly urge you to support HB 236. We sorely need to keep up with inflation as schools are continued to be asked to cut even more. Please support and pass this very crucial legislation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Mike Illg
Homer, AK

PLEASE increase this funding. As a principal of a small school, it hurts to have to cut the number of teachers due to insufficient funds. In our case, that may mean students at the elementary level are in a mixed grade classroom, which will be crowded. At the high school level, that may mean the difference between a teacher over the internet instead of a teacher in the building. Students will have fewer class choices. All of this means that without this increase, it will be hard to meet the needs of our students, our most precious resource.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lisa M. Couey
Site Administrator
Chaputnguaq High School/Amaqigciq Elementary School
Chefornak, AK 99561

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to express my support for HB236, which would increase the Base Student Allocation. I am an Anchorage resident with two children in school, and have watched with dismay as the ASD and School Board have had to institute cuts to health instruction to meet budget shortfalls. They were able to recently keep the INGITE gifted program funded for one more year, but that is also in peril. The newly instituted policy of having weekly one-hour late start or early dismissal, also implemented to address budegt shortfalls, is going to disproportionately impact lower income families who will struggle to adjust their schedules. My school's librarian position is being reduced by 50% to half time.

I believe the district has done a significant amount over the past several years to cut administrative and non-instructional costs to preserve classroom instruction, but they are now at the stage where key instructional programs are being cut. This is bad for our children, bad for our economy, bad for our state. We cannot provide a quality education to our children without adequate funding, and we cannot attract and retain a strong workforce without decent schools.

Please vote to increase the Base Student Allocation to adequately support our state's schools.

Thank you for your consideration,
Michelle Coombs
Anchorage AK

Dear Members of the House Of Education Committee,

>

Hi my name is Cori Steed and I am a parent of two ASD Elementary children a 1st grade and a 3rd grader, an engineer at bp soon to be Hilcorp, and a product of the Anchorage School District.

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> I have been following the proposed ASD preliminary budget and I am concerned how this affects the students. There is a need for additional funding for education.

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> One of the proposed cuts was the IGNITE gifted program. Fortunately it was restored for one more year but there is a good chance it will be jeopardized in future years. This program supports 2000 students with additional enrichment that they don't get in a traditional classroom setting. With the focus on lower level students and behavioral problems teachers dont have time to challenge the kids that are doing fine in their normal studies. Often times these kids skate by when they could be maximizing their potential. I say this from experience. My daughter had a first grade teacher that took additional time to challenge her. As she moved into second grade she was well above her class makes. However her second grade teacher was unable to do these things for her due to a problem class where the focus needed to be on getting the other students up to their appropriate grade level. She started to disengage from school the work was not challenging and she wasn't excited about school like she had been. Her spark for learning had been diminished. Then one day she came home all excited and engaged. It was because she was being tested for IGNITE. During testing she was being challenged with hard problems and getting to use her brain. She loved it even just being tested. She was admitted into IGNITE the following year and looks forward to it every week. It is her time to grow and be challenged. Without it I am afraid she would not like going to school and would be bored.

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> Teachers dont have time to cater to all of their individual student's needs. That is why the have resource for the lower level learners to get help. We should also have an opportunity to grow and develop those that need more than what goes on in the classroom. Why should they be punished because their classmates are not at their levels. This is a time that they are growing their curiosity and they are sponges. Their joy of learning starts now and can put them behind or even be hindered later on when they come across a challenge and are not prepared for how to deal with it. They begin to fear trying new things because they don't understand how to over come failure because they have always been able to skate by.

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> I went through the gifted program at ASD in elementary school which put me in the honors program in junior high school. I then went on to take more honors and AP classes in high school. This then set me up to take on a degree in chemical engineering in college.

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> We need to make sure these future doctor, scientists and engineers are being challenged and rising to their full potential. They are our future and IGNITE helps foster their love of learning and development.

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> Please consider addressing this gap in funding that keeps these programs going.

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Cori Steed

Good morning,

My name is Stacy S Olver and I am a resident of Juneau. I have two daughters enrolled in Thunder Mountain High School.

I am writing today to provide written testimony to support HB 236. Beyond my daughters' futures and what they will contribute to our community and state, I am thinking of the many children here and throughout the state that are engaged in learning and preparing for the future. Please fund their education! Increase the base allotment and make Alaska unique not for its challenges but for its leadership and innovation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Stacy Olver

Please support HB 236 and increase the BSA \$115 per student. We need a solid funding base for our schools as well as predictability and stability for all educational staff and, ultimately, students. I would like to see an automatic inflationary increase as well; at least, as I understand it, this will incorporate the FY20 appropriation of \$30 million into the formula. Our children and their education need to be our number one priority. In my mind, funding education is a no brainer and we shouldn't have to revisit this year after year. Please support this bill; and thank you to those of you who are already supporting it.

Barbara Pastorino

Juneau

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of House Bill 236, the BSA Bill. An increase in the Base Student Allocation is essential for all districts in our state. As a resident and educator in Anchorage, I see firsthand the detriment the recent flat funding has caused for the Anchorage School District.

Our district has been faced with approximately \$20 million in cuts this year alone, and without an increase to the BSA, will be looking at the same next year. The Administration and School Board were faced with very hard choices and proposed, among other things, eliminating security guard positions, a redesign of Elementary Health and IGNITE programs, and a late start/early dismissal of one hour per week. While emergency funds have been provided for the security guards and gifted programs for an additional year, without an increase in the BSA they are likely to be eliminated next year.

To see Elementary Health redesigned is tragic. It will now be absorbed to 15 minutes per week by whomever can teach it. What used to be taught by a trained Health/SEL professional will be absorbed by Library/PE/Classroom, TBD at the building level, with one hour a week less time for student learning. In a state with high sexual abuse, drug/alcohol problems, childhood obesity, the program designed to make our children more aware of these issues will no longer be available in our largest district.

To see our gifted students at risk of losing their enrichment program is also a travesty. Studies have shown that up to fifty percent of gifted students are at risk of underachieving. In order to keep these students active and engaged in their learning, they require a program with more depth and complexity. This requires a larger time block and specifically trained professionals, neither of which can be provided without an increase in the BSA.

Finally, security guards are just common sense. Last year, there was a shooting in my school's parking lot. This year we had a lockdown due to an unstable parent trying to enter our building. It is imperative that we are able to keep our children safe. Their learning depends on it.

Please do the right thing for our students and pass HB236 to raise the BSA.

Thank you for your time.

Treece Hanley

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of my clients and the children in the Anchorage School District. I work as a pediatric occupational therapist and serve children and their families in the Anchorage community. I am writing in support of HB 236. My concerns are related to quality and time allocations of recess, lunch, and physical activities, which are required for all students to participate in learning and social engagement.

It is my understanding that last week the Board accepted the administration's proposal to remove approximately 28 health teachers, placing the burden of health education for ASD students on their classroom teachers, PE teachers, or librarians. Overall, children entering Kindergarten will lose 2 months of academics by the time they graduate 12th grade, all children will have reduced health education by 30 minutes per week, and expanded lunch/recess times to meet ASD60's goals will be limited or unlikely. Removal of the health education teachers due to cuts made will be detrimental to the success of ASD students, both academically and psychosocially.

Children of all ages and within each stage of development require daily play experiences for emotion regulation, sensory processing and modulation, executive functioning (memory, self-control, problem solving), behavior, motor planning and accuracy, and impulse control. Effective learning is self-initiated with pleasurable activities and the best way to learn and develop skills is with hands-on experiences, which provide immediate feedback and natural consequences. A physical and sensory experience is necessary to develop skills that are useful in real life with other people. Children require physical play opportunities daily in order to attend to and focus on structured tasks in the classroom. Children require adequate time and appropriate environments for eating lunch and engaging in recess. Without passing HB 236, the resulting decrease in time allocated to comprehensive health literacy could be problematic because it would decrease time allocated to PE, lunch, recess, library, and/or general academics.

Loss of PE, lunch, and recess time throughout the week would have a significant impact on the ability of many students to learn and focus. During physical play opportunities, children develop body awareness and impulse control. They receive important proprioceptive input which gives them information about where their bodies are in space, which helps them feel grounded and learn to control their positioning relative to others. Sitting at a table, looking at the teacher during instruction, attending to an assignment or test - all of these activities and expectations within the school day require whole-body regulation. Children who are dysregulated may find focus and attention difficult during direct instruction, seek sensory inputs in inappropriate ways (i.e. fidgeting, talking), and create a distraction in the classroom. Weekly PE and daily recess increase children's regulation and decrease distraction during learning opportunities. I hope you will consider this when determining the outcome of this bill. Allocating time to health literacy and learning is paramount to children's mental and physical well-being, and should be addressed and included in curriculum purposefully, without taking away or reducing academics, PE, lunch, and recess.

Thank you for your dedication to the children of Anchorage and for your ongoing efforts to improve the quality of their learning experience. It is my hope that this feedback has emphasized the importance of movement and play in the daily lives of all children. I hope you will consider the positive impact of HB 236 on the success of Anchorage students. Thank you for your consideration of my recommendations and feedback. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

Jessica Flanigan, MOT, OTR/L

Occupational Therapist

All For Kids Pediatric Therapy, LLC

www.allforkidsalaska.com

Anchorage, AK 99518

Good Morning,

My name is Crystal Seeman. I am a registered voter. I have 2 children who attend public school in the Anchorage School District. My children are in 5th and 3rd grades. They have many years of public schooling ahead of them. I am writing you today to ask that you please support HB 236. Please increase our public education funding, and keep forward funding education.

The years of flat and reduced funding we have endured in public education are taking their toll. It is time that we, as a state, take account of what is truly important. We have a responsibility to our future to educate our children so that we will continue to have a stable, educated society. We need a strong workforce in the future. Why do we need more money to educate students today? The basic reasons are the same as for business. Basic expenses (fuel, electricity, health care, wages) all go up. They don't stay stagnant. Students continue to need books, paper, desks, and buildings. Over all - they need quality folks who are willing to dedicate their careers to teaching our children to read and interact with one another successfully. When the average years of service for teachers in Alaska is 5 years or less, I start to get very worried! We are not giving our students the best education they can get, or even an adequate one, if they get new teachers year after year. New teachers, even the amazing ones, do not know the quirks of our schools and communities. They aren't a part of our traditions and society. Teachers do great teaching when they are in a school and community long enough to get to know families, culture, and the way things work around here.

Other specific problems, here in Anchorage, I am worried about include: The elimination of important programs to save money including IGNITE and Health/SEL specialists. Our children in Alaska have higher than normal risk for suicide and students in general are showing higher levels of depression and anxiety. Why on earth would we get rid of Health teachers? Schools do not have enough money to pay for technology. As items like classroom projectors break, the teacher is required to pay for a new one, or find funding through PTA, PTO, or some other grant. Our teachers are not fundraisers. They should be taking time to care for student learning not finding ways to get money so they can have basic supplies required by the curriculum. Students make do with decades old furniture that is often broken. New furniture just doesn't exist. Teachers turn again to sources like PTA or Donors Choose to buy student chairs, mailboxes, tables, or bookshelves. PTA is not an ATM! It should be supporting the school community and families, not buying furniture and Chromebook computers for students. Anchorage School District cannot pay for these things when they spend all their money paying for increases in basic costs. I am also very concerned about class sizes sneaking up. This is especially a problem in grades k-3 when students are learning foundational reading skills. We expect teachers to make modifications for student learning and teach every student. How on earth can they teach individualized lessons when there are 27 seven year olds in the room all day? Let's stop and try to digest that idea for a minute. Not only do the teachers have to keep all these kids safe, but they also need to get them excited about something besides Minecraft or hockey, and teach them to read!

Please, please, give educators the money they need to do their jobs. Let us value and support our children. They deserve better than 27 seven year olds in a room with broken chairs, broken technology, and a new teacher who doesn't understand them for the 3rd year in a row.

Thank you,

Crystal Seeman

(House district 21, Senate seat K)

Dear Members of the House of Education,

Hello, my name is Mandy McConnell and I am a teacher as well as a parent of a 2nd grader and future kindergartner in the Anchorage School District. ASD announced its preliminary budget cuts last week, and I want you to understand how the cuts are affecting students in the Anchorage School District, and our need to end flat funding to education and provide additional funds to education.

One of the detrimental cuts that was proposed was to the IGNITE gifted program. Fortunately, IGNITE was restored for a year by the Anchorage School Board but it is still possible that it will be in jeopardy again next year. This program serves 2,000 gifted students in the Anchorage area, my son being one of them. These students are given the opportunity to be challenged and engage in hands on discoveries that aren't offered in the general education classroom. They learn about growth mindset and how to handle emotions that occur when taking on higher level thinking projects. I am concerned that next year it will be proposed again to have 8-11 of current IGNITE teachers employed as enrichment coaches during the WIN (What I Need) time, which is a daily 35 minute instructional intervention time by the general education teacher or other certified or classified staff. This IGNITE redesign will not meet the needs of gifted students to the same degree. How does removing the qualified gifted teacher from IGNITE and employing them as a teacher resource produce better results than having the qualified teacher ACTUALLY teaching these students? How can students take on an in depth learning activity in 35 minutes like they do now in 2 hours? Special education is a FULL spectrum and there are needs on both sides. Gifted education should not be an afterthought.

One of the other cuts that has a huge negative impact on Alaskan students is the loss of Health teachers. The redesign of the health program is now said to be divided amongst the physical education teacher, nurse, and general education teacher (who is already spread thin trying to fit in the current science, social studies, and social emotional learning lessons into the [90-40-40-60](#) blocked schedule) the most conducive way of teaching something that should be a priority with Alaska, the state that has the highest rate for sexual assault? As a state, we should be doing everything we can to educate our youngest to protect themselves and decrease his horrendous rate of 80 rapes per 100,000 people!

I'd like to encourage you all to support forward funding and provide additional funds to education. These students are the future of Alaska; we should be investing in these students and provide the best educational opportunity for these children. It would be a disservice to lose these important programs that educate and keep Alaskans healthy and safe.

Sincerely,
Mandy McConnell

Please take action: Don't allow \$30 million in funding for K-12 to be cut because of the temporary fix of last year. Make it permanent.

I would like to hear your view of this action.

Thank you for your time.
Mary C Burtness

Dear Elected Officials,

Please consider increasing the BSA through HB 236. Please also consider increasing education funding in the Operating Budget. Our children need YOU advocating for them more than ever.

Our district has already eliminated Social Emotional Learning and Health from our curriculum. These programs deliver vital life skills to our kindergarten – 6th grade students and have truly saved lives. Alaska has some of the highest rates of drug abuse, obesity and abuse/domestic violence. Health class is the first line of defense for many of our children. We can not tolerate these curriculum to be cut.

I fear we will be seeing many more programs cut in the near future. Our superintendent is quoted saying our students are lucky to receive art 2 times a month with the current funding they receive. I am concerned next to be cut is art, then our challenging gifted program. Next is band and orchestra, our safety resource officers, and student activities. Is this the safe and well rounded education you imagined for our children?

Given the current elementary ELA block curriculum, there is absolutely no time left to ‘restructure’ these cut programs into the day. I work in the school and I promise you this will not happen effectively or comprehensively. Once these program are cut, they will be lost at the expensive of our children.

Senator Natasha Vin Imhof asked this question of me, “Because you are advocating for additional funds to be spent on education, it would be helpful if you could send to me - and any/all legislators for that matter - a letter with a specific dollar amount of PFD that you would be happy to accept. \$1,100 is the 40-year average and would leave us with \$500 million deficit (versus \$1.5 billion deficit).”

My answer to this, I am more than happy to receive a dividend as low as \$500 if the funding directly affected the overall well-being of our children. I also support a city sales tax to increase education funding. I would be gravely concerned if this funding increased the budgets for assessments, administration costs, new curriculum or the superintendent’s budget. I am advocating for teaching the whole child, in a safe environment, with challenging and engaging options for development and life skills.

Please consider increasing the BSA and education funding in the Operating Budget so we can continue to teach to the whole child.

Respectfully,
Karen Driscoll

Dear House Education Committee members;

Please pass HB 236, which increases the base student allocation to achieve essentially flat funding, adjusted for inflation, for Alaska schools through FY22. Public education is critically important to the well-being of our communities and the future of our state. We need to protect and strengthen the programs we have. I am a retired citizen who is willing to pay increased taxes to fund a strong public education program. Please support this bill as part of ensuring a robust economic future for Alaska. Sincerely, Ann Gifford

Ann Gifford
Juneau, Alaska

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am writing to you to implore your support of HB236, the increase of the SBA. I am a lifelong Alaskan resident, a mother of two students who attended K-12 in the Anchorage School District, and an educator of 21 years. I have seen first hand as a parent and a teacher how flat funding has affected our students and their future. It is imperative that the Alaskan government invest in the state's future by consistently and fully funding education.

During my daughters' time in school, I watched AP classes be dropped each year due to lost funding or the need to channel money towards those who were behind in their education. The lack of AP choices was extremely apparent when my girls left the state to go to college. They found that students who had attended high school in other states had had many more opportunities to take AP courses at their regular high school. With the current flat funding, AP will continue to be eliminated and it will make our students much less desired by outside universities. We owe it to our children to provide them the same opportunities to excel as others in the US, as well as the opportunity to challenge themselves to reach their highest potential.

This year in ASD the School Board and Superintendent proposed cutting Health and security guards, redesigning Ignite (the special education for gifted students), and creating a late start for schools one day a week. Thanks to the incredible amount of public testimony and the open mindset of three school board members, the Ignite program was saved, as were the security guards, for next year only.

Health was eliminated. In a state that leads the hideous statistics of obesity, domestic abuse, suicide, and drug/alcohol abuse, we cannot afford to lose those who are trained to specifically address these issues. Our Health teachers are the first line of defense against students smoking, taking drugs, and making poor lifestyle choices. If you truly want our students to stay drug and alcohol free, say no to peer pressure, and choose healthy lifestyles, you will seriously consider increasing the SBA. Your decision will affect every student in the Anchorage School District, and perhaps literally create a life or death situation for some.

The late start idea remained in place as well. However, I believe this will cause a huge increase in absenteeism, which leads to less success for students. In addition, this will cause a severe hardship for parents who work. As a working parent, it is virtually impossible to find a care provider for one hour, one day per week. Late start/early release may make sense for middle and high school; those students can be left home alone for an hour. It is unrealistic and punitive for elementary school parents. An increase in the SBA would alleviate the need for this change.

The cuts that were recommended were done with the goal of keeping PTR as it is, and I appreciate that fact. However, at this point, due to flat funding the PTR is already way higher than it should be for any classroom. At my school we currently have 25 students in each kindergarten class. Grades 2-3 have 29 students. This is unacceptable and does not allow for the crucial one-on-one connection each teacher wants to form with his/her students. There is simply not enough time in the day to connect with 29 students when you are trying to teach, manage behaviors, and meet the required expectations of the Anchorage School District. The connection to a student is crucial to a child's success and well-being. With an increase in the SBA, we can reduce the PTR and increase the connections with our students, which will in turn lead to more success.

You have the opportunity to improve and protect the education of students in Alaska. You have the opportunity to make sure that every child feels safe, because there are always going to be security guards. You have the opportunity to make sure that every child knows the dangers of drugs and alcohol and knows they can tell an adult that they are being abused or feel like they may not want to live. You have the opportunity to be sure that gifted students continue to receive the education they **need** and deserve. You have the opportunity to allow parents to not have to make tough decisions regarding the safety and well-being of their children, because they cannot afford an hour of daycare each week, because they have to work.

Please, think of the future of our children and the future of Alaska. Please support and vote yes on HB236.

Thank you,
Heidi Tsukada
4/5 Teacher at Ocean View Elementary

Dear House Education Committee Members:

Because Alaska's public school districts had to budget for flat K-12 State funding for this fiscal year (FY20) while facing inexorable inflationary expenditure increases (energy costs, negotiated salary increases, etc.), the Galena City School District (GCSD), amongst many budget-balancing developments, lost four high school teaching positions in Galena.

The resulting 28 fewer high school class offerings for this 2019-2020 school year only permitted 215 Galena Interior Learning Academy (GILA) boarding school students to enroll this fall. Previously, GILA had the teaching/scheduling capacity for 245 boarding school students to take advantage of the excellent educational opportunities at Alaska's 2nd largest and 2nd longest-running residential educational facility.

With Governor Dunleavy's FY21 budget proposing another year of flat K-12 State funding (a cut because of inflation), GCSD is once again looking at the very real possibility of losing additional Galena-based teaching positions next school year in order to balance an inadequately funded budget. If history repeats itself and GCSD loses another 28 high school class offerings in Galena, GCSD will have lost the capacity to educate 60 GILA boarding school students in two years. We went from a 245 capacity to a 215 capacity this school year. Next school year GCSD faces the real possibility of only being able to enroll 185 GILA students.

GCSD fully recognizes the tremendous budgetary issues that are currently facing our state. However, in advocating for the 30 Alaskan students who were unable to receive the education at GILA that they wanted this year and the potential 60 Alaskan students who might not have the excellent educational opportunity of learning at GILA next school year, GCSD supports HB236, as proposed, because it will help GCSD bring back our high school teaching positions for FY21 and will provide inflation-adjusted budgetary stability going into FY22.

Thank you for your leadership regarding critical issues surrounding our public education system.

Yours in Education,
Jim Merriner
Superintendent
Galena City School District

Good morning,
My name is Stacy S Olver and I am a resident of Juneau. I have two daughters enrolled in Thunder Mountain High School.
I am writing today to provide written testimony to support HB 236. Beyond my daughters' futures and what they will contribute to our community and state, I am thinking of the many children here and throughout the state that are engaged in learning and preparing for the future. Please fund their education! Increase the base allotment and make Alaska unique not for its challenges but for its leadership and innovation.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Sincerely,
Stacy Olver

Dear House Education Committee

School Funding in Alaska is at a crisis point. Alaska must Increase the Base Student Allocation if we want to retain any quality in our education system. We are at a tipping point. The fat has long since been eliminated and we are carving away the meat now. More cuts mean more quality teachers looking elsewhere for more supportive communities. More cuts mean more parents with money pulling their students out of public school. More cuts mean parents of high achievers pulling their students out of public school. More cuts mean program quality decline, fewer students graduating, and on and on – a downward spiral that will be harder to reverse each year.

I am a lifetime Alaskan, a business owner, an Anchorage resident, and a mother of two at Inlet View Elementary school. I attended K-12 public school in Fairbanks. My husband went to private school in Minnesota. He regularly questions whether we are doing right by our children sending them to public school. I have always argued emphatically “YES!”, but I am running out of steam. He watches me spend hours at school board meetings each fall testifying on behalf of our neighborhood school and its teachers. Each school year brings different but critical budget cuts to fight. Things would be easier if we just sent our kids to private school, he says. Yes, I am starting to agree. The cons of Alaska’s public school are starting to pull ahead of the pros.

Why doesn’t the government value education in Alaska?

Why is a big PFD more important than educating our kids?

How is education NOT the most important budget item?

These are questions my kids will ask me sooner or later. I’m asking you now.

Petra Wilm

Architect

Mother of 2 elementary students

Anchorage resident

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you to ask you to approve HB236, an act relating to increasing the Base Student Allocation. I am a student from Cordova Jr./Sr. High School in Cordova, Alaska. Students can succeed if they have the necessary tools and inspiration from their peers and by our state government.

This is something I believe in deeply. Students are capable of so much but sometimes they don’t have the things they need to grow and to learn better. I can think of multiple examples where just in my life if my school had the right tools I could have done more, but was held back by the missing tools. In my school at least the one place I see the most need for more funding is our music program. Students have dented instruments and make them hard to place. And some of our students are very talented but can’t truly show that talent with messed up instruments.

I hope this helps in some way of helping you make your decision. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brian Allison

Cordova Jr./Sr. Highschool

Cordova AK 99574

Dear Alaska Legislative Office,

I am writing to you today to garner more support for House Bill 236 in the Alaska Legislature on the increasing Base Student Allocation. As a student I can clearly say there are many ways in which this Bill can affect not only me but my entire school. In any school, large or small, money is always an issue hard to handle. This bill can ease the burden on schools trying to meet federal and state standards. Having been students yourselves, I am sure you also understand why schools need the passage of this bill.

Every school no matter how big or small is always seeking an increase in funding to provide a better education for their students. In Alaska when the budget was cut every school's faced a myriad of problems on continuing to meet the same standards they had in the past. With a larger allocation of funds schools could afford to provide educational hands-on labs, provide qualified teachers for each subject, and have an overall higher graduation rate.

I request that you support House Bill 236 and help it pass through the legislative process. This bill's passage can not only increase graduation rates but will provide the young adults that graduate a better understanding and realistic view of the world they live in.

Sincerely,

Ethan Beckett

Ethan Beckett
Highschool Senior
Cordova Jr/Sr Highschool
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear Co-chairs Drummond and Story and members of House Education Committee,

Thank you for your service to our state, your districts and the students of Alaska.

I am a retired superintendent and currently work part time with school districts. I am representing myself.

I am writing in support of HB 236.

The testimony you were able to listen to today during your committee hearing provided concrete examples and the reality of uncertain and insufficient budgets in our schools.

There are unintended consequences beyond the specific reduction in programs, cutting of teachers and reduction in needed maintenance. The low morale that the cuts cause in schools not only results the specific reductions that are cut, it results in anger in the schools about the personal and program losses that result in stress on relationships. This directly leads to the high turnover rate that so impacts our schools and students. This low morale of the adults also effects the school climate of students and their learning outcomes.

I appreciate your leadership and encourage you to continue to invest your time and energy and the state's resources in our schools. Our students are our future, and this could be your legacy to this future.

Peggy Cowan

Hello.

Please support raising the BSA. Public school funding has been cut, yet expenses keep going up. I have two students at Homer High School and class sizes are nearing 30 students per teacher. Many programs have been cut. I grew up here in Alaska and received an excellent public school education. And I moved back so that my daughters could receive the same. High support fully funding public schools. Please raise the BSA .

We must support public school funding. Please vote to raise the BSA

Thank you,

Shannon McBride-Morin
Kachemak Bay Wildrness Lodge
Homer AK 99603

To the House Education Committee:

I am writing to express my whole-hearted support for increases in the Base Student Allocation (BSA), as proposed in HB236. As a member of the school board in Haines and a former student of Haines Middle and High school, I am a huge proponent of adequate funding of our education system. Our ability to offer the most high-quality education is greatly diminished by the lack of sufficient educational funding for our schools in recent years.

The educational vision in our school district is to “empower excellence every day” and we do that by attempting to create meaningful learning opportunities for whole-child growth; this means providing a rigorous academic curriculum, fine arts instruction, career and technical education, and extracurricular activities. Increasing in the Base Student Allocation would provide the resources we need to operate and expand these offerings. Our students need these opportunities to prepare them for individual success after graduation.

As a developmental psychologist who studies educational programs for a living, I am acutely aware of the importance of building a well-funded education system that promotes learning and protects the health, safety, and welfare of all students. In my opinion, our district would greatly benefit from a higher BSA rate in allowing us to fund the teaching positions and acquire the resources we need to achieve our worthy mission.

Thanks for your time. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,
Michelle Sloper
School Board Member
Haines, Alaska

February 26, 2019

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on House Bill 236, an act to increase the base student allocation. My name is Jeffrey Short, I am a 48-year resident of Juneau, and I am a member of the Juneau School District Board of Education, in my third year of my first term. I am writing in large part because I understand you are interested in what the consequences might be for our schools if HB 236 is not enacted.

These consequences became more clear last evening when our Board met to discuss how we would construct our budget for FY21. Flat funding from FY20 without the \$30M Legislative Operating Grant translates into a reduction of \$1.5M in our budget after accounting for inflation, which follows \$10M in cuts we have made since 2010. This will compel us to reduce the number of certified teachers, classified staff, student support programs. For example, even if we eliminate all of the discretionary spending we allocated in FY20, which includes: High School credit recovery, our elementary arts and integration specialists, instructional services provided to schools by the District, the High School AVID program, coordinated high school courses support, Sea Week, Tlingit Elder's honoraria, talented enrichment development support, library services support, and discretionary professional development and equity training for teachers, we would still be left with a \$800K deficit.

Closing the remaining \$800K deficit would require reducing some combination of up to 7 teachers and up to 13 support staff. We have already cut 52 teaching positions out of 360 since 2010, and losing 7 more will amount to a 16% reduction since 2010 while the student population declined by only 9%. This will necessarily increase class sizes, often to more than 25 for K-2 classes and more than 30 for the higher grades. Overall, any combination of these alternatives will substantially degrade our ability to educate our children even further.

Failure to keep up with inflation since at least 2007 has already led to deep cuts in our schools. These cuts come on top of increasing poverty and diversity among our students, both of which require additional resources to effectively address. In Juneau as well as across Alaska, the proportion of students in our Free and Reduced Lunch programs has increased by nearly 50% since 2010. As for diversity, Alaska's Caucasian proportion of 62% accounts for 45% of students, while the 15% of Alaska Natives account for 24% of students. Effectively addressing the unique educational needs of Alaska Natives in particular requires additional resources that have been steadily declining over at least the last decade.

Contrary to some claims, Alaska does not spend more per student on education than any other state. In nominal terms we were 5th highest in 2016, and after accounting for cost of living differences we were 12th, right next to Ohio and Michigan. But our small and dispersed population makes delivery of educational services inherently more expensive than those states, and after accounting for those differences, we are about average.

HB 236 will go a long way towards maintaining our current ability to educate our students, and so I strongly urge its passage.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Jeffrey W. Short, Ph.D.
JWS Consulting LLC

Dear Members of the Alaska House Education Committee:

We are writing in support of HB236, Increase Base Student Allocation. Providing adequate public education for all children of the State is a primary responsibility of State Government as defined by the Alaska Constitution. The last increase in the BSA was in 2017. Since then, inflation has eroded the funding for our public schools by 8.8%! As a result, our public schools have suffered substantial reductions in resources and staff. HB 236 increases the BSA by 3.8% over two years. These increases do not keep up with the continuing costs of inflation, but they are a step in the right direction. We urge you to support this bill and move it on for consideration by the House.

Sincerely,
Alex and Peggy Wertheimer
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to give you my thoughts on this bill. I was unable to attend or give feedback during the meeting this morning.

My son is in fifth grade at government hill elementary. We moved here to Anchorage two years ago, and in part chose Anchorage because of the availability of language immersion as a part of the public system. In Denver my son had been in Spanish immersion and the ability to continue him on that path help make Anchorage an attractive destination for us.

The recent discussion at the state level are extremely disheartening. I look to the next critical years in his education and am very fearful that in the end all these changes will simply hurt his education. This equates to lopping several days off the school year and decreasing my child's opportunity for education.

We're losing dedicated health studies at government hill next year and the school week is being reduced by an hour. In most places education is being prioritized more highly, but in Alaska it seems the only people happy about the current trend are the home schoolers because it's not their problem.

In regards to the base student allocation for and HB 236. These increases need to be supported.

Our teachers need more support. Health is a critically important subject to ensure the next generation can have the best chances of contributing to our communities.

An increase to the BSA could provide the resources necessary to provide that instruction for our students and to restore the full school week, eliminating the necessity for the trim to instructional time. The BSA has not been increasing to even keep up with inflation.

Please turn the tide and start showing that you support education. Please start showing that you support our children's future.

Sincerely,
Dave Nespoli,
Anchorage

Hello Representatives of the House Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public testimony. My name is Holly Martinson, I'm a 3rd generation Alaskan and an Assistant Professor of Molecular Biology for the WWAMI School of Medical Education at the University of Alaska Anchorage. I would like to speak to you today about why we need to invest in Education in Alaska to save essential programs like the ASD gifted education program IGNITE. Recently, the IGNITE program was going to be eliminated from the ASD Budget. The Anchorage community rallied a week ago to save the program and the School Board voted to give the program one more year of funding. I'm asking the committee to increase the BSA to provide additional funding for the IGNITE program for more than an additional year. Below I've describe what the IGNITE program has done for me as a former student and now for my daughter.

I entered the program in 2nd grade and it was my favorite day of the week. I loved all of my elementary school teachers, but with 30 kids in the classroom, they had little time to help me excel academically. Through IGNITE, I was able to step away from the chaos of the classroom and participate in STEM based projects that built the foundation for me as a scientist. It was through this program that I learned how to use a microscope, dissected my first specimen, and learned how to work with my classmates as a team. IGNITE was challenging and pushed my academic abilities. Coming from a lower income family, I wasn't going to get these opportunities anywhere else. I'm so thankful that I was given the chance to participate in such an amazing program helping me become the first in my family to graduate from college.

This year my daughter, Liv, was accepted into the IGNITE program. Even though Liv loves all of her teachers, she has often admitted to me that school was boring, that she didn't feel challenged and didn't want to go anymore. Everything she said to me reminded of how I felt in school before IGNITE. Just like my teachers, she has been given worksheets and allowed to read when she finished her work. On her first day in IGNITE she was so excited about everything she had learned and created, she talked with me for an hour about it. As I look at the students in Liv's College Gate IGNITE program, I see the same nontraditional diverse backgrounds that were in my class. I'm excited for her to participate in a program that has done so much for me.

The students in these program are our future doctors, scientists, engineers, lawyers and so much more. I currently work with former IGNITE high school students in my research lab at UAA studying cancer and many of my medical students are former IGNITE students as well. We need to continue to support the gifted education program IGNITE and not take away these opportunity from our brightest students.

Thank you for your time,
Holly Martinson

House Education Committee,

I am a lifelong Alaskan and a product of the Anchorage School District. I have two children currently enrolled in ASD, a Kindergartner and a 2nd grader. I watched nearly 5+ hours of passionate public testimony last week at the ASD board meeting. It was difficult and frustrating to witness and only made worse by waking up to the news that Governor Dunlevy has proposed a \$1300 supplement to the PFD. We can't fund education but we can afford to give residents checks?

The cuts that were passed by ASD last week mean my children have lost an hour of health Health alone to me is a core curriculum but the loss of this time also means key programs like social studies and science might be moved into library time. How do we expect our children to be ready for the future if we can't even fund a base core curriculum? The hour less of school a week means my Kindergartener will miss nearly 2 months of instruction time by the time he reaches middle school. We continue to cut funding at the college level too. Where are our next doctors, lawyers, teachers, psychologist, etc going to come from? The talented and gifted program (IGNITE) is also on the list to lose funding in 2022.

I have a chemical engineering degree that I had to leave the state to obtain. I felt strongly about coming back to Alaska to raise my children. If we can't fund a robust public education why would professionals like myself come back to the state or choose to stay?

The BSA has not increased over the past 10 years to match inflation at a minimum. This is unacceptable. Our state cannot survive on oil revenue alone and without a meaningful plan to raise revenue, public services are not sustainable. I work in the Oil Industry and am keenly aware of the instability that comes from a livelihood derived from it. I support an income tax, PFD cap, and sales taxes. I'd rather pay to build a community and future for my family than watch it dwindle to nothing.

Please raise the base student allocation so that our children and our state has a future.

Thanks,
Kristen Rutledge
Anchorage, AK

Dear Education Committee Member,

I am writing in support of HB 236 as it would give the Anchorage School District more time to absorb budget cuts. As you have probably heard, ASD has decided to eliminate elementary health teachers, moving that content to classroom teachers and physical educators. As a retired physical educator, I can tell you that the gymnasium is not a good learning environment for any content outside of physical education.

When students enter the gymnasium, they expect to move. Their eyes get huge as they view the variety of equipment set out for the day's lesson and their heart rate speeds up simply entering the large space. Asking students to sit for any extended period of time is painful, as there are no seats, no individual writing implements, white boards/blackboards may or may not be present, and the expectation of movement must be suppressed. Best practices in physical education involves students engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 50% of the time in class. That does not include the time students warm up,

warm down, stretch, are instructed in strategies, organized into groups, or equipment distribution. So you can see that taking additional time for health instruction will detract from best practices in physical education.

While many physical educators are versed in health issues, they may not be familiar with the health curriculum. Some will be able to visualize how to incorporate health instruction into their physical education lesson, while others will keep the two contents separate. Professional development will then be divided between health and physical education, detracting from both.

And then there is the concern that students will lose out on some of their current 90 minutes weekly of physical education. That also means that ASD falls further behind in their attempts to implement the intent of the Physical Activity in Schools Law.

More and more we see the need for students to learn healthy habits at school, as this is an age at which habits are formed. With the current threat of the new coronavirus, it is imperative that students learn about protecting themselves and their family/friends from the spread of disease. While this is also just a small part of the health curriculum, it is best conducted by a dedicated specialist and reinforced by other teachers and staff in the building. As the new executive director of Voices for Healthy Kids, Lori Fresina, puts it, "I envision a country where kids make healthy choices because those choices are everywhere.

"Picture this: A teen is offered a sugary drink by a friend, but he turns it down, giving his friend the side-eye, just the way my kids do if they're offered cigarettes. His friends join him in reaching for water instead of soda because that's what they prefer.

"I see restaurants serving kids healthy meals full of fruits and vegetables...families taking evening strolls together...and then those same children, the next day, walking to school safely. At school, those kids drink clean water throughout the day because they have access water fountains and water bottle filling stations and have a healthy lunch because that's what's served. After school, they play outside because they think being active is awesome and because their cities choose to invest in green spaces, public parks and rec centers.

"I see them feeling good, healthy and alive."

We are all responsible for giving our students the desire and tools to live and expect a healthy life. Passing HB 236 will allow the Anchorage community to have more input into how ASD can most effectively absorb future cuts to funding without detracting from the vision of a healthy lifestyle for all peoples.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Dorothy Orr

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I had to drop off the phone prior to having the opportunity to give testimony at your committee meeting this morning due to a business meeting.

Thank you to all of you for taking testimony and thank you to Rep. Story for bringing this bill forward.

I will simply echo the invited testimony of Mr. Wooten, Dr. Parady and Mr. Parker.

I strongly support HB 236 and an increase to the BSA. I know that Alaska can do better to support our kids than offer years of flat funding to public education with the excuse that "we can't afford it".

Please pass this bill out of committee and I will continue to provide public testimony in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Caroline Storm
Self Employed Architect
Anchorage 99515
