

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: A letter from a former student...
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 1:55:17 PM

Hello. My name is Dalton Turner, and I would like to talk to you about the critical issue of school funding. I am a student at Blatchley Middle School in Sitka, and at our school we can see the profound effects of low school funding and low BSA (Base Student Allocation). This issue has gone unsolved for too long.

I love to read. Starting years ago with loss of funding to schools my school library became woefully underfunded and underequipped. This is evidenced by the fact that the school librarian was fired last year and now no one can check out the books because no one knows how to operate the checkout system. Also, a lot of my favorite teachers were fired and the BSA still wasn't raised. House bill 69 will end this by restoring the BSA to what it should have been given rampant inflation and ever-growing costs to schools.

Representative Himschoot used to be my gifted and talented teacher in Sitka, Alaska. I know she has been working tirelessly to support education and public-school teachers like my parents. She and those who support house bill 69 are the true heroes in the state of Alaska.

Also, the issue of charter/private schools in our state. I believe that most private schools are acceptable, but what is NOT acceptable is taking public funds away from public schools and giving them to private schools. This practice is wrong and must be stopped. Many private schools teach things that are not taught in public schools, such as religion and other opinion-based lessons. We need to prioritize public schools because the reality is that not many families can afford the expensive tuition costs at a private school. Public education MUST be supported by the government of the state!

Not only am I a student in Sitka, but both my parents are teachers, and I see and hear firsthand the struggles that are affecting public education. First on the list, and most important, is school funding. Raising the BSA is one step, the most crucial step, in the right direction. The fact that the BSA has not increased since 2017 has been devastating to districts, families, and students across our state. Please support house bill 69.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Dalton Turner

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Alaska Education Funding
Date: Friday, January 31, 2025 5:33:18 PM

Stop throwing money at the school system without requiring measurable improvement.

We have heard for decades that schools need more money yet nothing changes. You just keep telling us schools need more money.

Start showing positive return on our investment and that will happen.

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Whitham D. Reeve
Anchorage, Alaska USA

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From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Base Student Allocation/Immersion Program Plea
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 1:39:38 PM

Good Afternoon,

I am reaching out to you, on behalf of my daughter. She is an eight year old third grader at Chugiak Elementary in the Spanish Immersion program. Recently, we became aware that the education funding challenges Anchorage School District is experiencing, has the likely potential to impact/eliminate the immersion programs.

My heart hurts, at the thought of this program ceasing to exist. Since my daughter was born, she's been immersed in two languages. The choice to enter the lottery into the Spanish immersion program was always our plan for her. We live in Eagle River, but adjusted our lives, so that I could take her to/from school every day, as I went down to part time work to allow for this. It's that important to us.

While I can understand a budget deficit, and I can understand hard decisions need to be made. But taking away educational programs from the kids, our community, is heartbreaking. While I can understand some of the other budget cuts also come with emotions, taking away sports is one thing, there are private clubs and things to join. Not a perfect solution, but a solution. I can't recreate an immersion program. I can't pay my way to funding that invaluable experience for her in the same setting she receives at school.

That school has become our community. It's a happy place for my daughter. It's a community that my entire family will be devastated to lose. We will watch all these kids lose their language focus (that we all specifically elected to prioritize), and watch all these kids be split up into different schools.

I won't pretend to understand the ins/outs of government. I will likely say some things incorrectly. But, I ask that you please consider my daughter, my family, her classmates, and our community when you cast your vote on increasing Base Student Allocation.

Thank you,

Allison Devora

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Closing Schools
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 8:52:17 AM

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to urge you to **pass HB 69**, a bill that is critical for ensuring that Alaska's education system remains **competitive, innovative, and responsive to the needs of families**. Last night, the Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board voted to **close Pearl Creek and two other schools**, a decision that could have been avoided if the district had the resources and flexibility to **pursue alternative models like magnet and FOCUS schools**.

My family moved to Fairbanks from Arizona, where we saw firsthand what happens when schools close without alternative models in place. Instead of **increasing choices for families**, school closures eliminated viable options, forcing parents into **a narrow system with fewer educational pathways**. We believed Alaska was different—that **our leaders valued school choice in all its forms**. But last night, Fairbanks **rejected innovation** when it could have **expanded educational opportunities**.

HB 69 is an opportunity to change that.

This legislation would **increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and provide districts with the funding stability they need to develop high-quality magnet and FOCUS schools, strengthen specialized programs, and create competitive educational options that retain and attract families**. Instead of being forced into a cycle of closures and shrinking opportunities, districts could **expand school choice through dynamic, student-centered models**.

Without HB 69, we will continue to see **school closures year after year**, not because families don't want these schools, but because districts don't have the funding or flexibility to **innovate and keep pace with changing educational demands**.

Last night's vote in Fairbanks is a warning sign. **Without bold action from the legislature, more communities will face the same devastating losses**. Passing HB 69 isn't just about keeping schools open—it's about **giving districts the ability to create competitive, high-quality educational models that meet the needs of every student**.

Governor Dunleavy has made **school choice a priority**, and we agree—but **true school choice means having a diverse set of high-quality options, including magnet schools, specialized programs, and innovative learning environments**. HB 69 provides the foundation to **make that vision a reality**.

I urge you to **act now and pass HB 69** to prevent more unnecessary closures, to expand opportunities for students, and to ensure that **Alaska remains a place where families have real choices in education**.

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Muehlbauer

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Dire funding needs in our state!
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 2:39:22 PM

Good afternoon, Members of the Alaska Legislature,

I am a parent of two teens in the Anchorage School District, a resident and voter in Alaska since 2008. As you are well aware, the Anchorage School District is facing an unprecedented budget deficit for the coming AY2025-26 school year, and with it there are significant slashes being proposed to continue operations. The governor recently attended a fundraiser event for Rilke Schule, the German immersion school in Anchorage, which is one of the district's public schools. The fundraiser was held because of the ongoing budget shortage that is a direct result of no increase to the BSA in more than 10 years. This has not kept up with inflation and is causing problem after problem for the Anchorage School Board, parents, students, faculty, and staff.

A few personal impacts to my family:

- my daughter is a high school swimmer, who took 2nd at State this year in one of her events. She intends to swim in college, and to eliminate high school swim (a no-cut sport) would be devastating for her goals
- my son is in middle school, intending to continue German from Rilke Schule into Service High School. Cutting support for immersion programs would completely derail his progress and goals
- my son participates in middle school sports through neighborhood schools. He participates in cross country and track, and cutting athletics in middle school would significantly alter his goals of continuing those sports in high school

PLEASE support Senate Bill 46, and House Bill 69 to preserve language immersion programs, athletics, adequate staffing, and school resources throughout our state. The time to act is NOW.

Sincerely,
Robin S. Brooks

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Robin S. Brooks
she/her/hers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 6:26:16 PM

Dear Alaska House and Senate Education Committees,

I am writing to you today as a concerned citizen and parent. Our education funding structure in Alaska is very unique. All of our communities are relying on you to ensure our students have access to an adequate public education. This is our responsibility as a state. Our local districts and governments are doing everything they can to ensure students grow and learn. We are trying our best to create communities that encourage a young workforce to stay in Alaska. We cannot accomplish this goal without adequate funding. I ask that you pass Senate Bill 46 to adjust our funding structures for our modern needs. I also ask that you pass House Bill 69 to increase the BSA. We need adequate class sizes, fully staffed schools, and highly qualified educators in every classroom.

Class sizes are growing out of control. Schools are not staffed adequately so we have current staff running in many directions to fill the gaps and keep students safe. The direct results of these problems is a loss of learning and safety for our students.

Local Alaska districts have already worked hard to cooperate with and assist local charter schools. Our charter schools are rated top in the nation in diversity and performance. We do not need to change what we are doing with our awesome charter schools. Not every family has the resources to make special school choices. We need to continue to fund our local schools so they can continue to be places of learning as well as community centers for our towns and cities. Anchorage School District has worked especially hard to make sure they provide school choices throughout the district with language immersion, Montessori, Open Optional, and ABC school offerings. Defunding public education is taking school choice away from the people who live in these communities but cannot afford to transport their children to charter schools or stay home and homeschool. Both of my children have greatly benefitted from the Japanese Language immersion program. They have had opportunities that are rarely seen in public school settings. As resources have dwindled in the last few years we have seen the teachers do more with less. At some point, this cannot be sustained. We are at that point.

Alaska desperately needs you to ensure our economic future is bright by funding schools that will attract and retain working families.

Thank you for your time, and thank you to the legislators who have sponsored these important bills. Keep up the good work!

Crystal Seeman
Anchorage, Alaska
Parent to a student at Mears Middle School and Dimond High School

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding: Base student allocation increase in needed
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 12:44:10 PM

Hello,

My name is Galina Ryabova-Houston and I am a mom of two kids attending Russian Immersion Program in Turnagain Elementary school.

It is very sad that although they are only in 1st and 4th grades, I'm having to defend their program for the second time within this short period of time.

I'm demanding to increase the BSA that hasn't been done for over a decade, and it has definitely not kept up with inflation.

As it stands, ASD's elementary immersion programs are slated to lose 12 FTE (positions) for next year at the elementary level. These are not 12 actual teachers, but funding from "holdbacks" to offset the difference between immersion and when non-immersion classroom PTR (pupil/teacher ratio) is increased to reduce overall costs. What this means, for example: let's say that the average elementary classroom has a current PTR of 25 students per classroom. And let's say that ABC elementary school has 3 classes of 25 (+/-) students. If the PTR increased to 30 students per classroom, that would mean that 2 teachers may need to take on additional students to accommodate losing one teacher.

This is not possible in immersion since it is very rare to be able to accept new students to the program past 1st grade, unless they come in from a comparable program, or come in with language skills from home, for example. Therefore, the PTR established by ASD (based on state funding) does not work for immersion.

(While middle and high schools are staffed differently than elementary, these proposed cuts at elementary imply that there's no need to continue to support/fund immersion programs in grades 6-12. Without a BSA increase, secondary principals will have to make hard decisions on what electives to cut.)

The 12 FTE ("positions") in question are not actual people, but overall funding to offset the smaller class sizes in immersion when overall PTA increases. However, if these 12 FTE were to be eliminated, ASD immersion programs would be decimated, most likely permanently. Our positions are extremely hard-to-fill and require native/near-native speakers, and in often cases, we need to apply for/sponsor international work visas. We cannot wait until June to see if and what the Legislature decides to fund; we will not be able to find/attract teachers to fill vacant positions. To put things into perspective, 12 FTE would completely eliminate the entire K-5 French immersion program or completely eliminate both the entire Chinese and Russian immersion K-5 programs.

As the current budget proposal stands, including both immersion and neighborhood programs, here are the potential cuts to elementary schools with immersion: O'Malley/French and Sand Lake/Japanese would lose 5 teachers each; Government Hill/Spanish, Chugiak/Spanish, Scenic Park/Chinese, and College Gate/Yup'ik, would each lose 4 teachers each; Turnagain/Russian would gain 1 teacher, which is due to closing Lake Hood Elementary and moving half of their students to Turnagain.

ASD is known for having exemplar immersion programs, dating back 36 years to 1989 with Japanese. Currently, we have 2848 students (K-12) in immersion programs of Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and Yup'ik. This is unheard of in most districts across the nation and reflects the diversity of our city. We have many families (military, oil, medical, etc.) that move to Anchorage due to our immersion offerings.

In 2020 ASD's immersion programs were recognized by being honored with ACTFL's Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Foreign Language Programs. We're home to the nation's first Russian immersion program; one of a handful (nationally) of Indigenous (Yup'ik) immersion programs in public schools open

to anyone; and we're probably the only urban school district that offers the language variety that we do. Our programs have been referenced as exemplars in the Curtain and Dahlberg (now 5th edition) book, Languages and Learners: Making the Match.

Our ASD immersion programs are amazing, and we desperately need your support!

Thank you,

Galina Ryabova-Houston

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education in the Kenai Peninsula and State
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:42:00 AM

Dear House Education Committee Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lila Johnson, and I have been a public school teacher in the Kenai Peninsula School District for 17 years. I am emailing you today because I believe in the power of public education and the responsibility we all share in ensuring that every child in our state has access to a quality education.

Funding Alaska's public school system is not just an option—it is a **constitutional duty**. The vast majority of our students—our future leaders, workers, and community members—attend public schools. Yet, year after year, we have watched funding fail to keep pace with inflation, leading to larger class sizes, fewer resources, and the loss of valuable programs that engage and support our students. These cuts are not just a numbers on a spreadsheet; they have devastating consequences that will impact the children sitting in my classroom today, as well as our entire community here on the Kenai Peninsula and around the state. Already, I see the effects of previous cuts firsthand. I see teachers stretching every resource to its limit. I see students struggling because they don't have access to intervention programs that used to exist. I see families frustrated, knowing that their children are not getting the same level of education they once did.

A **Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase of \$1,808** is not an arbitrary number. It is the amount needed to simply **keep up** with the rising costs of education, ensuring our students have access to the teachers, learning materials, and opportunities they deserve. Without this increase, we are not just cutting budgets—we are cutting futures.

In my district, we are facing a staggering **\$17 million budget deficit**. To bridge this huge monetary gap, we are looking again at **eliminating pools, theaters, arts, sports, and other extracurricular activities**, stripping away opportunities that keep students engaged, build confidence, and foster a sense of belonging. These programs are not just "extras"—they are lifelines for many students, offering a creative outlet, a team to belong to, and skills that extend beyond the classroom. Additionally, **school consolidations** would force hundreds of students into **longer bus rides**, leading to lost sleep, chronic exhaustion, and missed opportunities to participate in after-school activities that shape well-rounded individuals.

The district is also facing **massive teacher layoffs and reductions in support staff**, meaning fewer adults to provide individualized attention, intervention services, and the support our students need to thrive. With **increased class sizes**, students will struggle to receive the instruction and guidance necessary for success, making it harder to close

achievement gaps and provide the high-quality education they deserve. These cuts will not just impact schools—they will **weaken our entire community**, driving families away, reducing opportunities for our youth, and diminishing the strength of our public education system. Without immediate action and proper funding, we are failing our students and jeopardizing Alaska's future.

Our students deserve better. Our communities deserve better. A **significant investment in our public schools is needed NOW**. I urge you to fulfill your constitutional duty and prioritize the future of Alaska by increasing the BSA.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Alaska's students.

Lila Johnson

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Teacher, 2008-current

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Educational Funding
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 2:07:29 PM

Dear Members of the Education Committees;

I am writing to urge you to reject Governor Dunleavy's proposed education budget for 2025-2026.

Alaska's parents, students and teachers need and deserve to have the BSA dramatically increased. The schools, students and teachers are suffering because of years of flat funding.

We want to keep our teachers, middle school sports, ignite, immersion programs, electives in high school as well as keeping our classrooms at a manageable size. Asking a kindergarten teacher to teach 25 students and a high school teacher to have up to 40 students is making a mockery of the educational system.

Choosing to give some teachers a bonus is not the solution to teacher retention. Teachers need and deserve a salary that reflects their importance, and a defined benefit retirement program. Without those there is no encouragement for good teachers to remain in Alaska.

The emphasis on standardized testing does not recognize the vast differences found within the Alaskan communities - within the cities as well as in the villages. Charter schools do well, but they serve a much more restricted population that does not include children with special needs, be they educational, health or disciplinary.

The effects of Governor Dunleavy's proposed budget would negatively affect our kids and our schools, and the future economy of our state.

Thank you for addressing this critical issue,
Cathy Miller
Retired ASD teacher

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [House Education](#)
Subject: Focus on EDUCATION not harboring illegals - NO BSA INCREASE
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:02:18 AM

ASD is so out of touch - they think DEI and harboring illegals is more important than educating our kids and fiscal responsibility

Please do not give ASD another nickel in BSA until they stop this nonsense

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Budget Shortfalls | A Desperate Call to Action | Polaris K-12 School | Anchorage School District
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 4:14:02 PM

From: Clay_Tia [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 7:35 AM
Subject: Budget Shortfalls | A Desperate Call to Action | Polaris K-12 School | Anchorage School District

Dear Governor Dunleavy, Senator Sullivan, Senator Murkowski, and Esteemed Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I am writing today with an urgent request that you raise the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for public education in Alaska. Over the past decade, the state's investment in our children's futures has stagnated. The last significant increase in funding came in 2017, but since then, state funding has flat-lined. The result is that Alaska's public schools are now underfunded by nearly \$2,000 per student simply to match inflation, and this gap is being felt in districts across the state, including the Anchorage School District (ASD), which faces a \$111 million deficit for the 2025-2026 school year.

While my letter is written in the broader context of advocating for equitable education funding, it is also deeply personal. I am writing because my school—Polaris K-12—is facing dire consequences due to these funding shortfalls, and I fear that if we don't act now, we will lose what makes our school unique and vital to the community.

Polaris K-12 is more than just a school; it is a community center that has served nearly 500 students, spanning from kindergarten to 12th grade for 30 years. It is a school of choice—where every individual, from students to staff, has actively chosen to be here every day. It is a place where education transcends textbooks; where real-world, problem-based learning empowers students to drive their own educational outcomes and develop their own educational pathways. Our school is designed to meet the diverse needs of families who are looking for a more personalized and meaningful educational experience for their children.

However, the proposed budget cuts threaten everything we stand for. On January 31, 2025, it was announced that Polaris K-12 would face a 7.6% reduction in teaching staff, which amounts to 3.4 full-time teachers. In addition, there is a 15% reduction in Student Activity Funds and a +4 increase in the pupil-to-teacher ratio (PTR). This would significantly raise class sizes, stretching our already limited resources even thinner.

The reduction in teaching staff is the most concerning impact. This will directly compromise our ability to provide the individualized, hands-on instruction that sets Polaris apart. In elementary grades, this cut will reduce the number of classes from 8 to 7—well below the program’s design and will force us to close another entire classroom. As Polaris is a full-lottery school, this would have a cascading effect. While current families will not be immediately impacted, our ability to accept new families or siblings of students currently enrolled would be severely limited. I have already processed over 50 applications for the spring lottery within 12 hours of opening applications to the public for the 2025/26 school year, and last year, we received more than 1,000 applications from families seeking a seat in our program.

In our secondary education program, the cuts would be equally, if not more, devastating. The proposed reductions would affect the very core of our program. We would likely be unable to continue offering Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and our World Language Program would be substantially diminished. Core courses like English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies would be required to serve a larger spectrum of students moving from 7th/8th-grade classes to 6th/7th/8th—further widening the span of ability levels and readiness our teachers are serving in one class simultaneously. Furthermore, we would likely be forced to resort to online courses to fill instructional gaps in our master schedule, as the number of secondary teachers would drop from 13.4 to 11—which translates to 12 total classes missing from next year’s schedule. This would not only diminish the quality of education but could also render our program unrecognizable.

The proposed cut to our Student Activity Fund is also significantly concerning. These funds currently support essential before-school and during-school enrichment programs, including zero-hour courses, intervention groups, and activities like open gym during secondary lunch period. These funds have allowed us to be creative and resourceful, making it possible for us to continue providing a robust educational experience despite ongoing budget cuts. A 15% reduction in these funds would further cripple our ability to support our students in these essential areas.

The impact of these cuts is not just about numbers—it is about real people. It’s about the passionate teachers who have devoted their lives to education, and who are now at risk of losing their positions at our School of Choice. It’s about the students who rely on our program for more than just academics, but for a sense of community, purpose, and a path to success in life beyond school.

Governor Dunleavy and members of the Alaska Legislature, I urge you to prioritize our children’s future by raising the Base Student Allocation. The current funding levels are

not enough to support the educational needs of Alaska's students, and the proposed cuts will have a far-reaching and devastating impact on our schools and communities. We cannot afford to continue down this path of underfunding education, and we must act now to secure a brighter future for all Alaskans.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue. I trust that you will make the necessary decisions to support public education in Alaska and ensure that schools like Polaris K-12 can continue to serve our students and families with the excellence they deserve.

With care, kindness, and compassion,

Dr. Tia Clay, Ed.D.

Proud Principal of Polaris K-12


DR. TIA CLAY, ED.D.
PRINCIPAL
Polaris K-12 School
Anchorage School District



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:39:04 AM

From: Rebecca King [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 9:09 PM
To: Rebecca King [REDACTED]
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Education Committees,

Thank you for everyone who worked so hard for public education last session and who came to this session ready to prioritize stable funding. I am writing today in support of increased funding for public education and specifically an increase in the Base Student Allocation to, at the least, keep up with inflation.

I am writing to you as a middle school public education teacher who has worked in the Anchorage School District for over twenty years. My colleagues and I are working very hard to provide a quality and positive education and school experience for all of the children. The flat funding is causing continued decreases in vital student supports like Teaching Assistants and counselors. The flat funding is decreasing the types of opportunities at school offered through electives, special programs, and field trips that help students stay interested in school. The flat funding, this year, is threatening to raise our class sizes to an average of 35 students. I can tell you from experience that is a physically packed classroom where students will get a minimum of individual attention. The flat funding is going to cause some of my young and talented coworkers to lose their jobs, regardless of their talent or contribution to the kids.

I am writing to you as a mother of a public education student. My daughter struggles to maintain focus in classrooms that are loud and busy. In classes of 35 kids that is just going to be a reality. The flat funding is going to limit her opportunities for extra curricular activities, like her leadership classes taught in a zero hour on teacher addenda, that are exciting her about school and her future. The flat funding is likely to displace her advisor and favorite teacher from her school.

I am writing to you as a community member who fully believes in the importance of public education for all of us, whether we have children in the schools or not. Flat funding means less services for students who need them the most. Flat funding means less support from counselors for mental health issues. Flat funding means less individual attention for students who are struggling. As a person who lives in this community, I want our children and the future adults of our community to have the chance to learn and thrive in school. If they need more support I would rather give that to them now, as kids, than wait until they are struggling as adults. I want to live in a community that takes care of its children! Public education is for ALL students. And it should be because our communities need ALL of our children supported so they can grow up to be successful adults.

We are not failing. We are caring for and teaching our students as best we can with the resources we have. I see students learning and making improvements every day. Our kids are amazing and they deserve your support.

Sincerely,
Rebecca King
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 3:17:18 PM

Tammy Smith
Legislative Aide/Education Committee Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)465-3744

From: Cherie Bowman <Cherie.Bowman@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 2:36 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: Education Funding

Cherie Bowman
Legislative Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)-465-3744

From: KerriTony Jackson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:42 PM
To: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Representative Story,

I am writing to you as a public school teacher and the parent of two former public school students. I will be retiring from the Anchorage School District at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. While it would be easy for me to walk away and not care about education funding since I will be retiring soon and my kids aren't in the school system anymore, I am instead heartbroken for my students, my coworkers, and my community.

The Anchorage School District recently released their budget for the upcoming school year. As I am sure you know, the cuts are devastating. I teach at Goldenview Middle School, and nine of my fellow teachers are on the chopping block. My neighbor, who has taught at Goldenview

for over 25 years and just stepped into an assistant principal role this year, is also slated to be let go.

The past few days have been filled with questions from my students about what this all means for them next year. They are worried, scared, mad, and in disbelief that this is their future. One of my students asked if everyone in Alaska would give \$100, would that be enough to help? Others asked if donations could be made to our school. While their eagerness to come up with solutions makes me proud, I am also furious that our education system has come to this. Children should never have to worry about losing educational opportunities. They have so many questions as to how we have gotten to this point. I did tell them the state hasn't raised the funding for education for over ten years, and explained how that meant each year our state was actually cutting education funding. They were shocked to say the least.

Please, work for your youngest constituents and increase funding for their education, so I don't have to try to explain that their state doesn't want to invest in their neighborhood schools, or their futures.

Sincerely,

Kerri Jackson

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 8:19:29 AM

From: KerriTony Jackson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:43 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Representative Himschoot,

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Sincerely,

Kerri Jackson

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Working Group
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 11:19:17 AM

From: Gayle Schuh [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 11:12 AM
Subject: Education Working Group

Because you are a member of the Education Working Group or of the alternates, I would like to express my opinion on some of the topics you may be discussing.

YES - Increase the BSA and make sure you have a veto proof majority that will remain unchanged if the governor uses his veto pen again.

YES - Increase career and technical education opportunities

NO - Teacher Bonuses. An increase in the BSA can be used by school districts in the manner that suits them best, be it supplies and textbooks or salaries for support personnel and staff.

NO - Money for homeschool. The state is providing a public education that is available to everyone. If you want something different from that, pay for it.

NO - Expand charter schools. Keep in place the regulation that school boards must approve charter schools so that they may expand their options for the public schools if they see fit.

NO - Reading Intervention Program. If public schools are adequately funded they can provide this resource and have local control over the education decisions.

Alaskans, like me, are tired of the rhetoric. Increase the BSA and opportunities for public education.

Gayle Schuh
Eagle River, AK

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Funding Education
Date: Saturday, February 1, 2025 5:31:24 PM

Tammy Smith
Legislative Aide/Education Committee Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)465-3744

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Saturday, February 1, 2025 12:53 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Funding Education

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From: Gary Miller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 7:59:35 PM
To: Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jennie Armstrong <Rep.Jennie.Armstrong@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Representative.Eleie.Moore@akleg.gov <Representative.Eleie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Representative.Nelie.Jimmi@akleg.gov <Representative.Nelie.Jimmi@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jesse Sumner <Rep.Jesse.Sumner@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank

Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Sensesentative.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov <Sensesentative.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Sensesentative.Robert.Yundt@akleg.gov <Sensesentative.Robert.Yundt@akleg.gov>

Subject: Funding Education

Them kids don't need no education. Give them Dunleavy's PFD amount every year and them don't got to get jobs. How does that sound to you?

Our children are our state's future. They should get the best education we can give them. I suggest getting the legislation to Dunleavy as quickly as possible in case he cuts funding for education again. That will give you the opportunity to override his cuts.

Thank you.

Gary Miller

[REDACTED]

Juneau, AK 99801-8211

[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB 69-rethinking school funding from the state
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 11:26:20 AM

From: Alex Koplin [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 10:01 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 69-rethinking school funding from the state

Dear Representative Himschoot,

Thanks for pushing the education funding bill, HB 69. I have long been a proponent of increased education funding. Last year, I worked on a campaign to override the Governor's education veto. At least they voted on it, but it had no chance to pass.

I feel the bill you currently have has no chance of passing. Even if it passes in both houses, it would be almost impossible to override the Governor's veto, which is most likely to happen if HB 69 is passed.

I am advocating for a permanent BSA, even one dollar. I would be astounded to see the state agree to a regular yearly payment inscribed in law. We have been asking for stable funding for the last 8-10 years, and nothing has come of it. Why not change the strategy?

To make this happen, we have to start with a smaller number. I realize that some people think that if we don't get the increase now, there is no chance of coming back from the abyss, and it will just get worse. Well, it sure is getting worse. Has the state ever told the school districts what they would get before March? From my understanding of this current budget, money is going to be scarce.

So, besides lowering the BSA price, I would love to see HB 69 include an analysis of how much this will cost and where the money will come from over time.

In addition to the aforementioned ideas, we need bills that will generate revenue, be it a lottery, income tax, increase mining taxes, or get rid of SB 21—the list goes on.

I know the state has neglected its responsibility to provide adequate public education funding. The Governor is not going to support any BSA or permanent funding. And knowing all this, why are we just doing the same kind of song and dance to get this funding? We should know by now what doesn't work.

Good luck with your efforts, but I do hope you will consider another way to get permanent funding.

Sincerely,

Alex Koplin
Homer, Alaska

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Oppose HB 69
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:41:19 AM

From: Donna Anderson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:01 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Oppose HB 69

I attend School Board meetings every month. My public comment at the Feb. 3 KPBSD School Board meeting:

My name is Donna Anderson. I am a recently retired KPBSD teacher. Tonight I speak from that experience as a concerned stakeholder.

I oppose HB 69. This bill has zero accountability attached to it. This bill asks for a blank check increase of \$1800 to the BSA. In 2015 DEED wrote a resolution in support of repealing the 70/30 rule. One of the reasons listed as rationale for repealing the 70/30 rule was "Stakeholders will provide oversight to the budget." The public stakeholders have made it clear that they want results and they want accountability. NEA makes it clear they support the blank check, money grab, goodbye PFD approach outlined in this bill.

On Friday, Governor Dunleavy introduced HB 76 and SB 82 to improve educational outcomes for all Alaska students. This comprehensive plan focuses on funding, student achievement, and expanding opportunities for families and educators statewide. HB 76 and SB 82 align with the Education Reform Data Survey that shows "Education spending alone isn't the answer." The 2021 DEED Teacher Retention Survey shows the #1 area that impacts teacher retainment and retention is salary.

The blank check approach to school funding disenfranchises the public as well as teachers. These are the families who are leaving public schools and choosing to homeschool. These are the teachers, like myself, who leave the classroom. Its simple cause and effect. Decrease in student enrollment causes a decrease in, and need for, funding.

The blank check approach gives this board freedom to approve 8.9%-12% raises for central office staff, along with multiple \$9000 bonuses for some. According to "Open the

Books” this amounts to between \$20,000-50,000 pay raise for some central office administrators. Alaska families are paying multiple superintendents more than we pay our Governor.

The blank check approach allows the repeated wasteful spending of millions of dollars on curriculum and materials.

Your responsibility is to the families and students, the stakeholders, who reside in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and not to NEA. As the union converges on Juneau with their red shirts blazing, I hope you remember the stakeholders at home who are rightfully demanding accountability and results. If KPBSD does not make the necessary internal changes to attract and retain families and teachers, you will continue to see families choosing other options for educating their children. You will continue to see good teachers leave the profession.

I ask that you oppose HB 69. I ask for your support for HB 76 and SB 82. This comprehensive approach to educational reform is a step away from status quo and a step toward building trust between KPBSD and the stakeholders who choose to reside and educate their children here. HB 76 and SB 82 align with the will of the people, asking for accountability and results. It also addresses the need for quality teacher recruitment and retention, both which have a direct impact on student outcomes.

Thank you for your time.

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please support education funding!
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:40:53 AM

From: Megon Coon [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:48 AM

To: Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please support education funding!

Dear Representatives,

First, thank you for all that you do to make Alaska a wonderful place for Alaskans to live.

One of my favorite things about living in Anchorage is the excellent multicultural and bilingual education my two children have received at Government Hill Elementary. The fantastic immersion education program they attend, as well as the many other immersion programs in Anchorage, will be decimated if the BSA is not increased. The current proposal has my child's school losing 4 teachers next school year, and other immersion schools are slated to lose even more positions.

The language-learning opportunities that our school district currently offers Alaskan students are unmatched in this country. Teaching a wide range of languages (7!), Anchorage immersion programs reflect the rich diversity of our city and nation. They promote cross-cultural understanding, celebrate diversity, and empower young people to use their linguistic competence to break down barriers between people and cultures.

There are currently 2,848 students enrolled in the Anchorage School District's immersion programs, and many of these parents are so committed to immersion education that they drive their children across town every day to get to their school of choice. We made a long-term commitment to our children's education when they entered immersion kindergarten, and now I ask you to honor that commitment.

Anchorage families have clearly shown that they are invested in their children's immersion education. Please show that you too value education by supporting significant increases to the BSA. Please support SB 46 and HB 69.

Thank you,
Megon Coon

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: POM
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 3:18:02 PM

Tammy Smith
Legislative Aide/Education Committee Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)465-3744

From: Cherie Bowman <Cherie.Bowman@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 2:36 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: POM

Cherie Bowman
Legislative Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)-465-3744

From: Melissa Cahak [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:08 PM
To: Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; services@murkowski.senate.gov; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Representative.Maxine.Dilbert@akleg.gov; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Representative.RebeccaSchwanke@akleg.gov; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Representative.Sara.Hannam@akleg.gov; Representative.Nellie.UnanqipJimmie@aklag.gov; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard

<Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>;
governor@gov.state.ak.us; services@sullivan.senate.gov

Subject: POM

Dear Governor Dunleavy, Senator Sullivan, Senator Murkowski, and esteemed members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I am writing today with an urgent request to raise the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for public education in Alaska. This is a scary time as a parent to see our school system continue to decline and our children are paying a steep price. Classrooms are already overloaded, and teachers are struggling to meet the demands that are placed upon them from the education requirements that have been enacted. Our children deserve quality education with nurturing educators.

Funding for education in Alaska has been stagnant for the last 8 years and with continued inflation, this is unacceptable. Lack of education funding raises classroom sizes and significantly limits quality education. Parents are left with no options in this economy where financial burdens require both parents to work full time, not allowing other educational opportunities without a public education system. Without a healthy public education system, parents will be forced to leave the work force which could further destroy an already struggling economy. We cannot afford to lose public education.

Furthermore, we have chosen a choice school which supports the ideals of the education that we chose for my children, where we have built a community of support. That community is extremely important to not only my children's education, but also their continued social emotional development. It is here that they learn to interact with the world.

On a more personal note, I have a child on the autism spectrum who requires much more guidance in his education. These cuts would deeply affect the support for children with IEP's, 504's and other behavioral needs. These children deserve community support, they cannot thrive without it.

On another note, this significantly impacts of educators who have dedicated their careers to teaching our children. They are people that our children rely on and turn to for support. These are dedicated educators do what they do for the love of teaching and building a better future for our children. They deserve more. This would cut over 5 jobs alone from our school, with around 500 schools in Alaska, that's 1000-2500 jobs gone this year alone. In recent cuts our community has already lost teachers. We should be creating jobs within our state to keep people here and build our economy. We cannot afford to lose more jobs.

Please consider the impact on our communities, our state, the livelihood of our educators and our children's future. We desperately need better for our children.

Thank you for your time,
Melissa Bruesch
Alaska state resident since 1997

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: POM
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 8:17:14 AM

From: Melissa Cahak [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:08 PM

To: Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; services@murkowski.senate.gov; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Representative.Maxine.Dilbert@akleg.gov; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Representative.RebeccaSchwanke@akleg.gov; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Representative.Sara.Hannam@akleg.gov; Representative.Nellie.Unanqip.Jimmie@aklag.gov; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; governor@gov.state.ak.us; services@sullivan.senate.gov

Subject: POM

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children. They are people that our children rely on and turn to for support. These are dedicated educators do what they do for the love of teaching and building a better future for our children. They deserve more. This would cut over 5 jobs alone from our school, with around 500 schools in Alaska, that's 1000-2500 jobs gone this year alone. In recent cuts our community has already lost teachers. We should be creating jobs within our state to keep people here and build our economy. We cannot afford to lose more jobs. Please consider the impact on our communities, our state, the livelihood of our educators and our children's future. We desperately need better for our children.

Thank you for your time,
Melissa Bruesch
Alaska state resident since 1997

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Urgent: Do not increase Alaska's BSA
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 4:52:27 PM

From: Aiden & Arabella [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 4:32 PM
To: Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Representative.Maxine.Dilbert@akleg.gov; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Representative.Nellie.Unanqip.Jimmie@akleg.gov; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>
Subject: Urgent: Do not increase Alaska's BSA

Dear Representatives & /Senators,

I am reaching out today regarding the ongoing budget discussions for the Anchorage School District and the broader issue of education funding in Alaska. While many voices are calling for an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA), I firmly believe that increasing funding without first addressing inefficiencies in the current system is not a responsible solution. Instead, I urge you to reduce administrative overhead, consolidate schools where necessary, and ensure that funds are directed toward actual classroom instruction rather than excessive bureaucracy.

The situation at Polaris K-12 School underscores the need for a critical review of how education dollars are spent. Polaris is facing a 7.6%

reduction in teaching staff, a 15% cut to student activity funds, and a substantial increase in the pupil-to-teacher ratio. These cuts will have a direct impact on students education, reducing class offerings and increasing workloads for the remaining teachers. While these issues are being attributed to stagnant state funding, the real concern is how existing funds are allocated and managed.

It is unacceptable that we continue to hear calls for increased funding without a serious effort to assess how current education dollars are being utilized. The state should not simply funnel more money into a system that has yet to demonstrate fiscal responsibility. Before any discussion of a BSA increase, I strongly urge the legislature to:

1. Conduct a full audit of the education system to identify **inefficiencies** and areas of waste.
2. **Reduce administrative overhead** and prioritize classroom spending. Too many resources are directed toward administrative costs rather than direct student instruction.
3. **Consolidate underutilized schools** where appropriate to optimize resources.
4. Ensure that any future increases in funding are **directly** benefiting students.

This is not just about Polaris, it is about all public schools in Alaska and the long-term sustainability of our education system. Continuing to pour money into a system that has not been properly managed will not solve the problem. Fiscal responsibility must come first.

I urge you to take immediate action to prioritize structural reforms over a blanket increase in funding. The future of Alaska's education system depends on responsible stewardship, not unchecked spending.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the students and families of our state. I look forward to your response on how you plan to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Cortney Moore



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 – "EDUCATION FUNDING: INCREASE BSA"
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 4:29:47 PM

Hello House Education Committee Members,

As a member of the Alaska resource development industry, and a father of a child in an Alaska public school, I support an increase in the BSA. Our industry needs educated workers, and our industry and State need to attract workers with children. Good schools are vital to attracting workers to move to Alaska, and not rotate while leaving family in another state.

--

Kevin Pike

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 citizen input
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 5:33:57 PM

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I'm a parent of a child in an Alaska school system, reaching out to you as an individual Alaskan.

I'm urging our state legislature to please work to increase the base student allocation in Alaska, and respect local control for Alaska's schools.

Simply changing policies without addressing fundamental funding issues will not resolve our education system challenges. While Governor Dunleavy covets Mississippi's educational model (a model which ignores key geographic, cultural and infrastructure realities – and produces results I'd describe as “mid”), I've seen what success looks like in my son's Anchorage-based charter school. As it stands now, at current funding levels, our son's charter school, a shining success to date, will also face difficult decisions.

If you were to ask me what the secret ingredient to our son's school is, I'd say: resources. It's the community-added resources that allow our teachers to have the support of paraprofessionals every day. It's the abundant parental engagement for those of us who are fortunate enough to have the time to devote; this engagement is warmly invited by teachers and administrators who are not strained to the level I see in other schools. Not every student has the opportunity to go to a school with such resources, *but they should*.

HB 69's proposed increases - \$1,000 to the BSA for FY26 and additional \$404 increases for FY27 and FY28 - represent a critical first step toward improving schools across the state. Please work to increase the base student allocation to provide stable, consistent funding across all school districts, support teacher retention through sustainable funding (not just temporary bonuses) and ensure consistent educational opportunities.

Regina McConkey [REDACTED] Anchorage, Alaska 99502
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: HB 69 Hearing Comments
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:39:16 PM

Dear Rep. Himschoot and committee members,

As a 50-year Alaska resident, former classroom teacher, and mother of two daughters who received a great public school education in Fairbanks, I'm in complete support of increasing the student allocation by \$1,000, along with \$400 increases in 2026 and 2027. With inflation increases, it's also reasonable and necessary to inflation-proof educational funding. This is long overdue.

As a visiting children's book author I have traveled to elementary schools in 23 states. I've been in overcrowded classrooms and other classes with lower student-teacher ratios where students thrive. From my experience it's clear that students excel when they are not in overcrowded rooms because teachers have a better opportunity to meet the academic and emotional needs of each student.

It's also evident that the states and cities that invest in public education, attracting good teachers, engaging in strong, creative programs, maintaining their buildings, and offering a decent student-teacher ratio in a healthy environment—these are the states and districts that succeed with student growth and achievements, building stronger, more vibrant communities in the long run. All of this takes investment in our youth and public education.

As a number one priority, the State Legislature needs to unify its efforts and increase student allocation funding instead of shortchanging our youth.

The State of Alaska also has a constitutional responsibility to offer the very best public school education possible available for all residents. If we care about the future of our youth, our workforce, and Alaska—we should all support HB 69. We are a rich state and should have the very best school system in the nation!! Why not?

I find it troubling that so many schools are closing across the state because enrollment is down. Maybe consolidation is necessary in some circumstances, but many years of diminished or stagnant funding takes a huge toll over time. But it also begs the question, with increased funding could many of these schools stay open with a lower student-teacher ratio that is beneficial?

Last, one suggestion on a possible source for funding. Instead of giving \$50 million to AIEDA, at the Governor's request to be a backstop for the oil and gas industry, put the \$50 million into schools. AIEDA should also give its maximum allowable dividend to the state's general fund each year to help balance the budget. They are sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars.

Thank you,

Debbie S. Miller
[REDACTED]
Sitka, AK 99835
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 testimony
Date: Sunday, February 2, 2025 6:11:45 AM

To: House Education Committee

My name is Karen McSpadden, I am the principal of Gustavus School in Southeast Alaska. I am in Support HB 69 to secure Alaska's educational future.

Raising the Base Student Allocation (BSA) is imperative to keep schools operational, our teachers in classrooms, and for Alaska students' future. Failure to act on HB 69 will deepen the crisis and jeopardize the future of Alaska's youth.

Alaska's current BSA has failed to keep pace with inflation, leaving schools struggling to afford even the most basic operational costs. Rising expenses for utilities, classroom supplies, and transportation in rural areas where costs are exponentially higher, have pushed many districts, including ours, into financial hardship. This in combination with the absence of SRS funding connected to the lack of monies for forest receipts in Tongass National Forest (where we are located), face even more hardship to the tune of over a 400,000 deficit.

Without an increase in the BSA, our teachers will have no other alternative but to leave for states that offer better compensation and stability. The teacher shortage is even more severe in our rural community where the high cost of living and lack of housing make it impossible to attract new educators.

The domino effect of the current BSA is insurmountable. Businesses and families are more likely to leave our community to areas with stronger schools which will drive Alaska's economic growth elsewhere. By supporting HB 69 and increasing the BSA, lawmakers can help create a more thriving future here in Alaska for students and our economy.

We are urging lawmakers to prioritize education and pass HB 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation. The uncertainty surrounding educational funding is pushing Alaska educators to the brink, forcing them to make impossible choices as they struggle to plan for the future and preserve the quality of education students desperately need.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McSpadden/Principal/Gustavus School

Chatham School District

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:50:09 PM

Committee Members:

I completely support education funding increases like HB69. ASD proposed cuts are unnecessary and harmful. How can the Governor support private charter schools, vouchers, etc and allow programs within the schools that require no added transportation to be cut? The District needs to plan ahead for long term improvements to the system and to teacher retainment. Please pass HB69 ASAP.

Sharon Clawson
Anchorage 99507

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:28:45 AM

I am opposed to HB 69 and tequest you vote against this bill. Increased funding is not needed. There are less people, students.

Accountability, responsibility, results are needed. The focus should NOT be on more salaries, bonus', benefits and pensions, people who only work there to get vested and leave. That is just a drain on the system and the PFD to selfishly benefit themselves at the expense of everyine else. The priority and focus should be on teaching the students on knowledge, skills and abilities to be productive, skilled, knowledgible, independent, financially successful and able to take care of themselves and get a job, not teaching them how to be helpless, dependent, whine, complain, manipulate, be entitled and do nothing of value expecting everyone else to pay for and do everything which is what is currently being taught by the schools. Low grades, test scores, inability to read, write, do math are an abomination and should not br rewarded.

We actually need a DOGE i Alaska State gov't.

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Kevin McCabe](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Friday, January 31, 2025 5:11:53 PM

My name is Taunnie Boothby. I live in Willow, AK and **I am in Opposition of HB 69.** I believe that the way we support good quality education is not only through funding but with accountability and reform.

In essence, what you are doing by only throwing money at this issue amounts to putting gas in the tank of your car, but the reason it is not running is that the alternator is damaged and needs to be replaced. To find that out, you need good diagnostics and someone who can interpret that information, fix it, and then the car will run properly. I don't believe the diagnostics have been done on education nor have the alternatives been assessed.

It is irresponsible to continue funding without any reform or accountability in education.

I am not against quality education; however, you have not done your homework, and this is a poor example of budgeting within our means. This is the example you are providing to our kids?

We need accountability for the funds given currently before we increase funds, We need school choice.... parents (not bureaucrats) must direct their child's education for the best outcome for the child. I think investing in our teachers is vital but I am completely disappointed with the allocation of funding to the teacher. Nothing highlights this more than our charter schools since many teachers take a pay cut to teach at a charter school, knowing how much more they will be supported by the administration, parents, and other teachers. This says something about our broken system.

Increasing the BSA blindly is an inadequate and irresponsible action.

Please **DO NOT** Pass HB 69.

Thank you,
Taunnie Boothby

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 3:34:47 PM

To all members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for the work you are doing to improve the education of students in Alaska. I, as a former teacher, would like to request that HB 69, as it stands, not advance. At this point Alaska's spending on education is 25-40% more than the national average, depending on whose report you read. Our education spending has outpaced inflation by up to 50%. But just last week it was reported that again, our schools rank 49th out of 50 in actual outcome. This is outrageous! Obviously, the increased spending is not having its desired results. To increase the per-student spending again to the present education system that evidently is failing with no reforms required and no strings attached to performance is unconscionable. We owe our children more than that. Throwing money at the problem has not fixed it and will not, as we all know, fix it. We need substantial changes in our education system that evidence themselves in better outcomes for our students. We should no longer sacrifice our students on the altar of what has been, but need to explore every option available for the successful preparation of our kids to meet the challenges of today's world. And not just meet minimum standards but excel. Those options are out there and Alaska should be on the cutting edge. With the money we've spent, there's no reason we should not be. Thanks for taking time to seriously consider how we might turn this ship around.

Respectfully,
Kathy Conn
Blessed beyond measure!

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 2:22:12 PM

I am writing to urge committee members to support substantially increasing the BSA which is necessary to inflation proof school funding and adequately meet the educational needs of Alaska students.

Lea Filippi
[REDACTED]
Anchorage AK 99517

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69 – A Smart Investment in Alaska’s Future
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 3:31:17 PM

Dear Alaska Lawmakers,

I am writing to express my deep support for House Bill 69, which would provide a much-needed increase in per-student funding over the next three years. As a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars, I understand the concerns about Alaska’s budget and the need for fiscally sound policies. However, I believe that strategic investments in education will ultimately strengthen Alaska’s economy, workforce, and fiscal health—without requiring broad tax increases.

Why House Bill 69 is a Smart Investment, Not Just a Cost

- **Stronger Schools, Stronger Workforce:** Investing in education reduces long-term government dependency by ensuring our students graduate with the skills needed for high-demand jobs, particularly in industries critical to Alaska’s economy like energy, engineering, and resource development.
- **Teacher Retention Saves Money:** The cost of recruiting and training new teachers due to high turnover is a hidden but significant financial drain. A predictable, stable funding model would prevent the cycle of staffing shortages and the costly recruitment efforts that come with it.
- **Local Control & Fiscal Responsibility:** The bill does not impose one-size-fits-all mandates. Instead, it gives local districts the resources they need to make cost-effective decisions tailored to their unique needs.

Funding Solutions Without Raising Taxes

Instead of broad tax increases, there are **conservative, business-friendly ways** to fund House Bill 69, such as:

- **Leverage the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve** – A modest increase in the structured draw can support education without touching dividends or requiring new taxes.
- **Reevaluate Oil & Gas Tax Credits** – Ensuring a fair return on Alaska’s natural resources could generate funding while keeping the industry competitive.
- **Public-Private Partnerships & Federal Grants** – Encouraging industry partnerships and securing federal education grants could bring additional revenue without burdening taxpayers.

- **Responsible Budget Reallocation** – A performance-based review of state programs could identify areas to streamline, making room for education funding without increasing spending overall.

The Cost of Doing Nothing

Without action, we risk larger class sizes, school closures, and a shrinking skilled workforce—all of which will cost Alaska more in the long run through economic stagnation, higher unemployment, and increased outmigration. **A modest investment today will prevent larger financial problems tomorrow.**

I urge you to support House Bill 69 as a fiscally responsible, pro-business, and pro-Alaska solution to strengthen our schools, workforce, and economy. Thank you for your time and your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Katelin Avery

Longtime Member of the Fairbanks Community

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Senate Education](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 3:11:22 PM

Dear Chair Tobin, Co-Chairs Himschoot and Story, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole Reynolds, and I am the grandparent of a fourth grader, a first grader and two soon-to-be kindergartners in Alaska's public school system. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 69, which increases the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,000 this year and an additional \$404 for the next two years. This funding is essential to ensuring our public schools can provide a high-quality education in a safe and effective learning environment.

Right now, our public schools are facing devastating budget shortfalls that could lead to school closures and class sizes nearing 35 students per classroom. This is not a conducive learning environment, especially for young children. Teachers are already stretched thin, and overcrowded classrooms mean less individualized attention, more behavioral challenges, and a decline in educational quality. If we want our children to thrive, we must give public schools the resources they need to succeed.

Alaska's future depends on a strong public education system. A well-funded public school system benefits not just students but also our communities and economy. It helps retain great teachers, supports working families, and ensures every child—regardless of their background—has access to the education they deserve.

I urge you to support HB 69 and make a meaningful commitment to Alaska's public schools. Our children's future depends on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole Reynolds
Homer, Alaska

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: In support of HB 69 & multi-year funding for education
Date: Friday, February 7, 2025 7:45:38 AM

Dear Representatives and Senators,

My name is Holly Brooks and I am the mother of two first graders enrolled in the O'Malley French Immersion program. I am writing to ask you to support multi-year, secure, funding for our public schools. (Whether it's HB69 or otherwise.) **AND be prepared to override any vetoes & line items vetoes that come out of the Governor's office.**

As you know, the BSA has not received an increase in funding since 2017 and everything is more expensive. It is a cop-out to demand results without funding and personally, **I'm terrified that literally NO one with a sound mind is going to enter the teaching profession moving forward - why would anyone be attracted to such instability?**

The Governor's goal of creating more charter schools with no local influence or control is the most UNALASKAN thing I've ever heard of. Alaskans are autonomous, creative, and intelligent individuals and we do not want outsiders telling us how to educate our children. It is crystal clear that his goal is to reroute public funds for private and religious education.

With the current budget shortfall O'Malley is slated to lose 5 teachers. Assuming teacher loss will be based on seniority, many of our French Teachers will receive pink slips. Without French teachers, there is no immersion program. ASD currently has 2848 students k-12 enrolled in immersion programs and it is one of the shining stars and unique programs of the Anchorage school district. **Firing our immersion teachers now would dismantle decades of work and passion.**

I understand that the 111 million dollar shortfall will need funding and Alaskans have some hard decisions ahead. I support using PFD money for the purpose of education. The education of our kids is more important. Right now our Alaskan kids rank 46th and 49th for test scores in the country. We can and MUST do better. It's unfair to demand improvement without the funding and support to do so. I also support standards but it starts with reasonable student to teacher ratios and the ability to hire qualified, talented teachers.

Please, please, please commit to working together and do what it takes to reach a multi-year agreement - including the bravery to stand up to the private interests of our Governor. Stable education funding is important to the future and economy of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Holly Brooks

--

Holly Brooks (she/hers)

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In support of HB 69: Education Funding: Increase BSA
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 12:55:41 PM

Donna Freeman
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99508
[REDACTED]

State of Alaska House Education Committee
1500 West Benson Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you as a parent of a rising kindergartener and a concerned advocate for education in Alaska. It is imperative that we address the urgent need for an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to ensure the survival and growth of language immersion programs, as well as other essential educational programs within the Anchorage School District (ASD).

As a parent, I am eager for my child to participate in one of the language immersion programs offered by ASD. These programs not only provide essential language skills but also cultivate an appreciation for cultural diversity. In a globalized world, bilingualism is an invaluable asset that greatly enhances academic and career opportunities for our children.

My mother, Patricia McRae, is a former principal of Sand Lake Elementary, where she oversaw a successful Japanese immersion program. During her tenure, she witnessed the profound impact immersion education had on Alaskan students. She observed firsthand how these programs improved students' language proficiency, cognitive abilities, and cultural awareness, enriching their overall educational experience.

Unfortunately, ASD is currently facing significant challenges. Due to stagnant state funding, there has been a reduction of 12 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) in the immersion programs for the next fiscal year. This reduction compromises the quality and accessibility of these vital educational opportunities. Moreover, there is a real threat that one or more of the immersion programs may be closed altogether if funding issues are not addressed before June of this year.

To address these challenges, I strongly urge you to consider increasing the BSA and support House Bill 69. Investing in language immersion programs and other educational initiatives is an investment in the future of our children and our communities. By increasing the BSA, we can ensure that our schools have the resources necessary to promote bilingualism, cultural understanding, and a well-rounded education for all students. I strongly urge you to advocate for this vital funding.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing issue. I look forward to your support in ensuring that our children can thrive through quality education.

Sincerely,
Donna Freeman

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Rep. Louise Slutske](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#)
Subject: Interesting data, and will DEED be accountable for state funding of parochial schools... and data on the abysmal 50.6% graduation rate for correspondence programs
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 5:28:02 PM
Attachments: [Redacted.doc](#)
[Redacted.doc](#)

Greetings House and Senate Committee Education members,
Thank you for sitting in positions of power, and controlling education funding for Alaskan's children. You hold Alaskans children's future in your hands, the future of Alaska...
Whether Alaska schools will be able to have food services, if schools will be able to have sports teams...
-it is in your hands.

Last April an article was written about how all the students of a private parochial school signed up with a public school district, and how the parochial school received AK public funds.

- 1.) Does DEED report how much money is spent on private and parochial schools in AK??
- 2.) Is this a subversion of the Alaskan Constitution that says "no public funds to private and parochial schools".
- 3.) Will DEED be held accountable??
- 4.) How much has this already cost the state of Alaska with this diversion of how much public funds?? Doesn't DEED have to report how it spends Alaska state dollars??



Biggest Anchorage K12 private school enrolled all students in public correspondence to qualify for \$3,000 reimbursement
[thealaskacurrent.com](#)

And I find it interesting that Alaska's Attny General, who upholds the constitution of the state of Alaska... but his wife is working with Alaska Policy Forum, and telling parents of parochial schools, how to sign up for public school correspondence programs, to get state funding...

AG's wife lobbied former Anchorage charter school to change rules to subsidize private school tuition
[denverpost.com](#)

And interesting how MatSu is now creating its own statewide correspondence program, to lure students from other districts, WHILE lowering the graduation requirements??? AND THEN, increasing the "student allotments"???



Parents, staff push back on Mat-Central overhaul as district reads proposal
[matcentral.org](#)

And then... when one looks at correspondence programs... one is horrorstruck by the graduation rates of 50.6%????
And how only 15% of ALLLL correspondence program students even bother taking the "state mandated" testing??? And some talk about "school accountability"??? And is "accountability" for some, and not for others?

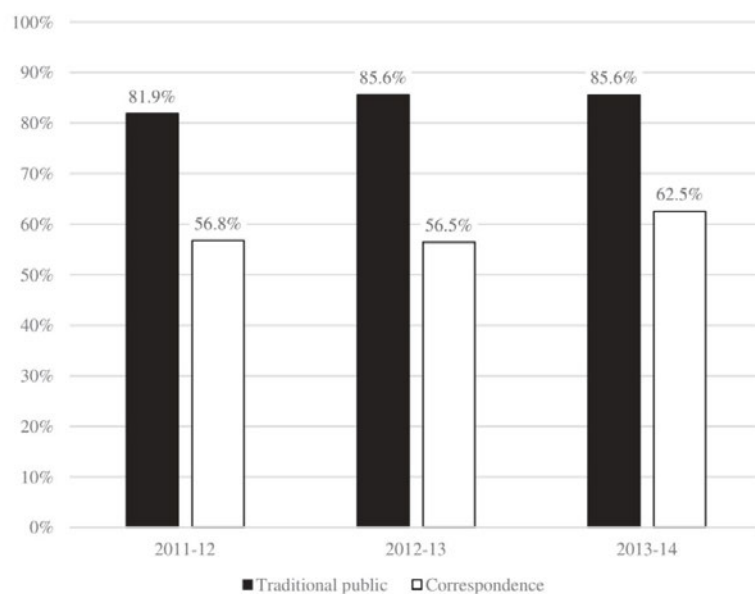


Figure 5. Alaska traditional public and correspondence school 5-year cohort graduation rates for students entering 9th grade in the 2010–11 ($n = 9,728$), 2011–12 ($n = 9,558$), and 2012–13 ($n = 9,510$) academic years.

ERIC - EJ1236451 - Correspondence
Schools in Alaska: Enrollment and
Cohort Graduation Rates, 2010-17,
Journal of School Choice, 2019
eric.ed.gov



When one realizes that education funding has increased LESS THAN 5% in SEVENTEEN years... and not the old tired rhetoric of "we give you ALLL this money"... one realizes that folks are just "spinning the rhetoric"... as the data and facts show otherwise.

As anyone who sits on any board, the saying is:

"You can look at your budget, and see where your priorities lie"...

Here is Alaska's priorities: Increases since 2017

Public safety 70% INCREASE

Dept of corrections 42.6% INCREASE

Education MINUS 3.4%... an actual DECREASE???

SOA Changes Since 2017

	FY17	FY25	\$ Change	% Change
Department of Corrections	315,917,400	450,652,700	134,735,300	42.6%
Governor's Office	25,880,400	31,917,900	6,037,500	23.3%
Legislature	65,549,200	82,416,100	16,866,900	25.7%
EED Total	1,614,209,100	1,635,793,300	21,584,200	1.3%
K-12 Aid to Districts	1,281,045,300	1,237,612,700	(43,432,600)	-3.4%
Other DEED operations	333,163,800	398,180,600	65,016,800	19.5%
Public Safety	189,033,400	321,332,400	132,299,000	70.0%
Fish and Game	203,720,200	248,279,100	44,558,900	21.9%
Natural Resources	155,984,600	209,100,500	53,115,900	34.1%

<https://omb.alaska.gov/fiscal-year-2017-enacted-budget/>

<https://omb.alaska.gov/fiscal-year-2025-amended-budget/>

Will the state of alaska meet its obligation to Alaskan families, or only "certain urban" schools, not for alllll of Alaskan's children...

And will DEED be held accountable for public dollars that have gotten diverted to parochial schools??

Thank you for your time in seeing the actual data and facts, and not the ole' rhetoric: "we keep giving you money".... As that is factually inaccurate, and factors such as; inflation, increased cost of health care, transportation are not taking into account.

Also, I believe they raised the leg salary by 85% last year??? The Governor got a raise.... And doesn't seem like anyone balked at these raises... well the second committee increased the wages, I suppose.

If the leg gets a raise???? And education has gotten a 4.6% increase in SEVENTEEN years.... Something seems off..

Peter Hoepfner.

Thumbed in from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: Keep up the good fight.
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:44:00 AM

The only good proposal Dunleavy made is to prohibit cell phones. Charter schools are needed while our public schools must serve misbehaving students anyway. But homeschooling is an absurd option with poor results. And why is all the focus on salaries? If teachers receive respect and professional support, they will stay. What we have now are politicized administrators, trying to impose top-down conformity.

Thanks for all you do.

John Welsh

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Kill the BSA increase bill
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 7:56:30 AM

Throwing good money after bad is a terrible idea! Student performance sucks in this state, money is not going to help that, period!

Sincerely,

Peter Parker

Eagle River, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Jeremy Bynum](#)
Subject: Letter of support - HJR 5
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 9:55:25 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[HJR 5 Support Letter.pdf](#)

Good morning,

Attached please find a letter from AML in support of HJR 5.

Thank you,
Carole

Carole Triem
Intergovernmental Affairs Manager
Alaska Municipal League



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: One more observation about the HB 69 conceit ...
Date: Friday, February 7, 2025 11:55:49 AM

The lackluster performance of Alaska students in recent decades, again even when funding and staffing were adjudged by institutions as sufficient, are placed in sharper relief when considering that those findings have been based on metrics developed by the system itself. NAEP, AKSTAR are not externally developed assessments, but arise from within the educational edifice, developed by the system's own "experts". What is to be said about a system that cannot consistently meet its own standards?

In fact, in recent history the correlation between per-student funding in Alaska and student performance is not weak, but, rather, **negative**.

Thus, for decades the deficiency in student performance must lie elsewhere. Is in an absence of academic rigor in instruction? Low standards for attendance, such as repeated toleration of chronic truants, rather than their expulsion? Are parents disengaged, as might be determined by rates of parental or guardian attendance at parent-teacher conferences? Perhaps some combination of all.

In conclusion, more funding to school districts without determining where the real failure lies will not enhance student outcomes; rather, it will simply allow districts in Alaska to **fail bigger**.

Cordially,

Charles Dean

Sitka

--

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Please support education funding!
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:34:16 AM

Dear Legislators,

First, thank you for all that you do to make Alaska a wonderful place for Alaskans to live.

One of my favorite things about living in Anchorage is the excellent multicultural and bilingual education my two children have received at Government Hill Elementary. The fantastic immersion education program they attend, as well as the many other immersion programs in Anchorage, will be decimated if the BSA is not increased. The current proposal has my child's school losing 4 teachers next school year, and other immersion schools are slated to lose even more positions.

The language-learning opportunities that our school district currently offers Alaskan students are unmatched in this country. Teaching a wide range of languages (7!), Anchorage immersion programs reflect the rich diversity of our city and nation. They promote cross-cultural understanding, celebrate diversity, and empower young people to use their linguistic competence to break down barriers between people and cultures.

There are currently 2,848 students enrolled in the Anchorage School District's immersion programs, and many of these parents drive their children across town every day to get to their school of choice. We made a long-term commitment to our children's education when they entered immersion kindergarten, and now I ask you to honor that commitment.

Anchorage families have clearly shown that they are invested in their children's immersion education. Please show that you too value education by supporting significant increases to the BSA. **Please support SB 46 and HB 69.**

Thank you,
Megon Coon

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please Support HB69
Date: Saturday, February 1, 2025 12:20:12 PM

Hello,

Thank you for taking time to read my message.

Alaska's prison population increased by 27% over the last decade, which is almost 3 times faster than the state population growth. Did you know it cost over \$50,000 a year to house an inmate in an Alaskan correctional center?

Compare that to our current SBA, which has remained stagnant. Do you want to continue funding the mistakes in the past, or would you rather invest in the potential of the future? Please look in the mirror when you are answering this question honestly to yourself. I am encouraging you to support HB 69.

Kind regards,
Edmund O'Regan
Fairbanks, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: Please vote yes on HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:22:09 PM

Dear members of the House Education committee,

I'm writing to thank you for hearing testimony today on House Bill 69. I urge you to adhere to Alaska's constitution and maintain an educational system for all students by voting yes on this bill. We must do all we can to ensure a stable future for our state, and that begins with a well-educated population.

With appreciation for your time and service,

Beth Short-Rhoads
Sitka

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Re: SUPPORT FOR HB 69
Date: Friday, February 7, 2025 9:09:53 AM

Thank you.

Please pass along that, since I wrote the previous e-mail, our local school board voted to close my family's neighborhood public school (along with two others). We are now facing increased transportation times and class sizes, not to mention the fracturing of our school community as our children are split between three to four different schools. I am furious and devastated.

Our community is in crisis over the loss of three neighborhood schools and people are making plans to leave Alaska, pursue creation of new charter schools, and homeschool their children. Many parents looking to homeschool are specifically seeking programs outside of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District because they no longer want any funding tied to their children to benefit our local school district. We are in a death spiral.

I don't know what to do but, for the first time in a long time, I have given serious thought to whether my family should stay here in Alaska. My husband and I are both attorneys for the State, working in public service. He was raised in a family of educators and we are staunch advocates for real public education in neighborhood schools - the ones that provide hot meals and free transportation, as well as robust educational services to meet the needs of all students within the attendance area. I am deeply fearful of the direction our State is headed in right now. We must prioritize meaningful education funding for our neighborhood public schools through a permanent increase to the BSA. Families with young children are leaving Alaska, and will continue to leave unless we fix this immediately.

Sincerely,
Nikole Schick

On Thu, Feb 6, 2025 at 9:07 PM House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov> wrote:

Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in education funding, the Base Student Allocation (BSA), and House Bill 69, "An Act relating to education funding; and providing for an effective date".

Your written testimony to the House Education Committee will be provided to each committee member and become a part of the permanent record.

Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Regards,

Tammy Smith

Legislative Aide/Education Committee Aide

Office of Representative Andi Story

House District 3

Alaska State Legislature

(907)465-3744

From: Nikole Schick <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 1:55 PM
To: Senate Education <Senate.Education@akleg.gov>; House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>
Subject: SUPPORT FOR HB 69

Good afternoon,

I reside in the Fairbanks North Star Borough and my son is a 3rd grade student at our neighborhood public school. I write today in support of HB 69. We must inflation-proof our BSA and provide our children - our future - with sustainable education funding.

I was born in Fairbanks, and educated in the public school system in both Fairbanks and Kenai. The school where I attended Kindergarten closed in 2022, and the school my son attends is on the list for closure this year. The loss of our neighborhood schools is devastating to the Fairbanks community.

Our neighborhood public school, Pearl Creek Elementary, is amazing. It is a supportive and exceptional educational community, as evidenced by its strong test scores, steady enrollment, and frequent collaboration with our nearby flagship University. My family chose to live within the Pearl Creek attendance area, and we twice purchased a home within our neighborhood with plans to send our future child(ren) to the school. Pearl Creek has been every bit as excellent as expected, despite years of funding deficits and budget cuts taking their toll on our school district. Our schools need money to provide the equitable, quality education that our State constitution demands for all Alaskan youth.

Please vote in support of HB 69 and provide Alaska's school districts with reliable, meaningful funding through a permanent BSA increase. Please also consider providing targeted funding for increased transportation costs, deferred building maintenance, and the Alaska Reads Act. Our schools need this funding to operate and continue providing the quality education that our children deserve.

Thank you for your consideration. And thank you for bringing this bill forward early in session to address the immense need for increased education funding.

Sincerely,

Nikole Schick

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Nikole Schick.

Fairbanks, AK 99712

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Save the immersion program!
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 11:29:55 AM

Hello,

My name is Christine Joyner and I am a constituent from Eagle River. I am calling to express my concern about the current level of education funding in Alaska. Adequate funding is essential to ensure quality education for our students, including vital programs like language immersion. I urge Kelly Merrick, and Dan Sadler, to support initiatives that increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to meet our schools' needs. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

We want to see our school, Chugiak Elementary, and the language program thrive. Our kids have worked so hard and have gained an incredible amount of experience and knowledge learning their second language. Do not let this go away!!

I personally, went to chugiak elementary, mirror lake middle school, and chugiak high school with the Spanish immersion program. My siblings and close friends did as well. Dan Sadlers children were in my sisters class, and knows just how great this language program is. Many students after graduating are able to get their language degree in college and are able to apply for jobs that are needing Spanish speakers because they are fluent in this language. Now, 10 years after graduating, my daughter is now in the Spanish immersion program. Her teacher taught both of my siblings, and has been there for almost 20 years. We want to continue seeing our kids thriving learning other languages. At home, her and I get to talk about her new words she has learned, and she is able to speak to my close family friend who only speaks Spanish.

Thank you for your time, I hope to see the language program continue for many, many years!

Christine Joyner

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Jesse Bjorkman](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#)
Cc: governor@alaska.gov; deed.commissioner@alaska.gov; [Suzanne Downing, Editor](#); [House Education](#); [Sen. Shelley Hughes](#)
Subject: SB 36 1986 how Carol Comeau screwed up education funding
Date: Saturday, February 1, 2025 11:28:46 AM

All,

The root of the current school funding issue is the change from instructional units to per student allocation. When enrollment declines so does funding under this 1986 change. Benefitted the big 6 districts until population of school age children attending school dropped.

The 1995 formula does a basket of goos approach, guarenteeing funding by school, not by student.

I suggest one of you to have Leg finance run the instructional unit formula with current BSA number.

It was passed to defund smaller districts.

David Nees

[REDACTED]

Cooper Landing

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Meeting/Text/?Meeting=HFIN%201998-04-04%2013:15:00&Bill=SB%20%2036>

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: School closure
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 10:08:39 AM

Hi! I have 4 kids 2 that are in nikiski middle/high school now. I think it would be a terrible decision to close our school down. For one kids would drop out no way kids will ride the bus for 90 minutes a day to an overcrowded school such as kenai would be if our students combined. Nikiski kids would be bullied to no other from Kenai kids i can only imagine the fights and crime that would be started. We need more funding to keep Nikiski Middle/High school opened as for one my kids will not be attending Kenai if they closed Nikiski and would be putting them in Idea instead. You guys need to think of the kids in this situation and find a way to fund this school. I have talked to so many parents who feel this exact way i do and there kids won't be going to kenai as well.. Our school means more to us then just education this is like a family school and home for our kids please help our school stay opened

Sincerely a mother to Nikiski Middle/Highschool students

[Yahoo Mail - Email Simplified](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#)
Cc: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: State support for schools
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 10:22:16 PM

Honorable members of the Alaska Legislature:

You know that the needs of the schools in Alaska are far greater than can be provided with the funding models currently in place. Please resist the Governor's draft budget and his faulty reasoning. Instead, create a budget that supports schools with a significantly higher base student allocation, funding needed for school maintenance, transportation and educational supplies, and the reinstatement of a defined benefit retirement plan for teachers and staff. These would likely stem the outflow of talented and enterprising people, and create the foundation for a renewal of trust in the state's stewardship as it attracts accomplished and motivated people to reside, pursue their education, and raise their families here.

Thank you for working together toward the great benefits that come from a well-established and well-supported school system.

Tom Miller

[REDACTED] 99515

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Support a BSA Increase!
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:33:27 AM

Legislators, I urge you to support a permanent increase and inflation-proofing the BSA. And PLEASE override Dunleavy if he tries to veto your efforts! Nothing is as important to our state as our kids, and any investment you make today ensures that our state has a future.

I am the president of O'Malley Elementary's PTA in the Anchorage School District. This week alone - with parent donations - I bought art supplies, paid for the BPO to coach afterschool basketball, purchased thermometer covers and cotton swabs for the nurse, and bought a new gravel spreader for maintenance to cover the ice in parking lot and sidewalks. We routinely buy maintenance equipment and classroom supplies because our school is so strapped for cash. I'm talking lightbulbs, paper, pencils, extension cords, batteries - you name it. I buy it for the school.

I would be happy to come to Juneau for a day to visit/testify my experience with the legislators. Please let me know if there is a recommended time to come or just drop in.

Let's fix the BSA once and for all!

Liz Van Patten
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support AK children, Oppose House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 1:54:58 PM

Please oppose House Bill 69. To increase funding by 43% of failing public schools is just throwing money away. The schools need to be held accountable to improve education outcomes, instead of rewarding them for failing students by simply giving them more money. These schools aren't failing due to lack of funds, they are failing due to mismanagement.

Charter and private schools in Alaska consistently outperform public schools. It doesn't have to be this way - but reform, not more money to support a failing system, is what's needed.

ALL Alaskan children should be able to attend a school that prioritizes and produces achievement. By supporting school choice, you help all children, because public schools will then begin to perform better or not receive funding.

Renee Gartland
Public charter school parent in Anchorage
[REDACTED]

Sent from [Proton Mail](#) for iOS

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 1:24:45 PM

Good Afternoon,

I am writing in support of HB 69. Alaska's children are our greatest natural resource and funding public education is a critical investment in the future of this state. We need this increase in the base student allocation to make up for years of inflationary cuts. We need predictable funding increases going forward so that educators can focus on their jobs serving children, rather than the endless side shows of scrambling for funds, uncertain employment and figuring out how to do more with less.

Please pass HB 69,
Erin Clay
Sitka, AK

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education; representative.andi.stori@akleg.gov](mailto:representative.andi.stori@akleg.gov)
Subject: Support HB 69 - Increase the BSA
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 9:42:40 PM

To Alaska House Education Committee,

Thank you for hearing public testimony regarding HB 69. I appreciate your dedication to building a strong education system in our state.

I'm writing in support of increased support of our education system by increasing the BSA. As a resident of Alaska, a parent, and employer, I see raising the BSA as vital to our state's future.

As part of a strong Alaska, support for education is vital - education today is an investment in our present children and future citizens. Part of showing support for education is funding a BSA increase. An increased BSA will support students directly through instruction materials and indirectly through supporting teacher salaries - financially supported teachers can focus on our students instead of second jobs! A financially strong education system supports stable families, communities and economies.

The Base Student Allocation has not been raised significantly in more than a decade; meanwhile the cost of living - including the costs running our schools - has gone up astronomically. When the Base Student Allocation stays the same year after year, it feels like a pay cut to our schools.

What I hope for my kids and our community are schools where teachers can focus on developing excellent education, where class size is small enough so that teachers can provide individualized support to their students. Right now, I see teachers worried about job retention and benefits due to uncertain funding, and challenged to support their students due to ever-growing class size.

I know there are many challenging choices to make about the state budget. I truly believe that investing in our kids' education by increasing the BSA is one of the most important things we can do for an economically stable future in Alaska. Raising the BSA will be a positive step towards a brighter future and demonstrate that Alaska invests in strong communities.

Please support our children, our teachers, our communities and our future by increasing BSA.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Laura Buchheit

[REDACTED]

Juneau, AK 99801

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB69, or any means for multi-year secure education funding
Date: Friday, February 7, 2025 8:23:09 AM

Representatives,

I support multi-year secure funding for our public schools, whether HB69 or otherwise. And, I support use of PFD money for this purpose if that's what it takes.

Please, we are counting on you not to let us down.

Sue Whitney

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB69
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:16:37 AM

I am a parent of 2 school-aged children in Petersburg, Alaska. My children's education is hugely important and will determine their future opportunities. In order for them to receive a good education we need to have excellent teachers along with the necessary supplies including an adequate and safe facility (school). This is not possible without money. I support this bill and want my tax dollars spent on public education.

Alice Hulebak

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Urgent Action on Education Funding
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 12:22:08 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

I am writing to urge your strong support for increased education funding in Alaska by advancing Senate Bill 46 and/or House Bill 69. These critical and urgently needed pieces of legislation are necessary to ensure our schools receive the resources they need to provide a quality education to Alaska's children. Education is not just an investment in our students—it is an investment in the future of our state.

As you know, inflation has severely impacted the purchasing power of our schools, eroding their ability to provide essential services, retain quality educators, and maintain safe and effective learning environments. The Base Student Allocation has remained largely stagnant for years, failing to keep pace with rising costs. Without meaningful increases, schools are forced to cut programs, increase class sizes, and struggle to recruit and retain qualified teachers. These challenges directly harm students and jeopardize the long-term success of our communities.

Furthermore, a well-funded education system is crucial for attracting and retaining young professionals in Alaska. Families considering putting down roots in our state weigh the quality of public education heavily in their decisions. Without strong schools, we risk losing talented individuals and skilled workers to states that prioritize education. This is a concern that deeply affects my own family—we want to continue living and working in Alaska, but the quality of education available to our children is a major factor in whether we can realistically stay. A failure to act on education funding threatens not only our children's future but also our workforce and economy.

Additionally, proposed budget cuts threaten the viability of Alaska's language immersion programs. With the Anchorage School District set to lose 12 FTE positions next year, these specialized programs—which require small class sizes and highly qualified teachers—face potential collapse. Once lost, these programs would be nearly impossible to rebuild, depriving students of unique language learning opportunities and diminishing Alaska's cultural and linguistic diversity. Without a BSA increase, secondary immersion programs will also be at risk, further limiting educational opportunities for our students.

I urge you to support legislation such as SB 46 and HB 69 and to advocate for sustainable, inflation-proof education funding. The time to act is now. The future of Alaska depends on the strength of our schools, and that strength begins with proper investment.

Thank you for your time and commitment to the people of Alaska. I look forward to your leadership on this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Nate Beck
Vice President, Koniag Energy and Water

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Vote yes on House Bill 69
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 9:23:55 AM

I am on the board of the Tongass School of Arts and Sciences, a charter elementary school in Ketchikan.

We want our kids to read, but we don't want money for test scores.

We believe in our teachers, but we don't want achievement bonuses.

We believe in charter schools, but they are part of our public education system and shouldn't be competing for funds.

We do need funding to educate our kids.

We do need funding to recruit and retain excellent teachers.

We do need charter schools as a choice for families.

I moved here as a transfer teacher from Washington in 1994 and it is sad to see how the Alaskan education system has deteriorated.

Please vote yes on House Bill 69.

Brenda Loughman

[REDACTED]
Ketchikan, AK 99901