



WRANGELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT OFFICE

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

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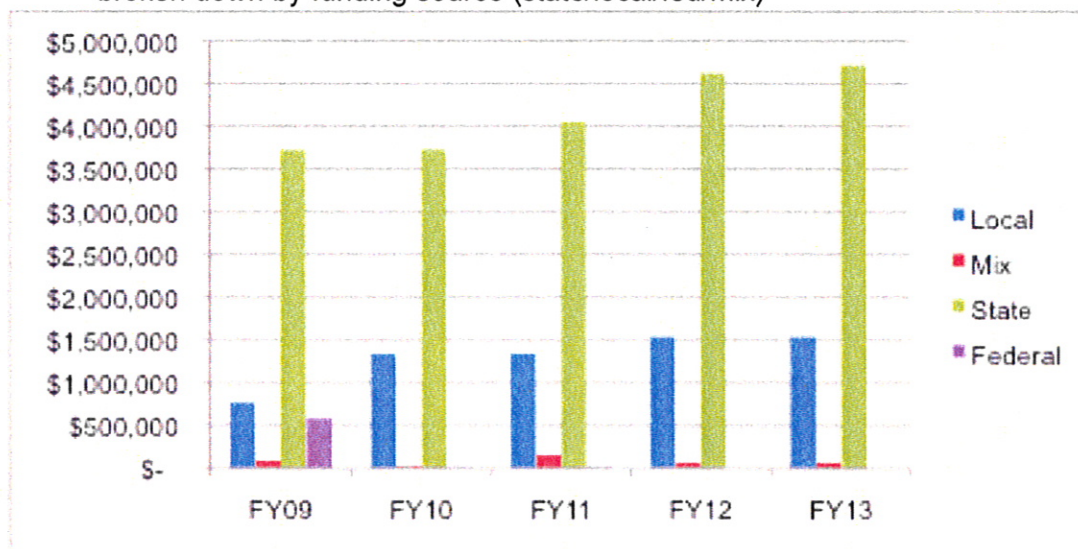
Representative Bill Thomas, Co-chair
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Thomas and Representative Stoltze:

Please find the answers to the questions asked by the House Finance Committee below:

- What is your FY13 total school district budget? **\$6,751,735.00**
 - What percentage goes to personnel? **76% for salary and benefits**
- Provide a graph that shows your total school district budget from FY09-FY13 (5 years), broken down by funding source (state/local/fed/mix)



- Did you fund to the total allowable local contribution in FY 12? **No** In FY13? **No**
 - If not, how much below were you?
 - **FY'2012 \$157,696.00**
 - **FY'2013 \$217,704.00**
 - Why? **The Borough and City of Wrangell increased its contribution by \$200,000 July 1, 2012. The borough just finished a bond for a new playground and currently carries two additional bonds for the school. The city conducts project manager services for work the school district does and currently has two roads on both sides of the elementary school that are scheduled for paving.**

- How much has the state contributed to the Pers/TRS unfunded liability on behalf of your school district in FY12? In FY'2012, the State is scheduled to give 32.99% of the TRS cost and 11.49% of the PERS cost in "on behalf of payment." The budgeted amount for these items is \$613,276.00 (TRS) and \$87,992.00 (PERS). The actual amounts will be determined by final salaries and wage costs.
- How much is the state scheduled to contribute for Pers/TRS unfunded liability costs on behalf of your district in FY13? The State is scheduled to contribute 40.11% of the TRS cost and 1.84% of the PERS cost in "on behalf of payments." The budgeted amounts are \$782,862.00 (TRS) and \$110,537 (PERS). The actual amounts will be determined by final salaries and wage costs.
- When was your most recently ratified teacher contract put into place? Our current Negotiated Agreement with the Wrangell Teachers' Association was ratified on March 15, 2010 for the period beginning July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2013.
 - What were the terms? (salary and benefits increases/decreases per year, in percentages {or dollars, if appropriate}) The annual salary increase for each teacher is \$1,981.00 for each of the three years. The teachers and board will split the health care premium increases beginning in FY'2012. The teachers will contribute to health care costs in FY'12 and FY'13 up to a maximum of \$200 per teacher each month.
 - What is your average teacher salary? \$66,781.00
 - What is your starting teacher salary? \$39,622.00
 - Did you negotiate significant salary increases in your labor contracts for FY2013? No; we have 22 full time teachers and their entire combined increase will be \$43,582.00 as stated earlier our contract began 07/01/2010.
 - If yes, why did you do that given the current funding situation/debate?
- What are the cost drivers in your budget? The cost drivers in our budget historically have been the cost step and column annual salary increases, health insurance costs, and the cost of oil to heat our buildings.
- How much were your energy costs in FY11? \$188,481.00
- How much do you project them to be in FY13? \$228,100.00; In January 2011, we installed electric boilers at our High School. This should help keep our costs steady. Depending on weather. We still have two buildings (elementary and middle school) that use heating oil.
- Do you have a system in place to make budget adjustments when enrollment drops—how do you approach this? When enrollment drops budget adjustments can be made by cutting staff and/or programs. We usually budget the student count lower than expected and hope that it is higher than we budgeted. This year we budgeted on the same number as we have had for the previous 3 years with the hope that declining enrollment has ended.
- What are your biggest instructional challenges? Our biggest instructional challenge is meeting 100% No Child Left Behind compliance in 2014. We are working hard to increase our graduation rate to 100%; it is currently 93%.

- What grade would you give your school district (A-F)? I would give our school a B+ because I am a hard grader. Others may choose a higher grade since one of our schools is a Blue Ribbon School. We are working to improve our Science curriculum and our technology integration. Since our schools have achieved AYP each year, these are the areas we have chosen to work on.
- What are you proposing to do differently to improve student performance? We have enrolled in the DEED's Alaska STEPP Program, and are re-applying for the AASB QS2 program to help us find resources to implement all phases of strategic plan that was adopted March 2012. Both programs will help us maintain our high level of student achievement.
- Is the state providing the kind of planning and curriculum support that is helpful to your school district? The Department of Education's Alaska STEPP program is the key tool to help us provide evidence based performance outcomes for student achievement. Additional funding for program support at DEED is necessary. Some people feel that the continued cuts and reductions to EED is cancerous and does not provide the high quality support staff (Experienced Alaska Educators) the ability to provide school support in our schools.
- How can the DEED, the Board of Education or other state agencies help you achieve better results, other than just providing you with more money? We believe the DEED, the Board of Education and other state agencies need to work together and speak with one voice for the sake of all children.
- How much ARRA funding did you receive over the past few years? \$461,642.00
 - How did you invest any ARRA funds you received? We kept teachers in the classroom and hired a school counselor, a position that was cut in previous years. We are able to keep the counselor position in the FY'2013 budget due in part to two teachers retiring.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Susan Eagle
School Board President

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