

2.1 URGING THE TIMELY, PREDICTABLE, EQUITABLE, AND ADEQUATE FUNDING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

The timely, predictable, equitable, and adequate funding of public education is of the highest concern to Alaska’s citizenry, the parents of its public school students, and its current, past, and future students. To align with the intent of [Article VII, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution](#), which states that the Legislature “shall maintain a system of public schools open to all the children of the State,” and because the last increase to the Base Student Allocation to account for inflation occurred in FY 11 (effective July 1, 2010), the Association of Alaska School Boards strongly supports the following:

- Enact annual legislation establishing the BSA within 45 days of the start of the legislative session so that school districts are able to effectively and efficiently utilize funding for the subsequent school year.
- Enact legislation that adjusts and maintains the BSA for inflation since FY 11, based on analysis by the Legislative Finance Division.
- Enact legislation which provides an adequate level of resources to all students, in which all students have an equal opportunity to achieve the state’s curriculum and performance standards.
- Require that the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development complies with [AS 14.17.460](#) by monitoring the District Cost Factor and preparing and submitting proposed district cost factors to the Legislature by January 15 of every other fiscal year.
- Fully fund the Public Education Fund ([AS 14.17.300](#)) for the subsequent year to ensure education funding will be in place prior to the school district date required for submittal of district budgets to DEED.

Rationale. To comply with the [Alaska State Constitution, Article 7, Section 1](#), the Alaska State legislature is required to fund public schools in accordance with [AS 14.17](#). Alaska’s 131,000 public school students in 502 schools are dependent on this funding to provide them with an education that prepares graduates to sustain the future of the 49th state. When there is confusion, delay, and doubts over the amount of funding, it places undue stress on the 7,500 teachers responsible for the instruction of Alaska’s public school students exacerbating the recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff. Today’s educational requirements are many, including traditional core subjects, career & technical education, technology, cultural understanding, physical and mental health, extracurricular activities, music, creative arts, and a myriad of other topics. A quality education requires highly qualified teachers and a robust instructional program to deliver the education that will prepare students to propel Alaska into the future. That education is only obtainable through sustained, early, adequate, equitable, and predictable funding.

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Association of Alaska School Boards
