



Senate Bill 277 – Education: Correspondence Students/BSA/Teachers

Sponsor Statement – *Version A*

The goal of public education is to ensure that all students have the resources to succeed in their academic and career pursuits. To better achieve this goal, Senate Bill 277 proposes several policy reforms and funding measures to increase state support for all forms of public education while also ensuring accountability from Alaska’s public education system.

SB 277 adjusts the Base Student Allocation by 1.9 percent to account for inflation in 2025. As a result, the BSA will increase by \$126.56 per student. SB 277 also increases state support for student transportation by over 6.5 percent. The bill addresses public concerns about the underfunding of the Alaska Reads Act by rewarding school districts with at least \$450 in reading proficiency grants for each K-6 student who demonstrates grade-level reading proficiency or improvement.

SB 277 increases support for homeschool students in Alaska by funding them at the same base level as students attending brick-and-mortar schools. The bill also requires correspondence programs to have cooperative agreements with the school district in which the student resides. Additionally, students who transfer out of correspondence programs would be allowed to retain textbooks, equipment, and other curriculum materials, including materials purchased through an annual student allotment.

SB 277 replaces “regional accreditation” with “institutional accreditation” in Alaska’s university statutes to align with new federal standards. The bill also fixes a flaw in state law, which specifically prevents the Southeast Regional Resource Center from hiring retired teachers and certified staff.

Finally, SB 277 supports the Task Force on Education Funding's top priority by commissioning a comprehensive, research-based education study through the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee. This study is intended to inform future policy decisions and ensure sustainable, effective funding strategies for Alaska's public schools.