

Michael Mason

From: Alicia Jensen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 12:27 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: SB 277 Considerations

Dear Senate Education Committee members :

I appreciated listening in to the committee yesterday and the opportunity to understand the heart and intent behind each section of the bill. As a correspondent parent with an out-of district enrolled child who participates in athletics, I have experienced some of the scenarios explained with being charged additional fees, etc. I am in support of the local districts being able to come to cooperative agreements to re-coup costs for services provided to out of district enrollees. However, I still need to express to you my strong opposition to the bill in its current form. Specifically sections 4 & 7. As it reads, the statewide programs have NO protections and parental freedom and choice is very much in question. Clear protections for statewide correspondence programs, as they currently exist and as thousands of Alaskan children thrive in, need to be seen in the language of this bill.

Not every correspondent student participates in their local district, it would be beneficial to see some of the data on this in order to support implementing a complex system that on it's face, would seem to increase administrative costs by funneling monies and enrollments through local districts. Section 7 seems to confuse the stated intentions of the committee, increase costs, limit choice and threaten the very existence of statewide programs.

I would be in favor of a system that allowed first and foremost the parent the choice to Opt-in to a collaborative agreement that benefits their child and provides reasonable reimbursement to the local district without placing their entire BSA at the mercy, and discretion of that local district. ***The BSA should always be administered and managed by school the child is actually enrolled in.***

Lastly, I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to your continued hard work in supporting our children and the unique education systems that make our state one of the best for freedom and choice. This bill has many positive elements structured to meet the varied needs of all education models. I look forward to seeing the revisions and am thankful for all your work.

Regards,

Alicia Jensen
Sterling, AK

Michael Mason

From: Amber Amis <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:13 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: opposition to SB277

Dear Senator,

I am writing to urge you to oppose **SB277**, a bill that would significantly and negatively impact Alaska's homeschool community. For decades, Alaska has been a national leader in educational freedom, offering families the flexibility to design learning environments that meet the unique needs of their children. SB277 threatens to dismantle that strength.

Homeschooling in Alaska is not a loophole — it is a vital, effective, and deeply valued educational pathway. Families across the state, especially in rural and remote areas, rely on the ability to tailor instruction, pacing, curriculum, and learning methods to their children. SB277 would restrict these opportunities and impose limitations that undermine the very foundation of individualized education.

Key Concerns About SB277

- **Loss of individualized learning:** The bill would reduce parents' ability to customize education to their child's needs, learning style, and pace — one of the core reasons families choose homeschooling.
- **Harm to correspondence programs:** Thousands of families depend on Alaska's correspondence programs for support, structure, and resources. SB277 would limit how these programs operate and restrict access to materials that make individualized learning possible.
- **Increased burdens on families:** Added oversight and restrictions would disproportionately affect families in rural communities, families with special-needs learners, and those who rely on flexible schedules.
- **Unintended consequences for Alaska's unique geography:** Many families homeschool because traditional schooling is not accessible or practical. SB277 does not account for the realities of distance, weather, and limited local school options.

Why This Matters

Alaska's homeschool community is diverse, engaged, and committed to high-quality education. Parents are deeply invested in their children's learning, and the current system allows them to provide instruction that is responsive, adaptive, and effective. SB277 would not improve educational outcomes. Instead, it would reduce flexibility, limit choice, and create barriers for families who are already succeeding.

My Request

I respectfully ask you to **vote NO on SB277** and preserve the educational freedom that has made Alaska a model for family-centered learning. Please listen to the voices of the many families who rely on

homeschooling not only as a preference, but as the most appropriate and effective educational path for their children.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your willingness to consider the concerns of Alaska's homeschool community.

Sincerely,
Amis Family
Fairbank ,Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Amy Flynn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 2:11 PM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Robert Yundt; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Robert Myers; Sen. Mike Cronk
Subject: Please Reject Senate Bill 277 (A)

Dear Chair Tobin and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am a parent who has homeschooled my child through a statewide correspondence program for several years, and I am also a graduate of such a program. These programs have provided my family with the flexibility and personalized education we need to succeed. I am writing to respectfully urge you to reject Senate Bill 277(A) in its current form.

As written, this bill redirects funding away from the correspondence programs that families have intentionally chosen and instead sends those funds to local resident districts. This change would significantly harm—or even force the closure of—programs such as IDEA, CyberLynx, and Raven. It would reduce curriculum allotments, limit teacher support, and remove the flexibility that allows families to travel, work seasonal jobs, and meet individual student needs.

Additionally, many families would likely transition to fully independent homeschooling, meaning the anticipated funding gains for local districts may not materialize. The bill also negatively impacts charter schools by increasing the administrative fees districts can take from their budgets.

I respectfully ask that you consider supporting the alternative version of SB 277 submitted by Barbara Haney on behalf of Alaskans Against Common Core. This version removes the harmful funding redirection, protects charter schools, ensures funding follows the student, prioritizes core academic subjects, and affirms the importance of parental rights in education.

Please reject SB 277(A) as currently written and support a version that preserves educational choice and flexibility for Alaska families.

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Amy Flynn

North Pole, Alaska

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Andrew Bowman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 5:34 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please vote NO on Alaska SB277

Dear Senators,

I am writing as a constituent and homeschooling parent in Alaska to express my concerns about Senate Bill 277 (SB 277), particularly Sections 4 and 7.

My family relies on a statewide correspondence program for our child's education. This model allows us to meet our child's unique learning needs while still receiving guidance, structure, and accountability. The flexibility and support we receive are essential, and we would not have the same opportunity through our local district alone.

As I understand it, SB 277 would redirect all state education funding to the district of residence, even when that district is not providing services to the student. This change could effectively eliminate statewide correspondence programs by removing their funding, which would significantly limit school choice for families like mine.

For our family, this is not an abstract policy issue—it directly impacts how we educate our child. Losing access to our current program would mean losing resources, support, and a model that is working well for us. We chose this path carefully, and it has made a meaningful difference in our children's education and well-being.

I respectfully ask that you oppose or amend SB 277 to ensure that:

- * State funding follows the student to the program that is actually providing their education
- * Statewide correspondence programs can continue to operate and serve families across Alaska
- * Parents retain the ability to choose the educational model that best meets their child's needs

I also support efforts to strengthen education for all students in Alaska, including increased funding for special education in correspondence programs, Career & Technical Education (CTE), Base Student Allocation (BSA), and student transportation.

Thank you for the work you all do on behalf of our state and for taking the time to consider the perspectives of homeschooling families. I appreciate your attention to this issue and your commitment to ensuring that all Alaska students have access to educational options that help them thrive.

Sincerely,
Andrew Bowman
North Pole, AK

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Michael Mason

From: Arielle G <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 2:46 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Robert Yundt
Subject: Concerning SB 277 (Version A)

Hello, my name is Arielle Squires and I'm writing concerning Senate Bill 277 (Version A). I'm a mother who has one child in public school while homeschooling two through IDEA. This flexibility in enrollment, funding and education has allowed me to ensure each child is getting the education they need in the best way they can receive it. Just this week I had the joy of hearing one child delight as reading "clicked" thanks to the many supports and tools available through IDEA while the other got to go to a class he adores with teachers specially trained to help him. I feel very strongly about some of the proposed ideas in this Bill that is threatening my parental rights and freedom to ensure each individual child is receiving the education they need in order to thrive and hurting the flexibility my family needs and the support we receive from IDEA. I recognize there are many things that need to be addressed but they need to be addressed well with actual solutions. I do not believe Senate Bill 277 (Version A) addresses the core problems nor does it offer solutions that are practical in supporting ALL Alaskan families and the individual needs of each child. Alaskans need the flexibility and security that this Bill will NOT provide.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,
Arielle Squires

Michael Mason

From: Audrey Tetlow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 4:02 PM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Robert Yundt; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Mike Cronk; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. James Kaufman; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Robert Myers; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. George Rauscher; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Cathy Tilton; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Robert Yundt
Subject: Senate Bill 277 version and sections 4 and 7, please vote against, for the sake of the children.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Audrey Tetlow, I am a stay-at-home mother of four and a homeschool mother of three young boys.

I am writing to express my concern regarding the Senate Bill 277 version A and sections 4 and 7. My boys are registered with Nanana City School district wasilla CyberLynx homeschool and correspondence program, as such this bill would affect the academic welfare of my children in a very personal way. When my husband and I chose to homeschool our children we weighed all of the pros and cons in the balance but the deciding factor to school our children at home was the ability to cater the learning experience to the needs of our children, and having a son who has a learning disabilities that became priority.

Through The homeschool correspondence program CyberLynx we have been able to give our son individual attention, special curriculum and extra one-on-one time that he would not otherwise get in a public school setting. If Senate Bill 277 version A passes however my children will lose not only the funding for curriculums tailored to their learning needs but also the funding for extracurricular activities such as field trips etc. which public schools offer to children for free but as homeschoolers we must pay for out of pocket for, without allotments. As you may understand homeschooling is not a cheap endeavor so for families like my own who are low income not only is it a financial burden lifted having a correspondence program but it is essential for those of us who have children with learning disabilities as having contact teachers who can help advise us and provide information on curriculums, tutors etc. is essential for our children's learning needs.

I would implore all who have the power to vote on the Senate bill 277 version A and sections 4 and 7 to please think of the children when voting on this bill. As it is not just my three children but an estimated 21 to 23,000 children in Alaska who are reliant on correspondence programs all throughout the states of Alaska for their children's academic needs. If you pass this bill you are blocking the education that those children need and deserve as Alaskans.

Make no mistake, we don't want to take anything from brick and mortar schools, special education, career and technical education, base student allocation funding and student transportation should all still remain because every student matters whether they go to a public school or attend homeschool through a correspondence program.

We don't want anything more, we just want the same resources and the same opportunities for our children as we do for every public School child. But to remove funding from correspondence programs and give that funding to the districts we live in but our children do not attend school in would be removing the very opportunities for academic success that every parent desires for their child.

From this homeschool mother, I asked that you look at the children that would be impacted negatively by the passing of Senate Bill 277 version A and vote against this bill.

For the sake of all children in the state of Alaska both public and homeschooled.

Thank you for all you do for the state of Alaska and for the children of Alaska.

Yours respectfully,
Audrey Tetlow

March 19, 2026

Senate Education Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 277(A)

Dear Chair Tobin and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I write as a charter member of IDEA Homeschool, founder of Alaskans Against Common Core, and a former University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty member with more than two decades of experience in education policy and economics. I also served as an elected member of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly. My opinions are my own and do not represent any board or organization with which I am affiliated.

I respectfully submit the attached five targeted amendments to Senate Bill 277(A). These amendments are designed to eliminate the bill's most damaging provisions while preserving its less controversial elements and strengthening both academic focus and parental authority.

The amendments would:

1. Delete the language that redirects correspondence student funding to the district of residence;
2. Remove the increase in the charter school administrative fee cap;
3. Require boroughs to distribute their local contribution based on Average Daily Membership to the actual educating district;
4. Mandate prioritization of core academic subjects (mathematics, reading, and writing); and
5. Affirm that a parent's right to direct their child's education is superior to that of any school district official.

Without these corrections, SB 277(A) would seriously undermine the correspondence and charter programs that have given thousands of Alaska families genuine educational choice. I urge the committee to adopt these amendments or, if that is not feasible, to reject the bill in its current form.

I am available to testify in person or by teleconference should the committee desire. Thank you for your time and service to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Barbara Haney, Ph.D.
North Pole, Alaska

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

These five targeted amendments would remove the most harmful parts of Senate Bill 277(A) while preserving its less controversial elements and strengthening parental rights and academic focus.

Amendment 1 – Delete Funding Redirection for Correspondence Students

Delete Section 11 in its entirety (the new subsection (h) added to AS 14.17.500).

This removes the language that diverts Average Daily Membership (ADM) funding for students enrolled in statewide correspondence programs to the student's district of residence (specifically the lowest-enrollment school in that district). Correspondence funding would continue to follow the student to the program the family actually chose.

Amendment 2 – Delete Charter School Administrative Fee Increase

Delete Section 2 in its entirety (the amendment to AS 14.03.260(a) that raises the administrative fee cap from 4% to 8%).

This prevents districts from taking a larger share of charter school budgets, preserving resources for flexible charter options that many homeschool families rely on.

Amendment 3 – New Mandate for Borough Local Contribution

Insert the following new section after Section 17:

“Sec. XX. AS 14.17 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(h) A borough or city that is required to contribute a local share under this chapter shall distribute that local contribution to every school district that has students enrolled from that borough or city. The distribution shall be made on the basis of the average daily membership (ADM) of those students, regardless of whether the students are enrolled in a correspondence program, charter school, or any other public educational option.”

This ensures that local tax dollars follow the student to the actual educating district.

Amendment 4 – Prioritization of Core Academic Subjects

Insert a new section after Amendment 3 to read:

“Sec. XX. AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(a) Every school district and public educational program shall prioritize instruction in the core academic subjects of mathematics, reading, and writing. These subjects shall receive primary emphasis in curriculum design, daily scheduling, and resource allocation. No district policy or administrative directive may subordinate the teaching of mathematics, reading, or writing to any other subject, activity, or social initiative.”

Amendment 5 – Recognition of Superior Parental Rights

Insert a new section after Amendment 4 to read:

“Sec. XX. AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(b) The right of a parent or legal guardian to direct the education of their child is superior to any authority exercised by a school district official, administrator, or employee. In all matters involving curriculum, instructional methods, enrollment choices, and program participation, the parent's decision shall prevail unless a court of competent jurisdiction rules otherwise. No school district may override a parent's lawful educational choice through administrative policy or regulation.”

PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL 277(A)
By the Senate Education Committee

A BILL

For an Act relating to education funding; amending the base student allocation; relating to correspondence study programs, charter schools, and local contributions; prioritizing core academic subjects; affirming parental rights; and providing for an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

Section 1. AS 14.03.300(c) is amended to read:

(c) A student who leaves a correspondence study program may keep permanently all textbooks, equipment, and curriculum materials purchased with state allotments.

Section 2. [Deleted in its entirety – the increase in charter school administrative fee cap from 4 percent to 8 percent is removed.]

Section 3. AS 14.14.110(a) is amended to read:

(a) Two or more school districts may enter into a cooperative agreement for the purpose of providing correspondence study programs.

Section 4. AS 14.17 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 14.17.XXX. Local contribution distribution.

A borough or city that is required to contribute a local share under this chapter shall distribute that local contribution to every school district that has students enrolled from that borough or city. The distribution shall be made on the basis of the average daily membership (ADM) of those students, regardless of whether the students are enrolled in a correspondence program, charter school, or any other public educational option.

Section 5. AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 14.03.XXX. Core academic subjects.

(a) Every school district and public educational program shall prioritize instruction in the core academic subjects of mathematics, reading, and writing. These subjects shall receive primary emphasis in curriculum design, daily scheduling, and resource allocation. No district policy or administrative directive may subordinate the teaching of mathematics, reading, or writing to any other subject, activity, or social initiative.

Section 6. AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 14.03.XXX. Parental rights.

(b) The right of a parent or legal guardian to direct the education of their child is superior to any authority exercised by a school district official, administrator, or employee. In all matters involving curriculum, instructional methods, enrollment choices, and program participation, the parent's decision shall prevail unless a court of competent jurisdiction rules otherwise. No school district may override a parent's lawful educational choice through administrative policy or regulation.

Section 7. [Deleted in its entirety – the redirection of correspondence student funding to the district of residence (lowest-enrollment school) is removed.]

Section 8. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

Copy of Testimony for March 18, 2026 regarding SB277

Barbara Laucius, Wasilla/Willow

Good evening, Committee members,

I oppose SB 277. As an educator for 20 years, I know that having options and school choice is critical for children's education. This bill threatens to eliminate one important option that many families rely on.

Alaska is unique. Many families live and work in non-traditional situations that do not fit a 9-to-5 schedule. From remote communities to seasonal industries, our state requires flexibility—especially in education.

Statewide correspondence programs provide that flexibility. They offer adaptable, student-centered learning that allows children to succeed despite geographic, cultural, or economic challenges. Families should have the freedom to choose the best educational path and partners for their children—freedom that is central to Alaska's identity.

Students in these programs consistently achieve remarkable success. They have won State in the Academic Decathlon, medaled in the Arctic Games, and gone on to excel in universities, technical schools, and the business community. When families can choose both their learning path and educational partners, children thrive academically, socially, and personally.

Homeschooling (correspondence) families also strengthen Alaska's communities and economy. They support local vendors, pay property taxes, and help sustain regional services. Eliminating these programs would limit children's potential, reduce family choice, and weaken the communities that rely on them.

The IDEA Program is a proven example. Started in 1997 in the small town of Galena, it now serves families statewide—from tiny communities like Metlaktla and Quinhagak to populous regions such as the Matsu Valley and Anchorage. This program demonstrates that flexible, alternative education can succeed across Alaska.

Protecting these programs ensures that Alaska's children, families, and communities continue to thrive. Proven success stories like this deserve to continue.

Thank you.

Barbara Laucius

Michael Mason

From: Brandie Oliva [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:17 AM
Subject: Senate Bill 277 (Version A)

Alaska State Senate,

I am very concerned about Senate Bill 277. I have one child, a son, that is enrolled in IDEA. He is currently in 5th grade and loves being a part of the IDEA community. IDEA introduced my son the First Lego League (FLL) this school year and my son had a blast. He is looking forward to the next season starting in August 2026. If Senate Bill 277 gets past, then this opportunity for my son completely goes away and that would be a shame. Not just for my son, but for his team and all the other students that participate in FLL. By the end of this season, my son and his team mates all became great friends. During the local competition in January, my son and his team not only competed against other teams, but they also socialized with the other teams and even helped another team out with a problem they were having with their robot. FLL is a great opportunity for kids to solve real world problems, build a robot and code it to compete in games, and learn how to work together as a team, plus making friends. These are only a few reasons, among many, that FLL is wonderful for students and FLL isn't the only service that IDEA provides that benefits all the students that are enrolled with IDEA. If Senate Bill 277 passes, all this goes away and IDEA no longer exists, leaving hundreds of parents with no option to choose the homeschool program for their children in Alaska and removes countless programs and opportunities for the students that may not be offered in their local district. Parents will have to choose between their local homeschool program in the district of their residence or go with a homeschool program outside of Alaska. As a last resort, some parents will choose not to do any homeschool program, but homeschool completely on their own.

Parents should have a choice as to where their children go to school, regardless if the choice is in their district where they reside or not. There are lots of families that live in districts with very limited resources, if any at all, for homeschooling their children. Being able to enroll their children into any homeschool program across the state opens up the door to countless resources and opportunities for parents and their children. Some districts may have what some parents want for their children and some districts may not. It does not make sense to have all the funding for a child go to the district in which they live since the child does not attend a public school. The money should be with the child no matter what kind of schooling they do, whether that is in a public school, private, or correspondence. The funding is for the student's education, not to pay the bills for the school district.

Please say no to Senate Bill 277 and save all the correspondence homeschooling programs.

Thank you for your time,

Brandie Oliva

Michael Mason

From: Brian Brigman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 5:18 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Vote no on SB 277

Dear Alaska Legislator,

I am writing to respectfully ask you to vote no on SB 277.

My family has benefited greatly from Alaska's homeschool correspondence program. We have five children, each with different gifts, strengths, and challenges, and homeschooling has allowed us to give them an education that fits who they are as individuals. We are not against public schools. We simply believe families should have meaningful educational options, because not every child learns the same way.

For our family, homeschooling has also meant something even deeper: time together. I have worked in healthcare for nearly 20 years and currently work nights as an ER nurse. Because of homeschooling, I am able to adjust my schedule so I can still spend valuable time with my children. Without this option, our family would lose something that cannot be replaced.

Many Alaskans work outside a traditional 9-to-5 schedule. Families like mine serve our communities in essential roles, and homeschool correspondence programs make it possible to balance that service with active involvement in our children's education.

Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure their children are taught well. When parents are directly involved, children benefit. That is one reason many correspondence students perform so well.

Please do not take away or weaken an option that serves so many Alaska families so well. Education should not be one-size-fits-all. In a world full of choices, families deserve choice in education too.

Please vote no on SB 277.

Sincerely,
Brian and Cheryl Brigman

Michael Mason

From: Candice Yoder [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 3:59 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

Hello,

I am writing today to share my opposition to passing SB277.

My family currently homeschools through a correspondence program. From my understanding SB277 will cause an end to that and hand over more control to the local school districts who have a history of downward spiraling performance. I can not support giving more control to a failing organization in hopes that they will improve operations.

Respectfully,

Candice Yoder

Michael Mason

From: Carolyn Musgrave [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 3:55 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277 Version A - OPPOSED

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am writing in regards to **Senate Bill 277 Version A**, released on March 13th. I am **OPPOSED** to the bill in its current status and will explain my reasoning below.

I have been homeschooling for 17 years and find that I am able to provide my children with a more excellent education than anything the public school system offers. I have used three different programs over the years, which include my local school district's homeschooling program (Matsu Central), along with IDEA and Raven.

SB 277 will restrict homeschool state funding to the local school district that I reside in. This makes no sense to me. The funding should go to the school district that is providing my child's educational opportunities. If the funding goes to my local school district, how does that help my child's education in any way shape or form, if they are using a statewide correspondence school? State money is provided to ensure that the children in our state have the opportunity to be well educated. By putting the money into the hands of the local school districts, you are literally taking away educational opportunities from students who are thriving through state correspondence schools.

After witnessing disturbing money grabs by my local superintendent, I see **SB 277** as a money grab by the larger, local school districts. They are upset that they are losing money that is currently going to successful correspondence schools. After Matsu Central was taken over by the MSBSD superintendent, their programs began to suffer just like the MSBSD is suffering. I was quick to pull my students from this failing organization. Many families are leaving their local school districts because the schools are failing their students in almost all categories of education. If you pass **SB 277** as it is, you will literally rip the rug out from under thousands of families who now rely on statewide correspondence schools to provide them with opportunities for an excellent education.

The Alaska Homeschooling Program has enabled my children to obtain excellent educations that sent two of them to out-of-state universities on full-ride scholarships, one graduated from the UAA sonography program, another successfully entered the state tech industry, with my youngest graduating this year with 28 college credits completed (4.0 in all classes). They each speak a different language (Chinese, Japanese, Greek, and Spanish - fluently!), and are successfully contributing to society.

Please do not mess with something that has worked so wonderfully for my family and for tens of thousands of other Alaskans! Do not let the greedy superintendents and educational unions that are failing our students, win this round. Stand up for school choice and the educational success of Alaskan students. Keep the money in the program that is actually providing the education.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Musgrave
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Carrie J Webster <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 3:30 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

My email to state legislators, should it help anyone else in drafting theirs. :)

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to urgently ask you to oppose Senate Bill 277 (SB 277) as currently written, particularly Sections 4 and 7, which pose a serious threat to homeschool and correspondence programs across Alaska.

Section 7 would redirect all state funding to a student's district of residence, effectively eliminating funding for statewide correspondence programs. This change would severely disrupt — and in many cases dismantle — programs that thousands of Alaska families depend on.

For families like mine, these programs are not optional; they are essential. They provide access to curriculum, resources, and support that allow parents to meet their children's unique educational needs. Removing or restricting access to these programs strips families of meaningful school choice and forces many students into environments that may not serve them well.

Alaska has long been a leader in educational flexibility, recognizing that one size does not fit all. SB 277 moves us in the opposite direction by centralizing control and limiting options for families who have thoughtfully chosen a different path.

This bill would not only harm homeschool families — it would impact students with diverse learning needs, rural families, and those who rely on correspondence programs for accessibility and stability.

I strongly urge you to:

- Oppose SB 277 in its current form
- Protect funding for statewide correspondence programs
- Preserve parental choice in education

Alaska families are paying close attention to this issue. Our voices matter, and we are counting on you to stand with students and families; not against them.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to serving the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Carrie J. Webster
Wasilla, Alaska 99623

Michael Mason

From: Carrie J Webster [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 3:46 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I strongly oppose SB 277, as it would harm and potentially damage a highly effective and thriving education system. Rather than shifting or taking money from the districts where parents have chosen to educate their children and redirecting it to where they reside, the focus should be on understanding why public schools are struggling and why so many families are choosing to leave.

This is not simply a funding issue—funding should follow the students. Increasing funding has been the consistent response to challenges in public education, yet it has not resolved the underlying problems. Continuing to rely on the same approach without meaningful change will not produce different results.

Public schools have failed my family for at least three generations, from the Anchorage School District to the Mat-Su Borough School District. As a multi-generational family affected by dyslexia, we have experienced these challenges firsthand.

My father was pushed through the Anchorage School District without receiving the help he needed. At one point, he stopped even bringing his textbooks into class, leaving them in his car, yet he was still passed through the system and graduated. He was never given the support necessary to succeed. Similarly, a close friend of mine, who is also dyslexic, has shared that she does not know how she graduated. She completed little to no homework, yet was still pushed through the system in the Mat-Su Borough School District.

My own experience in the Mat-Su Borough School District was similarly difficult. The lack of understanding of dyslexia, combined with ineffective teaching methods, led to significant emotional stress and anxiety. Because of this, I made the decision to homeschool my children. I did not want them to endure the same struggles I faced.

I initially homeschooled through Mat-Su Central; however, I began encountering many of the same issues—particularly a lack of understanding of dyslexia and restrictive guidelines on how to educate my children. This ultimately led me to transfer to IDEA, where I could better meet my children's educational needs.

Some of the primary reasons school districts are struggling—and why parents are removing their children—include the lack of early screening and individualized learning approaches. Children should be assessed before entering kindergarten to identify how they learn best, and instruction should reflect those needs throughout their education.

Approximately one in five children is dyslexic. These students require teaching methods that align with how they process information from kindergarten through 12th grade. Dyslexia is only one of many learning differences that often go unrecognized and unsupported. When students are not given the proper tools or instruction suited to their learning style, it is no surprise that test scores in reading, math, and other subjects remain low.

Additionally, even the best teachers face significant challenges. It is unrealistic to expect one teacher to effectively meet the needs of 25–30 students, especially when many require individualized support or specialized instruction.

If my youngest daughter—who has a more severe form of dyslexia—had been in today's public school system, she likely would have struggled significantly and failed. I cannot imagine the mental and emotional toll that experience would have taken on her. Because we have the ability to choose how and where to educate our children, she is now thriving and is on track to graduate through IDEA in May.

I would also like to address a statement made during the Senate Education Committee hearing on March 18, where it was suggested that families switching between correspondence schools may be required to repay funds. I would respectfully ask for clarification on the source of that information.

When I transferred my four children from Mat-Su Central to IDEA after several years, we were not required to repay any funds. The only requirement was to return non-consumable items and certain electronic devices that had not depreciated, unless we chose to pay the difference. The process was straightforward and did not create a financial burden for our family.

Finally, I would encourage legislators to engage directly with correspondence school leaders—such as IDEA, Raven, and CyberLynx to name a few—to better understand how these programs operate before making policy decisions that could significantly impact a thriving and effective education system. I would also encourage you to survey families directly to better understand why parents are choosing to remove their children from public schools and pursue other forms of education. Gathering that feedback would provide valuable insight into the root causes of declining enrollment and ongoing challenges within the public school system.

Respectfully,

Carrie J Webster

Wasilla, Alaska 99623

Michael Mason

From: Casey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:52 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Sb277

Section 7 is completely unnecessary, a clear danger to parent rights, school choice and statewide programs, and should be removed from the bill. There is no reason for Section 7 to exist.
Casey Zharoff

Michael Mason

From: Cheri Ruiz <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 1:26 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277 : Oppose

Good afternoon,

I oppose SB 277. I support school choice.

I do not support taking money from one program to pay for another program that will decrease the least restrictive education environment for students and remove school choice from parents and students. Not all environments are conducive for all students to participate in and access the curriculum. Choice must be allowed.

The issue lies w the budget. Make them balance it.

Cheri Ruiz
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [o Mail for iPhone](#)

Michael Mason

From: Christopher Howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 12:34 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Opposition to SB277 section 7 amendment

Hello, the current version of SB277 (A) has an amendment in Sec 7 which would reassign the ADM for a student from the district providing correspondence study to student, over to the district where the student resides. I'm am vehemently opposed to this. As an IDEA homeschooling family, we are happy with being able to choose whatever homeschool program we want in the state, and get the funding for that directly to our program. The proposed change would force us to either (1) get involved in the local borough's failing, godless public school system, or (2) accept whatever correspondence study "cooperative arrangement" they come up for us, if they even do so. Or, of course, fund our own homeschooling completely, which is what we would do, all the while knowing that the funding meant for our education was going back to the borough's lousy public education system which we don't support.

--

Christopher Howard
gemini://gem.librehacker.com
[https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://geminiprotocol.net_!!LdQKC6s!N--cerM3ow614phB9i9CKa0n6ejkcNWqPj-Jro2j1FdALpdbqnJCN_USuo6TM1GaAcfKOk0xsDi7kErgWSd3bcwYS5Sapo3G\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://geminiprotocol.net_!!LdQKC6s!N--cerM3ow614phB9i9CKa0n6ejkcNWqPj-Jro2j1FdALpdbqnJCN_USuo6TM1GaAcfKOk0xsDi7kErgWSd3bcwYS5Sapo3G$)

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ

Michael Mason

From: Clayton Arnold <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 8:07 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

Good evening Senators,

I was able to listen to the presentation during the education committee today and most of the public testimony. I have a few points that I would like some clarification on.

First, if a student didn't receive any services from their home district, all funds (not a single penny would be retained by home district) would forward to the statewide correspondence program? That was one thing I believe I heard stated.

If that is case, this seems like a cumbersome way to direct the same funds. Adding a middle man seems like an inefficient method to getting funds to where they are currently going already. Wouldn't it be simpler to have the cooperative agreements made for ONLY those students who are utilizing services in the both the statewide program and their district. That it would be better to have that made as it would affect far fewer students and still get the funds back to the home district where it needs to go?

Second; if all funds are routed through the home district, that would mean that each district would need to have a cooperative agreement with every program that students were working with. In the MatSu Borough, there are approximately. 3800 students (per Dr. Trani's presentation on February 4th) that reside in the Matsu that work with programs outside their district. That is a lot of coordination and would be well over a dozen different cooperative agreements that would need to be worked out, and those agreements would vary from student to student, depending on the services that each student required from IEP to hybrid type to nothing being requested from the home district, so you would have a large variety of agreements that would need to be made with over a dozen different programs.

If this law passed by the end of the March (and with edits and such doesn't seem like a likely timeline) and is effective immediately; that would leave MatSu Borough School district for example with less than 4 months to get the structures in place to make those agreements happen, to hire the new employees that would be needed to facilitate these agreements, and do all the talking and cooperating with other districts. I am not sure that that could all happen before July 1st. How could all of this be in place before then to avoid the disruption for students learning going into next year?

Our family utilizes year round schooling as summer tends to have rainy weeks and the winters tend to have a few nice weeks and so we work around the weather and sports schedules and all that. Needless to say, not being able to begin until September or potentially later due to the infrastructure not being in place is a huge concern, among other things. I generally have my plans all made before May and start purchasing our supplies and books needed on July 1st.

While you clearly stated what you are intentions were (and I can mostly agree with those intentions), but the verbiage and the results don't line up completely.

The issue mentioned about the curriculum not passing with the student, our program only requires the return of non-consumables, which are generally considered things that are valued above \$300 (like if we bought a

microscope or computer or something that could be reused by another student), not things like readers, workbooks, crayons, and such. While I am not sure what program was mentioned paying back 9 years of things, the programs that I have spoken to when deciding on a program, all had the same general rules about books and such and would only go back 3 years at max.

We enjoy our correspondence program and did consider our in district one both before we began and in between years even, but the program we are with offers some things that we greatly enjoy, including elementary math competitions. My middle child placed 1st in the state last year (granted there were only 2 in his level in the state) and ranked in the 39th percentile nationally. This is the only program in the state that offers this competition or any other elementary math competitions that I have found thus far. He is doing well in his academics and sports and enjoys the flexibility that we are afforded as late evenings for practices and then he isn't up at 6am trying to get ready to go to school, where he would likely not excel as he likes to move (a lot). He enjoys the curriculums we work on together at home and also the support from the math specialist at his school.

Thank you for listening to the parents who know their children best. Thank you for your attention to our concerns and taking them seriously.

Clay Arnold

Michael Mason

From: Colt Nelson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 8:25 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Jamie Allard; Rep. Dan Saddler
Subject: SB277 Disagreement

Good Evening Senators and Representatives,

To be up front and not to waste anyone's time with flowery speech tactics and beating around the bush, Senate Bill 277 is unbalanced and unfair in regards to the benefits offered to students of home school or charter programs. I believe this bill is being force pushed without any sound justification or research and if passed, will be detrimental to more than 23,000 Alaskan students.

To begin, the money allotted for my son's education, from the state, should be going directly to the educational institute that is providing his education, access to social clubs, and physical fitness, not to the Anchorage School District, to then hopefully be distributed to Raven HomeSchool through tentative language and legally debatable requirements, or lack thereof. The ASD does not provide education to my son and besides perhaps standardized testing access and maybe sports in the future, the ASD has no investment in educating my son. This small and insignificant involvement in my son's education does not warrant a doubling in public school to charter school budget taxation rates ie. the 4% to 8% increase in Section 1a.

The next issue is the cooperative engagements advertised in the bill are articulated by the word "may" not "shall" (Section 4a), meaning that, in the case of my son's education, if the Anchorage School District does not offer a program that my son is currently engaged in or wants to be, as Raven is proctored through the Yukon/Koyukuk District and uses innovative online and distance learning tools, he could be fresh out of luck, if he is even funded to do the program due to the aforementioned issue of the district not being required to distribute the money. This ambiguous language gives the various public, government run school districts complete control over whether charter, and therefore, home schools, even get money and if so, when.

A growing number of Alaskan parents choose to enter our children into home school programs due to our observation that local public districts are not only failing to educate our children academically but socially as well. School is about a lot more than grades on paper and standardized testing, which is all our local Anchorage School District seems to care about. Our children not only learn academically but experience important life events, stressors, and interactions that shape them. The environment is different in home school programs. There is a heightened focus on these non academic experiences as well as social clubs and alternative subjects, allowing students to develop socially as well as academically. Where these things happen in public schools, albeit at a slower and less intentional rate, the choice to enroll our children in either program is more important than adjusting the rules and funding to ensure state sponsored education institutes stay afloat.

I won't turn this email into a political soapbox where I bash politicians and go on tirades about policy preference but I do believe that the ASD is failing to properly educate, both academically and socially, our children. I believe that the ASD is fiscally irresponsible, misuses acquired resources, and spends

money like rich kids with daddies' wallet and I believe that the district is not interested in really going to the drawing board to innovate new ways of using funds, resources, and time to change the educational paradigm for the benefit of our children.

This was evident as my son, who was born three months early and was diagnosed ADD, Dyslexic, and Autistic, bounced from school to school in Eagle River trying to get help and resources to be a better student. It took the Resource teachers at Birchwood ABC (an ASD school that operates a completely different curriculum and social program than most), who personally acquired the teaching resources and privately invested the time and energy to address his specific needs, for him to learn to read and write on par with his peers. Still, we decided to put him in Raven HomeSchool for grade 6 as we felt the rigors of the Elementary to Middle School transition would be too much for him. Since he entered Raven, he has taken flight in new ways. His academics are off the charts, his social and personal skills have improved drastically, and he has more time to work out, do church functions and develop lasting relationships with kids his age. This is due to more efficient use of time, less homework, and an institutional focus on family and social time after "school hours". These things are vital for him specifically, but also to every student of his age.

The choice for us to enter him into Raven was vital in his early teenage development. We have seen him take strides in ways we actually never thought he would be able to.

We all realize that enrollment rates have dropped and class sizes are larger and so on but those are issues that should not affect the parents' choice to educate their children the way they see fit. ASD's inability to manage their program correctly should not be rewarded or "fixed" by stripping away the parents' right to educate freely and fairly while also boosting their district bank account.

I believe instead of drafting and submitting bills such as SB277 to the floor to address these issues blindly, The Alaska Legislature should commission a full study on the effectiveness of "Charter" education programs. Analyze the academic benchmarks of these students, measure their social ability as well as their functional life knowledge and weigh those results against the same metrics obtained from students in local districts. This isn't to pit "Our kids versus Their Kids" but sound research is needed before any major paradigm shift is made to any organization and to this date, I have seen no such research provided to the public. Then from there, look at school funding bills. Quite honestly, I think you would find that SB277 should be flipped around, providing more funding to Charter programs rather than throttling them and reducing the parents' choice.

I implore this committee, as well as any member of the Alaska Legislature who is preparing to vote Yay on SB277 to think critically about your expanding and invasive role in our children's education. Creating a system where all must educate their children in accordance with the will of government sanctioned and solely funded programs is a dangerous paradigm that not only says children must be educated in accordance with the government's law but also that parents no longer have the right to dictate how and what their children learn.

I hope and pray this email finds you all well and that you take the time to think on the more human aspect of what this bill is going to do to the future of Alaskan children. They are not 1's and 0's but the future of our state and nation and they deserve education that fits their needs as well as the opinion of their parents, who we put trust in to care and feed for them in every other aspect of their lives. I have no doubt that your hearts are in the right place but I believe you are putting an ill-built cart before a sick horse and the results will be disastrous down the road.

Colton Nelson

Michael Mason

From: Cynthia Bowman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 5:19 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Dear [Senate Education Committee,

I am writing as a constituent and homeschooling parent in Alaska to express my concerns about Senate Bill 277 (SB 277), particularly Sections 4 and 7.

My family relies on a statewide correspondence program for our child's education. This model allows us to meet our child's unique learning needs while still receiving guidance, structure, and accountability. The flexibility and support we receive are essential, and we would not have the same opportunity through our local district alone.

As I understand it, SB 277 would redirect all state education funding to the district of residence, even when that district is not providing services to the student. This change could effectively eliminate statewide correspondence programs by removing their funding, which would significantly limit school choice for families like mine.

For our family, this is not an abstract policy issue—it directly impacts how we educate our child. Losing access to our current program would mean losing resources, support, and a model that is working well for us. We chose this path carefully, and it has made a meaningful difference in our child's education and well-being.

I respectfully ask that you oppose or amend SB 277 to ensure that:

- * State funding follows the student to the program that is actually providing their education
- * Statewide correspondence programs can continue to operate and serve families across Alaska
- * Parents retain the ability to choose the educational model that best meets their child's needs

I also support efforts to strengthen education for all students in Alaska, including increased funding for special education in correspondence programs, Career & Technical Education (CTE), Base Student Allocation (BSA), and student transportation.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of our state and for taking the time to consider the perspectives of homeschooling families. I appreciate your attention to this issue and your commitment to ensuring that all Alaska students have access to educational options that help them thrive.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Bowman
North Pole, AK

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Michael Mason

From: Daniel C Jager <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 5:32 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

I do not support SB277 at all.

Michael Mason

From: Danielle Sjoden <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:04 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Homeschooler in support of SB277

Dear Senate Education Committee:

I am a homeschool parent in the Anchorage School District and am writing in support of SB277 as it's a step toward supporting both homeschool and public school students. I think many in the public view homeschooling at odds with support for public schools, but it's possible to support both options and ensure that all kids have robust educational opportunities. SB277 is a fair step in that direction.

Sincerely,
Danielle Sjoden

Michael Mason

From: Dani W [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 10:23 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Good morning,

I have serious concerns over the language of SB 277 as it currently stands. There is clearly much confusion surrounding the implications of this Bill, particularly Section 7. The intent of the Bill seems not to be fully reflected in the language, which leaves much room for misinterpretation and confusion. This section needs to be cleaned up and rewritten to ensure that a student's allotment is dedicated to the student no matter which correspondence program they are enrolled in. In its current form, there is no guarantee that this Bill would REQUIRE school districts to cooperate with this funding. Instead, it suggests they MAY cooperate. What is to stop a school district from denying cooperation, thereby bankrupting some of the correspondence programs tied to smaller districts?

Perhaps a different solution can be reached to achieve the ends this Bill is attempting to reach--ensuring local districts are not absorbing costs for correspondence students for which they are not receiving any funding. Perhaps the Bill could be rewritten to direct correspondence programs to pay the local district the actual cost of providing the enrolled class or extracurricular activity.

To hand over the entirety of the allotment to the district of residence with no assurance that that district has to cooperate is dooming the system to failure. But perhaps that is the goal after all.

In its current form, SB 277 is too flawed to continue. It will have unintended ripple effects throughout our local economies--small businesses that rely heavily on spending from correspondence students will see drastic reductions in enrollments. This is not hyperbole. Perhaps you think parents will happily switch to their local district's programs instead, but this assumption is just wrong. Alaska homeschoolers are fiercely independent-minded and won't be bullied into a program they have rejected in favor of a different correspondence program run outside of their home district. These parents will by and large just opt out of the system entirely, even further disrupting district funding levels as these students depart the state system altogether. Don't say you weren't warned, that you had no idea this would be a consequence--people are shouting it from the rooftops. Trust what they are saying is true. This Bill will cause more headache than whatever current problem it's attempting to solve.

Unless the language in Section 7 is changed to reflect a required cooperative agreement and specifies exactly what that looks like, it leaves too much room for abuse and is too open to vastly different interpretations. Explanations regarding the intent of the Section are not satisfactory unless the language of the Bill is changed to explicitly outline the process.

Thank you for your time,
Danielle Witczak, Palmer AK

Michael Mason

From: David Morrison <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 1:09 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: oppose SB 277

Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing as an Alaskan Homeschool parent to oppose SB 277. Families choose correspondence programs based on what best fits our children's needs, not based on where we live. This bill would tie students back to their district of residence instead of the program they are enrolled in, which undermines school choice. Funding should follow the student to the program providing education. If the funding does not follow students, correspondence programs will not be able to provide allotments or the support for families who find their program as a better fit for their children.

Many families will not switch to their local district program. They will choose to homeschool independently, which means no district receives funding at all.

If school district's don't like that parents are choosing to get their children educated elsewhere, then they should change and become better so families will choose them instead.

Please protect school choices in Alaska,

Sincerely,

David Morrison

Wasilla, AK

Michael Mason

From: David Nees <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 10:32 AM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Rep. Bill Elam; Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Justin Ruffridge
Subject: Testimony SB277

Senators,

Thank you for inviting public testimony on this bill.
As currently written, it needs quite a bit of work.

I would like to add to my spoken testimony of March 18th.

Here are my added comments:

Section 1:

The 4% administrative fee is not currently being audited by DEED and reported to legislature. If you choose to increase it 100% to an 8 percent administrative fee, you really need to note in detail what this fee includes and what the charter schools are paying for.

Currently, the districts have a monopoly on chartering schools, requiring charter schools to do planning, facilities, and pupil transportation.

Allowing the State Board of Education to authorize charter schools reduces the burden on local districts.

The Anchorage School Board has actively relocated its charter schools at will, leaving them holding the lease to buildings they no longer are allowed to use.

Section 3:

Requiring charter school parents to transport their students may likely be a violation of the Alaska Supreme Court decision in *Matthews v. Quinton* (1961) and leaves the legislature at risk if statute does not require the school district to provide said transportation.

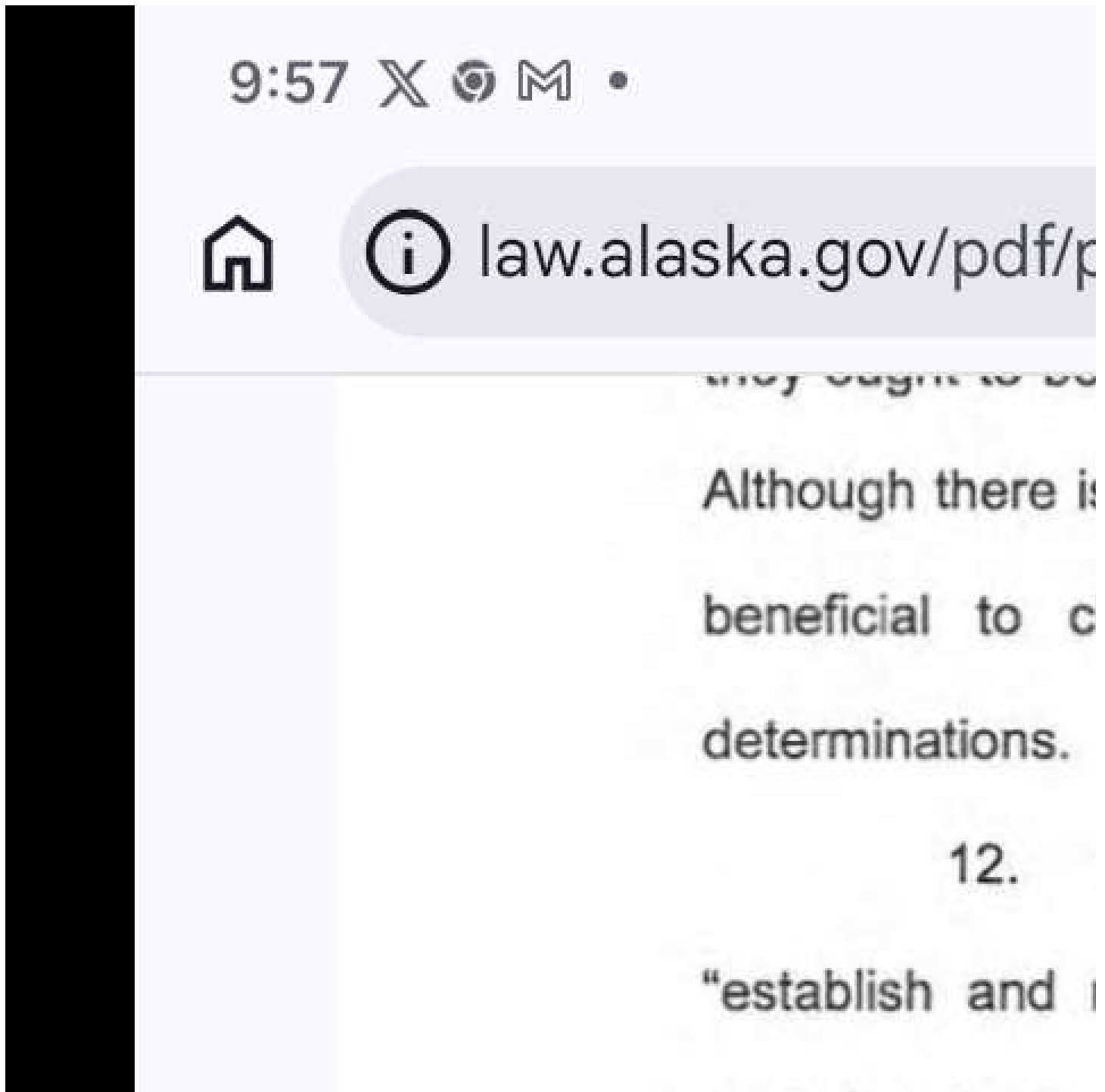
Section 6:

Increases in the BSA should always be truthful and show that every \$1 increase has a resultant budget cost of \$250,000.

Section 11-16:

Probably violates the Moore decision, finding number 12 on preschool within public schools.

See attached



Section 17:

Senator Tobin was correct in that many states have reading mastery incentives. However, all of them have consequences for not being proficient. These other states consequences vary but, solutions range from ending social promotion or a reduction in funding to school district.

Reading levels are measirable data points.

As the Moore decision states "the Education Clause affords equal opportunity, not a guarentee of mastery".

In Alaska carrot and stick approach is a good policy, do well get \$450, promote illiteracy in districts get you BSA for those children decreased \$450. Does not apply to IEP and SPED.

Bills are vehicles of change, robbing Peter to pay Paul is always bad public policy, looking forward to seeing committee substitute.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Was the testimony of Former Senator Tom Begich's wife from herself or as entity suing the Legislature (CEAAC) about school maintenance.

Respectfully,

David Nees
Cooper Landing
Member 2014 House Sustainable Education Task Force

Michael Mason

From: Deanna Nickoloff <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 4:38 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing as a concerned parent to respectfully share my opposition to SB 277 and to ask that you carefully reconsider its impact on Alaska families.

Alaska has long been a state that values educational freedom and parental involvement. Families like mine rely on homeschool and correspondence programs not simply as an alternative, but as a way to provide a personalized, effective education that meets our children's unique needs. These programs allow parents to take an active role in their child's learning while still benefiting from public education resources.

SB 277 raises serious concerns for me because it appears to shift control away from families and toward a more centralized system. Changes to how correspondence students are counted and funded could limit access to the resources that make these programs work. When funding becomes more restricted or regulated, it inevitably reduces flexibility—and with that, parental choice.

For many of us, this is not about convenience; it is about responsibility. We take seriously our role in guiding our children's education, values, and future. Policies that weaken homeschool and charter options risk forcing families into a one-size-fits-all model that does not serve every child well.

I urge you to consider the broader implications of this bill. Educational policy should empower parents, not limit them. It should expand opportunities, not narrow them. Alaska's strength lies in its commitment to individual freedom, and that should include the right of parents to direct their children's education.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your willingness to listen to the concerns of families like mine. I respectfully ask that you oppose SB 277 or advocate for meaningful revisions that protect parental rights and preserve educational choice.

Sincerely,
Deanna Nickoloff
Fairbanks, Alaska

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Michael Mason

From: Denbigh Perry <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 7:26 AM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Supporting Alaska Families and Flexible Education Options

03/19/2026

Dear Alaska Education Leaders and Community Members,

I am writing in support of Alaska families who rely on correspondence and flexible education programs to meet the diverse needs of their children.

Families choose these models for many reasons, including the need for individualized instruction, culturally responsive learning, and environments that support students who may not thrive in traditional school settings. For many students, these programs are not an alternative—they are what make meaningful access to education possible.

As discussions continue regarding SB 277, I respectfully ask that any policy decisions preserve flexibility for families and ensure continued access to diverse educational options. Limiting how families can use educational resources or restricting access to providers may unintentionally reduce opportunities for students who depend on these supports to succeed.

Educational systems work best when they recognize that students learn differently and when families are trusted as partners in that process. Maintaining a range of options—including correspondence programs—helps ensure that all students have the opportunity to grow, engage, and achieve in ways that align with their needs.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to students and families across Alaska.

Sincerely,
Denbigh Nicole Sockpealuk Perry

Michael Mason

From: Donald Gaston [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 2:34 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: I Strongly Oppose SB 277

Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to express my support for equitable funding for correspondence students in Alaska. I also want to share concerns I have regarding proposed requirements for statewide correspondence programs to have to enter into formal agreements and/or share funding with local school districts.

Families who choose correspondence programs are taxpayers just like those whose children attend local district schools. They contribute equally through property and local taxes, and their students should be funded at the same level. Equal funding reflects fairness, respects family choice, and acknowledges that all students—regardless of how they receive their education—deserve the same level of public investment.

At the same time, I urge you to oppose any requirement that would mandate additional bureaucratic agreements or share funding between statewide correspondence programs and local districts. Such measures risk creating unnecessary administrative burdens on school staff who are already stretched thin and under-resourced. Increasing paperwork and oversight structures will not improve educational outcomes, but it will divert time and energy away from supporting students.

Equally important, these requirements have the potential to erode parental rights. Families who choose correspondence programs do so because they value flexibility, personalization, and autonomy in their child's education. Adding layers of district control may unintentionally limit school choice and undermine the very benefits that make these programs effective.

Alaska has long been a leader in supporting diverse educational pathways. Maintaining equitable funding while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy will help preserve that strength and ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in the environment that works best for them.

Thank you for your time and your service to our state. I respectfully ask that you support equal funding for correspondence students and oppose provisions that divert funds away from statewide correspondence programs or introduce additional administrative requirements.

Sincerely,
Donald Gaston
Soldotna, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Doris & Damian Bollier [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 12:24 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

School Choice and availability to school funds should be, and needs to be! a basic right to every student and child!

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Michael Mason

From: Doris Sugak [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 12:57 PM
To: Senate Education

We are in desperate need of your help, please refrain from close cyberlynx homeschooling program. We are a homeschooling family, and are not able to put our children in the regular school district. Our children deserve good education

Michael Mason

From: Dwight Burgess <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:25 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: School

I would deeply appreciate if you didn't cut the funding for schools such as cyberlynx. I think it amazing to be able to finish your diploma when recreational school turns their cheek. I'm right there one step closer to my diploma.

Not only will I be affected by this but others who attend this school will be as well across Alaska. There are certain individuals who depend on this program to provide the education they need to proceed in life and further their education and or opportunities to exceed in life. To put them where they want to be whether it be college or working oil fields or becoming an officer or joining the military.

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Elizabeth Krenzke <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:51 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: No on SB277

Alaska has always been a state of independent pioneering spirit and this is to include homeschooling and homeschooling allotments. This blatant attack on homeschooling families and the organizations that support them to include certified contact teachers and their schools is a result of pure ignorance about the structures and focus of homeschooling. Please say no to SB277! This bill is a direct violation of the innate God given rights of parents to choose how to raise their children and offensive to think that the Alaska public school system has a right to use the funding for homeschoolers to their own means. Please say no to SB277 and any bill that does not fairly protect the homeschool system and culture that is apart of Alaskan heritage.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Elizabeth Orr [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 1:30 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please Consider the Impact of SB 277 on Homeschool and Military Families

Dear Senate Education Committee,

As a military spouse living in Alaska, I rely on homeschooling to provide my children with consistency and stability in the midst of frequent transitions. It allows our family to create a steady, supportive learning environment no matter where military life takes us. Local correspondence programs play a vital role in making this possible for our family and countless others. Through these programs, my children are able to participate in clubs, sports, and enriching educational opportunities while also receiving valuable academic support. As a parent homeschooling away from my family and support system I rely on the contact teachers and staff of Cyberlynx, our current correspondence program, to assist me in providing the best education possible to my children. These programs make a meaningful difference in the quality of my children's education.

Senate Bill 277 (Version A) threatens access to these essential resources and, in doing so, limits school choice for families like mine. Without correspondence programs, many Alaskan families—especially military families—will lose the support they rely upon to provide a well-rounded education at home. As both a home educator and a military spouse, I respectfully urge you to consider the far-reaching impact SB 277 would have on homeschool families across our state. Policies like this directly affect our quality of education our children receive while living in this state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Orr

Michael Mason

From: Felicia Finley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 4:48 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Hello, my name is Felicia Finley and I want to show my support of having distance education in Alaska. The funds to purchase local lessons (swim lessons, and baseball) to further my child's education in addition to purchasing school supplies is really important to me. I am able to give my child a much better experience for their individual needs due to good options for distance education options. These distance options are better for us than the local options. Our local school has bullying problems and I want to let my child learn without having to deal with bullies and large class sizes.
Thank you for your time, Felicia Finley

Michael Mason

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 1:52 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Good afternoon,

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 277, specifically Section 7.

Although I am not directly part of a statewide correspondence program, I work closely with and know many families in my area who rely on these programs. I relocated from Florida in June 2025, where school choice policies provide families with significant flexibility. In our case, my son participated in the Personalized Education Program (PEP), which allowed him to progress at his own pace while accessing funding for curriculum and educational resources. This approach fostered both academic growth and a genuine engagement with learning.

Based on both personal experience and conversations with families in Alaska, I am concerned that SB 277—particularly the proposed funding changes—will negatively impact correspondence programs and the families who depend on them.

I do support several provisions within the bill that would benefit students across Alaska, including:

- Special education funding for correspondence students
- Increased Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding
- An increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA)
- Additional support for student transportation

However, I do not believe these positive elements outweigh the potential harm caused by changes to how funding is allocated for correspondence education.

Alaska's education system should support a diversity of learning models, including correspondence programs, homeschooling families, and private education options. Policies that limit flexibility or reduce funding access for certain models risk narrowing opportunities for students whose needs are best met outside of traditional settings.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider Section 7 of SB 277 and its impact on correspondence education programs and the families they serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gideon Stence
Administrator
(907).378.2476 (Office)



Michael Mason

From: Heather Ciampa <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 9:07 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Senate Bill 277

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am writing in regards to Senate Bill 277 (Version A) which would eliminate most statewide correspondence programs in Alaska.

This bill greatly saddens and alarms our family as it would devastate our children's education. We have 4 school aged children and a small baby we have every hope will one day have the opportunity to follow in her older siblings' educational footprints.

Our family culture revolves around school and every one of our children loves their education with a passion and they work diligently & hard at it.

The amount of support we receive from our local correspondence program Cyberlynx, is not only substantive but crucial to our children's educational success. To have it removed or diminished would greatly and negatively impact the progress we have experienced in our children's development & happiness.

We are a family that loves reading, art, animals, music and our community; our school is interwoven into every one of these. Please help defend our children's right to development, their right to work hard and their right flourish.

Thank you,
Heather Ciampa

Michael Mason

From: Hope Burdette <[REDACTED]om>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:15 AM
To: Senate Education; Hope Burdette
Subject: Oppose SB 277

Hello,

Our family respectfully 100% opposes SB 277. My child and in the future youngest child have and or will be in IDEA Homeschool and will continue for many years. If you take that away it'll only make it more prominent for our family to want to leave AK more besides many other problems AK is making us face. My sons' education is crucial. The public and or local schools have failed us when we were kids and continue to fail current students and nothing can change what we observe as a family unit. The funding is not the issue it's the structure and many other issues that have been issues since we were in school many years ago. It's degrading on a huge scale yearly. Homeschool is where my child has had the most support and has succeeded well beyond any public/local school could ever provide. You pass this bill and I guarantee many families we know would find ways to get educations else where for their kids and many may even leave AK to find better solutions. Take it away from the families and the public to choose or have choices and the state would regret it. Thinking we'd go back to public/ local schools is an overrated illusion and would prove to be the worst mistake ever on your part.

Sincerely,

Hope Burdette

Michael Mason

From: Jaclyn & Preston Gagnon [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 5:54 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Opposition to SB 277 (Version A)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to respectfully oppose SB 277 (Version A), particularly Sections 4 and 7, which would effectively eliminate funding for statewide correspondence programs like IDEA. This bill would severely restrict school choice for homeschooling families by redirecting all student funding to local districts that are not providing educational services to those students. As a result, longstanding programs that support thousands of Alaska families would be forced to shut down, limiting options and harming students who depend on these flexible learning models. Additionally, this policy could negatively impact Alaska's economy by reducing support for local vendors and pushing families toward out-of-state alternatives. **This bill in its current form undermines parental rights and educational freedom. I respectfully urge you to oppose SB 277 as written and protect school choice for Alaska families.**

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,
Jaclyn Gagnon

Michael Mason

From: jana howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 3:37 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

Hello,

I am reaching out to you today in protest of SB 277. It is my understanding that this bill threatens the avenues and funding that most of us use to homeschool our children. I personally grew up in Salcha and homeschooled through the IDEA program. It would be a huge injustice to the children of this state for this bill to pass as it is written. There are many other things in there that I don't agree with also but this directly threatens my families education plans.

Thank you,
Jana

Michael Mason

From: Jen Schutte [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:38 PM
To: senateeducation@akleg.gov; Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Dear Senators,

I listened to your presentation and public testimony today.

I am truly surprised no one addressed the argument that local districts do not receive funding for correspondence students that choose to attend one to three classes in their neighborhood school. Local districts absolutely receive funding during the fall oasis when they claim the student. That is why correspondence students cannot enroll in more than three classes in their neighborhood school and be enrolled in the correspondence school as the out of school district does not receive any funding.

IDEA in particular allows students to take as many classes as they prefer even when they only receive 25% funding. IDEA accepts students after the count, providing full services if not allotment.

Two of my children graduated through IDEA and are successful adults living in Fairbanks with full time jobs, one a homeowner at the age of 24.

My youngest is a sixth grader through IDEA. This bill would force me to go independent as I gave FNSBSD a chance with my oldest from kindergarten through fifth grade. It was a disaster and if I were to go back, I would homeschool from the beginning.

Please suggest a solution for the failing districts as opposed to attacking successful programs.

Sincerely,

Jen Schutte

907-590-2630

Michael Mason

From: JenniAnne Holmes [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 2:32 PM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Robert Yundt; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Mike Cronk; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: SB 277

Hello, my name is JenniAnne Holmes and I'm a constituent from Fairbanks.

I'm a homeschooling parent wanting to express my concern about Senate Bill 277, Version A.

As a homeschooling family, we rely on Alaska's correspondence programs to help support our children's education. These programs allow our children to participate in clubs, sports, and provide valuable academic resources that we wouldn't otherwise have access to.

If SB 277 passes, it would limit access to these programs and make it much harder for families like mine to provide a well-rounded education.

I respectfully urge you to consider the impact this bill will have on homeschool families and also military families across Alaska, and to oppose SB 277, Version A.

Thank you for your time, I appreciate you passing along my message.

- Jenni Holmes

JenniAnne Holmes

Michael Mason

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 12:59 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277 - Opposed

Good afternoon

My daughter is dual enrolled in a private school in Anchorage and Denali Peak homeschool. Dual enrollment provides the financial opportunity to ensure our daughter receives an education that supports our family values and includes the broad education that public school children enjoy.

Alaska state funding is to educate all Alaskan children.

We will under no circumstance associate our daughter's education with the Anchorage school district.

If SB277 passes we will remove our daughter from dual enrollment and focus our financial resources on private schooling alone.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely,
Jennifer Anderson
Anchorage

Michael Mason

From: Northern Sr <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:15 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Bill 277

Senate Bill 277 is bad for Alaska's children.

Vote no on Bill 277

Jeremiah Hamrick
Homeschool father of 7

Michael Mason

From: john O'Neill <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 3:53 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277

Dear Senators:

I oppose this bill as being harmful to charter and homeschooling choices for families. Years ago, I homeschooled my children, two of whom were dyslexic and made it through college. I believe my being able to teach them at home enabled them to succeed. All four of my kids are very pro homeschooling. We value that option! Please do not pass this bill. Home and charter schools are valuable options for Alaska families!

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Kaci Gillham [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 2:21 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB 277 Opposition

Greetings Alaska Senate Education Committee members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 277 and to urge you to carefully consider its far-reaching consequences for families across Alaska.

While the bill contains a few provisions that may appear positive—such as an increase to the BSA and raising correspondence funding to 100%.

In my opinion, Section 7 of SB 277 would have devastating effects. By restricting funding for the Galena City School District to only students physically located in Galena, the bill would effectively eliminate funding for statewide correspondence programs. This would directly impact programs such as IDEA and other homeschooling options that thousands of Alaskan families rely on.

The consequences of this change would be profound:

- The end of statewide homeschooling programs
- A significant loss of parent rights in directing their children's education
- The elimination of school choice for many families
- Economic harm to communities and small businesses that support homeschooling families

I ask you to oppose SB 277 in its current form and to protect the rights of families to choose the educational path that best meets their children's needs. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kaci Gillham
Soldotna, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Kathryn Reininger [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 1:55 PM
To: Sen. Robert Yundt; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Löki Tobin
Cc: Senate Education
Subject: Regarding senate bill 277

Dear Senate Education Committee and my local Senator Cathy Giessel,

I am writing to urgently ask you to oppose Senate Bill 277 (SB 277) as currently written, particularly Sections 4 and 7, which pose a serious threat to homeschool and correspondence programs across Alaska.

Section 7 would redirect all state funding to a student's district of residence, effectively eliminating funding for statewide correspondence programs. This change would be detrimental to Alaskan family's opportunity for school choice and essentially pigeonhole many of them to the district they live in currently. This hurts families with kids who need specific support not offered in their current district. This would burden families to try to homeschool completely alone or forcing their kid into public school which may hinder the kid's ability to thrive and learn.

For families like mine, these programs give me hope to not be restricted to Anchorage School District (ASD). I do not agree with many things coming out of ASD, nor do I feel like my children will thrive being conformed to this district. I would love to be able to relocate to another district but finances and other circumstances keep us stuck in ASD's district.

Having the ability to choose a different school option in another district, like IDEA, is so beneficial. Having access to curriculum, resources, and support that allow parents to meet their children's unique educational needs provides stability. Removing or restricting access to these programs' strips school choice away from families and forces many children to conform environments that may not serve or benefit them to become well educated functioning members of society.

Alaska has long been a leader in educational flexibility making us unique in that aspect and affirming that one size does not fit all. SB 277 kills that uniqueness by centralizing control and limiting options for families who have chosen what works for their child's needs. Additionally, families specifically move to Alaska for the amazing freedoms we have for homeschool options. SB 277 is another thing that would make our state less desirable for new population growth.

This bill would not only harm homeschool families — it would impact students with diverse learning needs, rural families, and those who rely on correspondence programs for accessibility and stability.

I strongly urge you to:

Oppose SB 277 in its current form.

Protect funding for statewide correspondence programs and preserve parental choice in education.

Alaska families are paying close attention to this issue. Our voices matter, and we are counting on you to stand with students and families; not against them.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to serving the people of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Kathryn Reininger
Anchorage, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Kathy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 4:47 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

There is an old saying “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. The home school and charter school system ain’t broke – the public school system IS and that is where the Legislature, Department of Education and all school districts should be turning their attention to.

It was during school lockdowns during COVID where parents became keenly aware how miserably our education system is failing our students – asking for more and more money every year with no tangibly improved test scores and shoving inappropriate and needless curriculum down parent’s throats. These are the main reasons so many parents have decided to pull out of the brick and mortar schools, a difficult decision for most families as they try to juggle work and ensure their kids get an adequate, useful, moral education!

I am 100% against SB277. Leave the home school system alone!

Kathy Schutte
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Kesaiah Ritchey [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 12:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Senate Bill 277

I am writing to you as a parent who has trusted the public school system for years and has been let down.

We relocated to Alaska (the valley) in the last year, with the intentions of moving forward with our kids in the public school system. Shortly into our kids time within these schools, it was apparent that the focus on education was lacking. Our child came home from his first day and expressed how he thought he was put in the wrong grade. We told him to hang in there. First day jitters. Weeks later, he came to us and explained how it felt like he was being baby sat for 8 hours a day then sent home with a packet to complete each week on things they never even went over in class. He's never had difficulty in school and never mentioned feeling like this prior to enrollment in the mat su valley school district. Him still being young, I wanted to see for myself. I repeatedly emailed, called and tried for in person contact at his school. It was unsuccessful. No emails. No calls. No time for in person. After this unfortunate lack of communication I looked into homeschooling. I work from home and this is something I'm more than capable of doing. I found a great program who gave me time, information, freedom, and amazing resources. I walked into my sons school with him the next day to withdrawal. This is when the staff finally had time to hear me. But at this point, I no longer cared. They told me I could go with my son to collect his things from the classroom, so I did. His teacher was not expecting us. I stood at the door while my son collected his things through a class of 20 students managed by FOUR adults doing everything but learning. Running around the class. Screaming. Shelves of books all torn up. Two of the adults were on their phones. And no one noticed my son collecting his things for the last time at this school. I should also mention this was not kindergarten, this was not a special needs class, and this wasn't "specials" time. This was exactly what my child had been describing to me for weeks. It was not a learning environment. It was a daycare for older kids. Now after all this, I ask you, what exactly are you funding, education wise in the public school district? I walked those halls on the way out getting glimpses in other classrooms that were the same exact way. What exactly are tax payers dollars funding with public school? What parents once thought to be education is now simply childcare. Since removing my son from public school, and with the resources of our homeschooling program (IDEA) my son has been thriving. Reading, spelling, writing, math, history, art, P.E. ETC are all back to being primary focus and he is advancing in all core curriculum that he wasn't even being exposed to in the public school district. IDEA has given us that and more. Resources, socialization, check ins, teachers who prioritize all students and parents they are assigned to. I had never previously even considered homeschooling, and now will never go back. In fact we pay taxes for homeschooling and public school resources and education and have no issue with it because all students no matter home or in a classroom, deserves that. I urge you to keep funding going for these programs. From myself and so many other parents, defunding homeschooling programs would be a mistake and an even bigger disservice to the kids, families, contact teachers, resource providers, parents and voters. We put our trust in the system and leaders to give us the ability to do what's right for, and what we see fit for our children. Behind my voice, there are thousands more. And we do not stand with the shift of all funding to go towards the local districts only, and the cut threats to statewide programs that have proven to be effective for our kids. If homeschooling programs in Alaska are cut, you will see a significant shift in residents. There has been talk of relocations out of state by many more than I think you're aware of. This is not about which is

better, it's about our choice as parents. It's about our kids. Far more people will be negatively affected than benefitted by this decision and I think that's worth your attention.

Thank you,

Kesaiah Ritchey

Michael Mason

From: Kristen Metrokin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 2:05 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

Good Afternoon, Senator.

I am quite sure you receive numerous emails from concerned parents such as myself, in regards to SB 277.

I am asking for clarification on the following:

As per Sec. 1, why should my local district be entitled to any funds for my children that do not put any financial strain on the local school or district facilities? Why should my district receive funds for administration purposes? My correspondence school provides teacher assistance for me, multiple programs for my children to attend, a school library, etc. The money that they receive from the annual student allotment still goes to our local area. It provides multiple jobs for people in our district and provides multiple businesses with much needed patrons.

As per Sec. 2, it is not a concern to return school supplies bought with my children's annual allotment. If they attended public schools, they would be required to return any of the textbooks or equipment that is school property. This appears to be a token gesture for the anticipation of the dismantling of statewide correspondence schools like IDEA and Raven.

As per Sec. 3, would my local school district be able to take funds for transportation that my children do not use?

As per Sec. 7, why should the district be able to list my child's ADM at whichever school in the district has the lowest ADM. Would that not show that that school now has more students which would qualify it for more funding?

As per Sec. 17, why should my residential district receive grants for my children's reading proficiency, when my child's ability is a reflection of our dedication to homeschool and not at all a reflection of the school district.

As per Sec 18, why does the bill change funding surrounding correspondence schools without an evaluation in regards to methods of funding? That seems very counter intuitive.

The overall issue with the above, is that this appears to be a way keep failing schools afloat, without actually addressing the reasons why students are leaving in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration, time and any clarification available.

Sincerely,

Kristen Metrokin, a homeschooling Mother of 3.

Michael Mason

From: Laraina Mcculley [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 4:25 PM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Robert Yundt; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Mike Cronk; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. James Kaufman; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Robert Myers; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. George Rauscher; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Cathy Tilton; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Oppose Bill SB 277

Dear Representative,

I am writing as a concerned Alaskan constituent and supporter of homeschooling families to respectfully urge you to vote against Senate Bill 277 (SB 277) in its current form.

This bill poses a serious threat to parental choice in education and to the viability of statewide correspondence programs that serve thousands of families across Alaska. Section 7, in particular, would redirect all state education funding to a student's district of residence, regardless of where that student is actually enrolled. This effectively eliminates funding for statewide correspondence programs such as IDEA, making their continued operation financially impossible.

The consequences of this policy would be immediate and severe. Families who rely on these programs for flexible, individualized education would lose access to vital support, resources, and guidance. While the bill may appear to preserve "choice" on paper, in reality it restricts families to whatever limited options exist within their local district—or forces them out of Alaska-based programs entirely.

Additionally, Section 4 does not provide meaningful protection. It allows local districts to impose administrative fees without a meaningful cap, placing full financial control in the hands of the district of residence. This creates an unstable and inequitable system where homeschool families' access to programs depends on the discretion of districts that are not serving them.

Beyond education, the economic impact should not be overlooked. Statewide correspondence programs contribute to local economies by supporting vendors, educators, and service providers across Alaska. Eliminating these programs would redirect funds out of state and harm small businesses that depend on them.

I fully support efforts to improve education funding across Alaska, including increased support for special education students, career and technical education, transportation, and overall student funding. However, these goals should not come at the expense of eliminating effective and widely utilized educational models.

Alaska's strength lies in its ability to meet the diverse needs of its families. SB 277, as currently written, moves us in the opposite direction—reducing flexibility, centralizing control, and undermining parental rights.

I respectfully ask you to stand with Alaska families and vote NO on SB 277.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Michael Mason

From: Linda Trousil [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 1:00 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: SB277

Dear Committee,

I am writing concerning Senate Bill 277 and it's impact on homeschooling families and state finances. Certainly as a teacher with IDEA homeschool and a former homeschool parent, my response is personal, and the outcome does impact my profession. However, I write these comments also from a place of being a thoughtful person seeking to find 'win win' situations whenever possible. Here are some of my concerns and points I ask you to consider:

- If families will only be able to enroll in local school district homeschool programs, **how will families without districts that offer these programs be served equitable?** Communities even as large as Wrangell, are without homeschool programs. Families in places as small as Inian Islands have no school or district. These families are well served by statewide homeschool programs. Creating new programs in nearby districts to serve them would incur a significant expense.
- The Juneau School District is experiencing significant staffing shortages. **Will school districts be able to hire teachers and paraprofessionals to serve all the homeschool students they hope to return to classrooms?**
- Families who are not well served and supported in homeschooling may return to building-based schools HOWEVER, because independent homeschooling is part of Alaska educational options, many of these families will make this choice instead. This would not represent the hoped-for financial gain for school districts.
- Homeschool programs like IDEA and Raven, have staff who have specialized in supporting and coaching parents in their homeschooling. Our administrations are established to meet their specific needs. **Can local school districts re create the strength of these programs well enough to retain families?**

Here are some ideas that could blend statewide and local school district support for families, in ways that could financially benefit local school districts.

- Increase amount of homeschool allotment that goes to local schools/class when High School Students enroll in local school courses. Currently for each course taken at local High School, 25% of allotment goes to the local school. Could this be raised to 33% with a maximum of 2 courses allowed? **This would increase funds for local schools.**
- Could school districts offer homeschool specialist classes during the week, and charge for these classes? For example, a homeschool student registers for an art/music/PE class at a local school and pays the local school district for a semester of attending a weekly class designed for homeschoolers of their age range. **This would increase funds for local schools.**

- Could statewide programs be '**sub contracted**' to run local school district programs?

I encourage you, with many in the Alaska Homeschool Community, to consider options beyond the drastic measure of eliminating statewide homeschool programs.

Thank you for your work for our state and communities.

Respectfully,

Linda Trousil

Linda Trousil

Contact Teacher K-12
8800 Glacier Hwy, Suite 217
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: 907-789-6106

 [/IDEAfamilies](https://www.facebook.com/IDEAfamilies)



Michael Mason

From: Lisa Daugherty [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 2:02 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: oppose SB277

Hello,

I am writing in opposition to SB277. As a homeschool parent, access to allotment funds for my son's education were crucial. We are enrolled in Raven Correspondance school because our local school district, the Juneau School District, could not meet the needs and interests of my son. The community engagement and CTE opportunities at the JSD are very limited. As a commercial fishing family who works together, and as subsistence hunters, we also value our time together as a family, teaching real-life skills and self-sufficiency. Homeschool has always allowed us to "take school with us" rather than having our son miss lots of public school days.

We sent my son to public school for his freshman year. He took the usual core classes and a welding class, a carpentry class, and the ONLY engines class available. As someone set on becoming a mechanic, that meant three years of zero opportunity at school for developing his trade skills. We decided to return to Raven Correspondence School, where had been enrolled for elementary and middle school. There he has been able to use allotment funds to attend many trades classes at UAS, and as a graduating senior this year he already has over 20 college credits. With the flexible schedule of homeschool he was able to find mechanic mentors in the community and work in apprenticeship at a mechanic shop for three years. They paid for futher training for him, and he is now a certified BPR technician. **Had my son been in the local public school he would have likely had poor grades, a bad attitude toward school and learning, and would have likely found himself in trouble.** There is a large segment of the student population being held back by public school. Homeschool programs are able to serve students in ways public school can't. Never every kid wants to sit still and memorize facts. I support fully funding CTE programs, homeschool correspondence schools, and other alternative forms of education. The student allocation in funding should follow the student to the program they are in, not to the public school district they happen to live in.

Thank you for your consideration,

-Lisa

Michael Mason

From: LORI FISHER [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 9:30 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Protecting Parental Choice in Education for Alaskan Families

Dear Esteemed Legislators,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 277 and to advocate for parental choice and support for homeschooling and correspondence programs in Alaska. As a parent deeply invested in the educational future of my children, I urge you to consider the unique circumstances of Alaskan families and the diverse needs of our children.

Alaska's vast landscapes and distinct communities demand an educational approach that is flexible and responsive to the varied lifestyles of our families. Our children are not one-size-fits-all; they are uniquely Alaskan, with interests, talents, and aspirations that can be best nurtured through personalized educational paths. The proposed bill threatens to undermine the freedom that parents in Alaska currently enjoy when making educational choices for their children.

Instead of constricting options, we must be focusing on enhancing support for diverse educational strategies, including correspondence programs that serve thousands of Alaskan students. These programs provide invaluable resources and opportunities that allow children to thrive academically and socially, catering to their individual learning requirements. To limit such options is to diminish the potential of our children and to risk their futures.

Moreover, the funding structure proposed by SB 277 would disproportionately impact those already receiving the least financial support within our education system. Many Alaska families are diligently contributing to local school taxes while seeking alternatives that genuinely meet their children's needs. This inequity must be addressed, not exacerbated.

The data speaks volumes—parents are actively voting with their feet, choosing educational paths that align with their values and their children's unique strengths. By constraining funding and imposing restrictions like those in SB 277, we jeopardize not only rural programs that have proven effective but also the very essence of local control in education that has characterized Alaska's schools.

Rather than enacting policies that stifle educational innovation and choice, let us instead work together to celebrate and support the diverse educational approaches that honor the spirit of independence that defines our state. Every child deserves the opportunity to learn in an environment that respects their individuality and promotes their potential, and every parent should have the freedom to make that choice.

I implore you to reconsider the implications of SB 277 and to prioritize the needs of Alaskan families by bolstering support for all forms of education. Together, we can create an educational landscape that nurtures and empowers our children rather than constricts their choices.

Thank you for your attention to this vital issue and for your continued commitment to the welfare of Alaskan children and families.

Sincerely,

Lori Fisher



Twindly Bridge homeschool parent