

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: ** SUPPORTING HB 69 and MULTI-YEAR education funding!! **
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 3:14:34 PM

Dear Representatives and Senators,

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

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

The Governor's goal of creating more charter schools with no local influence or control is the most UNALASKAN and selfish thing I've ever heard of. It is blatantly clear that his goal is to reroute public funds for private and religious education, and push out educated people to help assist with brazen natural resource extraction.

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

I understand that the 111 million dollar shortfall will need funding and Alaskans have some hard decisions ahead. I support using PFD money for the purpose of education. The education of our kids is more important than people's \$3000 check to buy TV's at Best Buy. Alaska kid test scores are rock bottom. We can and MUST do better. It's unfair to demand improvement without the funding and support to do so. I also support standards but it starts with reasonable student to teacher ratios and the ability to hire qualified, talented teachers.

PLEASE commit to working together and do what it takes to reach a multi-year agreement - including the bravery to stand up to the private interests of our selfish Governor. Education funding is important to the future of Alaska (duh!)

Respectfully,

Rob Whitney
Anchorage

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From:



Subject:

Alaska House Education Committee HB69

Date:

Saturday, February 15, 2025 1:23:37 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today in regards to HB 69. It is imperative that this bill and its partner in the senate be passed to ensure the future prosperity of our state. A strong public education system is the root of a thriving economy as it provides and promotes knowledge, community, rigid work ethic, physical health and so much more. I currently have a child in the Anchorage School District that participates in the elementary IGNITE program and am deeply concerned with direction our public education system is heading.

We cannot afford to lose funding for this program or a number of the other activities/programs currently scheduled to be dismantled. The ability to prevent underachievement is paramount in a state that's already suffering from low overall test scores, poor graduation rates and continually declining retention of graduates to live and work in Alaska. The IGNITE program allows for intellectually stimulating opportunities and interventions. This program helps over two thousand children with the ability to stay engaged and invested within the public school system. Fostering their potential talent and challenging students to stay motivated to excel is of the utmost importance.

This program reflects positively on the district as a whole. Alumni are thriving and making progress in our society. It encourages parents that they're making the right choice enrolling their children in the public education system. It meets the needs of diverse learners, promotes equity and inclusion, and fosters innovation and excellence. As a state that is always looking towards development and progress, we need our future generations to be able to set that in motion. We need these gifted students and programs to fuel our economy, enrich Alaskan lives and promote a well rounded educational experience for future generations.

My child leaves our house with exhilarated energy on days they have IGNITE. Their spark is essentially "ignited" into a full flame with this program as the catalyst. Please consider prioritizing the needs of investing in education when making decisions about budget allocations and pursuing legislative action. Through continued support of gifted education, special education and many other arts and athletics programs, students are afforded the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Our future as an economically growing state relies on our ability to not only keep residents but to give others a reason to move here. Proposed projects such as a liquid natural gas pipeline or chip making plants will require thousands of people to move to Alaska to fulfill jobs in every sector. The best way to keep them here after these projects is to give them reasons to stay. A

strong economy and an excellent education system can only encourage prosperity.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Collin Hemphill

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Alaska House Education Funding HB69
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2025 8:32:31 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today in regards to HB 69. It is imperative that this bill and its partner in the senate be passed to ensure the future prosperity of our state. A strong public education system is the root of a thriving economy as it provides and promotes knowledge, community, rigid work ethic, physical health and so much more. I currently have a child in the Anchorage School District that participates in the elementary IGNITE program and am deeply concerned with the direction our public education system is heading.

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Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Victoria Hemphill
Anchorage Resident

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Alaska Schooling Support Letter
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 5:21:56 PM

Good Afternoon Alaska House Education Committee,

My name is Eli Stine, I have been an Anchorage Community member for over 13 years and I'm writing in support of HB 69 and an increase to the BSA for statewide school funding and to pass this quickly so that funding can go to districts. ASD is currently putting an unfair burden of teacher cuts to O'Malley Elementary School and the French Immersion Program due to the budget deficit. My son is currently a kindergartener in the French Immersion Program at O'Malley. Over this past year O'Malley Elementary (both the neighborhood program and the French Program) have created such a welcoming supportive community for my son as well as our entire family. The proposed cuts would fundamentally inhibit O'Malley's ability to continue to function, irrevocably damaging the community that has developed for it's children, families, and neighborhood. The persistent threat of losing desperately needed staff, and having the immersion program on the chopping block every few years is disruptive and stressful for teachers and students alike. Please make the correct choice to fully fund Alaska's school system by increasing the BSA allocation for every Student.

The budget is currently proposing to cut 5 teachers from O'Malley, reducing the staff from 17 to 12, more than any other school in the district. Such disproportionate cuts will severely impact the quality of education and overall student experience at the school. With only 12 teachers, there is no way that a neighborhood program and immersion program can coexist at O'Malley without having 52 kids in a single class, which is not manageable for any teacher. Immersion programs take long term planning to recruit bilingual educators, require international hiring and visa approvals to have native or near native speakers. This is not something that can be easily reinstated if its dissolved or accommodated at the last minute if the state happens to approve more funding in the spring/summer.

About 50% of the current students enrolled in the French Immersion Program are not zoned for O'Malley. If the immersion program is dismantled, most likely those kids would go back to their neighborhood schools which would severely lower the population at O'Malley and put O'Malley in a more precarious position in the next few years, creating another cycle of uncertainty and upheaval for the students and staff alike.

Immersion programs offer huge benefits to all students not only academically (improved performance, better reading comprehension and enhanced cognitive development including better memory, problem-solving skills and attention control) and socially (enhanced communication skills) but also gives them a better understanding and respect of other cultures. The immersion program also provides significant benefits to our greater Anchorage

community, developing more well-rounded future Alaska leaders and offering unique education opportunities, incentivizing new families to move to the area and join our community.

I am an engineering design manager for a local engineering consulting firm and I can unequivocally tell you right now our current greatest challenge is locating and motivating new young talent to our community. In a conversation just two weeks ago with a new engineer to my team, he specifically identified the unique ASD available options as a key factor in his family deciding to move to the area from the lower 48. It is additional young families like this that our community, our economy, and our city are in desperate need of. By dismantling the unique benefits our community can offer you are not only disrupting our community as it currently functions but also negatively impacting the ability for our community to continue to grow and prosper. Many young professionals have a plethora of opportunities to work in many locations that can offer community benefits that we cannot compete with, it is imperative that we not only maintain but continue to support those opportunities that our community can offer to further the development of our children as well as incentivizing new families to join our community.

I have written to the school board requesting they reinstate the 5 teaching positions back to O'Malley Elementary and allowing the French Immersion Program to continue. Please help create a better future for our kids by increasing the BSA so that amazing programs like French Immersion can continue and our kids can have the excellent education that they deserve. .

Thank you,

Eli Stine



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: BSA Increase
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 10:11:41 PM

Dear House and Senate Education Committee members,

I am writing to encourage your support for legislation such as House Bill 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska education funding. An increase in the BSA is the **only** way to provide adequate and reliable funding for Alaska schools into the future. One-time funding appropriations may help prevent outright funding disasters, but they come too late for planning for future staffing needs and aren't adequate to allow for many needed improvements. An increase in the BSA and a method for inflation-proofing those funds in the future will help provide consistent funding and staffing and allow for the innovation and improvements to dramatically improve education for Alaska's children.

Thank you,
Dan Bjornlie

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: BSA increase
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 3:17:11 PM

Hi,

My name is Amanda Peters and I currently have two kids in the Anchorage School District, with another joining them in the fall. ASD is currently considering massive cuts to deal with a \$111 million deficit. Among other things, they are considering/planning on cutting all middle school sports, several high school sports, and the gifted IGNITE program.

I cannot even begin to express my dismay at the massive sports cuts. As an athlete myself (all through middle school, high school, college, and at a semi-professional level), I know the power that school programs have in these kids' lives. They encourage discipline, leadership, teamwork, and school pride - besides the obvious skill development. With the high cost of living here in Alaska, many (ourselves included) are not able to afford the incredibly high costs for club sports.

Please vote in favor of increasing the BSA in HB 69.

Thank you.

Amanda Peters

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Chugiak Elementary School Immersion Program
Date: Sunday, February 9, 2025 5:58:59 PM

Hello,

My name is Buffie Stewart and I am a constituent from Chugiak, AK. I am writing to express my concern about the current level of education funding in Alaska. Adequate funding is essential to ensure quality education for our students, including vital programs like language immersion.

Of particular concern to my family and community is the future of the Spanish immersion program at Chugiak Elementary School. I currently have two children enrolled at this school, one in the Spanish immersion program and one not. I can say from personal experience how valuable the immersion program has been for my 1st grader. My family moved to Chugiak in late 2020. Since my older child, who is currently a 4th grader, did not start school at Chugiak, he did not participate in the Spanish program. Being a part of the Spanish immersion program, starting from Kindergarten, has been an amazing opportunity for my 6-year old. He loves the Spanish instruction, has picked up the language quickly and excelled. I can only imagine what an advantage being fluent in Spanish will be for him when he enters the working world, if he is able to continue with Spanish immersion program. Just being a part of the program is a huge source of pride for my child and his friends. The school district has done an amazing job with this program, helping those kids to excel and be excited to learn. The Spanish immersion program is providing them with such an advantage in preparing for their future. Of all the languages offered, Spanish is one they are guaranteed to use and be of true value to them in future careers.

I urge you to support initiatives that increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to meet our schools' needs and in particular to help save the Spanish Immersion Program at Chugiak Elementary.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter."

Buffie Cerutti Stewart

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Concerned parent HB69
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 2:24:54 PM

Hello, My name is Christopher Rackliff. I have two students in immersion programs at omalley elementary. I am very concerned with the upcoming budget cuts. If you do what you are planning on doing you will essentially eliminate the French immersion program completely. There are so many students enrolled in that program. We have people from all over anchorage that seek the program out for opportunities for their children. We have people in the military, gas and oil, regular everyday people like me, that are just trying to give our kids opportunities in their education. If you cut these immersion programs you will be severely depriving these students from their education. Please consider looking within administration instead of cutting teachers, programs, and sports! What will our kids have left? Please support HB69 and education funding.

-Chris Rackliff

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: education budget
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:02:18 AM

Dear State House Education Committee,

I am writing today as a concerned parent of a child in the Anchorage School District, and a community member, to advocate for increased funding of our schools. Every year we are in crisis mode in large part because there has been no increase to the BSA for many years.

My daughter is in 5th grade at O'Malley elementary. She has been in French immersion since the start of the program in 2019. We are certainly proud of our daughter learning a second language and we know the benefits of language immersion programs go beyond biliteracy. Numerous studies cite Increased cognitive skills, improved memory, better problem-solving skills, and increased cultural awareness. Most of the world speaks more than one language, the US does not. Immersion programs improves that.

We learned O'Malley is currently slated to lose 5 teachers, most likely ending the immersion program our family has been committed to for six years with the expectation the program will continue through high school. We have attended school board meetings and heard testimony from immersion parents of the positive impacts of these programs – career opportunities, social connections with peers, and a stronger sense of community. We've personally experienced our daughter's pride in speaking another language, and how confident and socially connected she is with her fellow students, and us with other parents.

I urge you to support HB69 and support increased funding of education. The benefit to our students and communities are great. The downside is grim. Teachers and staff laid off, programs cut, families disengaged, not to mention the long-term economic impacts of a poorly educated workforce.

Education is an essential service. I urge you to keep that in mind as the House and Senate consider education funding and HB69.

Sincerely,
John S Field

John S Field
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding and Shifting Funds to Charter/Homeschool Concerns
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:52:30 AM

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I am writing this letter to share great concerns about the shifting of public education dollars to charter and homeschooling programs, especially without a meaningful increase to the BSA (which I support). This move does not support the idea that EVERY child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed - which I hope is what we all want for all the kids of Alaska. I want to be clear that I support the idea of "choice" - we should have the freedom to decide what's best for ourselves and our families (yes, barring we are not hurting anyone in the process) but with freedom of choice, we as Alaskans have to maintain our focus that ALL children deserve the right to have a successful educational experience provided by public education and through education dollars.

Homeschools: There are already a wide variety of homeschool options that are afforded to parents and students within Alaska, all that come with financial allotments allowing "choice" in terms of specials and curriculum, in addition to these students still being able to participate in brick-and-mortar facets like content-classes, extra-curriculars, and dances. It is a great hybrid option for many families. I have no doubt there are amazing things happening for some homeschoolers just as there are amazing things happening for so many students in our neighborhood schools. The difference? There are no required assessments or accountability metrics for homeschool students, families, or programs - even those connected to LEA's - and a very low percentage participate. This is as school districts across AK get hammered by their opponents for wanting "accountability" and usable outcome metrics. Numerous families each year enter our public schools after being "homeschooled," some confessing they "never really did anything," with children who have huge gaps in learning and academic deficiencies. Brick-and-mortars take them in, are required to test them, and then take the heat for failing to have positive performance outcomes. If we are going to expand funding to homeschooling options, it should only be done with the requirement that those students are **beholden to the same accountability measures** as all other students - and again, not to the detriment of our neighborhood school's funding. If people are upset about this move to equal expectations and transparency, I would ask them why.

Charter (and private) schools: **The term "school choice," is really about the school's choice, not the family's choice.** These schools will be able to accept or deny any student they wish based on whatever criteria they design in their operating policy. It's not hard to imagine that these schools will greatly minimize students who are needing/receiving special education services, who are economically disadvantaged, who are experiencing homelessness, etc., or who do not fit the preferred demographic. Schools will know these students may bring down test scores and perceived school performance outcomes. Additionally, the vouchers currently given in states like Texas, do not cover the costs of many private schools - essentially meaning that only the affluent families who can pay the remainder out of pocket are able to attend. **This system creates fewer opportunities for the majority of students**, specifically those who are already vulnerable, and a greater chasm between the haves and the have-nots. This will not benefit our communities or our State (or our country) and risks forcing segregation based on abilities and class status.

Thank you for your time and I urge you to advocate for the best education opportunities for ALL of our Alaskan students by protecting where our education dollars are directed.

Respectfully,
Kelly King

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:30:15 PM

Hello,

I am a registered voter living in Anchorage, AK. I am very interested in the news about education funding. I'm writing to ask that you take action to ensure public school funding for ALL kids, statewide.

Our failed funding policy is resulting in failed schools. Recent reports show Alaska lagging in national test scores and most students not proficient in core subjects.

Governor Dunleavy's proposal is for correspondence, home school programs and transportation. None of which are in crisis. Each spring, we witness a scramble for education funding resulting in layoffs of teachers and other school resources, programs being cut, and general chaos while looking toward the next school year. This causes us to lose qualified teachers and resources necessary for a successful school.

Looking ahead, the education budget needs to be shifted to the state budget and inflation proofed to protect future school budgets.

Thank you for your time and attention to this most important issue we are facing.

Donna Graham

[REDACTED]

Anchorage

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Matt Claman](#)
Cc: [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#); [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:03:04 AM

Good day:

As a parent of 3 ASD graduates and grandmother of 4 current ASD students, I am very concerned about the chronic underfunding of public education. My sons received quality educations here, then graduated from UAA. They remain in Alaska in professional positions and are responsible, law abiding, tax paying residents of Anchorage. It saddens me to read about the declining proficiency in math and science of our current students. In my opinion this is a direct result of the stagnant BSA, which has fallen behind inflation for two decades.

The solution is NOT more funding for home schools and charter schools. Instead I support a permanent and guaranteed funding increase for K-12 education that adjusts for inflation.

Thank you,
Lyn Clark

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99517

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:42:56 PM

Dear Representative Himschoot,

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

The Anchorage School District recently released their budget for the upcoming school year. As I am sure you know, the cuts are devastating. I teach at Goldenview Middle School, and nine of my fellow teachers are on the chopping block. My neighbor, who has taught at Goldenview for over 25 years and just stepped into an assistant principal role this year, is also slated to be let go.

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

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

Sincerely,

Kerri Jackson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 9:07:57 AM

Dear House Education Committee,

As a parent, and pediatrician in my community, I urge you to support House Bill 69 and ensure funding for education in our state.

In my position as a primary care pediatrician, i work Children need not only excellent teachers and adequate supplies, they also need smaller class sizes and in school therapies that support their education. They also need experiences in music, physical education, and art, all of which have been shown to improve academic performance and increase attendance rates.

The current education funding crisis in our state is shameful and unacceptable, and hurts those most at risk in our communities. Now is the time to prioritize the children in our communities and fulfill our obligation to provide a quality public education to every child in the State of Alaska.

Thank you for your time and please feel free to reach out for more information.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: French Immersion
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:29:21 PM

Dear dedicated representatives:

The Anchorage School District is facing the largest deficit in education funding ever, \$111 million for the next school year. This is due to a lack of state funding to support the district. The Alaska legislature has not increased the base student allocation in over a decade! This is definitely not keeping up with inflation. Stable, multi-year education funding is a vital state investment for our kids and the Alaskan economy. Meanwhile, it is my understanding that spending on Alaska's prisons has grown 3 times as fast as spending on education?? This seems backward to me. Investing in our children and their education is an investment in our future for the state of Alaska.

The suggested model of increasing the pupil to student ratio (PTR) to stretch the budget simply does not work for language immersion programs. The 12 FTE "positions" that are in question are not actual people but overall funding to offset the smaller class sizes in immersion when overall PTA increases. However, if these 12 FTE are eliminated, ASD immersion programs would be decimated and likely permanently. Foreign language teaching positions are hard to fill and these individuals often need time to apply for work visas. We cannot afford to wait until June to see what the legislature decides to fund as we will not have the time to find teachers to fill the vacant positions. 12 FTE would take five teachers from O'Malley and completely eliminate the entire K-5 French immersion program. Five teachers is nearly one third of our entire teaching staff at O'Malley.

Additionally, if there is no immersion program at O'Malley we will also lose our direct feed to Goldenview Middle School. This also negatively impacts our children because they will be separated from friends they've been attending school with since kindergarten. Without the direct feed some of our students will be directed to Hanshew and some to Goldenview.

ASD is known for having exemplar immersion programs dating back to 1989 with the Japanese program starting at Sand Lake Elementary. Our variety of languages reflects the diversity represented in our city and is unheard of in most districts. In 2020 ASD's Immersion programs were recognized by being honored with ACTFL's Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Foreign Language Programs. A testament to the dedication of our educators and the success of our immersion programs.

My child attends the French Immersion program at O'Malley Elementary. He has benefited in so many ways from this program as it challenges him academically, and also gives him a sense of community and stability. This stability is extremely valuable in these early formative years and if programs like French Immersion is not funded, my child will lose a key part of his support system outside of his home environment. He will lose the opportunity to challenge himself to learn in two languages, a skill that has already given him so much confidence. He will lose the ability to learn and interact with other French language speakers on a daily basis something that cannot be replicated anywhere else in Anchorage. This program has been amazing for my child's growth and development as it has been for so many others!

Our children and our hard working educators deserve predictable, multi-year funding to avoid

annual crisis and cuts. Please, I urge you to support HB69, Senate Bill 46 and all vital education funding.

Respectfully,

Paula Rogers

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Fully fund BSA
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 10:21:11 AM

Here's a recipe for making Alaska great again:

1. Fully fund BSA
2. Support the UA system
3. Provide pension plans for teachers, firefighters, police, and all state workers.
4. Provide competitive salaries for teachers and state workers
5. Cap the PFD at \$1000 per person.
6. Bring back state income tax.

Invest in our workforce and in our state's future!

Roman J Motyka

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Matt Claman](#)
Cc: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Fund Education!
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:52:51 PM

Dear Senator Claman,

I want you to support a permanent and guaranteed increase to the BSA through the support of HB 69 so that we can properly educate our children.

As a concerned parent in Alaska, I am alarmed by the trends affecting our schools. News of closures and budget cuts has generated anxiety within our community. I urge the Alaska Legislature to address this issue by investing in public education early in the legislative session. Predictable funding is critical to prevent teacher layoffs and enable efficient operation of schools.

Prolonged budget reductions have led to detrimental outcomes, including school closures, termination of programs, and declining educational quality. It is time to reverse this trend; Alaska must invest in public education for a brighter future.

Over the past decade, continuous budget cuts have increased class sizes, reduced support staff, and eliminated essential programs. The threat of school closures disrupts children's learning environments and separates them from friends and teachers. These schools are integral to our communities.

Our children need a comprehensive education to excel. Budget threats are a significant blow to our community and an injustice to our children.

Please prioritize investment in public education to secure Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

Lee Bolling

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Fund our public schools
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 7:54:12 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

Please support a bill that includes increasing the BSA, keeps PE, music and art in the schools, support the programs and courses in the trades, and provides adequate pay and benefits for teachers.

Our children are the future of Alaska. At this rate, they will graduate lacking needed skills OR leave the state for better schooling and jobs. Having some charter schools is great but not without also adequately funding public education.

Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,

Joan Stassel
Anchorage, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#)
Subject: Fund our Schools! NOT JUST ONCE!
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 9:56:56 PM

Dear Education Committee Members, Representative Coulombe, Representative Costello, and Senator Kaufman,

The Anchorage School District (ASD) is facing a financial crisis that will have a significant impact on our schools. With a deficit exceeding \$100 million, driven by more than a decade of flat state funding and rising inflation, our schools and the future of Alaska are at risk.

For years, ASD has been grappling with the effects of declining purchasing power. The current Base Student Allocation (BSA) of \$5,960 per student, when adjusted for inflation, is now equivalent to just over \$4,000. This means that despite our best efforts to manage costs and operate efficiently, we can no longer sustain the same level of services and programs.

While the Legislature has periodically allocated one-time funds to school districts, these funds often arrive too late—after critical hiring and budget decisions have already been made. Although there is a possibility that the legislature and governor could approve a one-time or permanent funding increase, the magnitude of inflationary pressures makes it highly unlikely that the District will be able to maintain current programs and services.

There is no substitute to a sustained and lasting boost to the ASD budget, as would be provided by a large and meaningful increase to the BSA. This is a necessity for the future of Alaska.

Thank you very much.

Kimberly Klein

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Fund schools properly and (at least) maintain existing programs
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 3:58:18 PM

Dear legislators,

As the parent of a kindergarten and third-grade student at O'Malley Elementary, I am deeply concerned about the future of our children's education. Small class sizes and immersion programs are essential—not optional—for student success. Individualized attention helps students thrive, while immersion programs foster cognitive development and cultural understanding, preparing them for an increasingly interconnected world.

To maintain these critical programs, we must ensure adequate funding for our schools. Increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) is vital to sustaining small class sizes, retaining qualified teachers, and providing students with the resources they need to succeed. Without proper funding, schools will be forced to make cuts that directly impact our children's education and future.

I urge you to support increased BSA funding to prioritize the quality of education our children deserve. Their future—and the future of Alaska—depends on it.

Sincerely,
Cliff Wilson

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Funding concern
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 10:41:31 AM

Dear Mr. Schrage,

I am writing in strong support of a permanent and guaranteed funding increase for K-12 education that adjusts for inflation so that our school districts can properly operate our schools and educate our children. Funding has fallen behind inflation for almost two decades, and our schools, students, teachers, and the State of Alaska are suffering.

I have three children ages 6 and younger and am very concerned about class size and teacher turnover. We need to see the class size lowered, as opposed to increased. And we need to protect extracurricular activities that provide a valuable way for students to enjoy school, have well-rounded interests, and create a community at their schools.

Governor's Proposed Education Budget is not Workable

Governor Dunleavy proposed an education budget in December 2024 for the 2025-26 school year that would represent a 15% CUT from this year's budget, which would result in schools receiving almost \$2,000 LESS in real dollars per student than they did in 2011. Dunleavy's education package ties targeted funding increases to specific policy changes rather than offering broad, sustainable funding for public education and it falls short in addressing the real crisis facing Alaska's schools: chronic underfunding, inequities in resources, and an unprecedented teacher shortage.

Alaskans Deserves a Permanent and Guaranteed BSA Increase for High-Functioning Schools

The BSA is the core formula used to fund schools in Alaska, and it has remained stagnant for over a decade despite rising costs. Instead of increasing this foundational funding, Dunleavy proposes targeted spending for specific initiatives leaving school districts to struggle with covering basic operational costs like teacher salaries, heating, and building maintenance.

School leaders and legislators from both parties have called for a permanent increase to the BSA, yet Dunleavy's plan ignores this demand entirely.

The Alaska constitution requires that the legislature "establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state" and the lack of adequate funding for our public education system for over a decade does not carry out this mandate.

Schools are closing, teachers are leaving the profession, families are leaving the state, and companies are having difficulties attracting talent because we have failed to invest in our kids and in Alaska's future.

What Alaska Actually Needs:

- **A Significant & Permanent BSA Increase** – Schools need predictable and flexible funding to cover core operational needs.
- **Teacher Retention Policies, Not Temporary Bonuses** – Sustainable salaries, affordable housing support, and retirement benefits will keep educators in Alaska long-term. Alaska has reached 598 teacher vacancies statewide, the highest ever recorded.
- **Fair & Equitable School Funding** – Funding should be increased for all public

school options, which happens through a permanent and guaranteed increase to the BSA.

- **More Local Control, Not State Overreach** – Districts should have control over how funds are allocated, rather than being forced to follow state-imposed spending mandates.
- **Conclusion:** Dunleavy's Plan Is a Band-Aid, Not a Solution – The lack of BSA funding means schools will continue facing layoffs, program cuts, and operational challenges. Dunleavy's plan may appear to invest in education, but in reality, it undermines public schools, favors privatization, and fails to address the urgent funding crisis. Alaska's students, teachers, and communities deserve better.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my letter. This is not a partisan issue and we should not wait for the governor to come around. I am asking the legislature to pass HB 69 to raise the BSA and to override a veto by the governor if necessary. We owe this to our children and the state of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Andrea Clark
Anchorage, AK 99507

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Funding for education
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 10:07:09 PM

Dear Representatives,

The uncertainty in education funding is undermining our school districts' ability to hire and retain talented and dedicated teachers. I have two children in the Anchorage School District and the prospect of bigger class sizes, loss of programs like IGNITE, and the loss of after school sports is dispiriting. If the economy was in a recession and we didn't live in a state with a massive oil fund, I would be ready to accept such cuts. This is not the case, and I believe we should prioritize education over luxuries such as "full" PFD payments and no taxes. I know there is not much appetite for it, but I would much rather see a progressive income tax adopted before reducing the PFD payment much lower than, say, ~\$1000.

I understand you have many difficult decisions ahead of you, but I hope my voice will help you to prioritize the education of our State's children, to help them go into the future with the necessary foundation to do great things.

-frank witmer

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Alaska Schools
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:04:47 PM

From: Kelly Taylor [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:20 PM

To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Yundt <Sen.Robert.Yundt@akleg.org>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Alaska Schools

Dear Alaska Legislators,

My name is Kellyan Taylor. Not only I'm a parent of three children in the Anchorage School District, I am a product of the Anchorage School District. Alaska is and will forever be my home. I'm writing because I'm worried about our schools and hoping you'll support increased funding for education stable multiyear funding

Let me tell you a bit about what I see at our schools.

At Chinook Elementary, where my youngest is enrolled in the Open Optional Program, (a lottery program that is a teaching community, not just an individual teacher) we have teachers that are part of the village that is shaping my daughter into a strong, brave leader of her community. My hope is that she will have this program for years to come, so that she may learn how to lead and not dictate.

At Mears Middle School, my youngest son has been introduced to a world of magic in Video Production. He is learning that there's more to making movies than becoming a YouTube star.

South High School continues to push and challenge my eldest child. For years he flew through his class studies. Now he's enrolled in UAA working on his college credits WHILE working on his high school diploma.

With the mass budget cuts looming. My children, their classmates and the future children of this state will not have these resources, programs or teachers available to them to further their educational needs.

I know you have a lot of tough choices to make about the state budget. But I truly believe that investing in our kids' education is one of the most important things we can do for Alaska's future. When I think about where our state will be in 10 or 20 years, I want to

know we did everything we could to give our children the education they deserve. Strong schools make a strong Alaska. Our teachers and children deserve better.

Could you please support:

- A real increase in school funding that keeps up with inflation
- Money for both basics (like heating and supplies) AND programs that help kids thrive
- Support for our teachers so we can keep good educators in Alaska

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I know these decisions aren't easy, but our kids are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Kellyan Taylor

Anchorage, AK

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Bill
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:48:12 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Paula Davis [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:56 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education Bill

Dear Representatives and Education Committee,

I believe in public schools and speak as a retired preschool and primary teacher and as a parent of successful children raised in the Anchorage School District.

Please pass this latest bill that you have worked so hard to craft!

We are coming up on the March first deadline that will make a world of difference to principals, administrators and especially the children of Alaska. This is our future that ou are voting upon!! Please pass this quickly so quality teachers are not laid off and leave the state, as so many have already done.

Please pass the bill quickly so time and energy are not wasted in the process of cutting plans for next year.

Please pass appropriations that will give money to all Alaska children, not favor those that homeschool or attend by correspondence, or attend religious schools.

Please inflation -proof the funding and protect the school budgets by shifting them to the state budget.

Please, think of the next generation of Alaskans and how a critical lack of educational funding will affect their ability to be ready for the future needs of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Paula Davis
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education funding
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:04:06 PM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:03 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: Education funding

From: Donna Graham [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:30 PM
To: Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education funding

Hello,

I am a registered voter living in Anchorage, AK. I am very interested in the news about education funding. I'm writing to ask that you take action to ensure public school funding for ALL kids, statewide.

Our failed funding policy is resulting in failed schools. Recent reports show Alaska lagging in national test scores and most students not proficient in core subjects.

Governor Dunleavy's proposal is for correspondence, home school programs and transportation. None of which are in crisis. Each spring, we witness a scramble for education funding resulting in layoffs of teachers and other school resources, programs being cut, and general chaos while looking toward the next school year. This causes us to lose qualified teachers and resources necessary for a successful school.

Looking ahead, the education budget needs to be shifted to the state budget and inflation proofed to protect future school budgets.

Thank you for your time and attention to this most important issue we are facing.

Donna Graham

[REDACTED]

Anchorage

[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Testimony-Andrew Keller
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 9:16:14 AM
Attachments: [Education Testimony-Andrew Keller.docx](#)

From: Andrew Keller [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:49 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Cc: Andrew Keller [REDACTED]
Subject: Education Testimony-Andrew Keller

Dear Representative Himschoot,

Attached is my testimony for your bill, which received testimony from the public in the Education Committee. I also visited 14 House offices.

Please add this to the record.

Thank you for introducing this bill and I wish you success in securing funding for education in the budget.

Sincerely,

Andrew Keller

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 2:41:51 PM

From: Susan Heuer [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 10:41 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am very concerned about the state of public education and strongly encourage you to support increasing the BSA to \$1008/student for public school funding for ALL students statewide. I do not support limited funding that addresses correspondence and homeschool programs. I would like to see the education policy address inflation proofing and have it attached to the state budget in the future.

I understand the urgency to getting this bill passed by March 1st so school districts can anticipate their budgets for next year and don't have to waste time and resources cutting programs and staff this spring. I see this as the highest priority for the stability and future of Alaska and appreciate your efforts to make sure this is funded.

Thank you very much,

Susan Heuer

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 10:14:30 AM

From: Brian [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 10:08 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Click Bishop <Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education

Dear Gary

To me the Alaska Legislature is looking very much like the Peanuts character Charlie Brown. That is "Wishy Washy". You put out a request for how taxpayers money is being spent in all of the school districts in Alaska and they lie and stonewall the legislature and you admit it but are too wishy washy to take action against them. Himschoot indicates they're covering up but Himschoots response is to increase bsa by 1/4 billion dollars. Ruffredge's response is I told you so. Course all of his kids are home schooled collectin allotments. Tobin doesn't believe the report but just wrings her hands. To me, the average taxpayer the education system in Alaska is totally disfunctional.. Enrolment down, test scores.lowest in the nation, truancy rates at 50%, people leaving Alaska, and the legislature solution is to increase education budget to \$1.5 billion dollars. This all comes out of my PFD. I gain nothing from this incredible expenditure. What would President Trump and DOGE do with this fiscal fiasco? Clean out the department of education, fire all of the school districts administrators and start over. Is there no senator or representative with the "guts" to stand up to these "rogue" school districts. Come on Alaska legislature.

Regards
Brian Hakkinen
Kasilof

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Funding Our Future
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 12:08:55 PM

From: Liza Spencer [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 11:23 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Funding Our Future

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am a parent to three children in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. We moved to Homer from Fairbanks in 2018, and at the time we had 4 children attending our local schools. My husband was attending the Kachemak Bay Campus completing the 2 year nursing program. We had intended to move back to Fairbanks, where we are originally from, but chose to stay in Homer because our children are thriving in the schools here. We left a small private school in the interior for the public schools on the southern peninsula. The teacher to student ratio created a positive learning environment where our children could be seen. One of my children started the second grade and was unable to read. His teacher caught on right away and he was signed up for reading intervention. He got the help he needed from this program. Two of our other children have also benefited from reading intervention as well. These programs are not offered at private schools or charters. Two of our children have moved onto IEP's to further help them succeed at school. One of them will be graduating out of special education because he has made drastic improvements. It is disheartening to see programs like this on the chopping block. They are not a political pawn to be played. These are necessary building blocks for our children's education.

It is also disheartening to see teachers in our school having to use their own money to provide snacks to children in their classrooms with their own money. Teachers are also buying their own supplies. Paul Banks PTA started a program to fund supplies to take the financial burden off of our teachers and families. Our PTA is incredible, but our teachers should not be put in this position in the first place.

If our BSA is not increased to match inflation then our students will continue to suffer as will our teachers. The trickle down affect of not forward funding education and increasing the BSA is that we will continue to lose the dedicated teachers in our community. Our schools here in Homer are the heartbeat of this community. It was a shock to see that four schools in Homer are at risk of closing. You can not cram more students in tiny classrooms and ask the teachers to do more with less. Everyone will suffer. Sometimes I read comments from people online saying that our schools are failing and that they can't continue to throw money at the "problem". Those people have never set foot in a public school. Teachers continue to do more with less and it is leading to burnout. I am begging you to increase the BSA and forward fund education. We can not be in

this position, begging our leaders to do the right thing for our children every single year. I urge you to increase the BSA, forward fund our education and keep IEP/s and 504's.

Sincerely,
Liza Spencer
Mother of three in KPBSD

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB 69
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 11:14:01 AM

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 11:09 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 69

Dear House Education Committee Members and my House District Representative Sarah Vance,

I am in support of increasing the base student allocation as stated in House Bill 69. Public schools are struggling with the inflationary costs and this proposal will help with funding deficits and hopefully stop the closing of so many neighborhood schools and important programs.

However, how will this bill provide assistance to rural public schools? As we all know, the cost of living is higher in rural Alaska areas both on and off the road systems. Please advise.

Thank you,
Karen Murdock
[REDACTED]
Homer, AK 99603

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB 69
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 10:01:31 AM

From: Deborah Ward [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 8:32 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 69

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to express support for HB 69, and to thank you for your advocacy work on behalf of Alaska's children and youth. The policies and practices of Governor Dunleavy and Commissioner Bishop are undermining public education in our state. Despite their employment prior to becoming politicians, they are not educators. True educators understand that depriving school districts of adequate funding, which is mandated in the Alaska Constitution, is an extreme hardship rather than a solution. The overworked rationale of not providing increased funding until test scores improve is a fatal approach. How ironic that both Governor Dunleavy and Commissioner Bishop benefit from top of the line Tier I TRS benefits, yet they oppose providing an adequate retirement package to teachers; one step in increasing teacher recruitment and retention.

Are lagging NAEP scores a concern? Yes, but those scores are a reflection of a multitude of factors, and are not a sign that Alaska's public schools are inherently inferior to private, charter or homeschool programs. The governor says he wants to expand charter schools under oversight of a state agency. This is another flawed approach. If, indeed Alaska charter schools perform better than most charter schools in the U.S., it may be because of the Alaska model. Our charter schools are under local school board oversight and employ certified teachers from local school districts, unlike many charter schools in the Lower 48. State-level oversight would be a disastrous, heavy-handed change.

In a final assault, the governor wants to increase funding for homeschoolers, which can be a backdoor to funding religious education, again constitutionally unsound. Homeschooling is highly successful for some families, and is also a disaster for many children. After failing to adequately teach children at home, parents enroll their children in their neighborhood schools for remediation. Ironically, severely delayed in skills, these children contribute to the achievement deficits demonstrated on NAEP testing. Last year the governor indicated that he welcomes immigrants to our state to help improve the shrinking population trends. Who will educate the children, most of whom are English as a Second Language learners? Will these children be able to attend charter schools or be homeschooled? And what about

children with learning, emotional and behavioral differences? In most cases, charter and private schools do not accept these students, who are the most vulnerable and challenging to educate. Increasing funding for charter/home schools, while flat-funding public schools, is cruel and immoral.

Not understanding the legislative process well, I encourage you to stand strong against the governor's attack on public education. Thank you again for caring about the future of our state and for your work in Juneau.

Sincerely,

Deb Ward

Anchorage, AK 99516



I live on the unceded land of the Dena'ina.

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB69
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:04:19 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Haley Kinnard [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:27 PM
To: Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69

Hello, my name is Haley Kinnard. I live in Homer, Alaska and my child goes to Paul Banks Elementary, she is a really good kid taught by wonderful teachers who work for a school which cares greatly for them. All of the options at play to try to get out of this deficit are very grim, in every direction something important gets lost. In the classroom when you pack up to 35 children being taught by one teacher that is going to cause major problems. The teacher, no matter how wonderful and attentive, couldn't possibly give the individual child the support or attention that they need to learn causing any issues to go unnoticed and grades to drop. The teacher would feel immense stress due to crowded classes and workload. Eventually, they would burn out and find a job that supports them better financially and mentally, even though they will miss their students. Schools will have to fill positions with less quality employees. Cutting athletic and art programs hurts the community, especially in a community like Homer that is so wonderfully weird and artsy. We are a growing community and we have no better investment for our future than our children. I am in support of HB69 and a substantial increase to the base allocation for Alaska's kids, they deserve it!!!! I grew up in Homer and want to raise my girls here, I know that Paul Banks Elementary is a great school, because I went there! I felt the love and care for myself and my peers and feel it still when I volunteer. Please, we need an increase to the base allocation. We need to be able to keep up with the inflation of our nation. Thank you for taking the time to read this, please please PLEASE do not let our children down.

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Homer High Site Council Support for HB 69
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 4:30:57 PM
Attachments: [Alaska Legislature HB69 final.pdf](#)
[HB0069A.pdf](#)

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

From: Cherie Bowman <Cherie.Bowman@akleg.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 4:36 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: Homer High Site Council Support for HB 69

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

From: Mike Illg [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 2:06 PM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Yundt <Sen.Robert.Yundt@akleg.org>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon

<Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Cc: boardofeducation@kpbsd.k12.ak.us

Subject: Homer High Site Council Support for HB 69

February 7, 2025

Subject: House Bill 69: "An Act relating to education funding; and providing for an effective date."

Dear Honorable Legislature Member,

The Homer High School Site Council is writing to formally express our unanimous support for the proposed House Bill 69 and we respectfully request your support to pass this bill as well. The base student allocation over the last decade has been significantly underfunded and every school district is now subjected to make classroom sizes much larger, close down community centered schools and lose many quality educators and staff.

In the Homer area, we are currently reviewing the possibility of closing 4 out of 9 local brick and mortar schools. As you can image this is quite a daunting and difficult task for the community especially for the students. This proposed bill would substantially increase the amount of funding per student for the next few years and we respectfully request your much needed support to passing this bill.

Sincerely,

Homer High School Site Council



Homer, AK 99603

Chair Kyle Schneider (staff)

Juliann Techie (student)

Deb Curtis (staff)

Alicia Phillips (staff)

Jeanette Schafer (parent)

Ken Goldman (parent)

Casey Eberle (parent)

Amy Sundheim (parent)

Vice Chair Mike Illg (parent)

McKenna Black (student)

Eric Simonsen (staff)

Sara Richardson (parent)

Julie Gauthier (staff)

Erica Marley (parent)

Lia Calhoun (community member)

From: [House State Affairs](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Claire Fordyce](#); [Tammy Smith](#)
Subject: FW: Please Fund Education!
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 2:02:43 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

I believe this email was meant for your committee.

Stuart Relay

Chief of Staff

Representative Ashley Carrick
Alaska State House
District 35 – West Fairbanks

Committee Aide

House State Affairs Committee

Email: Stuart.Relay@akleg.gov

Office: 907-452-6084

Direct: 907-465-6879

Sign up for Rep Carrick's weekly e-news:

[The Carrick Capitol Connection](#)



From: Lila Lee Little [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 1:09 PM
To: House State Affairs <HouseState.Affairs@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please Fund Education!

Dear House Education Committee Chair and Members of the Committee,

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

Funding Alaska's public school system is not just an option—it is a constitutional duty. The vast majority of our students—our future leaders, workers, and community members—attend public schools. Yet, year after year, we have watched funding fail to keep pace with inflation, leading to larger class sizes, fewer resources, and the loss of valuable programs that engage and support our students. These cuts are not just a numbers on a spreadsheet; they have devastating consequences that will impact the children sitting in my

classroom today, as well as our entire community here on the Kenai Peninsula and around the state. Already, I see the effects of previous cuts firsthand. I see teachers stretching every resource to its limit. I see students struggling because they don't have access to intervention programs that used to exist. I see families frustrated, knowing that their children are not getting the same level of education they once did.

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

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

The district is also facing massive teacher layoffs and reductions in support staff, meaning fewer adults to provide individualized attention, intervention services, and the support our students need to thrive. With increased class sizes, students will struggle to receive the instruction and guidance necessary for success, making it harder to close achievement gaps and provide the high-quality education they deserve. These cuts will not just impact schools—they will weaken our entire community, driving families away, reducing opportunities for our youth, and diminishing the strength of our public education system. Without immediate action and proper funding, we are failing our students and jeopardizing Alaska's future.

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

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

Lila Johnson

Concerned parent of 4 kids attending 4 schools in the K-Pen
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Teacher, 2008-current

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Lila Lee Little

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please Fund Education
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 7:28:47 AM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 6:41 AM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Please Fund Education

From: Angela Palmer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 3:20 PM
To: Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please Fund Education

Dear Representative Julie Coulombe,

As one of your constituents, I implore you to pass and support meaningful funding legislation for public education statewide. I have cc'd all Representatives in this correspondence.

Learning is greatest in a secure environment, in which basic needs are not up for question annually, as is the case in our current environment. The State has the money, but currently it is not allocating enough to sufficiently fund our public schools. Basic needs include a BSA (base student allocation) that keeps up with inflation, and to ensure teacher and staff job security. In a high functioning society like ours, students, families, and educators shouldn't have to worry every year about the fabric of their school community crumbling beneath them. A well-funded public education system benefits and is essential to the whole society. It is shocking to me that this is even in question. The current atmosphere of fear of losing basic levels of funding annually is a distracting and stressful waste of time.

An example of a successful school that will be derailed at the current proposed level of funding is Chugach Optional Elementary School in downtown Anchorage, where I am a para-professional and parent of former students. Chugach Optional is a choice school that has 50 years of success as measured by student outcomes and test scores. The Chugach philosophy is based on the idea that children are curious and want to learn. At Chugach children are taught decision making, critical thinking, and community kindness using engaging theme studies to support deep student learning.

The current proposed ASD budget is devastating for all schools and for Chugach Optional in particular, as we are slated to lose two teaching positions (including one kindergarten) and our full-time librarian and school nurse positions. This loss would be catastrophic to our school because our school is based on a carefully designed clockwork of gears. By design, the gear system supports smaller class sizes in kindergarten and mixed grade combinations in Primary (1st and 2nd grade), Middle (3rd and 4th grade) and Upper (5th and 6th grade). We have two kindergarten classrooms that feed into three Primary classrooms. Each of our three Primary classrooms are composed of half Youngers (1st graders) and half Elders (2nd graders), and thus we have three half classes of first graders. In the fall, 2nd graders (Elders) come into the classroom knowing the rules of their teacher and act as mentors to the Youngers. This pattern of mentorship continues for Middle and Uppers, so, as students progress through the school, in each grade they alternate being mentees (Youngers) or mentors (Elders). The insufficient budget during the last two years has ballooned our class sizes. At our school the increases in Kindy class size have disproportionately impacted our higher-grade class sizes as students move through the program. Ballooning class sizes have stretched our teachers thin. (Have you ever tried to get twenty-two 5- and 6-year-olds ready for recess in our Alaskan climate?). If we further compound these cuts and take away two teachers (including a kindergarten teacher), it is easy to see that our gears would be

dismantled and our school, that has long served our community, would collapse.

If you've never visited Chugach, I invite you to contact the front desk and schedule a tour so you can see our beautiful, highly functioning school. In lieu of that, close your eyes and imagine you might smell baking bread in the kindergarten. You might see insect dioramas by the Primary rooms, or model castles lining the hall by our Middle students. You might hear singing as our Uppers rehearse for their annual spring musical performances.

Our school is intentionally designed with an open floor plan, teaching students to be in-charge learners. Student art and various projects are displayed on the walls of the halls, exemplifying our hands-on learning through theme studies reflecting inquiry-based learning. You will see engaged students in a phenomenal setting. Classrooms straddle the single hallway culminating in our stunning library. When new parents visit our school, many gasp at the beauty of our library. The open floor plan is inviting, and the view of the Chugach Mountains is inspirational. Our library is at the heart of the school. The loss of the full-time librarian position would be devastating.

The years of flat funding are exhausting to our whole community, and the proposal for next year is devastating to educators, who just want to focus on their craft: teaching. Without proper funding the gears of this successful school and community will not function. Our school is just one example of many in our amazing Anchorage School District. Please be sure you know what you are voting against before you vote. Please fund public education in a meaningful way. Fund schools and override vetoes of insufficient funding for public education. Your actions could dismantle education so fully that we break successful programs that are literally hanging on by a thread. As your constituent, I am asking for more than just passing a bill, I am asking for the follow-through of overriding the governor's veto if he does not support funding public schools in a meaningful way.

Thank you for your service! I was disappointed last year when you did not override the Governor's veto. You have another chance this year! **You could be the one to make a difference.**

Respectfully yours,
Angela Palmer

PS, Cutting all middle school activities, a current proposal in the ASD budget for next year, is a terrible idea. These cuts would 1) further divide the "haves" and the "have nots", 2) dissolve social activities at a stage of life when social connections are most vulnerable, 3) dismantles programs that are highly functional, wasting time and energy of our community members. I can imagine that with no after school activities provided during the most vulnerable stage of childhood—middle school—youth would turn more towards their phones driving up depression and desocialization.

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please support fully funding our children's education
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:12:31 AM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:58 AM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Please support fully funding our children's education

From: Brandi Askeland [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:01 AM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Yundt <Sen.Robert.Yundt@akleg.org>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin

McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please support fully funding our children's education

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and a dedicated member of our community. I am deeply troubled by the state of education funding in Alaska, and I am reaching out to urge you to take immediate action to properly fund our schools, including my own child's school, Chugach Optional Elementary.

As you know, the Base Student Allocation (BSA) has not kept pace with inflation, and our schools are now feeling the consequences of this lack of investment. Despite calls for education reform, it is impossible to expect meaningful results when our schools are being asked to do more with less. Funding is the foundation for success, and without it, even the best reforms will struggle to take hold.

At Chugach Optional, we are already seeing the direct impact of these funding cuts. Our school will likely face the following changes:

- **Loss of TWO of our ELEVEN classroom teachers**, representing almost 20% of our teaching staff. This will result in extreme increases in class sizes, with as many as 44 students per classroom, which will undoubtedly hinder the individualized attention our children need to succeed.
- **Reduction of 50% of our beloved librarian Amy's time**, meaning she will only be at Chugach half-time. The library is an essential resource for our students' growth, and reducing access to it will be detrimental to their development.
- **50% reduction of Maya, our amazing nurse's time**, meaning she will only be available half-time. This puts our children's health and well-being at risk, especially during flu season and other health concerns.
- **Loss of office and administrative support**, which will make it harder to manage the day-to-day operations of our school and reduce the efficiency with which we serve students and families.
- **Loss of the IGNITE program**, which provides essential support for gifted and talented students, limiting their opportunities for enrichment.
- **Loss of band and orchestra programs**, which provide our children with invaluable opportunities for creative expression and collaboration.

These reductions in staffing and resources will severely limit the quality of education that my child, and many others, will receive. I ask you to consider the long-term impact of underfunding education. We cannot expect our children to thrive without the proper resources, and it is clear that these cuts will only hinder their potential.

While I understand the need for reforms in education, I believe that no meaningful reform can succeed without adequate funding. We need to ensure that our schools are equipped with the resources they need to provide our children with the education they deserve.

I urge you to prioritize fully funding education and tie funding increases to inflation to ensure that our schools have the resources they need to succeed. A small reallocation of resources could make a world of difference for our students and teachers.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your actions to support education in Alaska, and I hope you will take the necessary steps to ensure that schools like Chugach Optional can continue to provide high-quality education to our children by supporting HB69 or the senate equivalent.

Sincerely,

Brandi Askeland, MS, LPC

Constituent of Anchorage, 99504

Parent of a Chugach Optional Elementary Student

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please support Increasing the BSA
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 7:30:48 AM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 6:40 AM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Please support Increasing the BSA

From: Maya C [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 10:26 PM
Subject: Please support Increasing the BSA

Dear Alaska Legislator,

My name is Maya, I am a constituent of Senator Tobin and Representative Fields. I have 2 children in the Anchorage School district and I am deeply concerned with the state of education funding in Alaska. The news is filled with districts across the state closing schools, increasing class sizes and cutting programs. Education needs to be our top priority. I read an ADN article last April that I found appalling: Alaska spends four times the amount of money per year to incarcerate someone (not including health care costs) than it does per student each year! Our children are our future, they deserve a public education system that supports them to grow into healthy, happy, productive members of our community.

I am a strong supporter of increasing the BSA and House Bill 69. Flat funding of our schools since 2017, has been working in direct opposition to the state of Alaska's constitutional obligation to maintain our public schools.

My 3rd grader, who attends Chugach Optional Elementary - a lottery school - will have a class size increase by 4 students putting her already crowded classroom at 30 students. Our school is also slated to lose 2 full time classroom teachers, our Ignite teacher and our Nurse and Librarian reduced to part time positions. Increasing the PTR as well as losing 2 classroom teachers, would increase our 1st/2nd combo classes to approximately 42 students per classroom and our 5th/6th grade combo

class to approximately 45 students. This is not sustainable or fair for teachers and students.

The Library is the heart of the school and an extension of the classrooms. As well as scheduled librarian-led classes, students are welcome to read and work independently in the library throughout the school day. We need our Librarian full time! Emergencies can happen at any time; students with acute and chronic healthcare needs require nursing services all day. Without a full time nurse, even more burden will be placed on teachers and office staff to deal with the medical needs of students. Bottomline, this is a safety issue. We need a full time Nurse!

The middle school sports programs have been where my thirteen year old has created friendships, learned about true sportsmanship, commitment and teamwork. Being physically active 5 days a week is helping to build healthy habits while creating new friendships. Any activity that benefits the mental health of our teens should be seen as essential.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. Please support a significant and sustained increase to the base student allocation to our schools, our kids are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Maya Curtis

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please Support School Funding
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:05:14 PM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:02 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: Please Support School Funding

From: Amanda King [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Yundt <Sen.Robert.Yundt@akleg.org>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin

McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please Support School Funding

Dear Alaska Legislators,

This is the first time I have ever written to the Legislature. I was born in Anchorage 45 years ago and received an amazing education through the Anchorage School District. I remember hearing about private schools in the lower 48 when I was a kid, and wondering why anyone would pay a lot of money to send their kids to private school. All of my schools (Susitna Optional, Wendler and East) were amazing, and free! Later I learned that Anchorage has one of the best public-school systems in the country.

I credit my ASD experience with my professional success today. After college at Caltech, I earned my Ph.D. from Stanford University and now am a professor at Alaska Pacific University, living in East Anchorage. I am represented by Donna Mears and Bill Wielechowski.

My top personal priority was moving back to Anchorage to live and start a family, because I love and believe in Anchorage. I knew that no matter where my kids went to school, they would be fine, because of our top-notch public school system.

I now have two children in the Anchorage School District. Both attend Chugach Optional School, a lottery school of my choice. Chugach is a wonderful school that has intentional multi-age classrooms and a librarian who is the heart of the school. And it works. Our test scores are among the highest in the district and state. Proposed funding cuts by ASD next year would increase class sizes in our school and throw off the ratio of classrooms, so that our intentional multi-grade model would not work. It's not just a matter of a few more kids per class - it's losing entire classes and throwing off the intentional multi-age ratios in our school. We would lose our beloved librarian and nurse to half-time. And we would lose my daughter's favorite program, IGNITE, which truly inspires her.

Education funding continues to be my top political priority, and the thing that keeps me awake at night. I urge you to advocate for school funding increases, by supporting HB69 or the senate equivalent.

Thank you,
Mandy King

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Public school funding
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 2:40:31 PM

From: Betsey Howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:04 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Public school funding

Please support **public** school funding for all children statewide. Our public schools will continue to struggle and under-perform if there is no secure funding policy.

Please inflation-proof the funding and shift it to the state budget in future years to protect the schools' budgets.

Betsey Howard
Anchorage, AK

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Resolution Education Funding from Newhalen Tribal Council
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 10:37:38 AM
Attachments: [Resolution Education.pdf](#)

From: Maxine Wassillie [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:51 AM

To: Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>;
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Resolution Education Funding from Newhalen Tribal Council

To whom it may concern. Please take in account the resolution that Newhalen Tribal Council has sent forth in concerns about our School Education Funding

--

Maxine Wassillie
Newhalen Tribal Council
ICWA Worker, Enrollment
[REDACTED]
Newhalen, Alaska 99606
[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Save Alaska's Schools
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:03:37 PM

From: Kayse Ericksen [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:26 PM
Subject: Save Alaska's Schools

Dear Alaska Legislators,

My name is Kayse Hinrichsen and I am a parent of one child in the Anchorage School District and two more entering the school district this fall and in 2027. I am writing this because I am very worried about our schools and the future of our children.

I am urging you to support House Bill 69 and any other legislature that supports the education of our Alaskan children. It is essential that we fund public schools so that every child can have access to high quality education, not only because it is our basic moral responsibility, but also because it has a direct impact on the future of our state. If we do not provide quality education for children our economic future and the future of Alaska is dire. We need these children to grow into strong intelligent leaders who will help Alaska thrive.

My child attends a school that is joyful, supportive and provides the opportunity for children to grow and develop a love of learning. This positive environment creates children who are problem solvers that are eager to better their community. The success of their school is also evident in their high test scores.

If the Base Student Allocation is not increased the success of this school will not continue. Teachers will be eliminated, support services will be reduced, and student success will fail.

I know there are a lot of competing needs in the state budget but we have to fund education. Without a fully funded education budget the rest of the things we are fighting for will not matter. Our children are our future. Please fund our future.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, our children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Kayse Hinrichsen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99508

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support Increasing the BSA
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 7:28:25 AM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 6:42 AM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Support Increasing the BSA

From: Brady Siegel [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 1:33 PM
Subject: Support Increasing the BSA

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you to support an increase in Alaska's Base Student Allocation (BSA) to ensure that our schools receive the necessary funding to provide high-quality education for all students. As an Anchorage School District teacher at Aquarian Charter School and also as a mother, I see firsthand the challenges that insufficient funding creates for students, teachers, and communities across the state.

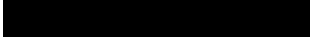
Alaska's BSA has not kept pace with inflation and the rising costs of providing essential educational services. Schools are struggling to retain any teachers, much less highly qualified ones, maintain programs that support student success, or provide necessary resources to create a safe and effective learning environment for our students. Without a meaningful increase in the BSA, these challenges will only worsen, leading to larger class sizes, reduced student support services, and fewer opportunities for our children to thrive. These issues are permeating every single district and every single school across our state.

Additionally, it is important to remember that accountability is already built into our school and district systems. As educators, we are held accountable for ensuring student success, and we need legislators to be accountable for doing their jobs by properly funding public education so we can be successful for all kids. Furthermore, Alaska's charter school system is already effective and does not need fixing. Funding increases should not be tied to Governor Dunleavy's plan for state-run charter schools, which could undermine the success of the existing schools he is so proud of.

Investing in education is an investment in Alaska's future. Our students deserve a well-funded education system that prepares them for success in higher education, careers, and civic life. The BSA should be increased now and made inflation-proofed for the future to ensure our schools have the resources they need for years to come.

I urge you to prioritize this issue in the upcoming legislative session and advocate for a meaningful increase in the BSA. Vote in favor of education and use your power as legislators to override our Governor if needed. Please stand with Alaska's students, educators, and families by ensuring our schools receive the funding they need.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you would like, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Brady Neel, House District 16 Constituent
Teacher, Aquarian Charter School


From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support our public schools!
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:48:36 AM

From: Melanie Wahl [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:04 PM
To: Melanie Wahl <melaniewahl21@gmail.com>
Subject: Support our public schools!

Hello,

We love Alaska, first and foremost. We love everything about it except for the time, effort and funding that is put into public schools. It is truly the one thing that could drive us out of the state. Our friends/colleagues are of the same mind, if something doesn't change, we will need to look elsewhere for better education opportunities for our young children.

Please make funding public school a priority with the below items at the top of your list:

- 1) Support increasing education funding to track inflation.
- 2) Support a BSA increase.
- 3) Increase funding to keep class sizes down.
- 4) NURSES in each school (first hand experience with my daughter's school nurse that helped her through a traumatic seizure during the school day). Taking nurses out of schools or even having a nurse part-time IS NOT ACCEPTABLE! Full-time nurses in each school!
- 4) Support and advocate to keep Language immersion programs running indefinitely

Thank you for your time,
Melanie Wahl
(Mom of an 9 and 13 year old in the Chinese Immersion Program and Steller Secondary)

From: [Tammy Smith](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support our public schools!
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:22:28 AM

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

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:38 PM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: Support our public schools!

From: Melanie Wahl [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:04 PM
To: Melanie Wahl <melaniewahl21@gmail.com>
Subject: Support our public schools!

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Please make funding public school a priority with the below items at the top of your list:

- 1) Support increasing education funding to track inflation.
- 2) Support a BSA increase.
- 3) Increase funding to keep class sizes down.
- 4) NURSES in each school (first hand experience with my daughter's school nurse that helped her through a traumatic seizure during the school day). Taking nurses out of schools or even having a nurse part-time IS NOT ACCEPTABLE! Full-time nurses in each school!
- 4) Support and advocate to keep Language immersion programs running indefinitely

Thank you for your time,

Melanie Wahl

(Mom of an 9 and 13 year old in the Chinese Immersion Program and Steller
Secondary)

From: [LIO Anchorage](#)
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: FW: Timely: Advocacy for ASD's Base Student Allocation Increase
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 8:08:52 AM

From: Katie Caswell [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 8, 2025 11:46 AM
To: LIO Anchorage <Lio.Anchorage@akleg.gov>
Subject: Timely: Advocacy for ASD's Base Student Allocation Increase

Hello,

My name is Katie Caswell and I am a constituent from Chugiak, Alaska and mother of two. I grew up in Eagle River and am a proud Anchorage School District alum. My oldest will be starting Kindergarten this year at Chugiak Elementary. This should be a time filled with excitement and anticipation and instead I am filled with concern. Class sizes of 26, eliminating necessary teacher positions, no immersion programs, cutting all middle school sports, ending several high school sports among many other suggested cuts are not a reflection of the healthy district I grew up with. Dissolving these programs and increasing class sizes is not acceptable. Our kids, my kids, deserve more.

My daughter is hard of hearing, attends an ASD preschool, and has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) with the district. Children who are deaf and hard of hearing are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). It's imperative to provide these children an environment that presents the fewest language and communication barriers to their cognitive, social and emotional development. My child, and children like her, require an ideal listening environment so they can access sound in a language rich school setting with minimal distractions and background noise. A classroom filled with 26 students can't achieve this. It is the district's responsibility to ensure Zoe and her classmates have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education that meets their unique needs, particularly their communication needs.

Adequate funding is essential to ensure quality education for our students. I urge you to support initiatives that increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to meet our schools' needs.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and ensuring our children (our future!) receive the education they deserve and require to be thriving members of our community. A loss of funds or cutting services could potentially result in my family relocating outside of Alaska to pursue a better school service.

Katie

From: [LIO Anchorage](#)
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: FW: Timely: Advocacy for ASDs Base Student Allocation Increase
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 8:10:12 AM

From: Linda Shepard [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 8:41 AM
To: LIO Anchorage <Lio.Anchorage@akleg.gov>
Subject: Timely: Advocacy for ASDs Base Student Allocation Increase

Hello,

My name is Linda Shepard and I am a constituent from Eagle River and a mother/grandmother. Adequate funding is essential to ensure quality education for our students. I urge you to support initiatives that increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to meet our schools' needs.

We raised our family in Eagle River and our children are successful adults who graduated from ASD, now have college degrees, are contributing to the Alaska economy, and are raising their children in Chugiak. We are concerned that our grandchildren will not have the same educational opportunities and support that our children benefited from. With class sizes increasing, eliminating necessary teacher positions, no immersion programs, cutting all middle school sports, ending several high school sports among many other suggested cuts do not reflect the healthy district we raised our family in. Dissolving these programs and increasing class sizes is not acceptable, and only leads to young families entertaining the idea of moving to another state where the education of our most valuable resource, our children, is a priority.

In addition, one of our grandchildren is hard of hearing, attends an ASD preschool, and has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) with the district. Children who are deaf and hard of hearing are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). It's imperative to provide these children an environment that presents the fewest language and communication barriers to their cognitive, social and emotional development. Our grandchild, and children like her, require an ideal listening environment so they can access sound in a language rich school setting with minimal distractions and background noise. A classroom filled with 26 students can't achieve this. It is the district's responsibility to ensure Zoe and her classmates have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education that meets their unique needs, particularly their communication needs.

Thank you for your hard work and attention to this important matter; ensuring our children receive the education they deserve and require to be thriving members of our community.

Sincerely,
Linda Shepard
[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:48:21 AM

From: Bear Remien [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:12 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB69 and to urge you to take immediate action to increase education funding in Alaska. This is not an issue that can wait another year—our schools, our students, and our communities are already feeling the impact of inadequate funding.

I am the parent of a first grader at O'Malley Elementary School, where my child is part of the French immersion program. Due to budget cuts within the Anchorage School District, O'Malley is set to lose five teachers this year, including French teachers essential to the immersion program. If these cuts go through, the program will be effectively shut down.

For my family, this decision is deeply personal. The French immersion program is one of the few things keeping us in Alaska. If it is eliminated, my wife and I will most likely make the difficult decision to leave the state. As IT professionals working for a local company, we are among the many working families who contribute to Alaska's economy. However, continued underfunding of public education is making it increasingly difficult to justify staying. We are not alone in this—other families are facing similar decisions, and Alaska risks losing skilled professionals to states that prioritize education.

Public education is the foundation of a thriving community and a strong workforce. Underfunding our schools does not just hurt students; it weakens our entire state by driving away families and discouraging businesses from investing in Alaska. I urge you to support HB69 and ensure that our children receive the quality education they deserve.

Please take action now. The future of our schools—and our state—depends on it.

Sincerely,

Bear Remien

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99507

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Urgent: Strong Support for Increased BSA and Sustainable Funding for KPBSD
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 2:43:16 PM

From: Mandy Lehm [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 10:16 PM
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Urgent: Strong Support for Increased BSA and Sustainable Funding for KPBSD

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing as a concerned parent and a strong supporter of public education. I have two young children—one currently in 1st grade and another due to start kindergarten in August—and I am deeply concerned about the projected \$17 million budget deficit facing the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD), and the significant impact this will have on our students, teachers, and schools.

While I appreciate the proposed \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) in HB69, I believe this is just a starting point. To truly address the financial challenges facing our schools and keep up with inflation, the BSA should be increased by at least \$1,800. Additionally, we must ensure that the BSA is inflation-proof. By tying the BSA to inflation, we can guarantee that our schools are not perpetually struggling to keep up with rising costs, creating a more sustainable funding model for public education.

One of the most pressing issues is the current process, which forces districts to submit their budgets before knowing how much funding they'll actually receive from the state. This uncertainty is unsustainable. It's like going grocery shopping without knowing how much money you have—it simply doesn't work. Schools need the ability to plan effectively. Teachers and staff must be hired by April/May, but the district is often left in limbo about funding. Last year, KPBSD didn't receive the final budget until two days before school started, creating unnecessary stress and pink slipping staff just days before they thought they would begin working.

This uncertainty is further compounded by the fact that we are working on a yearly basis. We need to move toward forward funding for education—ideally for 3+ years. This would allow districts to plan more effectively, make informed staffing decisions, and ensure that schools are able to provide a stable educational environment without the constant financial uncertainty year after year.

The financial strain on KPBSD is affecting our educators in real, harmful ways. Teachers are stretched thin, managing larger class sizes with fewer resources. We are already looking at potential school closures, and elementary classrooms could soon have up to 30 students each. This overcrowding makes it nearly impossible for teachers to give students the attention they deserve. Instead of being the focused educators they were trained to be, teachers are being forced into a babysitting role of managing increasingly difficult situations, which is burning them out and pushing many to the breaking point, which means quitting the teaching

profession. We are losing our educators, what an absolute travesty.

As a parent, I see firsthand the importance of quality education for my children. The decisions we make today will directly impact the education and future of my kids, and countless others across the state. We cannot afford to continue reducing funding for public education and expecting our teachers to manage larger classes with fewer resources.

I want to be clear—I fully support public education funding and am advocating for solutions that will allow our schools to serve students effectively. To truly solve this issue, we need to find ways to increase revenue for our schools and reduce the burden on the state budget. Here are some potential solutions that could help:

- **Have the borough fund to the cap every year**
- **Raise the sales tax cap:** By increasing the cap on the sales tax, we could generate additional revenue for education without overburdening any single group of taxpayers.
- **Implement a small, flat school tax:** One idea would be to introduce a modest, flat school tax for every working Alaskan—say, \$10 or \$100 per year. This would be an equitable way for all Alaskans to contribute to the funding of our public education system.

These are just a few ideas, but the key point is this: we need stable, predictable funding for our schools. We cannot continue to take resources away from public education and expect our teachers to work magic. Our teachers deserve better. Our students deserve better. And we, as a state, must invest in the future of our children. Without strong and robust public education in our state people will leave our beautiful state. Who wants to live somewhere where there is no future for their children? No extra curriculars? No sports? No theater, pool, shop classes?

I urge you to take bold action in support of public education funding. We need a BSA increase that reflects the true cost of inflation, forward funding to provide stability, and additional revenue solutions to ensure our schools can continue providing quality education.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing your leadership in ensuring that Alaska's public education system is adequately supported for the future.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lehm

Resident of Homer, Alaska



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Public Testimony for Feb 12th Hearing
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:53:50 PM

Good evening! My name is Sterling Huntington, a lifelong resident of Alaska currently living on Deerfield Drive in Anchorage, AK, 99515. I have three kids... a 6th, 8th, and 11th grader all attending public schools supported by ASD funds. I myself attended Palmer High School and participated in after school sport programs, an amazing experience and one that helped shape my identity as a community member and Alaskan resident.

These schools are the backbone of our state, and our pockets of social communities throughout. They prepare our Alaskan Grown kids for positive cultural and economic engagement. They help families that transplant to our beautiful state thrive and flourish. They encourage American workers to move here and join us in the last frontier, and entire companies to invest in our infrastructure.

This only happens if we, as Alaskans, in turn invest in our public education.

The base student allocation in Alaska has not adjusted with inflationary growth since 2017, and it shows in our classrooms. Please show your support of HB 69 and pass this critically needed increase, this investment in the future of our state's schooling, economic growth, and long-term sustainability.

If my words are not enough, my teenager currently attending Service High School has her own words to the house legislators of Alaska. She too is a lifelong Alaskan, and embodies the next generation of our state's voters, so take her words to heart:

"School budget cuts affect more than just the present economy. Restricting the funds for School programs and infrastructure creates a society without knowledge, a society that is taught only what the law states to be the bare minimum, math, English, and a small amount of science and history. If the State decreases the budget for our education system, there won't be any more after school activities, there won't be any foreign language classes, there won't be any field trips, there won't be any of the activities and curriculum that mold a capable generation of humans. Restricting the school budget ruins lives in the present and future. Restricting the school budgets is ruining my life right now."

I couldn't have said it better. Thank you for your time, consideration, and support of this house bill.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); House.Education.Committee@akleg.gov; [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#)
Subject: HB 69 support. Charter school data rev 1
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 5:21:41 AM
Attachments: [Why governor doesnt know Feb 13 2025 rev 1.pdf](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Testimony
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:31:15 PM

My name is Kayse Hinrichsen and I am a parent of one child in the Anchorage School District and two more entering the school district this fall and in 2027. I am writing this because I am very worried about our schools and the future of our children.

I am urging all legislators to support House Bill 69 to fund the education of our Alaskan children. It is essential that we fund public schools so that every child can have access to high quality education not only because it is our basic moral responsibility, but also because it has a direct impact on the future of our state. If we do not provide quality education for children our economic future is dire. We need these children to grow into strong intelligent leaders who will help Alaska thrive.

My child attends a school that is joyful, supportive and provides the opportunity for children to grow and develop a love of learning. This positive environment creates children who are problem solvers that are eager to better their community. The success of their school is also evident in their high test scores.

If the Base Student Allocation is not increased the success of this school will not continue. Teachers will be eliminated, support services will be reduced, and student success will fail.

I know there are a lot of competing needs in the state budget but we have to fund education. Without a fully funded education budget the rest of the things we are fighting for will not matter. Our children are our future. Please fund our future.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, our children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Kayse Hinrichsen

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99508

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Justin Ruffridge](#)
Subject: HB 69, School Funding, Charter Schools
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 10:54:40 AM

Members of the Senate & House Education Committee,

THANK YOU for your devotion to the future of the State of Alaska, our children!
My children, your children, my students and all students of Alaska deserve the best education possible.

I have devoted the last 27 years of my life to educating the children of Alaska; with 18 years served in Southwest Region School District as a teacher and principal and now 9 years as the principal of Aurora Borealis Charter School in Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. During that time I have taught kids how to solve two step equations, watched and coached them compete in extra-curricular activities, and walked beside them at funerals when a loved one passed away.

Schools are the life blood of our communities. The presentation by the Alaska Municipal League today shows how vital our schools are to our local governments. Funding for schools needs to be a priority to help our communities as a whole.

School Districts and schools can and should do better than they are right now. We need to be holding everyone more accountable for the funding they receive from the State and their local municipalities.

However, punishing our children by not providing them the best academic possibilities should not be an option. Our children deserve to have schools that have adequate staffing, something that only funding can provide.

Aurora Borealis Charter School is one of the highest performing schools in the State of Alaska when it comes to academic outcomes as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK Star). I have renewed our charter application twice now, and I know of some simple policy changes that would benefit charter schools.

Please e-mail or call me if you have any questions or concerns.

THANK YOU for your time and consideration of increased funding to our Student Base Allocation (SBA).

Cody McCanna

Aurora Borealis Charter School
Administrative Leader
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#); [Rep. Jubilee Underwood](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: HB69 Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 4:04:11 PM

Alaska House Education Committee Members:

Thank you in advance for your consideration in increasing the BSA for Alaska's public schools. I am a member of the Cordova School Board. Here in Cordova we are experiencing a rapid increase in our school population. Many young families are moving to our community because they want to build lives and raise families here in our small, rural city. We find ourselves in need of facilities, teachers, and staff in order to reach the demand before us.

We are fortunate that our local city contribution is consistently generous every year. However, even with a generous contribution this past year, we had to look at cutting both our food service and student activities. Fortunately, the Native Village of Eyak stepped in and contributed funds that covered both the food service and all student activities. That was an amazing contribution, but not one we can assume will be offered every year.

An increase in the BSA would ensure our ability to reach the challenges we face in providing a quality education for the children of Cordova. Thank you in advance for your careful consideration ... our children are worth the investment.

Terri Stavig
Cordova School Board

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Sunday, February 9, 2025 9:06:14 AM

I'm totally against this bill and all bills that deal with school buildings, maintenance administration, teacher and unions(local or national)

Since my kids are all grown

I don't see why I have to give up my PFDs for a bunch of do nothings who complain about everything

This is nothing but a raid on the entire PFD

By greedy Union bosses and their lackeys

I've seen the waste produced by this system

If I do have to give up my share of alaskas mineral rights

then teacher should teach year round no more

Summers Off

But they don't want to lose that

When's the last time kids needed summers off to help on the farms or fishing boats

Wouldn't they be farther along in their education

If they didn't have to start new every year

This is nothing but slinging as much shit at the wall and hoping it all sticks

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69 (HB69)
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:16:57 AM

To Whom it may concern,

I'm writing to show my support for House Bill 69 (HB69). We desperately need to increase the Base Student Allocation. As I'm sure you are aware, schools around the State are closing, and here in Ketchikan, we are facing a consolidation of the elementary schools. By not increasing the BSA, we are not prioritizing children and families. Families with children who can relocate are already starting to leave, and we are not attracting new families to Alaska. According to the newly published report on nonresidents working in Alaska, the number of non-residents working in Alaska has steadily increased since 2020. It will continue to increase if our working-age population relocates. To build Alaska's future, we need families and children. Please pass HB69 and support our Alaskan families!

Thank you,
Meadow Muench

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#)
Subject: I support House Bill 69
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 11:58:18 AM

Hello,

My name is Cara Shonsey. I live at [REDACTED] Anchorage AK 99516. I am a constituent of House District 11-225, Senate District F. I have two children that will be entering the school system in the next four years; one next year. As a family with two working parents we are delighted to have a language immersion option at O'Malley Elementary School so close to our address. We have heard nothing but good things about the french immersion program and the teachers and are looking forward to our first child's development through the program. My husband and I have both lived abroad and learned multiple languages to interact as global citizens. We understand the value of teaching our child to speak another language at such a young age. We believe the skill is so important that we believe a language immersion is paramount to other available learning programs offered in the district.

We understand that House Bill 69 is much more than just an increase in funding that will preserve O'Malleys immersion option, but will preserve and expand opportunities for many. We trust that the evaluations performed and the resulting recommendation to increase funding to the overall BSA, now and over the next two years and also set an adjustment for future inflation, is sound.

Please Vote "yes" on House Bill 69.

Thank you,

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); julie.coulombe@akleg.gov; [Senate Education](#); james.kaufman@akleg.gov
Subject: In support of SB 46 and HB 69
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 11:58:26 AM

Dear Representatives and Senators:

I'm writing to you as a member of the Anchorage community and as a parent to a child who is thriving in O'Malley Elementary's French Immersion program. O'Malley is one of the schools that will have to cut a substantial amount of teaching positions due to proposed budget cuts. Anchorage School District's innovative educational programs are a huge part of what keeps our family rooted and invested in Alaska as our home. However, every year it seems we have to fight harder and harder to maintain the quality of education that ASD provides, primarily due to lack of State funding.

I urge you all to support SB 46 and HB 69 and to prevent devastating cuts to public education. Please promote a more sustainable means of prioritizing the well-being and growth of your youngest constituents.

Sincerely,
Keri Iles

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase Alaska School Funding
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 3:18:49 PM

Please increase the funding provided to my child's school in Anchorage. I would be fine with reducing my pfd to provide more school funding.

Thank you,

Mark Winslow

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increasing the BSA is Vital
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 11:50:23 AM

Rep. Himschoot, Rep. Story, and members of the House Education Committee:

I am a retired public educator who devotes a significant amount of time and energy into volunteering with many organizations, including being the coordinator of the Anchorage School District middle school cross country ski races. This sport annually attracts around 500 students of all abilities and experience levels and is a cornerstone of winter sports in middle school.

I urge you to work across party lines to approve an increase to the BSA that is meaningful and lasting. School districts across the state are at a breaking point with no guaranteed funding and have had to cut deeply into staffing and programs to make ends meet. The Anchorage School District is putting all middle school sports on the chopping block for potential lack of funding. This would have a hugely negative impact on students at a critical point of their development. Participation in sports isn't always quantifiable in its benefits, but there are observable positive impacts: a sense of belonging, collaborating with teammates, pride in developing a new set of skills, problem solving, and practicing a growth mindset perspective. These skills, developed at practices and races, can translate into better performance in the classroom - better attention, better focus, better collaboration with peers, etc. Forcing districts to take away sports because of not fully funding the BSA is unacceptable. Not fully funding the BSA in order to provide a bigger PFD is simply wrong. Sacrificing children's futures for a bigger PFD? You can do better.

Again, I urge the Education Committee to work with the legislature to provide a fully funded BSA so that school districts can provide opportunities for students to be successful.

Thank you,

Julie Truskowski

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99507

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: It's time for a permanent increase to the Alaska BSA
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2025 7:49:39 PM

Dear Representative Rebecca Himschoot,

Alaska students deserve a permanent increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

Investment in public education is critical—not only for our students and families but also for the future of Alaska's workforce and economy.

For over a decade, Alaska has faced a troubling trend of outmigration, losing working-age residents and families. This decline is directly impacting our economy, and business leaders have repeatedly stated that the lack of investment in our schools is making it harder to recruit and retain a strong workforce.

Military leaders have also voiced concerns, noting that soldiers are choosing not to bring their families to Alaska due to inadequate funding for public schools.

A desperately needed increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) will help ensure:

- Opportunities for career and technical education and for students to learn real-life skills.
- Reasonable class sizes, giving our students the one-on-one attention they need to succeed.
- Stability in the education workforce, ensuring our schools remain fully staffed.

Your support of a significant investment in public education sends a message to parents and business leaders: Alaska is open for business, committed to developing a skilled workforce, and dedicated to student success.

Please stand with parents, educators, and business leaders in making public education a priority. I urge you to support a significant increase in the BSA.

Sincerely,
Elissa Kaminsky
[REDACTED] Sitka, AK 99835-7208
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: KPBSD Budget Deficit
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 9:27:23 AM

Good morning members of the House Education Committee,

I wanted to reach out this afternoon to share my input on the budget deficit that our school district is facing. What we face pales compared to other school districts in the state; however, like Anchorage, Mat Su, Fairbanks, Kodiak, etc. the KPBSD is facing a significant budget deficit, nearly \$17 million. Without an increase to the BSA, the KPBSD will face implementing severe cost saving measures. Some proposed solutions for this budget deficit include closing pools and theaters, eliminating after school programs, increasing the PTR as much as +10, consolidating and closing schools, eliminating counselors and academic programs, and eliminating positions, both certified and classified.

More specifically to Paul Banks, if a +10 PTR were established, we would lose two teaching positions which would increase our class sizes significantly. The impact of increasing class sizes is vast. For learning to happen, teachers must develop safe and trusting relationships with students; with larger classes, this is more challenging. The opportunity for teachers to provide small group and individual instruction diminishes as classes grow in size. When I give tours of our building to families from the Lower 48, they marvel at our class sizes and comment how their children were in classrooms with 30+ students and that learning wasn't happening. Learning is happening in our classrooms every day, quantitative and qualitative data supports this.

Last week, our school board presented school closure and consolidation scenarios that included students at Paul Banks going to West Homer Elementary. Families have shared with me their concerns about this as has our staff. Homer families treasure our K-2 program for what we create for kids academically as well as socially.

I would be remiss to not mention the impact the budget deficit is having on our staff as well. It seems that annually they are faced with whether or not they will have a job. Governor Dunleavy advocates for teacher retention strategies such as a \$5000 bonus for teachers but this is a temporary fix. At one time, Alaska was one of the most alluring places to teach in the country. This was when our teaching salaries were more competitive and our retirement packages were excellent. Neither one of these are a current reality. While I am sure teachers would appreciate this temporary salary bump, it doesn't have the systemic impact that a change in retirement would. In fact, I haven't had one teacher say to me they agree with Governor Dunleavy's teacher retention proposal.

Speaking of Governor Dunleavy's education proposals and how they fit within the budget, I would urge you to support HB 69 rather than the proposals the governor has put forth. Notably, Governor Dunleavy advocates for more money going to charter schools. However, the author of the study he consistently cites critiqued the governor and rejected using his study as evidence to support his proposal. Furthermore, Governor Dunleavy has put forth a desire for more money to go to homeschooling. Any increase in homeschool funding should come with the caveat that a family must complete the same assessments public school students take in order for the family to receive the state funding.

Finally, our school district introduced a tool that stakeholders can use to provide feedback on our budget deficit. In addition to scores of options to cut, there is the option to increase the BSA. By increasing the BSA by \$1000, our budget deficit is erased. I urge you to support HB 69 and support public education in your district and state.

Please feel welcome to reach out with any questions about education funding and always feel welcome to visit our school.

Best,

Sean Campbell
Paul Banks Elementary School Principal



From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Andrew Gray](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. David Nelson](#); [Rep. DeLena Johnson](#); [Rep. Donna Mears](#); [Rep. Elexie Moore](#); [Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Rep. Genevieve Mina](#); [Rep. George Rauscher](#); [Rep. Jamie Allard](#); [Rep. Jeremy Bynum](#); [Rep. Jubilee Underwood](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Justin Ruffridge](#); [Rep. Kevin McCabe](#); [Rep. Ky Holland](#); [Rep. Louise Stutes](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Rep. Mike Prax](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Nellie Jimmie](#); [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Rep. Robyn Burke](#); [Rep. Sara Hannan](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#); [Rep. Will Stapp](#); [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
Subject: Letter in support of House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 8:22:16 PM
Attachments: [Letter in support of House Bill 69.pdf](#)

Please find attached letter in support of House Bill 69.

Thank you for your consideration as you deliberate this important Bill.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Olson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#)
Subject: MIR Support Letter for SB46, Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:23:03 AM

MIR, Russian Language Immersion Program
Turnagain Elementary
[REDACTED]

February 11, 2025

We are writing as Mission is Russian (MIR), a parent led non-profit that supports the Russian Immersion Programs at Turnagain Elementary School, Romig Middle School, And West Anchorage High School. We are deeply invested in quality education and are writing to express our strong support for SB46, the Education Funding Bill. We respectfully urge legislators to vote in favor of SB46, as the chronic underfunding of the Anchorage School District has now led to a \$100M budget deficit. Long-term investment is needed in our schools and is vital not only for the success of our children, but also for the future of Anchorage.

For another year, language immersion programs at the Anchorage School District have faced severe budget cuts or closure. Our family of language immersion programs are far more than just classes in a foreign language—they are immersive experiences that build bridges between cultures, foster empathy, and prepare students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. By enabling students to learn a new language through everyday use and cultural integration, immersion programs significantly enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, in today's global economy, bilingualism and cultural fluency are more than just assets; they are necessities. The sustained funding provided by SB46 will ensure that these programs remain open, giving students the opportunity to develop these crucial skills and creating opportunities such as the ones we have seen at the State Department with Richard Marshall, Director of Operations for NSA Alaska.

Supporting SB46 is an investment in our future. By endorsing this bill, legislators are not only ensuring that vital educational programs continue, but they are also sending a strong message about the value our community places on diversity, inclusion, and global readiness. We are confident that with your support, SB69 will help build a stronger, more innovative, and united future for all of us.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. We hope you will stand this letter of support to the packet and it helps build support for 40 legislators.

Sincerely,

Anna McConnaughy (President)

Vlada Sotskaya (Vice President)

Galina Ryabova-Houston (Treasurer)

Marina Moore (Secretary)

MIR Parents, Inc.

Supporting Russian Immersion students, teachers, and families at
Turnagain Elementary, Romig Middle School, and West High School in
Anchorage, Alaska



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Our Schools NEED a Higher BSA!
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:49:02 PM

Hello,

I am writing to you today because I'm discouraged and saddened by the news that our schools will not be fully funded next year. Our children are our future and they deserve to go to schools that have enough money to properly fund all programs. They deserve to have full time librarians and nurses. They deserve to play after school sports and go to music, gym and art. They deserve to have normal classes taught by teachers who are not spread thin with large classes and other duties due to lack of funding for other positions.

I'm scared that if our schools aren't properly funded that our kids reading and math skills will decline even further. Our children are still trying to recover those skills that were lost during remote learning for Covid. If we don't have full time librarians, I'm worried that reading will decline even further. Our children need to be able to have access to the library and have a librarian there to help them find the love of reading.

I am asking you to please vote to increase the BSA needed by our schools next year.

Thank you,
Dawn Stoops

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Subject: Permanent and guaranteed funding increase to the BSA
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:07:39 PM

Dear Representative Hall and the House Education Committee,

I am writing in strong support of a permanent and guaranteed funding increase for K-12 education that adjusts for inflation so that our school districts can properly operate our schools and educate our children. Funding has fallen behind inflation for almost two decades, and our schools, students, teachers, and the State of Alaska are suffering.

I have two children, in kindergarten and first grade, attending Kincaid Elementary. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful neighborhood school. My children have a long way to go in the Anchorage School District and I am extremely worried about the proposed budget that eliminates teacher positions and leads to class size increases of 4 per class, when we are already above recommended levels. I am also worried about reductions in sports, special programs and extracurricular activities to keep ALL children engaged in school

If the Alaska school system fails, our whole state will fail. Without a strong educational system, anyone who has the means will leave Alaska. This includes myself, a physician working with an underserved urban population, and my husband who works on rural infrastructure.

Schools are closing, teachers are leaving the profession, families are leaving the state, and companies are having difficulties attracting talent because we have failed to invest in our kids and in Alaska's future.

Governor Dunleavy proposed an education budget in December 2024 for the 2025-26 school year that would represent a 15% CUT from this year's budget, which would result in schools receiving almost \$2,000 LESS in real dollars per student than they did in 2011. That is crazy. We need MORE money, not less money, going into schools.

The BSA is the core formula used to fund schools in Alaska, and it has remained stagnant for over a decade despite rising costs. School leaders and legislators from both parties have called for a permanent increase to the BSA, yet Dunleavy's plan ignores this demand entirely.

The Alaska constitution requires that the legislature "establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state" and the lack of adequate funding for our public education system for over a decade does not carry out this mandate.

What Alaska Actually Needs:

- A Significant & Permanent BSA Increase
- Teacher Retention Policies, Not Temporary Bonuses
- Fair & Equitable School Funding
- More Local Control, Not State Overreach

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my letter. This is not a partisan issue and we should not wait for the governor to come around. I am asking the legislature to

pass HB 69 to raise the BSA and to override a veto by the governor if necessary. We owe this to our children and the state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Rachel Samuelon

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99502

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Please Fund Education, Vote YES for HB69
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:08:16 PM

Hello,

I am writing today to ask you to do everything you can to increase funding for education in Alaska, to support the future of our city and our state. Please support HB69.

It is unreasonable to expect school districts to perform at somewhere between 60-70 cents on the dollar. You wouldn't expect a business to run successfully with a 30-40% cut to revenue and I'm sure you wouldn't expect to operate your household finances that way either. The costs associated with education are no different, yet the State of Alaska has repeatedly refused to increase BSA despite increases in operating cost due to inflation.

My husband and I grew up in this state, we received excellent educations through the Anchorage School District, and we want to offer that same education opportunity to our kids while raising them in the greatness that is Alaska. While we want to stay here, we don't have to. Alaska has a well known problem with out-migration right now and I can tell you, when I talk to friends and family who have left, fear about the quality of education is one of the major factors. Please, PLEASE adequately fund education so we can grow our population with home-grown Alaskans who are ready to take on the challenges and opportunities this great state has to offer.

Thank you for your time,
Kate

Kate Hammer
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please increase BSA
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 1:08:28 PM

Hello,

My children attend public school in Fairbanks, and I'm asking you to please support our schools by permanently increasing the BSA. As I watch our friends' schools close and class sizes go up, I seriously question if this is the best place to stay and raise a family. Though I've lived here fifteen years, and my husband grew up here attending Fairbanks public schools, it's harder to justify staying when we see education getting cut repeatedly. Please invest in the future of Alaska by increasing the BSA.

Thank you,

Molly

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: PLEASE Support Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 2:59:35 PM

Good afternoon –

We must invest in our **students and teachers, protect parents' choices, and ensure accountability at the school district level.** It is clear from the proposals put forth that there is room for compromise! The unstable funding, inconsistent messaging, and 'threats' to cut programs and staff have impacted teacher retention and morale. Our educators should not be spending their resources on subjects like this – we need them to engage with our children without this 'excessive noise.'

In the long term, sustainable budgets will save money and prevent us from having a yearly crisis in education funding. These annual conversations cause undue stress on educators, parents, and our students. Please tell me why we have increased funding for prisons but can't increase funding for our children's education. Cutting teachers, proven programs (immersion), and undermining progress will not prepare our children - or our state - for a better future. **By funding education, we are investing in our future.**

When choosing which school my husband and I wanted our children to participate in, the Immersion program was an absolute game changer. Without the French Immersion program, we would have chosen to send our children to a private school. We were looking for a school close to our home (O'Malley is our neighborhood school) with a close-knit, consistent group of engaged families. The French Immersion program checked all those boxes while also supporting our public school system. It was the obvious choice for our family. Without the French Immersion program, we would have no choice but to leave the public school system and potentially the State. This is why I support school choice and increased education funding.

My husband and I were born and raised in Anchorage and attended the public school system at a time when funding was not an annual conversation. I can only imagine the undue stress and anxiety we would have experienced if we knew that our school programs were on the chopping block. Our children **do not** need to be bothered with this. They need to focus on learning and growing into the future leaders of our community.

As a super voter, I rely on you to represent the best interests of our

community, and I strongly urge you to support funding education immediately. Let's adequately fund education and invest in our future!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you,
Tara

Tara Gallagher, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Partner, Architect

sparkdesign,llc

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, Alaska 99518

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [School Board](#)
Subject: Please Support HB 69!
Date: Saturday, February 8, 2025 12:00:12 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

My name is Tina Tweedley and I am a District 10 constituent who returned to Anchorage (Klatt area) from out of state in August 2024. We lived in various parts of Anchorage from 2010-2019, then overseas 2020-2023, and finally in Texas for the first half of 2024. My husband, an oil and gas engineer, and myself, a medical professional, wanted to return to the Alaskan mountains, culture and community we loved.

I would like to encourage you and all other representatives to vote FOR House Bill 69! The state should be embarrassed by the proposed budget cuts and the blatant lack of adjustment the Base Student Allocation (BSA) has seen for inflation. This state needs to invest in the education of its young people if it will have a bright future. Preserving a PFD may serve lower income families in the present but at the risk of crippling them with poorly educated children and thus endangering their future.

Upon returning to Alaska, ASD has been a massive disappointment. Not because the educators aren't passionate or lack the skills to do their jobs. Not because the administrators lack ability or motivation to run the best schools they possibly can. But because the lack of state financial support affects whether they can perform their jobs to the best of their ability.

Honestly, the Alaskan government we have returned to is a disgrace and I cannot in good conscience encourage other professionals with young children to come here. In fact, had we not just made the move, we would be looking to leave as many of our colleagues are now considering in light of the deep budget cuts. The underfunding leads to devastating cuts that will inevitably destroy the education and future for the children of Alaska.

Please consider supporting HB 69 to increase the BSA, thereby saving our children's education and securing their future!

Regards,

Tina Tweedley

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please support HB 69
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:45:33 PM

Please support our local communities and our future by supporting HB 69. Raising funds to equal out inflation increase is a start but it's time for us all to dig deep and invest in Alaskas future; our children. Education and innovation is what make this state great. We are already seeing a decline in young populations leaving out of state do to lack of educational opourtunities. Our students are in the bottom 10% for reading comprehension nationally. This is embarrassing and completely unacceptable. Our State is one of the richest states when it comes to resources. Let's put our money where it counts. The true future education. Thank you for your consideration.

Victory Cheney

[REDACTED]

Anchorage AK 99508

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#)
Subject: Please support HB69!
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:43:31 AM

Hello,

I am writing to urge you to please vote for HB69, we need to secure funding for our schools.

Anchorage has such a rich diversity of schools and quality programs that are in jeopardy without adequate funding. Please save our immersion programs and many other school programs through out the state that are critical for the future of Alaska, an Alaskan workforce, Alaskan businesses, and society.

Please invest in our future by funding our schools. School funding levels has fallen way behind inflation and we need to increase school spending to maintain quality programs throughout the state. Quality education is paramount in investing in Alaska's future.

Sincerely,
Marta Kumle

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please support HB69
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 12:53:15 PM

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to urge you to vote in support of HB69. Stable, multi-year education funding is imperative for our kids & the Alaskan economy. Education funding has been flat for 8 years which is not sustainable. If nothing changes, huge cuts will be necessary to balance the budget. Meanwhile, spending on Alaska's prisons has grown 3x as fast as spending on education - this is backwards! I am well aware the programs that will likely be cut are those that provide our students with a well rounded education-art, physical education, music, and specialty programs will likely be the first to go.

My child attends the French Immersion program at O'Malley Elementary School in Anchorage. She has benefited in so many ways from this program as it challenges her academically, and also gives her a sense of community and stability. This stability is extremely valuable in these early formative years and if programs like French Immersion is not funded, my child will lose a key part of her support system outside of her home environment. She will lose the opportunity to challenge herself to learn in two languages, a skill that has already given her so much confidence. She will lose the ability to learn and interact with other French language speakers on a daily basis-something that cannot be replicated elsewhere at this time. This program has been amazing for my child's growth and development as it has been for so many others!

I urge you to consider the future of Alaska-our children, and the importance of well-rounded, properly funded education plays in their growth and development overall.

Respectfully,

Dr. Caitlin Milligan

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: PLEASE support multi-year, secure funding for our public schools
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:51:00 AM

Good Morning,

My name is Sarah McWilliams. I am a Speech Pathologist, a small business owner, and the mother of two elementary students that attend the O'Malley Elementary French Immersion program. Today I am writing in strong support of raising the BSA and to support multi-year, secure, funding for our public schools.

COVID encouraged many educators to leave the profession and very few people are attracted to and/or joining what sometimes feels like a sinking ship. At the same time, education is one of the most important, valuable investments we can make as a state. Families will not stay in Alaska without solid public school options for their children. I know several families who plan to move out of state if the O'Malley French Immersion Program were to be dissolved. A well-educated population is integral to our economy and attracting big business to set up shop here. The out-migration of smart Alaskans that care about education is incredibly concerning.

Our student to teacher ratio is incredibly concerning, and O'Malley is slated to lose 5 additional teachers which is unimaginable. Assuming teacher loss will be based on seniority, some of our French Teachers will receive pink slips. Without French teachers, there is no immersion program. ASD currently has 2848 students k-12 enrolled in immersion programs which are such special programs of the Anchorage school district. Firing our immersion teachers now would dismantle decades of work and passion.

I understand that the 111 million dollar shortfall will need funding and Alaskans have some hard decisions ahead. I support using PFD money for the purpose of education. The education of our kids is more important than shopping. Right now our Alaskan kids rank 46th and 49th for test scores in the country. We can and must do better. It's unfair to demand improvement without the funding and support to do so.

Sincerely,
Sarah, Sadie (9yrs), & Isla (7yrs) McWilliams

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please vote YES to raise the BSA!
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 12:02:35 PM
Attachments: [Screen Shot 2025-02-12 at 8.56.58 AM.png](#)

Hello House Education Committee Members,
Here we are a year later with another plea for you to vote for Alaska's children and the future of Alaska. PLEASE support raising the BSA and stable, multi-year education funding. Strong schools make a strong Alaska and we must act now!

The ASD budget proposal paints a grim picture of what the future of ASD and our children's education could look like if the BSA is not raised yet again this year. This morning's [Op-Ed](#) in the ADN hits home on many levels what those cuts would mean to not only my own children but also their peers.

Have you been in an ASD classroom recently? They are bursting at the seams with no space, less attention per child and behavior issues on the rise. How can we expect our children to read, write and learn math if the classroom is overly packed with desks and distractions? How can we expect our teachers to teach such a large class effectively? We must set our children and their teachers up for success. The answer is simple- RAISE THE BSA!

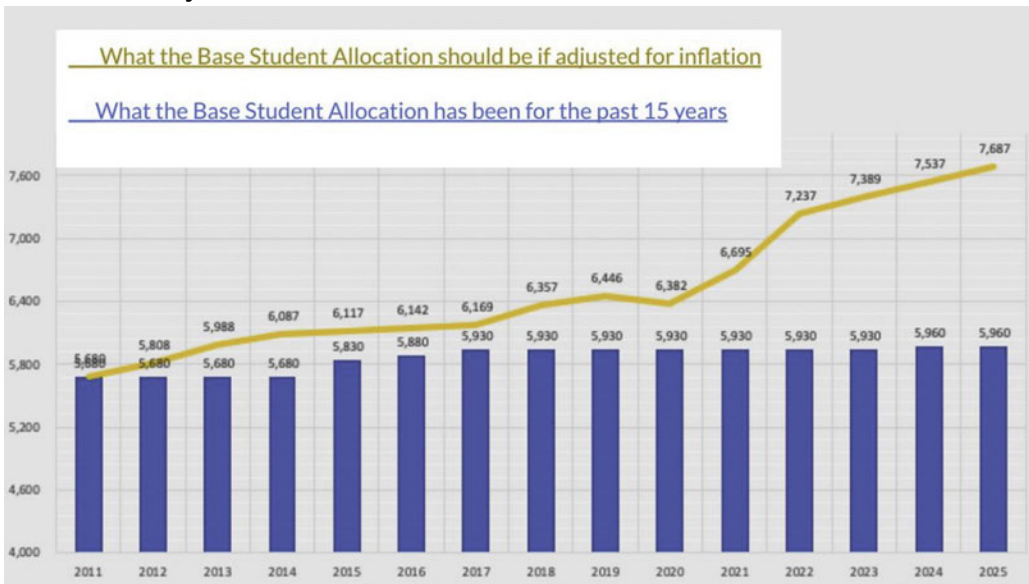
My own fifth grade daughter recently shared her concerns with the ASD school board members about middle school sports being cut. Here is a snippet from her letter highlighting that sports, especially middle school sports are valuable beyond the sport itself:

Middle School sports help bring the school community together. Participating on a team can help students make friends and discover new strengths that the students may not have known they had. School sports are a great way for middle schoolers to get involved and develop healthy habits such as teamwork, confidence, time management, self esteem and a sense of belonging.

Exercise is important in overall wellbeing and starting that habit young is a great way to build a strong healthy lifestyle. Being part of a team encourages friendships and strong social skills that are helpful for later life.

How can we expect our students to produce exceptional outcomes from all

areas of academics and extracurriculars when we don't provide funding to keep up with inflation? This graph clearly shows that education funding per student has been flat since 2011 while the cost to operate schools has risen substantially.



It is time to stand up for our children now and for the future of Alaska. We cannot continue the downward spiral of our education system. Please vote YES to raise the BSA!

A concerned parent of three ASD students,

Calisa Kastning
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [House Finance](#)
Subject: Public testimony
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 8:58:48 PM

My name is Kim Dugas, I am representing Watershed Charter School where 3 of my children attend and a 4th will enter next year. I am asking you to please support a permanent increase to the BSA. Our children are truly the future of Alaska. They will soon be part of Alaska's workforce all the way from our government, to law enforcement to our pilots, to our doctors, nurses and other medical personnel. Our children deserve to have quality education and that just can't happen without proper funding. They need the school related opportunities that enhance their well being and inspire them to engage in meaningful activities that will lead to a positive future. Our children are faced with many more challenges today (screen addiction from young ages, distracted and disengaged parents) and for many the positive experiences and relationships they find at school is their lifeline to success and wellbeing as they move towards adulthood. Please provide this essential lifeline to our society's children by enabling them to attend properly funded schools.

Sincerely,
Kim Dugas

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: Raising the BSA Student Letters
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:23:03 AM
Attachments: [8th Grade Letters.pdf](#)

Dear Representative Himschoot,

My 8th grade students at Craig Middle School have been learning about our Constitution and our government. We thought this was an excellent time to put our learning into action. After hearing about the BSA and what it does, my students were greatly concerned about what not raising it would mean for their future. They wanted to write to you expressing their support for raising the BSA. Attached are letters from students.

Thank you for your fight in this and we appreciate all the work you are doing.

Courtney Frieb
CMS Social Studies

From: [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Re: !!KPBSD Funding
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 7:00:49 AM

Hello Melisa,

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your story.

I am including the Senate and House Education Committee emails to ensure your testimony is added to the public record.

Thank you for advocating for our schools and kids.

@lgtobin

Löki Gale Tobin, MA (she/her)
(pronounced: Lew-key)

Alaska State Senator, District I
Chair, Senate Education Committee

On Feb 11, 2025, at 7:30 PM, Melisa [REDACTED] wrote:

I am writing to you as a deeply concerned constituent from Anchor Point, Alaska, regarding the imminent threat of closure facing Paul Banks Elementary School in Homer. This decision, driven by budget cuts to the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD), will have devastating consequences for our community—especially for children with special education needs who rely on the critical services provided by this school.

Both of my children attend Paul Bank Elementary School. They both have several learning disabilities and Autism.

Paul Banks Elementary is not just another school. It is a cornerstone of our community, a safe haven where young children, including those with special needs, receive the foundational support necessary to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Closing this school would strip away essential resources from the very students who need them most—those who cannot advocate for themselves and depend on us, as adults and leaders, to protect their right to quality education.

Alaska's children deserve better. Our educators deserve better. The future of our

state relies on a strong, well-funded public education system that doesn't just meet the bare minimum but actively invests in the success of every child. Special education programs are not luxuries—they are necessities. Cutting funding for these services is not just short-sighted; it is unconscionable.

I urge you to stand up for the families, educators, and—most importantly—the children of the Kenai Peninsula. Advocate fiercely for increased funding for KPBSD. Fight to keep Paul Banks Elementary open. Prioritize the needs of our most vulnerable students, because when we fail them, we fail as a society.

Your leadership in this matter is not just requested—it is demanded by the people you were elected to represent. We are watching closely, and we expect action.

Sincerely,

Melisa Marquardt

Anchor Point, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: RE: BSAI
Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 11:28:26 AM

Thank you Tammy!

From: House Education [mailto:House.Education@akleg.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 6, 2025 10:59 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BSAI

Greetings,

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

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

Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Regards,

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

From: Kate Steve [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:27 PM
To: House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>
Subject: BSAI

As a 49 year resident without children in schools, I still fully support the Base Student Allowance increase. Falling behind in school funding has done a disservice to our children and our state. I urge you to pass a clean bill without the many misguided Dunleavy policy desires.

Thank you,
Kate Wedemeyer

[REDACTED]
Anchorage 99508



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: [Sarena Hackenmiller](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: RE: MIR Support Letter for SB46, Education Funding
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 4:34:44 PM

Thank you!

Thank you,
Sarena

From: House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:38 PM
To: Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>
Subject: FW: MIR Support Letter for SB46, Education Funding

Hello,

Wanted to ensure your office had this letter of support for SB 46.

Regards,

Claire Fordyce
Legislative Aide/Education Committee
Rep. Rebecca Himschoot
District 2
907.465.6848

From: MIR Parents [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:23 AM
To: Senate Education <Senate.Education@akleg.gov>
Subject: MIR Support Letter for SB46, Education Funding

MIR, Russian Language Immersion Program
Turnagain Elementary
[REDACTED]

February 11, 2025

We are writing as Mission is Russian (MIR), a parent led non-profit that supports the Russian Immersion Programs at Turnagain Elementary School, Romig Middle School, And West Anchorage High School. We are deeply invested in quality education and are writing to express our strong support for SB46, the Education Funding Bill. We respectfully urge legislators to vote in favor of SB46, as the chronic underfunding of the Anchorage School District has now led to a \$100M budget deficit. Long-term investment is needed in our schools and is vital not only for the success of our children, but also for the future of Anchorage.

For another year, language immersion programs at the Anchorage School District have faced

severe budget cuts or closure. Our family of language immersion programs are far more than just classes in a foreign language—they are immersive experiences that build bridges between cultures, foster empathy, and prepare students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. By enabling students to learn a new language through everyday use and cultural integration, immersion programs significantly enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, in today's global economy, bilingualism and cultural fluency are more than just assets; they are necessities. The sustained funding provided by SB46 will ensure that these programs remain open, giving students the opportunity to develop these crucial skills and creating opportunities such as the ones we have seen at the State Department with Richard Marshall, Director of Operations for NSA Alaska.

Supporting SB46 is an investment in our future. By endorsing this bill, legislators are not only ensuring that vital educational programs continue, but they are also sending a strong message about the value our community places on diversity, inclusion, and global readiness. We are confident that with your support, SB69 will help build a stronger, more innovative, and united future for all of us.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. We hope you will stand this letter of support to the packet and it helps build support for 40 legislators.

Sincerely,

Anna McConaughy (President)

Vlada Sotskaya (Vice President)

Galina Ryabova-Houston (Treasurer)

Marina Moore (Secretary)

MIR Parents, Inc.

Supporting Russian Immersion students, teachers, and families at
Turnagain Elementary, Romig Middle School, and West High School in
Anchorage, Alaska

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Cc: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [s \[REDACTED\]](#); [Rep. Genevieve Mina](#); [Sen. Forrest Dunbar](#); [Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson](#)
Subject: Re: New NAEP scores support HB 69
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:30:54 PM
Attachments: [NAEP reading 4th 2024 220AK4.pdf](#)
[NAEP 8th reading 2024 220AK8.pdf](#)

Dear Anchorage School Board / Legislators / Education Leaders,

Thank you, Mike, for sending this out. The recent NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) results highlight what many of us have long known Alaska's education system is in crisis. In 2024, Alaska's fourth-grade students scored an average of 226, falling well below the national average of 237. Rather than blaming students, teachers, or families, we must confront the systemic challenges that are driving these outcomes and recognize the critical issue of education adequacy in our state.

Alaska's Constitution guarantees students the right to a system of public education that is adequate, equitable, and effective. However, current funding levels, staffing shortages, and policy failures have led to an education system that does not meet this constitutional obligation.

Adequacy in education means ensuring that every student has access to the resources, teachers, and opportunities they need to succeed. In Alaska, we are failing to provide even the most basic level of educational adequacy.

Schools lack critical instructional support, intervention services, and up-to-date materials to meet the diverse needs of students.

Special education services are underfunded and understaffed, leaving students with disabilities without the legally required support they need to access their education.

Class sizes continue to grow, and many schools lack certified teachers in key subject areas, disproportionately affecting low-income, Indigenous, and rural students.

Key Underlying Challenges Contributing to Alaska's Educational Struggles

1. Chronic Underfunding of Public Education

Flat BSA (Base Student Allocation) funding for years has left schools struggling with rising costs, staff shortages, and inadequate resources for student support.

High poverty rates mean many students arrive at school without basic needs met, requiring additional services that schools cannot afford to provide.

2. Severe Teacher Shortages & High Turnover

Low salaries, lack of professional support, and difficult working conditions have driven experienced educators away, forcing schools to rely on long-term substitutes and underqualified staff.

Rural and high-need schools face the greatest shortages, deepening inequities in education access.

3. Equity Gaps for Indigenous and Rural Students

Alaska Native and rural students face disproportionate barriers, including a lack of certified teachers, unstable broadband access, and the absence of culturally responsive curricula.

Transportation and weather-related school closures further limit access to consistent learning opportunities.

4. Lack of Investment in Early Childhood Education

Minimal state-funded pre-K programs mean students enter kindergarten without early literacy and numeracy skills, putting them at an immediate disadvantage.

States that invest in early childhood education consistently outperform Alaska in NAEP scores.

5. Impact of Federal Policies & Funding Withholdings

Alaska is the only state that withholds up to 90% of Federal Impact Aid, disproportionately harming Indigenous and military families who rely on these funds.

REAs (Regional Educational Attendance Areas) and borough-based

districts have vastly different funding structures, creating deep inequities in school resources.

These challenges are not new, and they will not improve without real investment and policy change. If we truly care about Alaska's students, we need:

1. A meaningful BSA increase that accounts for inflation and ensures adequate resources for schools.
2. Retention-focused strategies to keep experienced educators in the classroom.
3. Strong investment in early childhood education to close achievement gaps before they start.
4. Policy reforms to ensure equitable funding across all districts, including a reassessment of Impact Aid policies.
5. A serious commitment to meeting the legal standard of an adequate education for every student, not just those in well-resourced districts.

These NAEP results are not just statistics they are a reflection of systemic failures that demand urgent attention. Alaska's students are just as capable as those in any other state, but without the necessary support, they are being set up to fail. We can no longer afford to make excuses or ignore the consequences of inaction. It's time to prioritize education adequacy before Alaska falls even further behind.

Sincerely,

Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche

Alaska Education Chair, NAACP Alaska, Oregon, Washington State Area Conference (AOWSAC)

Anchorage Education Chair & 3rd Vice President, NAACP Anchorage Branch

Vice President of Family Engagement, Alaska PTA

On Jan 29, 2025, at 7:43 AM, Mike Bronson [REDACTED]
wrote:

Dear Representatives,

If you are interested, here's today reports of Alaska's declining reading scores on the national test in 2024.

Fourth graders have lost a full year's reading learning since 2015. Now they are a year behind the average US fourth grader.

Thanks, -Mike Bronson, Anchorage

From: [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ: Failing Schools, Fleeing Families: The Consequences of Alaska's Education Crisis
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:35:44 PM
Attachments: [Failing Schools, Fleeing Families- The Consequences of Alaska's Education Crisis \(1\).pdf](#)

Hi Rachel,

I am copying the two education committees to ensure we get your thorough and insight public testimony onto the public record.

@lgtobin

Löki Gale Tobin, MA (she/her)
(Pronounced: Lew-key)

Alaska State Senator, District I
Senate Education Committee Chair

On Feb 12, 2025, at 4:53 PM, Rachel Blakeslee [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Representatives of the Alaska State Legislature,

It is with extreme urgency that we are writing to you to request that you quickly increase the investment in our public education system to support its viability. Our public schools have been neglected for too long, and across the political and ideological perspectives among our networks, we are all fed up. Our colleagues and friends are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike, and all of us are reliant on well-supported public schools.

My husband and I have spent the past few nights staying up late and analyzing statewide school data from the past 20 years. We have included our findings in the attached piece I wrote last night. **Families are leaving.** It feels dire to us, and if the divestment in public education continues, more of us will leave. **We are the state's workforce, the backbone of the economy. And we cannot stay here in a place with a high cost of living and a low return on our investment.**

I hope you read the attached piece in full. Our communities are suffering, and there will be fewer of us willing to stick around if this is all we have to look forward to year after year.

Respectfully,
Rachel Blakeslee

From: [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Re: Urgent: Strong Support for Increased BSA and Sustainable Funding for KPBSD
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 6:58:08 AM

Thank you Mandy for reaching out and sharing your insight.

I am including both the Senate and House Education Committee emails to ensure your testimony is added to the public record.

@lgtobin

Löki Gale Tobin, MA (she/her)
(pronounced: Lew-key)

Alaska State Senator, District I
Chair, Senate Education Committee

On Feb 11, 2025, at 10:16 PM, Mandy Lehm [REDACTED]
wrote:

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing as a concerned parent and a strong supporter of public education. I have two young children—one currently in 1st grade and another due to start kindergarten in August—and I am deeply concerned about the projected \$17 million budget deficit facing the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD), and the significant impact this will have on our students, teachers, and schools.

While I appreciate the proposed \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) in HB69, I believe this is just a starting point. To truly address the financial challenges facing our schools and keep up with inflation, the BSA should be increased by at least \$1,800. Additionally, we must ensure that the BSA is inflation-proof. By tying the BSA to inflation, we can guarantee that our schools are not perpetually struggling to keep up with rising costs, creating a more sustainable funding model for public education.

One of the most pressing issues is the current process, which forces districts to submit their budgets before knowing how much funding they'll actually receive from the state. This uncertainty is unsustainable. It's like going grocery shopping without knowing how much money you have—it simply doesn't work. Schools need the ability to plan effectively. Teachers and staff must be hired by April/May, but the district is often left in limbo about funding. Last year, KPBSD didn't receive the final budget until two days before school started, creating unnecessary stress and pink slipping staff just days before they thought they

would begin working.

This uncertainty is further compounded by the fact that we are working on a yearly basis. We need to move toward forward funding for education—ideally for 3+ years. This would allow districts to plan more effectively, make informed staffing decisions, and ensure that schools are able to provide a stable educational environment without the constant financial uncertainty year after year.

The financial strain on KPBSD is affecting our educators in real, harmful ways. Teachers are stretched thin, managing larger class sizes with fewer resources. We are already looking at potential school closures, and elementary classrooms could soon have up to 30 students each. This overcrowding makes it nearly impossible for teachers to give students the attention they deserve. Instead of being the focused educators they were trained to be, teachers are being forced into a babysitting role of managing increasingly difficult situations, which is burning them out and pushing many to the breaking point, which means quitting the teaching profession. We are losing our educators, what an absolute travesty.

As a parent, I see firsthand the importance of quality education for my children. The decisions we make today will directly impact the education and future of my kids, and countless others across the state. We cannot afford to continue reducing funding for public education and expecting our teachers to manage larger classes with fewer resources.

I want to be clear—I fully support public education funding and am advocating for solutions that will allow our schools to serve students effectively. To truly solve this issue, we need to find ways to increase revenue for our schools and reduce the burden on the state budget. Here are some potential solutions that could help:

- **Have the borough fund to the cap every year**
- **Raise the sales tax cap:** By increasing the cap on the sales tax, we could generate additional revenue for education without overburdening any single group of taxpayers.
- **Implement a small, flat school tax:** One idea would be to introduce a modest, flat school tax for every working Alaskan—say, \$10 or \$100 per year. This would be an equitable way for all Alaskans to contribute to the funding of our public education system.

These are just a few ideas, but the key point is this: we need stable, predictable funding for our schools. We cannot continue to take resources away from public education and expect our teachers to work magic. Our teachers deserve better. Our students deserve better. And we, as a state, must invest in the future of our children. Without strong and robust public education in our state people will leave our beautiful state. Who wants to live somewhere where there is no future for their children? No extra curriculars? No sports? No theater, pool, shop classes?

I urge you to take bold action in support of public education funding. We need a

BSA increase that reflects the true cost of inflation, forward funding to provide stability, and additional revenue solutions to ensure our schools can continue providing quality education.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing your leadership in ensuring that Alaska's public education system is adequately supported for the future.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lehm

Resident of Homer, Alaska



From: [REDACTED]
[House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#)
Subject: Restore and inflation-proof the BSA
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 5:16:38 PM

Dear members of the House and Senate Education Committees, Senator Cronk, and Representative Carrick,

I am writing to strongly encourage you to support restoring education funding to an adequate level. This means increasing the BSA to at least \$7589, which would put us back to 2017 levels when adjusted for inflation. And it means inflation-proofing the BSA going forward so our school districts and educators can plan ahead with fiscal certainty. We also need adequate funding for school transportation so working families like mine can get our kids to and from school while working full time.

I'm a lifelong Alaskan and current resident of Fairbanks, where my two kids go to Pearl Creek Elementary. This wonderful, outstanding school is going to be closed in May due to our school district's budget crisis. This crisis was caused by years of inflation eating away at the value of the BSA while costs continue to rise, coupled with families pulling their kids out of public schools as programs get cut and class sizes increase. Alaska's schools are in a death spiral, and we can't cut our way out of it. Our class sizes are too large, our buildings need maintenance, we've lost talented teachers, music, and art programs, and now we're closing some of our best schools. Closing great Alaska schools for no good reason. Please stop this now.

I know many of you care about school choice. Pearl Creek Elementary was my family's choice. We really value being able to send our kids on the bus to an outstanding neighborhood school, and I know a lot of other families feel the same way. Some families prefer charter schools or correspondence. That's great. Restoring and inflation-proofing the BSA helps all of us.

To boost our economy, we need to educate a highly skilled workforce. To stop our population from dropping, we need to attract and retain talented, hardworking young families in Alaska. We have watched too many of our friends leave Alaska because of year after year of school cuts, funding crises, and uncertainty. Flat funding has failed. One-time funding patches that pass in June are not working either because districts can't plan for the long term, and talented young teachers will leave if they don't have a stable job lined up by then. **Please support a permanent increase to the BSA, inflation proofing, school transportation, and catching up on deferred maintenance. Alaska's future depends on it.**

If you're worried about how to pay for public schools, I support all of these revenue generators:

- Sen. Yundt's bill SB92 to tax S corporations (Hilcorp) at the same rate as C corporations
- Reducing per-barrel oil tax credits
- A non-resident income tax, and even
- A progressive income tax that applies to everyone employed in Alaska

Thank you,
Erik Schoen
[REDACTED]

Fairbanks, AK 99709



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Save public schools - Support HB 69!
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 9:26:22 PM

Hello, and thank you for what you do.

I'm an Anchorage resident and I am writing to ask you to do everything within your power to increase state support to Alaska's public schools. Doing so is vitally important to our children, the retention of working families, and to economic growth. Alaska's future literally hangs in the balance. Alaska's public schools must be capable of providing a quality education to our students, and that is simply not possible under the current state funding situation. The best way to help in the immediate term would be to support HB 69; so I implore you to do so. Once the school districts have reliable funding that allows them to keep class sizes reasonable, provide for much-needed maintenance, and continue to offer special programs like language immersion and IGNITE, we can work on more initiatives to make Alaska's schools competitive with other states. What we cannot do is stay on the path of public school destruction we are currently on... that will lead to an exodus of those who can afford to move (which happens to be the very families and skilled workers that drive Alaska's economy).

Please, I ask again: support HB 69!

Thank you for your time.
Clint Hammer

From: [REDACTED]
Cc: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: SB 46 Educational Funding- HB 69support the ASD Language Immersion program
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 5:29:57 PM

Dear Matt Claman, and Rebecca Himschoot,

I am the Grandmother of a 3rd grader in the French Immersion program at O'Malley Elementary School. She started in Kindergarten, and has had a half day French and half day in English in her school year for the past four years. I have witnessed the transformation from her beginning year of French to conversational and comprehension this year. She is now 8 1/2 and has a grasp of the language and its structure. It is inspiring! When a foreign language is immersed into these children for hours at a time, it becomes a normal part of their lives.

This is not a frivolous expenditure in the ASD budget-it is an investment that will play out around the globe as travelers and employees utilize their talents.

Please allocate the funds for the school district so it can continue to support this important part of the children's lives.

Sincerely,
Linda Bennett

A 49.5 year Alaskan Resident

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Matt Claman](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Cc: [Sen. Jesse Bjorkman](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#); [Sen. Forrest Dunbar](#); [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#); [Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson](#); [Sen. Lyman Hoffman](#); [Sen. Shelley Hughes](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); [Sen. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Sen. Jesse Kiehl](#); [Sen. Kelly Merrick](#); [Sen. Robert Myers](#); [Sen. Donny Olson](#); [Sen. Mike Shower](#); [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Sen. Löki Tobin](#); [Sen. Bill Wielechowski](#); [Sen. Robert Yundt](#); [Rep. Jamie Allard](#); [Rep. Robyn Burke](#); [Rep. Jeremy Bynum](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#); [Rep. Zack Fields](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#); [Rep. Andrew Gray](#); [Rep. Sara Hannan](#); [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Ky Holland](#); [Rep. Nellie Jimmie](#); [Rep. DeLena Johnson](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#); [Rep. Kevin McCabe](#); [Rep. Donna Mears](#); [Rep. Genevieve Mina](#); [Rep. Elexie Moore](#); [Rep. David Nelson](#); [Rep. Mike Prax](#); [Rep. George Rauscher](#); [Rep. Justin Ruffridge](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Rep. Will Stapp](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Louise Stutes](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Rep. Jubilee Underwood](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#)
Subject: Significantly increase and inflation proof the BSA
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 2:37:56 PM

Dear Senator Matt Claman and Representative Carolyn Hall,

I am a born and raised Alaskan who has 3 children that will go through the Anchorage School District. It is crucial that the legislature provide an increase in the student base allocation to recover from the last 4 years. I also urge the legislature to inflation proof the student base allocation to prevent history from repeating itself. The prior year's tactic of providing one-off additional funding is inefficient and creates ASD budget planning chaos. In addition, I'd like to see funding for not just the basics, but for the programs that help kids thrive (Ignite, fully staffed libraries, teachers that aren't burned out due to the lack of support around them).

My eldest daughter attends Chugach Optional. The test scores at Chugach Optional are among the highest in the district and in the state. One special aspect of Chugach Optional is the multi-age classrooms. Proposed funding cuts by ASD would increase class sizes in this school and throw off the ratio of classrooms so that our intentional multi-grade model would not work. The teachers at Chugach provide specialized teaching to support students who span multiple grade levels in ability. The attention that is required to support the individual child cannot be accomplished with larger class sizes. The high-test scores at Chugach show that this level of attention is what Alaska needs for their students to thrive. I chose to send my daughter to this school specifically for the reasons described above. As a child I attended Denali Montessori and had such a good experience that I picked a similar educational program for my own children.

My daughter also attends the Ignite program, as I did as a child in the Anchorage School District. I still remember how Ignite gave me a joy for learning and developed my critical thinking skills. After college I came back to Alaska and now work as a natural gas engineer helping to provide heat and electricity for our community. I believe this program holds significant value supporting students. I would hate to see us lose support for our gifted students who we ultimately want to stay in Alaska to be contributing members of the community.

Like other schools, Chugach Optional is losing excellent, experienced teachers due to the lack of support and resources resulting in burn-out. In addition, Chugach will lose a librarian and nurse half time.

The current state of funding for Alaskan education greatly saddens me as a born and raised Alaskan. I want my kids to thrive in this state and I don't think they can if we continue to gut our schools the way we have been. Please support HB69 or an equivalent funding increase which also inflation proves the budget.

*Thank you,
Sierra Becia*

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for and Alaska Education Funding and Continued Funding of O'Malley Elementary School
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:34:10 AM

Dear Members of the State House Education Committee,

I am writing to urge your support for **House Bill 69**, which is critical to ensuring adequate funding for schools like O'Malley Elementary in Anchorage. As a parent of two young children enrolled at O'Malley and a professional working for the State of Alaska, I see firsthand how strong, well-funded schools are essential to our community's success.

O'Malley Elementary fosters academic excellence, social development, and a strong sense of community for our children. A lack of funding threatens not only this school but also the stability and future of Anchorage's families and workforce. Schools like O'Malley attract and retain professionals in Alaska, strengthening our economy and ensuring a well-educated future workforce.

House Bill 69 is an investment in Alaska's future, providing the resources necessary for student success, workforce development, and economic stability. I urge you to support this bill and stand with families who depend on quality public education.

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

Sincerely,

Melany Wilson

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for Education
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 5:06:22 PM

Dear Representatives,

My name is Jessica Vetsch, and I am a constituent who represents a cross-section of voices on the issue of education in our community. I am a proud graduate of Family Partnership Charter School (2003) who experienced first-hand the benefits of school choice and alternative options in education. I am a mother of four school-age children currently enrolled in our beloved neighborhood schools (Trailside Elementary and Service High). I am a former homeschool-mom (pre-Covid even!) who was gratefully able to leverage alternative schooling options for two of my kids during specifically challenging times in their development. I am also a current substitute teacher for ASD who sees the daily challenges faced by our public school teachers, staff, and students but who also sees the hope and promise of a free and public education.

From this cross-section of perspectives, I am able to understand many sides of the current debate surrounding education and school funding. I fully support the development of more charter and alternative schools to serve the many educational niches of our diverse community; but I also strongly believe in the value — indeed necessity — of a thriving neighborhood school option for every family. It is for this latter reason I am writing to urge you to support permanently raising the BSA.

Our neighborhood community is built around our neighborhood schools. We know our neighbors because of school events and involvement. Kids roam our streets on bikes and on foot, playing pick-up games of street hockey, basketball, and ski-jumping (um, yes - I should really send a picture!) because of these school-based relationships that allow us to know our children are watched and cared for by a larger community. We know which kids are practicing for Battle of the Books, and we circulate copies of their reading lists between households. We know which kids have started reading and which have unicycled across the gym for the first time. We know which kids have just gotten their driver's license and what vehicles they drive. We know what sports kids play, and we cheer for them *all* at school games and meets. We support one another through family challenges and difficult times. We celebrate each others' accomplishments and promotions.

These relationships would not exist without our neighborhood school. It is what brings us together and gives us a commonality of shared experience and purpose. It is public school that brought us together and public school that continues to provide the in-person and real life communal interactions and concerns our society as a whole is starving for these days. (See "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing

Effects of Social Connection and Community,” 2003,
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>).

But the struggles are mounting. Classes sizes increase a little every year, stretching our teachers thin; resources become scarcer, limiting the options for hands-on and inquiry-based learning; our children on IEPs receive less needed time and attention NOT due to negligence but to lack of staff. (If you browse open positions in ASD right now approximately half are in Special Education and Paraprofessional Support — the positions which largely provide those essential services). Teachers are struggling under this weight and leaving the profession in discouragement. Families are more open to job opportunities outside the state and sometimes leaving when they would otherwise have chosen to stay. Most of us in our neighborhood are committed to supporting our public schools, but without adequate funding, we all realize things are about to get dire.

While many parents are aware of alternative schooling options, and some would be in a position to homeschool or provide transportation to other schools (IF they even make it in through a competitive lottery system!), the majority are not. For our neighborhood to begin splintering off into (largely demographic-based) alternative schools scattered across town would be to unravel the community fabric that makes it such a desirable place to live. ***We as parents are firm believers in school choice, and we want our neighborhood school to be one of those thriving choices.*** To raise the BSA is not only an investment in our students but an investment in our communities. Please vote to permanently raise the BSA and help us support our neighborhood schools.

If you have made it through the end of this (admittedly long) letter, I want to thank you sincerely for your time! With Regards,

Jessica Vetsch

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 - Increasing BSA
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 3:20:58 PM

I support HB 69. Please increase funding for our children and link funding with increases in CPI. The current education budget deficit is hurting future generations and the future of Alaska.

Thank you,

Amy Steele

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 - Save our Language Immersion Schools
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 12:48:15 PM

State House Education Committee,

I am writing to request your support of HB69 (or a bill substantially similar). My daughter is enrolled in the French Immersion program at O'Malley Elementary and I, along with many others in my community, am very concerned about the shortfall of funding for ASD and specifically how it will decimate our immersion programs. O'Malley is currently slated to lose 5 teachers, if they lose their French teachers, they will lose the immersion program. The teacher positions are extremely hard-to-fill and require native/near-native speakers, and in many cases, the school needs to apply for/sponsor international work visas. They cannot wait until June to see if and what the Legislature decides to fund; they will not be able to find/attract the teachers to fill vacant positions.

As the current budget proposal stands, ASDs elementary immersion programs are slated to lose 12 FTE positions for next year at the elementary level. To put things in perspective, the current 12 FTE would completely eliminate the entire k-5 French immersion program or completely eliminate both of the entire Chinese and Russian immersion K-5 programs.

Without an increase in the BSA, and predictable funding that accounts for local inflation, the immersion programs cannot continue to staff the teachers they require. In addition to losing the immersion program, the school is faced with losing numerous extracurriculars, the IGNITE program for gifted learners, and increased/extreme high class sizes. The last minute funding that has plugged inflation holes in recent years is extremely inefficient and unsustainable for the entire district, but this "solution" poses extra hardships for the immersion programs. I have 3 additional kids I am hoping to send through these programs in coming years. Our kids and hard working educators deserve better.

Your support for funding local education via HB 69 is appreciated. Please help save our immersion programs.

Thank you for your time,

Ashley Bruns

[REDACTED] 99516

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 / Education Funding
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 11:59:33 PM

Hello House Education Committee,

I'm writing in support of HB 69 and an increase to the BSA for statewide school funding and to pass this quickly so that funding can go to districts.

ASD is currently putting an unfair burden of teacher cuts to O'Malley Elementary School and the French Immersion Program due to the budget deficit. I currently have a kindergartener in the French Immersion Program at O'Malley. O'Malley Elementary (both the neighborhood program and the French Program) have created such a warm, inviting, and supportive academic community. Tearing this apart would be tragic for all parties involved. Parents are tired of Immersion being on the chopping block every few years, its disruptive and stressful for teachers and students alike to go through this limbo cycle so often.

The ASD budget is currently proposing to cut 5 teachers from O'Malley reducing the staff from 17 to 12, more than any other school in the district. Such disproportionate cuts will severely impact the quality of education and overall student experience at the school. With only 12 teachers, there is no way that a neighborhood program and immersion program can coexist at O'Malley without having 52 kids in an immersion class which is not manageable for a single teacher. Immersion programs take long term planning to recruit bilingual educators, require international hiring and visa approvals to have native or near native speakers. This is not something that can be easily reinstated if its dissolved or accommodated at the last minute if the state happens to approve more funding in the spring/summer.

About 1/2 of the current students enrolled in the French Immersion Program are not zoned for O'Malley. If the immersion program is dismantled, most likely those kids would go back to their neighborhood schools which would severely lower the population at O'Malley and effectively put the school on the chopping block to be closed in the next few years, creating another cycle of uncertainty and upheaval for the students and staff alike.


Immersion programs offer many benefits to students not only academically (improved performance, better reading comprehension and enhanced cognitive development including better memory, problem-solving skills and attention control) and socially (enhanced communication skills) but also gives them a better understanding and respect of other cultures.

I grew up in the Anchorage School District and attended Huffman Elementary, Goldenview Middle School and Service High School. ASD was a thriving school district when I attended, helping me develop the skills I use to work in our community. My husband and I were excited to move back to Anchorage to raise our kids here and were thrilled that ASD had created such a robust Immersion program offering so many languages. Our friends and family in the Lower 48 have all been impressed that a school district in Alaska has the ability to provide such an extensive immersion program. I fear that by cutting things like Immersion that make our school district unique, ASD is doing a huge disservice to the

Anchorage community and Alaska economy as a whole. Alaska is currently experiencing a population exodus. 28% of the workforce works remotely. Folks are moving out of state to better school districts - I work for a small, locally owned business and the owner told me today she's considering buying a house in Seattle so her kids can go to school there. We also have an aging population that is retiring out of the workforce. How is Anchorage supposed to attract young families and new talent when ASD is failing our children? Is the doctor you need going to be here when no one with young kids wants to move here? How are you going to recruit new teachers when there is no job stability, and they must go through a layoff cycle every year? Please consider the long-term ramifications that severe cuts like this will have on our community and state.

I have written to the school board requesting they reinstate the 5 teaching positions back to O'Malley Elementary and allowing the French Immersion Program to continue. Please help create a better future for our kids by increasing the BSA so that amazing programs like French Immersion can continue and our kids can have the excellent education that they deserve.

Thank you,
Jess Stine

From: 
Cc:
Subject: Support for HB 69 and increase of BSA statewide school funding
Date: Monday, February 17, 2025 4:26:31 PM
Importance: High

Senate Education and House Education Committee Members,

We are writing **in support of HB 69 and an increase to the BSA for statewide school funding and the need to pass this quickly so that funding can go to school districts prior to the need for staff and program cuts.**

ASD is currently putting an unfair burden of proposed teacher cuts on O'Malley Elementary School and the French Immersion Program due to the budget deficit. We currently have a grandson in kindergarten in the French Immersion Program at O'Malley. O'Malley Elementary (both the neighborhood program and the French Immersion Program) have created such a warm, inviting, and supportive academic community. Tearing this apart would be tragic for all parties involved. Parents are tired of the Immersion Programs being on the chopping block every few years; its disruptive and stressful for teachers and students alike to go through this cycle so often.

The current proposed ASD budget will cut 5 teachers from O'Malley Elementary, reducing the staff from 17 to 12 - more than any other school in the district. Such disproportionate cuts will severely impact the quality of education and overall student experience at this school. With only 12 teachers, there is no way that a neighborhood program and immersion program can coexist at O'Malley without having 52 kids in an immersion class - which is not manageable for a single teacher. **Immersion programs take long term planning to recruit bilingual educators, often requiring international hiring and visa approvals to have native or near native speakers. This is not something that can be easily reinstated if the immersion programs are accommodated at the last minute if the state happens to approve more funding this spring/summer.**

About half of the current students enrolled in the French Immersion Program are not zoned for O'Malley Elementary. If the immersion program is dismantled, most likely those kids would go back to their neighborhood schools, severely lowering the population at O'Malley and effectively putting the school on the chopping block for closure in the next few years. This will create another cycle of uncertainty and upheaval for the students and staff alike.

Immersion programs offer many benefits to students not only academically (improved performance, better reading comprehension, enhanced cognitive development, better memory, problem-solving skills, and attention control) but socially (enhanced communication skills and a better understanding and respect of other cultures).

Our children grew up in the Anchorage School District and attended Huffman

Elementary, Goldenview Middle School and Service High School/South Anchorage High School. ASD was a thriving school district when our daughter, Jessica Cawvey Stine, attended, helping her develop the skills she uses to work in our community. Jessica and her husband, Eli, were excited to move back to Anchorage to raise their sons here and were thrilled that ASD had created such a robust Immersion Program offering so many languages. Their friends and family in the Lower 48 have all been impressed that a school district in Alaska can provide such an extensive immersion program. We fear that by cutting things like the Immersion Programs that make our school district unique, ASD is doing a huge disservice to the Anchorage community and Alaska's economy. Alaska is currently experiencing a population exodus - 28% of the workforce works remotely outside of Alaska. Folks are moving out of state to find better school districts. Jessica works for a small, locally owned architecture business, and the owner told her she's considering buying a house in Seattle so her kids can go to school there. We also have an aging population that is retiring out of the workforce. How is Anchorage supposed to attract young families and new talent when ASD is failing our children? Are the doctors you need going to be here when no one with young kids wants to move here? How are you going to recruit new teachers when there is no job stability and they must go through a layoff cycle every year?

Please consider the long-term ramifications that severe cuts like this will have on our community and state.

We have written to the school board requesting they reinstate the 5 teaching positions at O'Malley Elementary and allowing the French Immersion Program to continue. **Please help create a better future for our kids by increasing the BSA so that amazing programs like French Immersion can continue and our grandchildren can have the excellent education that they deserve.**

Sincerest thanks,

Jan and Von

Jan and James (Von) Cawvey

Grandparents of an ASD Student at

O'Malley Elementary/French Immersion Program

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: support for HB 69
Date: Sunday, February 9, 2025 9:30:28 PM

Dear Alaska State House,

As an Anchorage parent of two kids in public schools at ASD I urge you to vote yes to pass House Bill 69.

Alaska has sold our kids short for too long and if we want to be competitive in the future with smart leaders of the future, and keep families in Alaska, we need to adequately fund our public school system.

I grew up in Anchorage going to public schools and came back to Alaska after going to college to raise my family and enjoy all that this state has to offer. We are going to continue to see outmigration problems and have a poorly educated population not ready to enter the workforce of the future if we don't increase the Base student allocation to a reasonable level. We will also have problems keeping good teachers if our schools are not adequately funded

I urge you to pass this important bill to finally fund our schools to the levels our kids deserve.

Thanks for considering my comment.
Sam Tocchini

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for O'Malley Elementary & Increased Education Funding
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 7:03:16 PM

Dear Alaska Legislators,

As the parent of a kindergarten and third-grade student at O'Malley Elementary, I am deeply concerned about the future of our children's education. Small class sizes and immersion programs are essential—not optional—for student success. Individualized attention helps students thrive, while immersion programs foster cognitive development and cultural understanding, preparing them for an increasingly interconnected world.

To maintain these critical programs, we must ensure adequate funding for our schools. Increasing the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** is vital to sustaining small class sizes, retaining qualified teachers, and providing students with the resources they need to succeed. Without proper funding, schools will be forced to make cuts that directly impact our children's education and future.

I urge you to support increased BSA funding to prioritize the quality of education our children deserve. Their future—and the future of Alaska—depends on it.

Sincerely,
Melany Wilson
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for permanent and guaranteed BSA funding increase
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2025 3:30:39 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

I am a local constituent and I am writing today to express my concerns about the public school budget deficit. I have two children, one enrolled in ASD-K12 and one soon to be. There are numerous cuts ASD has outlined if the BSA is not raised. These cuts, in my opinion, will have tremendous impacts on our kids and greater community. I was born and raised in Alaska and hope my kids will be allowed the same opportunities here I had.

I am asking for your help to work with other Alaskan legislators to support a permanent increase to the BSA. In doing so, we can promote the success of future generations and ensure local retention in our Alaskan workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,
Spencer Newins

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB 69
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 10:38:20 AM

Dear House Education Committee,

I thank you all for your work on the important issue of funding for schools in Alaska. Recently I read in the Alaska Beacon about how [non-resident hiring in Alaska has hit an all time high](#).

This trend will only continue if we continue to short change our children by not fully funding our public education system. I highly encourage you to support HB 69 and work with your colleagues to agree to a path forward to increase the BSA. Our schools have been starved for too long and now is the time to turn it around.

Thank you and especially thank you to Representative Schwanke who is the representative from my district.

Sincerely,
Lili Misel

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); representative.julie.colombe@akleg.gov; senator.james.kaufman@akleg.org; senator.loki.tobin@akleg.org; [Rep. Jamie Allard](#); representative.justin.ruffridge@akleg.org; [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#); [Rep. Ky Holland](#)
Subject: Support HB69 and SB46
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 3:28:00 PM

Dear State Senators and House of Representatives members,

I would like to ask you to **support Senate Bill 46 on education funding and House Bill 69 about raising the BSA.**

Please increase the state funding for public school education and make it inflation-proof, increase the BSA to provide decent educational conditions for our children in decent-sized classes, offer more stable teacher employment, retain talented/experienced teachers, decrease disparities between students, and finally retain strong immersion programs.

I have a son in 5th grade and my daughter is in 1st grade, both in the French immersion program at O'Malley Elementary. Immersion programs in Anchorage have a very good reputation among parents and are sought after.

Without a raise in funding in years, O'Malley Elementary now risks losing 5 teachers (out of 17) next year, and the school will not be able to provide for its student population that is constantly increasing. It will also kill the French immersion program that took years, tens of thousands of dollars and great parents' involvement to build from the ground up since 2018. It will decimate a community.

Finally, please find solutions to increase the revenue of the state to provide a more stable economy that can financially support the education of its children. The funding issue coming back every year is not sustainable; it creates a lot of stress among parents, teachers, the community. With an unstable educational system in Alaska, families are leaving, and Alaska is made less attractive leading to a significant negative economic impact by limiting the workforce population and skills, leading to lower economic growth.

Please support education, Alaska's future depends on it.

Thank you for your time,

Christine Couturier

O'Malley Elementary School Parent, Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: SUPPORT HB69 FOR FUTURE EDUCATORS IN ALASKA
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 2:38:26 PM

My name is Lauren Langford, and I am an educator in Anchorage, Alaska. With a hire date of 2023, every February is a nightmare, and this year in particular because of the depth of proposed budget cuts to teachers and programs. One week ago, I received a displacement notice from my principal. Since 299 other educators are also being displaced, some with hire dates as far back as 2017, I am not sure I will be able to secure another position at a different school in Anchorage or anywhere in the state unless funding is increased for public education.

My elderly parents are here, my brother and his young family are here, and my daughter of whom I have shared custody with my former husband is here. I don't want to leave Alaska and find another job. I want my government to fund education so that I can work here in the place where I have made my home.

I want the government to make good on the promise I believed two years ago when I paid \$25,000 out of pocket to earn a master's and become an educator that our state needed teachers so badly there is no possible scenario in which I could be without a job no matter how bad budget concerns became.

I want to stop going through this each February, the stress and anxiety of wondering whether there will be enough money for education feels like it is killing me.

Please rally to fund public education. If we cannot invest in our future and the educators who are nurturing it, what point is there to live in Alaska any longer?

Sincerely,

Lauren M. Langford
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); Julie.coulombe@akleg.gov; mia.costello@akleg.gov
Subject: Support HB69
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 7:29:35 AM

Good Morning,

My name is Melissa Thomas, parent of Mia Thomas 4th grade at O'Malley Elementary School. I am writing on behalf of the French Immersion program. This program is setting up the future leaders of Alaska. Speaking two languages is beneficial not only to the recipient but also to our community and ultimately the state of Alaska. With our educational system ranking 46 in the nation, we have no better time than now to make a change. Because Alaska already struggles with fiscal stability there is already a need for change. O'Malley in particular is at risk of shutting down completely without the French Immersion program. O'Malley has shown and proven to be a safe and trusted school speaking from experience. The community of O'Malley has been compassionate and supportive, and I believe we deserve a call to action that would be reconsidering the budget cuts that impact the quality of education and overall student experience at the school. thank you for your considerations.

Respectfully,
Melissa Thomas

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: support HB69
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 3:51:36 PM

Please support House Bill 69.

Raise Base Student Allocation.

Forward fund public school education.

Fund public schools to the cap.

These should not be negotiable funding issues. Our children our are future. Parents are already considering moving out of state because of this reckless budgeting debate and certainly young families are reconsidering moving to Alaska, and Homer specifically, because there does not seem to be the proper support of our foundational institutions that grow our young people into productive, healthy adults.

Respectfully,

Daniel Perry
[REDACTED]
Homer, AK 99603
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support Immersion Programs
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:55:02 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Taylor Hall and I'm a father of two children who are currently enrolled at O'Malley Elementary and are part of the French Immersion program. I am writing you today to advocate for this wonderful program and strongly advise that local and state politicians support education for the future of our city and our children.

The Anchorage School District is facing a terrible economic climate, one that is mirrored locally and statewide as seen by budget forecasts. While I understand that tough decisions have to be made, losing teaching positions for the immersion programs at ASD and particularly at O'Malley Elementary, would be a devastating short-term and long-term loss for our community. The ASD Immersion Programs have been a beacon to other school districts in the nation. They have helped keep ASD enrollment up and studies have shown children involved in Immersion Programs, like the one at O'Malley Elementary, develop into more well-rounded students and excel more in school, as well as socially. Programs like immersion help the community by drawing interest and developing our next generation to become leaders. Losing these programs and the benefits they bring cannot be understated enough.

The decision to cut teachers, such as the estimated 5 at O'Malley Elementary, will be devastating to the community and could serve as a death sentence to the school as a whole, much less the Immersion Program. I know O'Malley Elementary is not the only school that would be affected and our kids will be the ones that suffer due to these cuts. I urge you and your office to do everything in your power to save the teaching positions at O'Malley Elementary so the French Immersion Program can continue by supporting HB69. Funding for students has long been pushed aside long enough.

Invest in your future. Invest in our community. Invest in our children.

Thank you for your time,

Taylor Hall
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support increased education funding
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 9:54:07 AM

I write as a concerned parent of two elementary students enrolled in Anchorage School District. Please vote to increase the BSA as much as possible. Please don't eliminate middle school sports.

I am one of many professionals in Anchorage, who is not originally from the state, raising my family here, but I will not continue to stay in a place that does not fund robust public education. We don't want keep losing talented people to other states because our state is not funding public education.

Sincerely,
Courtney Carothers

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support Increasing the BSA
Date: Sunday, February 9, 2025 1:33:50 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you to support an increase in Alaska's Base Student Allocation (BSA) to ensure that our schools receive the necessary funding to provide high-quality education for all students. As an Anchorage School District teacher at Aquarian Charter School and also as a mother, I see firsthand the challenges that insufficient funding creates for students, teachers, and communities across the state.

Alaska's BSA has not kept pace with inflation and the rising costs of providing essential educational services. Schools are struggling to retain any teachers, much less highly qualified ones, maintain programs that support student success, or provide necessary resources to create a safe and effective learning environment for our students. Without a meaningful increase in the BSA, these challenges will only worsen, leading to larger class sizes, reduced student support services, and fewer opportunities for our children to thrive. These issues are permeating every single district and every single school across our state.

Additionally, it is important to remember that accountability is already built into our school and district systems. As educators, we are held accountable for ensuring student success, and we need legislators to be accountable for doing their jobs by properly funding public education so we can be successful for all kids. Furthermore, Alaska's charter school system is already effective and does not need fixing. Funding increases should not be tied to Governor Dunleavy's plan for state-run charter schools, which could undermine the success of the existing schools he is so proud of.

Investing in education is an investment in Alaska's future. Our students deserve a well-funded education system that prepares them for success in higher education, careers, and civic life. The BSA should be increased now and made inflation-proofed for the future to ensure our schools have the resources they need for years to come.

I urge you to prioritize this issue in the upcoming legislative session and advocate for a meaningful increase in the BSA. Vote in favor of education and use your power as legislators to override our Governor if needed. Please stand with Alaska's students, educators, and families by ensuring our schools receive the funding they need.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you would like, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Brady Neel, House District 16 Constituent
Teacher, Aquarian Charter School
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Support smaller class sizes and a meaningful increase in the BSA
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 11:52:46 AM

First of all, **thank you** for your value and commitment to education for the newest generation of Alaskans.

I understand tough decisions need to be made however please prioritize support for lowering pupil to teacher ratios and retaining our language immersion programs which depend on stable multi-year funding.

The consequences of the proposed cuts of 5 teachers at our Omalley Elementary school include a swell of class sizes to outrageous numbers and a decimation of the O'Malley French Immersion program.

My 4 year old daughter is slated to enter the incoming **kindergarten class** which is now slated to have **30 students in her class and no teaching assistant**. In her age group, [childcare.gov](https://www.childcare.gov) states to allow "No more than 12 school-age children in a group or class".

Can you imagine tending to the many needs of 30 kindergarteners at once, let alone demanding that they produce "results"? Even for our kindergarten teachers, who are real-life superheroes to me--- this is unreasonable. 24 kindergarten students with a teaching assistant is at capacity but reasonable.

Secondly, Language programs take years to develop in order to find native speaking teachers and are not likely to be reinstated once dismantled. There is a window period of putting in energy to learn a language when a child's brain is malleable. At a local language competition- the Omalley french elementary students performed better than all the Advanced Placement high school students and were mistaken for being native French speakers. A pride point in Anchorage education is our emphasis on strong language immersion programs, which reflects the value of diversity in our city and helps us thrive in an interconnected world.

Please do your part and take a stand to have a **meaningful vs moderate** increase in the BSA, and demonstrate you care about education and through **support of HB69**.

Katie

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Katrina Ronsse Libby, DPT, COMT
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Urgent Action on Education: Increase the BSA to Support Alaska's Public Schools
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 10:41:11 AM

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support a significant, sustained increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to protect public education in Alaska. The funding crisis facing our schools is not new—public education funding has fallen behind inflation since 2011, with no meaningful increases to keep up with rising costs. As I am sure you are aware, from 2017 to today, funding for school districts has decreased by 3.4%, while the Department of Corrections has seen a 42.6% increase, the Governor's Office a 23.3% increase, and the Legislature a 25.7% increase.

Alaska is already losing people, and fewer families are choosing to move here. My husband and I chose to make Alaska our home over a decade ago, in part because of the Anchorage School District's language immersion offerings. By decimating programs like this and corroding the foundation of a strong public education through sustained underfunding, the state is making Alaska a less viable and less attractive place for families to stay, work, and contribute.

My children attend O'Malley Elementary in Anchorage, a thriving school with a strong community and a successful French Immersion program. Due to the district's budget shortfall, O'Malley is set to lose 5 out of 17 teachers—the highest cuts of any elementary school—which will effectively dismantle the immersion program and weaken the quality of education for all students.

Alaska has an abundance of resources and talent—it is **an embarrassment** that public education has been allowed to reach this state of crisis. **We can and must do better.** A strong public education system is the foundation of a thriving economy and a prosperous future. Investing in our young people means investing in Alaska's long-term success. We owe it to our children, and we owe it to the people who built this amazing state.

I want to make it clear that education is the single most important issue for me and my family. I will continue to advocate loudly for the Legislature to meet its responsibility to education, and I will hold our elected representatives accountable for the lasting impacts of failing to do so.

Alaska cannot thrive without a strong, well-funded public education system. If we want to retain families and grow our economy, we must prioritize schools. The BSA must be increased now to provide the sustained, predictable funding necessary to keep schools open and protect programs that prepare our students for the future.

I urge you to take immediate action to invest in Alaska's children and ensure our public schools have the resources they need to succeed. **Please support a meaningful increase to the BSA by voting for House Bill 69 and make public education a true priority.**

Thank you for your time and leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Zoé Styron

Zoé Styron



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:06:29 AM

Dear House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB69 and to urge you to take immediate action to increase education funding in Alaska. This is not an issue that can wait another year—our schools, our students, and our communities are already feeling the impact of inadequate funding.

I am the parent of a first grader at O'Malley Elementary School, where my child is part of the French immersion program. Due to budget cuts within the Anchorage School District, O'Malley is set to lose five teachers this year, including French teachers essential to the immersion program. If these cuts go through, the program will be effectively shut down.

For my family, this decision is deeply personal. The French immersion program is one of the few things keeping us in Alaska. If it is eliminated, my husband and I will most likely make the difficult decision to leave the state. As IT professionals working for a local company, we are among the many working families who contribute to Alaska's economy. However, continued underfunding of public education is making it increasingly difficult to justify staying. We are not alone in this—other families are facing similar decisions, and Alaska risks losing skilled professionals to states that prioritize education.

Public education is the foundation of a thriving community and a strong workforce. Underfunding our schools does not just hurt students; it weakens our entire state by driving away families and discouraging businesses from investing in Alaska. I urge you to support HB69 and ensure that our children receive the quality education they deserve.

Please take action now. The future of our schools—and our state—depends on it.

Sincerely,

Ariane Remien

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025 6:30:20 PM

To the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB69 and to urge you to take immediate action to increase education funding in Alaska. This is not an issue that can wait another year—our schools, our students, and our communities are already feeling the impact of inadequate funding.

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Sincerely,

Bear Remien

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507