

Michael Mason

From: Alyssa Logan <alyssamlogan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 5:57 PM
To: Senate Education; House Education
Subject: HB 69

Hello,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 69. With flat funding from the state for the last decade, our schools are in desperate need of an increase in the BSA in order to be able to plan for the future. While I appreciate the extra one time funds that the legislature has provided the last few years, without a change to the BSA, districts cannot plan ahead and are stuck making last minute changes. I was dismayed by the release of the NAEP test results today, and the only way to reverse this trend in our children's education is by adequately funding education, as is your constitutional mandate. Many will argue that throwing money at it will not help with results, but as we learned from No Child Left Behind, punishing struggling schools with less funding does not bring results, it only makes the problem worse. The best education systems in the country are the ones that provide adequate funding to their schools. As a lifelong Alaskan with two children currently in our public school system and a teacher myself I am fully aware of the struggles we are facing and we cannot improve the system without more funding. Please pass HB 69 and fully support the future of our state. Thank you.

Alyssa Logan

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Amanda Smith <luccaroo22@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:16 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Fw: HB 69 Education Funding

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Amanda Smith <luccaroo22@yahoo.com>
To: House.Education@akleg.gov <house.education@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 at 06:28:01 PM AKST
Subject: HB 69 Education Funding

To Whom It May Concern,

I wish to submit a public testimony regarding HB 69 and the proposed budget cuts for KPBSD. I am a current resident of Homer, AK and a parent of two children involved with the public school system on the Kenai Peninsula. I am in support of HB 69. I can say first-hand how concerning this is for our children and community. Teachers are already struggling with the workload they currently have and minimal pay for such jobs, increasing PTR would only make this worse for teachers and students. Additionally, individual learning opportunities would become impossible to give to students that are really struggling.

Our small city has little resources as it is, and the proposed budget cuts for KPBSD would be detrimental. Our pool and theatre at HHS are a very important part of our community. Not only is our pool a part of extra-curricular activities, it's the only public source for swim lessons in our community. As many parents, including myself, stated the last time our pool was at risk; it is also a safety concern for children living in a small city on the water. Knowing water safety and how to swim is extremely important in our community.

In addition, our theatre and additional extra-curricular activities/school sports are very important to our children. Often these activities are an incentive to keep students going when the school day is difficult, staying active is very important for the physical and mental health of our youth. My concern is not just for my own children, but for their peers and for generations to come. Please, strongly consider the impact to our children and our education system when making a decision regarding the BSA Increase. Our children and our community need these resources.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

- Amanda Smith

Michael Mason

From: Amy Carroll <amy340@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2025 12:15 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Cc: Rep. Sara Hannan; Sen. Jesse Kiehl

Good morning,

I am writing in strong support of increasing state funding for K-12 education (HB 69). I have many strong feelings about this, some of which are summarized below.

Funding has fallen behind inflation for almost two decades, and our schools are really hurting. Our schools can't keep up with costs when their budgets have been virtually frozen.

Alaska used to have some of the best-paid teachers in the country, and now our teachers can barely afford housing and can't rely on a pension.

I am old enough to have friends who are retired teachers with a pension that provides them a liveable income. I also have younger friends who are actively teaching who cannot live comfortably on their income and are considering leaving Alaska for better opportunities in one of the other 49 states that provide teachers (and municipal workers) with a pension, or leaving the profession altogether for a job that pays more --- and is not subject to yearly legislative wrangling that leaves them wondering if they will have a job in the new school year. It has been hard to watch as these younger teachers have to crowdsource to pay for classroom materials, and there is so much anxiety about possible school closures.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. Alaska's kids, their parents, their teachers, and our communities are counting on you to hear their voices and acknowledge the call to action.

Please enter my support of HB 69 into the public record. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amy Carroll, Juneau

Michael Mason

From: Amy Steele <amy.e.steele@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Senate Education; House Education
Subject: Support for HB 69 - Increasing BSA

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

Michael Mason

From: Andrea Marthinsen <ajmarthinsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:23 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Fwd: Public Testimony

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Andrea Marthinsen <ajmarthinsen@gmail.com>
Date: January 29, 2025 at 7:48:26 PM AKST
To: Senate.education@akleg.edu
Subject: Public Testimony

As a resident of Ketchikan, I write to support HB 69. I've watched our community, school board, and school district struggle with budget planning and cuts over the last several years without an increase to the BSA. With the significant cost changes to cost of living and supplies that impact salaries, supplies, travel, etc that make up a budget, our district continues to fall short year after year and each year the cuts are deeper for our children and their foundational education.

This year seems to be pivotal in our district. It seems to be different. Without a permanent increase and plan moving forward, I see the impacts of changes in our school district ripping through our community. As health professionals, my husband and I have educational standards that we expect for our children. I feel as if we are toeing that line with the proposed cuts and changes that will need to take place to meet the funding shortfalls we will experience from the state not addressing changes to the BSA, cumulative over the last several years. Once we do not have stable and quality schools in our community and state, we will not have professionals moving to or remaining in our state. This changes quality services and access to services we all depended on in small communities, as essential as healthcare due to the impact of quality education available for families in our State's communities.

The plan in HB 69 allows for forward planning by districts and communities from year to year to better plan moving forward and help prevent the crisis our district and community has been experiencing over the last several years.

Thank you for your time,
Andrea Marthinsen

Michael Mason

From: Ann Byker <AByker@architectsalaska.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:51 AM
To: House Education; Sen. James Kaufman; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. Mia Costello; Senate Education
Subject: HB69

Good Morning,

As the investment towards our children's education continues to decline, I was particularly dismayed to learn that the French program at O'Malley was under threaten of elimination, along with 5 O'Malley schoolteachers. O'Malley's French program seems to be disproportionately impacted by financial cuts and loss of teaching staff, even though enrollment is high and growing. Our French immersion staff, kids and families have dedicated so much to this program, and we are committed to seeing our kids through graduation. When the program started, we envisioned that the school board maintained the same commitment to us and our children. If this program is lost simply due to poor timing of funding, it will be difficult to reinstate and puts one of Anchorage's most established schools in jeopardy. It's a shame to provide language diversity to the students of Alaska only to find out it's on the chopping block as we've failed to maintain and provide an appropriate budget for the future leaders of our state.

I implore you to critically evaluate the research that shows language immersion programs improve cognitive development, problem-solving skills, academic performance and life readiness, all of which are tops for fulfilling the school boards missions for students. Eliminating successful programs such as this will only weaken the district's ability to provide high quality, innovative education and ultimately have a lasting ripple effect on retention and growth as people decide to raise their families in the Anchorage and surrounding community, or not. With over 30 successful years of immersion programs behind us we know that these programs bring, keep, and return educated professionals to our diverse community. O'Malley is supported by the French government and the local French Language Advocates Anchorage (FLAA), which tirelessly works to financially bolster the program.

Please put your support behind HB69. Our kids, my kids, deserve it.

Ann Byker, CHID
Project Manager

Architects Alaska
900 West 5th Avenue, Suite 403
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Tel: 907.272.3567 | Direct: 907.865.9324 | www.architectsalaska.com



ANCHORAGE | WASILLA | BOZEMAN | PRESCOTT

Michael Mason

From: Anna Rose MacArthur <annarosemacarthur@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:45 PM
To: Sen. Donny Olson; Rep. Neal Foster; Senate Education; House Education
Subject: Support HB 69

Dear Representatives and Senators,

I'm Anna Rose MacArthur in Nome. I am a parent of a six-month old. I am testifying in support of House Bill 69.

My husband was born, raised, and educated through the public schools here in Nome. My husband's family owns a small business in Nome, and Nome is where we want to raise our family. We can't do that if we don't have functioning schools to send our child to.

Here's what will happen in Nome without an increase to the base student allocation that matches inflation. The Nome Public School District will have to cut 10 teachers and one assistant principal. These teachers are community members with families. Placing Nome teachers under the stress of constant, looming job insecurity in addition to higher class sizes is terrible, unacceptable, and no way to improve student outcomes. Without increased funding, the Nome district will also slash student travel funds and take away funds set aside for building much needed teacher housing. These cuts are on top of years of substantial, cumulative cuts.

The continuous neglect and under-investment in our public schools must end. Alaska is in a population decline with a shortage of workers across sectors. Underfunding public schools will only propel these problems. Our children, our teachers, and our communities deserve well-funded public schools to thrive. And the state has a constitutional duty to provide this funding.

Please support House Bill 69. Please support our public schools and our future.

Thank you,
Anna Rose MacArthur

Michael Mason

From: Anne Biberman <anne.biberman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:03 PM
To: House Education
Cc: Rep. Ashley Carrick; Sen. Mike Cronk; Senate Education; Sen. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Support for HB 69

Dear Alaska Legislators,

I am writing in support of HB 69 specifically and funding for education generally.

Flat funding for our schools has resulted in school closures, loss of programs, and valuable, passionate, professional teachers.

The BSA has not seen an increase in many years. During that time, we've seen our schools increase class sizes and force cuts of important programs to stretch district dollars. Schools both need and deserve adequate funding; especially as everyday costs are skyrocketing. From rural sports and elementary music programs being cut, vocational education going away to class size increases, the impacts on our students of flat funding are real and harmful, not only for our students, but for our entire community. We can, and must, do better.

I'm not a parent of kids in the school district and I didn't grow up here. I'm writing as a deeply concerned community member because I'm worried about our schools which are the heart of our community and our hope for the future. I hope you'll support increased funding for education this year.

Further, while of course parents deserve a choice in how they educate their children, if that choice dictates private or home schooling, they should be responsible for the costs themselves. Funds should be entirely directed at providing the best public education possible. That is our responsibility.

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 the most important thing 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 that we did everything we could to give our children the education they deserve.

Could you please support:

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

Please fund education in our state. It is the very definition of investing in our future.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Biberman
Fairbanks

PS: I continue to believe the best way to fund our state is through a 2% tax on income above \$200,000 per year. Implementing a sales tax or using the PFD will hit those hardest who can least afford it. An income tax on all those earning here distributes the burden equally.

Michael Mason

From: Ariane Remien <ariane@remien.org>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:06 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska

Dear Senate 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
7111 Miranda Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507

Michael Mason

From: Ashley Bruns <ashleynbruns@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 12:50 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB 69 - Save our language immersion schools

Dear Senate 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
4820 Talus Dr
Anchorage, AK 99516

Michael Mason

From: Ashley Krimmel <akrimmel1217@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2025 8:51 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for Alaska House Bill 69 – A Critical Step for Student Education

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Alaska House Bill 69, which proposes a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This increase is essential for ensuring that students across Alaska receive the high-quality education they deserve.

Over the past few years, schools in our state have faced an increasingly difficult situation. Due to a lack of funding, schools have been forced to make drastic cuts to critical programs. Personnel have been reduced, sports and extracurricular activities have been eliminated, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which are vital for preparing students for the workforce, have been slashed. With these cuts, class sizes are growing, and students are receiving less personalized attention, which is detrimental to their success.

Teachers and staff are working harder than ever, but they cannot do their jobs effectively with the insufficient resources available. The lack of funding has made it impossible to maintain a high standard of education. Additionally, inflation has made everything more expensive, from educational materials to staff salaries. Yet, the BSA has remained stagnant. How can we expect schools to pay their staff, provide essential resources, and give our students the education they need without a necessary increase in funding?

As a wife of a public school employee I have seen first hand how short staffed the schools are. There is a continual increase in the amount of work but not enough staff to provide an education of excellence. Schools continue to cut staff due to budget restraints (minimal increase to the BSA over the last 15 years) which hurts the education of our children. You can not provide a quality education with less educators.

Increasing the BSA by \$1,000 is a crucial step in addressing these challenges. It will help schools maintain programs, hire and retain qualified staff, and ensure that students receive a well-rounded, high-quality education. With this increase, we can better prepare our children for the future and support our educators in their efforts to provide the best possible learning environment.

I want to thank you for your attention to this critical issue. The education of Alaska's children is vital to the future of our state, and I appreciate your efforts to prioritize it through House Bill 69.

Sincerely,

Ashley Krimmel

Michael Mason

From: Bear Remien <bear@remien.org>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 6:31 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Urgent Support for HB69 – Protecting Public Education and Retaining Families in Alaska

To the Senate 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.

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
7111 Miranda Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507

Michael Mason

From: Ben Loeffler <bloeffler3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:06 AM
To: Senate Education; House Education
Subject: Written Testimony on HB69

- I am a strong supporter of public school reform including school choice in the form of magnet and charter schools. I am sure that administration efficiency can be improved. I am not questioning that we should always strive for better outcomes for our children and our communities.
- I love living in this state. I have 2 small children and another on the way. I want to ensure they receive a quality education that serves them throughout their lives. I am a professional engineer in this state, and personally oversee over \$20M in federally funded research on energy technologies relevant to Alaska.
- However, if the current trajectory on public education continues, I fear we will join the growing exodus from this state.
- For years, through both action and inaction, our elected leaders have reduced the level of public funding per student on a real basis. I have seen a notable shift in opinions among the "political left" in my community toward being accepting and even enthusiastic about school choice. Perhaps restricting funding has had the intended effect.
- House Bill 69 is a clean and defensible bill to correct the downward trend in education funding in real terms, and to do so gradually over three years.
- I understand concerns about tying the state budget to a CPI index that is outside of our control, but the alternative is to tie our children's and our economy's future to DC's monetary policy. No family in this state makes their children forego necessities due to inflation, the adults give up other things. You can create the needed flexibility elsewhere in the budget.
- Furthermore, the state's fiscal future may be brighter than it has been in previous years, with the spectre of a gas line, increased oil, and increased mining. Alaska may soon be trying to attract talented workers and their families.
- I understand the political realities of leveraging your opponents' priorities to further your own. But holding education funding hostage for so many years is a bipartisan embarrassment.
- **Please advance this bill with no amendments** and settle your political and philosophical differences in another piece of legislation. Nothing in this bill can be used against you in a future attack ad.
 - To the folks on the left, school choice is a reality, and one that a majority of Alaskans with children are now in favor of. Charter and magnet schools, correctly implemented at the district level, can improve the experience and outcomes of students across the socioeconomic spectrum.
 - To the folks on the right, please have the vision to see that education is not a zero-sum expense on the state balance sheet. It is an investment in the future. One that, if neglected, will lead to decreasing population, decreasing outside investment, decreasing quality of life, and yes, eventually, a decreasing PFD. Education reform will not simply materialize if budgets are simply held flat while inflation erodes what these funds deliver to our children.

Ben Loeffler
Fairbanks, AK

Michael Mason

From: Benjamin Crawford <bencraw4d@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 2:16 PM
To: Senate Education; senate.education.committee@akleg.gov
Subject: Please Support HB 69

Dear Legislators,

I am asking for your support of HB 69. As a product of Alaska's public schools, I benefited from a well-funded educational system. With that foundation of education that I received in the Anchorage School District, I went on to pursue my graduate education outside. After completing my training, I returned to Alaska and have been providing health care for over 12 years to the community I grew up in.

My son is now a Kindergartener at Aquarian Charter School in Anchorage. I would like him to have the same opportunities that I had during his education. Please invest in our children, they are the future of our state. Give the teachers the resources they need to allow our kids to thrive. Create an environment that attracts talented educators to our state and keeps them here.

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Benjamin Crawford O.D.
Anchorage, AK 99508

Michael Mason

From: Brady Siegel <brady.siegel@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 11:00 PM
Subject: Vote YES on HB 69 – Invest in Alaska’s Future

To whom it may concern,

Tomorrow’s vote on House Bill 69 (HB 69) will determine the future of Alaska’s public schools. As both a teacher and a parent, I urge you to vote YES on HB 69 to ensure our students and educators receive the long-term support they need.

Education is the foundation of Alaska’s future, yet our schools face ongoing budget shortfalls, rising class sizes, and teacher shortages. Of the two options currently presented, HB 69 provides stable, reliable funding to address these challenges, while HB 76 offers only short-term fixes that fail to resolve the real issues.

Why HB 69 matters:

- Provides stable, long-term funding so schools can plan for the future
- Invests in teachers by ensuring competitive salaries and smaller class sizes
- Supports all students by funding reading programs for those who need extra help
- Protects important school programs like STEM, arts, career training, and sports
- Maintains local control of school funding and decisions

HB 76 falls short:

- Offers only temporary bonuses instead of real solutions for teacher retention
- Does not fund class size reductions, leading to overcrowded classrooms
- Underfunds critical student programs, forcing schools to cut resources
- Delays school construction funding, leaving districts struggling to maintain safe buildings
- Increases state control over local schools, reducing community input

HB 69 is the only bill that ensures long-term success for Alaska’s students, teachers, and communities. Without this investment, our schools will continue to struggle with unstable funding, teacher shortages, and overcrowded classrooms—and it’s our children who will suffer the consequences.

We cannot afford another year of uncertainty. Alaska’s students deserve better than short-term fixes. I strongly urge you to vote yes on HB 69 and invest in the future of our state.

Sincerely,
Brady Neel
House District 16 Constituent
Teacher, Aquarian Charter School
Brady.neel@outlook.com

Michael Mason

From: Brent Johnson <ragweb@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 2:27 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: I support HB 69.

Honorable Senators,

I support HB 69, which increases the base student allocation and ties increases over the next few years to the Consume Price Index.

Thank you,

Brent Johnson
Clam Gulch

Michael Mason

From: Bridget McBride <b2mcbride@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:27 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Matt Claman; Rep. Mia Costello
Subject: Raise the BSA

To the Alaska Senate and House Education Committees,

I am writing in regards to HB 69 to encourage you to raise the BSA for our children. I am a mother of 3 public school students in the Anchorage School District, and I am a product of the same school district myself. A lot has changed since I graduated in 1997, to when my eldest graduated in 2024, to watching what's unfolding for my youngest to graduate in 2030. It is sad that what was once considered one of the strongest districts in the nation, has become one of the weakest. There are several variables at play, but one of the main contributors is a lack of proper funding. You cannot offer our children a quality education when we are unable to hire and retain quality teachers, and provide the materials and environment for them all to succeed. Our funding needs to match inflation so we can continue to prosper. I implore you to pass HB 69 and raise the BSA.

Respectfully,
Bridget McBride
Anchorage, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Bridget Paule <silene.acaulis@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 9:11 AM
To: Senate Education; Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Matt Claman; Senate Rules
Subject: HB 1: Please increase the BSA ASAP, with no strings attached

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to ask that you move HB1 forward, as written, as soon as may be in order to increase the Base Student Allocation before the next school year. **I am strongly in favor of increasing the BSA and I'm very willing to reduce my PFD distribution and, in addition, to pay taxes if needed, to make that happen.**

I have written to the relevant House committees thanking them for moving the equivalent House bill quickly through Education and Finance and into Rules. I encourage the Senate to follow suit on this essential support for our democracy.

As step-parent to a junior high school kid with special needs in the Anchorage School District, I've seen the incredible difference that small class sizes with experienced, skilled staff with adequate time, can make for a child. Up until this year, our boy wanted to go to school each day. We live close enough to his elementary that he would walk there or, more often run because he wanted to be there. He was succeeding behaviorally and academically because of the School Based Behavioral Services program (SBBS), which is now at risk of being cut due to budget shortfalls.

Now that he's in 7th grade, where there is already very little special ed support, I see the chilling effect of this lack of support. His middle school is too crowded and simply lacks the staffing and staff experience of the elementary SBBS program. He is now at greater risk for losing appropriate education services and being either forced into the inappropriate setting of Whaley School (he is not a juvenile delinquent but a person with mental health disabilities) or out of the public schools entirely. Our kiddo doesn't even get to attend PE this year because the class size is over 150 students and his disability makes it impossible for him to succeed in that setting without staffing that just isn't available. Anyone with a preteen boy will recognize that PE is maybe the most important class they could have!

I'm under no illusion that increasing the BSA will increase special ed services but it might mean that we can preserve the little that we have and perhaps lay the ground work for improving the situation in the future. Your support of increasing the BSA is one step toward keeping such essential services for my child, not to mention providing the school experience we want for all the rest of our kids.

Given the current threat to federal education funds, increasing the BSA significantly is even more important now than ever. This funding will ensure our schools have the resources to better meet their mission of free, appropriate public education for all, regardless of means or background. And, as we all know, a well-educated and informed populace is the strongest base for a resilient, functioning democracy.

Finally, as the bill moves through the inevitable political negotiations, I urge all of you to please not compromise the quality of our children's education. However urgent it is to fund our schools, please do not trade funding for any concessions that will dilute or weaken our public education system. We don't need more measures, testing, teacher evaluations, curriculum oversight, charter or homeschool options/support - there is plenty of all of that (well, maybe we need to add back a civics class requirement). And we sure don't need vouchers. We just need adequately funded, good quality neighborhood schools and the willingness to pay for them.

Please help complete this important step toward funding public education for all Alaska's children and move HB1 forward with speed and simplicity, no strings attached.

Sincerely,

Bridget Paule
(907) 230-9903
3820 Crosson Circle
Anchorage AK 99517

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on Dena'ina Etnena

Michael Mason

From: Caitie Milligan <cemilligan@live.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 12:57 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please support HB69

Dear Senators,

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.

Respectfully,

Dr. Caitlin Milligan

Michael Mason

From: Shonsey, Cara <cwshonse@mtu.edu>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 11:58 AM
To: Senate Education; House Education; Sen. James Kaufman; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. Mia Costello
Subject: I support House Bill 69

Hello,

My name is Cara Shonsey. I live at 5045 Whispering Spruce Drive 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,

Michael Mason

From: Carolyn Loeffler <carolynkloeffler@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:14 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: In support of education

To the honorable members of the Senate Education Committee,
I am writing to you in support of our public schools and House Bill No. 69. I am a parent in Fairbanks of two young children and expecting the arrival of another this summer.

In the last several years, I have witnessed numerous school closures, the removal of arts and music programs from public schools and the departure of a multitude of talented teachers, researchers and healthcare providers from Fairbanks. In my household alone, we've had to change health providers four times. The latest letter my husband received indicated that his primary care provider is leaving the state and there is no one to take him as a patient in the clinic. This year, the Fairbanks North Star Borough school district is proposing the closure of *five* elementary schools. Five, including my daughter's. **It is hard not to look around and see a community in decline.**

These trends are happening state-wide. I commend (and am proud of) the bipartisan efforts of the legislature to put forward sustainable education spending for our state, but am I at a complete and utter loss at the Governor's veto of last year's SB 140. Alaska is failing to meet its constitutional obligation to adequately fund public education and we are caught in a downward spiral.

Inflation has hurt all Americans the last few years. It is no secret that costs have risen significantly, and yet our state education funding has remained flat, **unduly burdening local districts and families.** I urge the legislature to both continue their bipartisan work and to consult with the Governor's office to ensure that the proposed education funding increase includes reasonable priorities from the Governor's office. **Alaskans cannot endure another veto of education funding.** Even after closing five elementary schools, the school district will *still* have a \$6 million deficit. There is only so much we can do locally; **the future of education in our town relies on legislative action.**

Working age Alaskans are leaving because our state has chosen not to fund services that support raising families here. As a result, talented people are seeking better opportunities for themselves and their children elsewhere. With them they take their good ideas, entrepreneurship, and innovation that the Alaska economy desperately needs. I don't blame them. Without an increase in state funding, school districts will continue to spiral downward. More will leave.

Again, thank you for addressing this critical issue. There is no doubt in my mind that whatever the outcome for education is in the 2025 session, it will have lasting implications for the well-being of our state. It is my sincere hope that we can **take the long view** and leave a positive lasting legacy for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Kozak Loeffler
Fairbanks
Constituent of House District 35, Senate District R

Michael Mason

From: chris corrao <chriscorrao@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 9:57 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Committee members,

My name is Charles Corrao, I live in Petersburg and currently have two children enrolled in public school.

I am writing today in support of HB 69.

The year by year underfunding of our education system is not benefiting anyone. Inflation has depreciated the BSA to an untenable level that is putting our students and educators at a disadvantage.

A BSA increase of \$1,808 will allow our education system to keep pace with inflation and provide access to quality education for Alaskas students.

Thank you for your time,

Charles Corrao

Michael Mason

From: Chris Rackliff <sirrack@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 2:26 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Concerned Parent HB69

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

Michael Mason

From: christowclark@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, February 22, 2025 12:11 PM
To: Senate Education; House Education; Sen. Matt Claman; Rep. Carolyn Hall; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Chuck Kopp; Rep. Bryce Edgmon
Subject: Request for a Permanent and Guaranteed BSA Funding Increase

Dear Senator Claman, Representative Hall, Senate President, Speaker of the House, Majority Leaders, and members of the education committees;

The legislature must pass HB 69 to raise the BSA to pre-2011 funding levels and override the Governor's veto when received. We owe this to our children and the great state of Alaska.

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

We are in a vicious cycle of underfunding, which directly impacts performance. This, in turn, doubles down on further reduced funding and lower performance. This is a downward cycle in which no one benefits and our children's opportunities are greatly diminished.

The lack of BSA funding means schools will continue facing layoffs, program cuts, and operational challenges.

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 of addressing the real crisis facing Alaska's schools: chronic underfunding, inequities in resources, and an unprecedented teacher shortage. The proposed education budget will result in the elimination of a significant number of teacher positions, leading to class size increases, reduced course offerings, and reduction of sports and extracurricular activities that provide a valuable way for students to enjoy school, have well-rounded interests, and create a community at their schools.

The Alaska constitution requires that the legislature "establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state," the lack of adequate funding for our public education system for well 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 Alaska's future.

We deserve a public education system that provides our communities with a strong, stable, and non-polarization foundation. We all benefit from cross-cultural and cross-socioeconomic exposure that predominantly happens through our diverse public schools. Our communities need less polarization and segregation, which are only amplified through private and charter schools.

Thank you for your time and service to our great State.

Sincerely,
Christopher Clark

(Lifelong Alaskan, a proud product of the Alaska public education system, father of two (5 and 7), and professional civil engineer)

christowclark@gmail.com

907-306-7384

Anchorage, AK 99502

Michael Mason

From: Clint Hammer <clint.s.hammer@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 9:27 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Save public schools - Support HB 69!

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

Michael Mason

From: Cody McCanna <CMcCanna@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 10:54 AM
To: Senate Education; House Education
Cc: Rep. Justin Ruffridge
Subject: HB 69, School Funding, Charter Schools

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
283-0292- ext. 6538
Cell: 907-513-9161

Michael Mason

From: Colleen M Bolling <colleenmbolling@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:34 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Letter in favor of a permanent and guaranteed funding increase to the BSA

Dear members of the Senate Education Committee,

First off, I would like to thank you for all of your hard work to solve the funding crisis facing our public schools. 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, and teachers and the State of Alaska are suffering.

I have three children attending Bayshore Elementary School and I have witnessed high teacher turnover, large class sizes, and low morale among teachers and staff who feel undervalued. Looking ahead based on the Governor's proposed education budget, the situation is even bleaker with the elimination of a significant number of teacher positions leading to class sizes increases of 4 students across all grades (currently most classes are already above the recommended levels) and limited course offerings and the elimination or reduction of sports and 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 appropriate 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 our 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,
Colleen Bolling
Anchorage, AK 99515

Michael Mason

From: Collin hagen <collin.t.hagen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:31 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: I support HB69

Hello,

My name is Collin Hagen from Homer. I'm a dad of 3 and I support HB69 and a substantial increase to the base student allocation for Alaskas kids!

Kids in our coastal town learn to swim at our local high school pool. Extracurriculars give our kids opportunities and a well rounded youth. Our class sizes should not get any bigger than they already are. We need a substantial increase to the BSA.

I SUPPORT HB69!

Thank you,
Collin Hagen

Michael Mason

From: Connor Whiteside <rcwhiteside01@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:01 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB 69

Good morning,

I just wanted to introduce myself and share my support for the proposed HB 69 bill. My name is Connor Whiteside and I teach 2nd grade on Kodiak Island. My position for next year is up in the air, like many of my colleagues, because our school board just had to vote to close a school for next year.

I know many issues are brought to your attention and are requesting your eyes and support but I would be remiss if I didn't advocate hard for this bill. Our district is at a \$3M deficit this year before the decision to close a school, and we will likely be faced with another school closure in 4-6 years, based on the current level of state and local funding. That would leave us with 1 town school. Limiting our access to our schools is crippling for a small community like our own. It is where kids grow up learning how to play basketball, host events to celebrate our native community and traditions, and many more things. Alaska students deserve a quality education and schooling experience to support their needs. Having public schools with proper funding is a Constitutional duty.

Much damage has been done already. Many schools are being closed across the state and well-trained teachers are leaving our state for better opportunities. We are stretched thin. I would strongly urge you to pass this bill to offer some relief for our families, teachers, and most importantly, our students. While a BSA increase of \$1808 is what is needed to keep up with inflation, I acknowledge how difficult it is to be able to pass legislation without some sort of compromise. Thank you for attempting to serve our state's interests and for your consideration.

Best regards,

Connor Whiteside
2nd Grade Teacher
East Elementary School

Michael Mason

From: Constance Jensen <constancejensenis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:53 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Hello Congress Members,

Please do NOT support HB69. This song and dance is getting way too old. Every year, it's the same cry: You increase the SBA, and we get the same poor ranking on the national education report card. More money does not equal a better education. It's amazing that after all these years, the legislators are still doing the same thing and getting the same disappointing results.

The issue is the mass exodus from the state. Lower our local taxes and make it affordable to live in Alaska, and the population will increase.

Do communities have to close schools? Of course. That's ok. Some people get very emotional when change happens. That's ok, too. They can be emotional. You legislators don't need to react to that. When the population goes back up, the school will open again. Sometimes teachers have to be pink-slipped, and people will get emotional about that, too. Let them. You are elected to make the best fiscal choices, not emotional choices.

Please vote no on HB 69 and instead do what you can to encourage the DEED to adjust their sails so districts can raise their standards without additional bureaucracy.

Thank you for considering my opinion,

Constance Jensen,
Kodiak Island.

Michael Mason

From: Dan Bjornlie <dan.bjornlie@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 10:11 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Subject: BSA Increase

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
Lone Tree Dr
Anchorage, AK 99507

Michael Mason

From: David Nees <davidneesak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:23 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Fwd: BSA increase is both ill advised and unnecessary HB 69 testimony

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **David Nees** <davidneesak@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 29, 2025, 12:36 PM
Subject: BSA increase is both ill advised and unnecessary HB 69 testimony
To: <house.education@akleg.gov>
Cc: <senate.education@alaska.gov>, <Representative.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>, Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>, Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>, Sen. Shelley Hughes <Senator.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov>

All,
Please add this as my Testimony on HB69.

As a member of the 2014 House Sustainable Education Task force I was in full agreement with our conclusion that increases to the BSA do harm to school budgets.
That injections of money need to be outside formula.

This dispersement model has failed since it was last modified. Leading inevitably to wasteful spending, nearly every district could not comply with Legislative requirement that 75 percent of fund go to classroom, and DEED waived so many Districts from this requirement that the requirement was dropped.
Like Speed limit on Sterling highway.

The only thing that is consistent in the last 30 years is more money into the BSA only leads to more money badly spent.

We agreed there are simpler and cheaper solutions:
Here is our list.

1)Enroll all School District employees into the state health care program.
Lowers over all cost due to age pool, per Insurance actuaries.

2) Prohibit state funds from being used to pay administrators and central office staff.
This is money that never makes it to the classroom. This has lead since kast formula to excesive growth in school budgets for central office costs.
The previous formula had both salary and personel caps tied to classroom expenditure.
If you want to control the spending, prohibit use of state funds in excess of 1999 restrictions on Administration costs.
If districts want to exceed this amount they must use local funds only.

- 3) Increase pay to teachers. By directly sending as a yearly a COLA adjustment.
- 4) Prohibit districts from allowing union to contact new hires until after contract is signed.
- 5) Prohibit districts from closing schools which still have bonded debt, and require 90 percent occupancy in the rest of the school buildings.
- 6) Require districts to use surplus buildings and/or excess space to house charter schools at no cost, this will end the practice of charter schools having to build or lease buildings.
- 7) Allow Charter schools who have more applicants than space to operate in multiple public school buildings, especially surplus buildings.

It is also important to check that districts are complying with the Alaska Supreme Court decision that school transportation must allow charter and or private school students access to routes that pass their location.

- 8) Prohibit Districts from paying union membership dues for their employees to the union directly. Unions work best when members write the check for their dues.

David Nees
Member 2014 Task Force

PO box 867
COOPER landing

9072449103

Michael Mason

From: Dawn Rauwolf <dawn.rauwolf@k21schools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:56 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB 69

I am a 4th grade teacher in Ketchikan, Alaska. I absolutely support HB 69.

At our current funding levels, we are not able to provide all the wonderful programs for students. The state of Alaska will not have successful students if the state doesn't increase the BSA. We also need this amount of money to increase to match inflation.

Other states have students who test well. We want to be able to fully support all of our students. We want our students to have every chance to also test well.

We want to be able to fully support our special education students, our English Language Learner students, our students with extra challenges, and our gifted students.

Vote yes on HB 69. Our Alaska education system needs it.

Sincerely,

Dawn Rauwolf

Mrs. Dawn R. Rauwolf, M.A.T.
4th grade teacher
Tongass School of Arts & Sciences
410 Schoenbar Rd. #202
Ketchikan, AK 99901
907-225-5720 (TSAS office)
907-254-9944 (personal cell)

I gratefully acknowledge that I am living and working on Lingít Aaní. I pay respect to the first peoples of this land - the Taant'á Kwáan and the Sanyaa Kwáan.



This message is intended solely for the use of the individual and entity to whom it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable state and federal laws. If you are not the addressee, or are not authorized to receive for the intended addressee, you are hereby notified that you may not use, copy, distribute, or disclose to anyone this

message or the information contained herein. If you have received this message in error, immediately advise the sender by reply email and destroy this message.

Michael Mason

From: Delane Blackstock <delaneblackstock@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 1:03 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: I am in support

I am in support of increasing the BSA, forward funding education for 3 years, and adjusting for inflation annually.

Thank you!

Delane

Michael Mason

From: Donna Anderson <grannymom27@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:20 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: *****SPAM***** OPPOSE HB 69

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in opposition to HB69. An increase in the BSA does not extrapolate out to increase in student success. The KPBSD has too many instances of money being spent on Admin raises and bonuses and not in the classroom on students, or teachers. Our current Superintendent and School Board is not responsive to other solutions.

STATUS QUO HAS TO GO!

Donna Anderson
Recently retired KPBSD teacher
Moms for Liberty KPEN Chapter Chair

Michael Mason

From: Eamon O'Regan <eamon.oregan@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 1, 2025 12:34 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please Support HB69

Hello,

Thank you for taking time to read my message.

Alaska's prison population increased by 27% over the last decade, which is almost 3 times faster than the state population growth. Did you know it cost over \$50,000 a year to house an inmate in an Alaskan correctional center?

Compare that to our current SBA, which has remained stagnant. Do you want to continue funding the mistakes in the past, or would you rather invest in the potential of the future? Please look in the mirror when you are answering this question honestly to yourself. I am encouraging you to support HB 69.

Edmund O'Regan
Fairbanks, AK

Michael Mason

From: Eli Stine <eli.stine84@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 5:20 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Alaska Schooling Support Letter

Good Afternoon Alaska Senate 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

720-490-5791

Elizabeth Serrano
400 W. 11th Avenue, Apt. 8
Anchorage, AK 99501
elizabethnoelserrano@live.com
(907) 717-6367

1/28/25

Dear Alaska Senate Education Committee Members,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for the passage of House Bill 69 (HB69), which would increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for our public schools. As a concerned resident of the Anchorage School District, I urge you to prioritize this legislation in order to address the ongoing challenges our district and students face.

Over the last two years, our district has been forced to close elementary schools due to insufficient funding from the state. This has had a profound impact on the entire community. Families have had to adjust to longer commutes, overcrowded classrooms, and diminished access to vital educational resources. The closures have strained our teachers, staff, and students, creating a ripple effect that extends beyond the classroom. The lack of adequate funding has placed our children's education—and the future of our community—at risk.

Increasing the Base Student Allocation through HB69 is critical to reversing this trend. This bill will provide the necessary resources for our schools to maintain smaller class sizes, offer more comprehensive educational programs, and ensure that our children have the quality education they deserve. It will also help prevent further school closures and support the sustainability of our local schools.

I urge you to stand with our students, educators, and families by supporting HB69. Our children's education is the foundation upon which our community's future will be built, and this bill represents a crucial step toward strengthening that foundation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing of your support for HB69.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Serrano
Parent of a child in the Alaska school systems

Michael Mason

From: Emily Forstner <forstner@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:36 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: In support of HB 69

Hello,

I am a public educator of 43 years of service. I live in the Mat Su.

I am in serious support of HB 69 and significant and permanent increases to education funding. Without such, Alaska schools face devastating choices. Closing schools is one of them, but the domino effect of closing a school includes increased class sizes beyond 30 in kindergarten, the loss of talented staff, the loss of contributing families, and an equally devastating impact on the Alaskan community as a whole. Not increasing funding in a significant way does not increase the quality or the support for parent choice in homeschool or charter schools. It simply destroys the foundation that both of those choices rely on.

Please stay the course and increase funding.

Emily Forstner

Michael Mason

From: Emily Sousa <rottador@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:55 AM
To: Sen. Robert Myers; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke; Sen. Mike Cronk; Rep. Ashley Carrick; Senate Education; House Education
Subject: Please support House Bill 69 and Fund Public Education in Alaska

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I'm writing to encourage you to support House Bill 69, which would increase the base student allocation and fund public education in Alaska. In my 40 years, I have never seen our schools in such dire straits as they are at the moment.

I grew up in Fairbanks, attended Pearl Creek Elementary School, Ryan Middle School, West Valley High School, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks for both my BS and my MS degree. My daughter is now a kindergartener at Pearl Creek Elementary and I have had the honor of being a guest scientist in her phenomenal school, as well as other wonderful schools now slated for closure due to lack of funding from the state, including Hunter Elementary, a Title I school, and Salcha Elementary, a strong community focused rural school. Although my hope is that we can keep these schools open, and to that we have a robust proposal to turn Pearl Creek into a magnet school which will bring students back into the district and increase equity by inviting students from outside of Pearl Creek's boundaries to attend, even with the closure of these five amazing schools, Fairbanks will still face *at least* a \$6 million deficit. Without increased funding from the state, it is hard to imagine that the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District will be able to keep paying teachers, staff, next year and, in the next few years, how it will be able to keep any of its public schools open at all.

This goes against a fundamental right guaranteed to our people in our constitution: that every child in our state has a right to a public education. When we close neighborhood schools, title I schools, and rural schools, we are in violation of our own constitution. I understand our Governor is a big fan of parent choice, but parents don't have any choices when their schools are taken away. Many families cannot homeschool, as the pressures of working two jobs to pay for rent do not leave anyone at home to provide a homeschool education. Many families cannot attend charter schools, because the charter schools do not provide bussing and are not equally available to everyone - for example, the lottery this year for one charter school had 100 students apply, and accepted only 9. Charter schools do not have the same resources available for students with special needs. With our public schools closing, charter and homeschools cannot be considered truly accessible public education. Neighborhood schools are the best answer to educating our kids, especially in communities like our borough, which is nearly as large as the state of New Jersey.

Our town will die without increased funding in education. I realize that sounds extreme, but I am one of many life-long Alaskan families that love our town and our state that will be forced to move out of state due to the lack of funding for education. When we lose people, our economy suffers. This will happen quickly to Two Rivers and Salcha, who will face the choices of bussing their kids for hours each day or homeschooling or moving. Once again, this hardly seems like parental choice- this seems like forcing parents into losing scenarios.

Representative Schwanke, I am a long time Goldstream resident (don't we live in a beautiful place?) and was very impressed with your focus on education this summer during your campaign. I asked questions and in response appreciated hearing that you support our neighborhood schools. I know many of us in Goldstream are counting on you as our representative to help fund public education and keep our own neighborhood school, Pearl Creek Elementary, open.

We must start first with providing for the most important members of our community - our youth and our future. Please support HB 69 and fund public education, for Fairbanks, and for Alaska's future.

Thank you,
Emily Sousa
Goldstream Resident
Science Education Specialist at UAF
Pearl Creek Elementary Alumni
Parent of an Awesome Pearl Creek Kindergartener

Michael Mason

From: Emily Youcha <eyoucha@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:54 AM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Subject: HB69 public comment

Dear House and Senate Education Committees:

I urge you to greatly and significantly increase school funding and the BSA so my child can have an adequate education. I don't think your current proposal (in HB69) will be enough of an increase in funding for the Fairbanks North Star Borough school district to provide an adequate education. Here are some of the effects of flat funding on Fairbanks North Star Borough School District from the perspective of a parent (of an elementary student):

Class Size Increases: Since my daughter started kindergarten in 2019, her class size has gone up each year since 2020 (COVID) and this year she is in 5th grade and her class size is up to 29 students - above school district targets. Many school grades are combined into one classroom (split classes). I expect next year (in middle school) there will be 30-35 students per class.

Loss of educational programs at elementary schools: No art class in elementary. Elementary band and orchestra has been eliminated. Extended Learning Program (ELP - gifted program) decreased or eliminated. Classes are combined at different grade levels (split classes K/1, 2/3, 4/5 combined classrooms) due to lack of funding for additional teachers making learning difficult for students and teaching more difficult for teachers.

High teacher turnover: Last year 6 educators left at my daughter's school. Lack of a school music teacher for 1.5 years. There have been 4 different music teachers since my child started school. Periodic losses of school nurse, who administer medicine and deal with sick children. The school has had great difficulty finding elementary school teachers. Many teachers have quit due to burn out, stress, poor retirement/benefits, large class sizes, etc. My daughter's school had to hire 2 teachers last year from the Philippines who will likely not remain in Fairbanks long term.

Continued school closures and instability: 4 school closures during our 6 years in the Fairbanks School District (Joy Elementary, Nordale Elementary, Anderson Elementary, Ben Eielson High School). They also moved 6th graders into middle school within the past few years. This year (2025) 5 additional school closures are proposed (Pearl Creek Elementary, Midnight Sun Elementary, Salcha Elementary, Two Rivers Elementary, Hunter Elementary). School closures have a strong negative (academic, emotional, financial) impact on students, families, communities, and teachers.

Transportation: Less school buses available for many neighborhoods (i.e. some students have to walk more than 1 mile to their bus stop on steep hilly outlying roads with no shoulders all winter). My daughter has a long bus rides of nearly 1 hour per way. Friends' kids have bus rides of OVER 1 hour each way because they combined middle and high school routes into the same bus to save money. This means that they drop the high school kids off first and then drive across town (additional 20 minutes) to drop kids off at middle school. This makes for very long bus rides for many kids. These busing "efficiencies" done by the Fairbanks school district have a negative impact on kids and families. These transportation issues (started during COVID and continue today) are partly why make

many people pull their kids out of school in our district and look for other options (private school, home school, move to lower 48, etc).

Over testing: Students are over tested with numerous standardized tests and other tests during the school year. This results in less time for actual education. My elementary school child no longer performs as well on standardized tests; she was well above proficient in her early elementary years, despite COVID, but is not longer "advanced proficiency" and does not show strong growth. In my opinion it is because there is too much standardized and other testing and as the students get older, they know their score doesn't matter for their grades. My child gets mostly straight As on report cards and tested into the elementary school gifted program (ELP). I feel she doesn't try as hard anymore because there are so many tests and the children are tired of the constant repeated testing all year long. I would prefer that the time spent on standardized testing is spent educating instead. Legislators should stop tying school funding to only standardized test performance, it seems to be a poor measure of student success.

Please provide adequate funding for our school district now.

Sincerely,
Emily Youcha, parent of elementary school child
Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

Michael Mason

From: Eric Lehm <ericlehm@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:11 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education; Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Sarah Vance; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: House bill 69

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Dear Chair Tobin, Co-Chairs Himschoot and Story, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eric Lehm, and I am a parent of a first grader and a soon-to-be kindergartner in Alaska's public school system. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 69, which increases the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,000 this year and an additional \$404 for the next two years. This funding is essential to ensuring our public schools can provide a high-quality education in a safe and effective learning environment.

Right now, our public schools are facing devastating budget shortfalls that could lead to school closures and class sizes nearing 35 students per classroom. This is not a conducive learning environment, especially for young children. Teachers are already stretched thin, and overcrowded classrooms mean less individualized attention, more behavioral challenges, and a decline in educational quality. If we want our children to thrive, we must give public schools the resources they need to succeed.

Alaska's future depends on a strong public education system. A well-funded public school system benefits not just students but also our communities and economy. It helps retain great teachers, supports working families, and ensures every child—regardless of their background

—has access to the education they deserve.

I urge you to support HB 69 and make a meaningful commitment to Alaska's public schools. Our children's future depends on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric lehm

Homer, Alaska

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Michael Mason

From: Gloria Burnett <glow313@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 10:26 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support SB 46: Education Funding

Greetings,

I am writing as a very concerned parent, educator and community member. The impending budget cuts resulting from stagnant state education funding despite inflation will be detrimental to the wellbeing of my children and the state of Alaska.

I have directly witnessed the impacts of the lack of sustainable investment in our state education system in the lives of my children. My son receives special education services at Anchorage School District. He has received a lack of services over the past 2 years due to budget difficulties which result in staffing difficulties. I have put in the extra hours necessary at home to ensure he receives the extra support he needs. I have also volunteered to serve on our middle school PTA in an attempt to revive the morale and sense of community within Hanshew Middle School. It is clear that our educator morale is at an all time low with financial uncertainty taking a toll on their ability to focus on the most precious task at hand, educating our children.

There have been a multitude of bipartisan efforts over the past couple of years to increase education funding. I am pleading with you to please support HB 69: Education Funding: Increase BSA. Failure to do so will result in the following impacts to my children's schools:

O'Malley Elementary

1. Loss of 5 teachers
2. Increased class sizes
3. Cutting 3 after school programs
4. Elimination of IGNITE program

Hanshew Middle School

1. Loss of 10 teachers
2. Loss of 1 Assistant Principal
3. Elimination of all middle school sports and afterschool activities
4. Increased class sizes
5. Increased enrollment
6. Reduction in electives offered

Alaska is already struggling as one of the lowest performing education systems in the nation. We should be investing MORE resources in our schools for the future of our state.

Thank you,

Gloria Burnett

Michael Mason

From: Haley Kinnard <haleykinnard907@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 5:57 PM
To: Senate Education
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.

Michael Mason

From: Amy Pocewicz <apocewicz@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:05 PM
To: House Education; Senate Education
Cc: Rep. Ky Holland; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Nick Czarnecki
Subject: Hazel Czarnecki testimony supporting HB 69

Thank you for the opportunity for my daughter, Hazel Czarnecki, to testify verbally in support of House Bill 69 this evening. We're also sharing her written testimony below.

Sincerely,
Hazel's parents, Amy Pocewicz and Nick Czarnecki

My name is Hazel Czarnecki. I live in Anchorage and am in second grade at Bear Valley Elementary School. I'm asking you to increase base student funding. I'm really proud that my school won the national blue ribbon. But things are getting harder at school. Last year there were 20 kids in my class when I was in first grade. This year there are 26 kids in my class. A lot of the time I have to wait in line to get help from my teacher. He's too busy to spend enough time with everyone. In my class all the students come together to sit on the rug, to listen and learn what to do for our next assignment. It's the calm place. Now that my class is so big there's not room for everyone on the rug. Some kids sit on the floor and it can be hard to hear instructions. With a smaller class, I would be able to ask more questions. I would get more help with finishing my reading and skills assignments. Please support House Bill 69.

Michael Mason

From: Heather Conn <hconn@pcsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 4:50 AM
To: Heather Conn
Subject: HB 69 Support

Esteemed Members of the Senate Education Committee,

It is my pleasure as you consider HB 69 to provide you with a list of how we at the Petersburg School District are accountable in education.

Here at the Petersburg School District we have been accountable in the following ways:

1. Benchmarking 3 times a year using DIBELS
2. Benchmarking 3 times a year using MAP
3. Once a year AK Star
4. Screeners for those below proficient
5. Progress Monitoring students who fall below proficient on both the DIBELS and MAP biweekly
6. Providing interventions to any student who falls below proficient
7. Conferencing with families to provide updates
8. Notifying (conferences, phone calls, emails) families 10 times a year with updates on their child's progress on MAP and DIBELS
9. Evaluating teacher practices and monitoring their practices for student growth
10. Conducting quarterly community meetings to review our schools data, systems, teaching, answering questions, and looking at concerns
11. Hosting our Title One and Migrant Events to the families to increase awareness and opportunity for education at home
12. Making contact with families who have been more than 10% absent
13. Making contact with families who have been tardy

I support HB 69. Most of these are written into Alaska's regulations or law; However, in passing the AK Reads Act in 2022 there was little funding to support this act. This list of what we do in Petersburg is not exclusive, and it is an important list. These practices are what is best for students, but with these practices comes the need for people, time, and supplies. Please reach out if you would like to talk about our system of accountability. I am more than happy to have you in person, chat over the phone, answer your questions, lend you my thoughts, or send you documentation. What more is needed?

Thank you, Heather Conn

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Heather Conn, Principal

Stedman Elementary School

hconn@pcsd.us

877-526-7656

<http://www.pcsd.us>

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Michael Mason

From: Holly Brooks <brooksha@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 7:45 AM
To: Senate Education; House Education
Subject: In support of HB 69 & multi-year funding for education

Dear Representatives and Senators,

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

As you know, the BSA has not received an increase in funding since 2017 and everything is more expensive. 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 thing I've ever heard of. Alaskans are autonomous, creative, and intelligent individuals and we do not want outsiders telling us how to educate our children. It is crystal clear that his goal is to reroute public funds for private and religious education.

With the current budget shortfall O'Malley is slated to lose 5 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. 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. I also support standards but it starts with reasonable student to teacher ratios and the ability to hire qualified, talented teachers.

Please, please, 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 Governor. Stable education funding is important to the future and economy of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Holly Brooks

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Holly Brooks (she/hers)
<http://hollybrooks.com>

<https://red-s.com/>

phone: +1 907-350-8349

Facebook: [Holly Brooks LLC](#)

Instagram: [Holly Brooks LLC](#)

Michael Mason

From: Holly Williams <hrwilliams12@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:50 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Public Testimony--Education Funding

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Holly Williams, and I am a teacher in Scammon Bay, Alaska. I have been teaching here for 10 years. I am asking the state legislature to please increase the BSA by \$1,808. Funding our public schools is a Constitutional duty. Our school has had to make major cuts in the past couple years because we have not received the funding promised by the state. We have had to cut back on sports, particularly wrestling, which used to provide a great sense of connection and purpose for many of our struggling students. We have also had to cut back on the hours of our teacher aides, who are invaluable in our school. Currently our district is trying to replace our science curriculum (and hopefully next year, social studies). The current textbooks for these high school courses are over 15 years old and are in desperate need of replacing, but we currently have no budget to replace them. It is very frustrating to see how little our state government seems to value the education of Alaskan students. This neglect of our most vulnerable and at-risk students and families must end. Please raise the BSA.

Thank you,
Holly Williams