

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Finance](#); [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); senator.mia.costello@akleg.gov; [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); james@senatorkaufman.com
Subject: Accountability & OUTCOMES for correspondence programs!
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 8:32:35 PM

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to ask for some accountability for the roughly 47 millions dollars (nearly 1/2 of our current budget shortfall) we spend annually on correspondence education. Per the recent ADN article it's my understanding that only 14% of those students engage in testing. **HOW DO WE KNOW THEY ARE LEARNING ANYTHING?**

The argument *against* additional funding for public education is because "*we're lacking results and outcomes.*" This is a gross double standard! **I would love for the Governor and those who are proponents of *his* bill (and opponents of HB69) to report on OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION.** I have seen none.

Respectfully,
Holly Brooks

--

Holly Brooks (she/hers), OLY, LPC, PMH-C
Owner/Practitioner
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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: BSA
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 5:51:15 PM

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for an increase to the BSA for education. I have been in support of this for many years. If it passes, I hope the legislature has the votes to override a likely veto by the governor.

Thank you for your service,
Mary Forbes,
Kodiak

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Michael Mason](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: From Yesterday's Testimony, questions
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025 11:13:59 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-p51f1zuv.png](#)
[Testimony 25.3.5.pdf](#)

Hello Claire and Mike,

Please see the attached document with the three member testimonies.

Also, in answer to some of the committee questions, I can share the following resources:

- The **14 different "Eligibility Categories" for Special Education** in Alaska as defined by IDEA can be found [HERE](#), starting on page 23 (pdf. pg. 24), and with more details for each category on the subsequent pages
- The **7 specific criteria to qualify for "Intensive Funding"** can be found in the same document, starting on page 140 (pdf. pg. 141)
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports** is a very common "model" used to talk about how to meet the differing needs of all students as part of a "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports" (PBIS) model or program that is widely used in schools today. [HERE](#) is a document from DEED that demonstrates this. The **"Level 4"** or **"Level 3 Intensive"** needs would be for the students with needs that are best met in level three that also qualify as "intensive needs" under 4 AAC 52.700 (c)
- From the presentation slides, I believe Representative Elam asked what districts were represented in the numbers of open positions. Based on a scroll through what is currently posted on the website (1656 total positions):
 - "Special Education" Postings (488):
 - Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau make up ~75% of the postings
 - Other postings are coming from Kenai, North Slope, Mat-Su, Northwest Arctic, Lower Kuskowkim, Lower Yukon, Valdez, Petersburg, St. Mary's, Sitka, Cordova, Copper River, Kodiak, Alaska Gateway, Galena, Denali, Southwest Region, Hoonah, Kake, Kashunamiut, Dillingham, Iditarod, Yukon-Koyukuk, Nome, and SERCC
 - Related Service Provider Postings (116):
 - Anchorage makes up ~25% of the postings
 - Other postings are coming from Kenai, Juneau, Denali, Kodiak, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, Bering Strait, Sitka, Ketchikan, Juneau, North Slope, Unalaska, Northwest Arctic, Hoonah, Yukon-Koyukuk, Galena, Kashunamiut, Cordova, Lower Kuskokwim, and SERCC

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any pictures from the committee testimony, I would love a copy. I've attached the cell phone pictures I took below in case the committee

would like them.

[House Ed Committee Photos](#)

[Senate Ed Committee Photos](#)

Please feel free to reach out if you need to hear from experts on other topics affecting public education!

Thank you,

Caitlin Tumlinson (she/her/hers)

UniServ Director, NEA-Alaska

Anchorage Office

Office: 907.263.8549

www.neaalaska.org

fb.com/myNEAAlaska | [@NEA-Alaska](https://twitter.com/NEA-Alaska)



NEA-Alaska exists to be an advocate for an excellent public education for each child in Alaska and to advance the interests of public school employees.

Proud member of my own staff union - NSO-Alaska!

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Fund our public schools. Increase student BSA. Suggested solutions provided.
Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:35:58 AM

Dear House Education Committee Member.

I am a mother of two children in Anchorage. My youngest attends Aquarian Charter School and my oldest is in his second year at Romig Middle School. I am a taxpayer, a voter, and petroleum geologist in the oil and gas industry. Both Aquarian and the HG program at Romig are excellent models for public education in Anchorage. My boys have excelled academically as well as in the after-school activities such as running club, JNYO, Battle of the Books, Cross Country, Jazz Band, and Track. I have been extremely disappointed that the State House and Senate have not funded the student base allocation rate so that it meets today's needs as well as future needs.

Relying on revenue streams from declining oil fields is not enough to manage our state resources. Implementing a state income tax for all people who work in Alaska is one option. Reducing the permanent fund dividend is another option. The one option that must end is refusing to adequately fund our public schools. We must provide excellent public education for our youth. We must continue to provide in-class standards as well as after-school activities that develop leadership, teamwork, community, and pride.

At Aquarian Charter School, to sustain our current teachers and programs, we need the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to raise by \$1,900 per student. Please know that this is what would be needed if Aquarian didn't make any cuts or raise class sizes at all. Without additional funding, Aquarian will be forced to pull over \$700,000 from their unallocated funds. Aquarian would only be able to do this for three years before the unallocated funds would be depleted. Without a BSA increase, Aquarian may have to: decrease their nurse to half time, eliminate night custodian services, raise class sizes, and decrease staff.

The rising costs of salaries, benefits, and classroom resources make an increased BSA essential. If there is not an increase to funding for next year, salaries and benefits alone would make up 103% of Aquarian's budget. Without adequate funding, academic programs, intervention supports, and extracurricular opportunities may be impacted. Aquarian's model of high engagement, strong relationships, and academic relies on sustained funding to maintain manageable class sizes and specialized programming.

At Romig Middle School, when I attended the cake auction, a benefit put on by the students and parent volunteers to raise money for Romig's music program, the principal stated that if the base student allocation rate is not increased, Romig will lose multiple teachers. Our children, their education, and our future depend upon the excellence of public schools and their after-school activities that develop their leadership, commitment to growth, teamwork, and sense of community.

House Bill 69 is a great start at increasing the Base Student Allocation rate today and for our future. Please note that the excellent schools that my sons attend cannot sustain their normal course of action without an increase in the BSA. Please note that there is no reason to tug and war between critical missions in our state. The legislators need to agree to add additional revenue streams such as state income tax for all workers in the state of AK as well as reducing the permanent fund dividend.

In 1976, the people of the state of Alaska established the permanent fund to make sure that future Alaskans would benefit from the early revenues of the state's non-renewable oil and gas resource. 2025 is the 49th year since the people of Alaska created this funding source for the future. As expected, the non-renewable resource is much less (averaging 465 thousand barrels a day in 2024 versus over 2 million barrels a day in 1988). It is time for our current legislators to increase our revenue stream to pay for the necessary increases to the base student allocation fund. Stop the tug of war and fund education this year and beyond.

Thank you,

Laura Gregersen
[REDACTED], Anchorage, AK 99517

PS. I add the history of the permanent fund dividend for your reference. (<https://pfd.alaska.gov/Division-Info/Historical-Timeline>)

1976

Voters pass a constitutional amendment to establish the Permanent Fund (Alaska Constitution, Article IX, Section 15).

1980

First Permanent Fund Dividend legislation enacted. The legislation established a program giving every adult Alaska resident \$50 for every year of residency since statehood in 1959 and also established a dividend Fund. Payment of dividends were stayed under litigation (Zobel v Williams) challenging the constitutionality of the program.

1982

U.S Supreme Court ruled the 1980 legislation unconstitutional. In response to the litigation, the legislature passed legislation authorizing equal dividend payments to all six-month residents. The first dividend amount was \$1,000. The first dividend checks were distributed June 14, 1982.

1983

Residency period defined as 6 months ending March 31. Filing due date established as June 30.

1985

Hold-harmless program funding for public assistance recipients changed from General Fund to Permanent Fund dividend Fund.

1988

January 1988 - Permanent Fund Dividend Division established. Positions with PFD responsibilities in Administrative Services (20), Enforcement (23), and Public Services (14) transferred to the new division. Enforcement and Public Services divisions eliminated.

1989

Legislature changed residency period from 6 months to 24 months. Individuals banned from assigning dividends (except to government agencies) by regulation. Felons not eligible for dividends. Physical presence requirement established.

1990

Superior Court ruled 24-month residency requirement unconstitutional and changed the residency requirement to 12 months (Lindly v Malone). Disclosure requirements established to print program costs on dividend checks.

1991

Check-off program for Advance College Tuition started. Percent of dividend subject to levy for private judgments increased from 50% to 55%. Fairbanks office closed in September 1991 (2 positions). One position each transferred to Anchorage and Juneau office. First receipt cards mailed.

1992

Individuals banned from assigning dividends (except to government agencies) by statute. Review Unit moved from Anchorage to Juneau.

1993

Direct-deposit program for full dividends established. Residency period changed to calendar year. Voter registration forms included with dividend application.

1994

Filing due date changed to March 31. Longevity Bonus Annuity check-off program began. Legislature authorizes the division to charge fee for processing claims and assignments on dividends

1995

Longevity Bonus Annuity check-off program repealed.

1996

Misdemeanants with two prior crimes not eligible for dividends.

1997

Fairbanks office re-opened February 1997 (2 positions).

1998

Internet program implemented to allow applicants to check their status online. All allowable absences defined in statutes (statutory provision for commissioner to define absences by regulation repealed). Spouses accompanying eligible residents authorized as allowable absence. Authority to file for estates (persons who die during filing period) established. Physical presence changed to 72 hours every two years (effective for 2000 dividend). Percent of dividend subject to levy for private judgment increased from 55% to 80%.

1999

On-line application implemented, but applicants required to print and sign full application. Direct-deposit program expanded to include partial dividends. Document Processing Unit night shift (17 positions) eliminated. Emergency regulations detailing alien eligibility adopted.

2000

Imaging system and new data entry system implemented January 2000. First year that applications imaged. Improved on-line Internet application implemented March 2000 (applicants required to sign signature page only). Fairbanks office moved to Cushman Street location September 1.

2001

Review and Appeals units consolidated into the Dividend Enforcement, Review and Appeals Unit. Alaska Supreme Court rules that immigrant aliens who form intent to remain in Alaska qualify for dividends.

2002

Receipt letter replaces application receipt card. Department of Health and Social Services files applications electronically. Final year securities companies participated in the direct deposit program. Misdemeanants with one prior felony or two prior misdemeanors not eligible for dividend.

2003

Online applications exceed 100,000 (155,226). Electronic signature for online applications implemented March 20, 2003. All review cases worked by year-end. Fraud Investigations moved from Anchorage to Juneau.

2004

Receipt letters eliminated. Online application expanded to cover full application and supplemental schedule. Tri-fold direct deposit advice implemented. Selective Service registration part of the application.

2005

Online applications exceed 200,000 (211,464) and electronically signed applications exceed 100,000 (129,822). Time period for applicants to respond to requests for information changed to 30 days.

2007

Over 2/3 of Alaskans apply online (420,596) and electronically signed applications exceed 275,000 (276,203).

2008

One time resource rebate added to dividend. Payment timing moved up to September in response to high energy costs. New eligibility software program implemented.

2009

The Charitable Contribution program, Pick.Click.Give is implemented allowing applicants to donate all or part of the dividend to non-profit agencies.

2010

Community distribution centers are used for distributing paper applications for the first time. Postal delivery to every Alaskan mailbox is reduced to targeting mailings in light of over 75% of applicants filing online.

2013

The Division publishes a Facebook page to develop an additional interactive experience with Alaskans through social networking.

2014

The Division implements system changes to expand the options for Direct Deposit of dividend payments. Within months, the number of financial institutions selected by applicants for Direct Deposit jumps from 22 to over 350!

2015

The State of Alaska moved to utilizing an integrated accounting system, which greatly affected the PFD payment process. This transition was successful, and will continue to be utilized.

The Positive Payee Standards were implemented, creating a State Warrant that has security features to prevent fraud, as well as providing for a more 'uniform' State Warrant to be recognized across Alaska.

2017

A voter initiative passed, joining The Division of Elections and the Permanent Fund Dividend Division in what is termed the PFD Automatic Voter Registration process. This meant that every Adult Application filed beginning in March of 2017 registered the applicant to vote, with an 'opt out' notice being sent to the individual.

2018

In 2018, the PFD division created a new application specifically for tribal courts. In Alaska, there was a need for tribal courts to apply on behalf of a child. This occurred outside of State programs like H&SS. Because of this, we created an application catered to tribal courts so that they could continue ensuring that children in their custody are receiving their PFD.

2019

In 2019, the Education Raffle was put into the application as an option for individuals to give a portion of their PFD

to benefit education statewide.

In 2019, individuals who utilize the online application as well as direct deposit will be paid in the first payment run in October. Those who utilize the paper application or request a paper check instead of direct deposit will be paid in the second payment run in October.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Fund Schools
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 9:53:38 PM

Please fund schools over PFDs. I have two children in the district. We work in healthcare and engineering. Our priority is education for our children. I have an immersion student going into middle school. She will no access to the school we committed to as a kindergarten or a health future in sports. We are reconsidering our commitment to living in Alaska based on the future of education.

We are working parents who need access to regular education options not charter or homeschool. Make education a priority and support Alaska's long-term economic future.

Corrine O'Neill
[REDACTED]
Anchorage

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: schoolboard@asdk12.org
Cc: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); doa.commissioner@alaska.gov; deed.commissioner@alaska.gov
Subject: Funding Education in Alaska
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:43:25 AM

The following was written for an Anchorage School District school board meeting about education funding, which I was unable to attend. This was really written for ALL Alaskans, the intense political divisiveness our country is experiencing right now is more damaging and far reaching than ever. Education has become about much more than kids. I appreciate you taking the time to read my plea for making funding for education a priority.

Dear Anchorage School Board Members,

My name is Tabitha Voeller and I am a parent of students with disabilities who attend ASD public schools, I am also an ASD employee - though I am speaking for myself here.

I have many personal stories I could share with you about my family's experiences in ASD - both good and bad. Stories that make people angry and sad - regardless of their political stance - because as humans we feel (well, most do).

The people that need public schools the most can't pay for education and they don't want to deal with vouchers (I know I don't). Most families are not afforded the privilege to cross the city for a preferred school. Families, like my own, can't go to a charter school or afford a private school, and it wouldn't matter if we could because these institutions are not inclusive. They don't offer, are prepared for, or welcome medically fragile students with severe intellectual or other learning disabilities.

I don't believe the blame for the budget crisis should solely sit on our school board. There are probably things that could change, there always are. However, our state leaders have chosen to underfund education time and again for years. The base student allocation (BSA) is and has been below inflation rates for years. Our staff and students are suffering and scared of what the future holds. Educators and parents are wondering how they are going to explain to their kids why programs, like sports, are being taken away; why essential resources, like having a full time nurse will be unavailable; and why people are leaving our state.

I realize it is naive of me to hope for people to do what is right, but at this point you've heard it all. It doesn't matter how despicable, inspiring, tragic, or successful the outcome is, underfunding public education is about keeping money in deep pockets. We have let our divided political agendas come before our children, our most valuable and vulnerable asset.

We need our state Legislators, Governor Dunleavy, Senators - and the people who have elected them - to take the time to actually go into our communities and get to know the real people affected by their decisions. I am guessing most of these families weren't at your rally's, Mr Governor.

Bottom line, our children and educators are the wrong targets here.

Thank you,
Tabitha Voeller

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99502

[REDACTED]



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: ASD School Budget
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 11:32:52 AM

From: Chair Steller Parent Group [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:34 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; representative.maxine.dilbert@akleg.gov; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; representaative.calvin.schrage@akleg.gov; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Steller Parent Group Officers [REDACTED]
Subject: ASD School Budget

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

Steller Secondary School's parent group (SPG) is writing out of concern regarding the Alaska state budget in regards to education funding.

Student education, community, and welfare are our primary concerns. When ASD's base student allocation has not increased in the last 10 years, the direct impacts for students are unacceptable.

As you may know, Steller has been asked to cut 3.4 teachers. The consequences for Steller will be detrimental to the education of its students in some of the following ways:

- the obvious loss of many excellent, newly-recruited teachers
- unreasonable class sizes for students who learn well from direct interaction with teachers
- fewer academic opportunities as fewer teachers will be available for electives and potentially some of Steller's current unique programs like Passages and Intensives
- the loss of new students after the program has grown in recent years thanks to Steller's dedicated Principal, Maria Hernandez
- the ability for Steller to fulfill its goals, which we provide below, as they inspire families, students, and staff every day

While Steller Secondary School is a special place that provides students with a community that cannot be found elsewhere, all schools need proper funding to educate students respectfully.

Our sincere and simple message to you is, please allocate much more funding to Alaska's public schools.

In our society, we hope for young people to contribute intelligently. Please direct funds to our community's students so they can become "independent, courageous people capable of dealing with the shifting complexities of the modern world (quote from Steller's Philosophy)."

Signed, Steller Parent Group Members,

Dee Dee Zobian
Susan Beesley
Karen Brenneman
Ruth Black
Sarah Burke
Ellen Chirichella
Teresa Drescher-Freimuth
Herman Black
Lea McKenna
Valerie Klemmer
Kristen Malaiva
Rose Kuiper
Lisa Wells
Rachel Toberlin
Kary Bashford-Blumer
Sheilagh Menck
Linnea Wells
Amy Sexton
Blake Smith
Hattie Harvey
Monica Perez-Verdia
Brett Harvey

Essential to the development of the Steller Alternative program are the following goals:

1. To demonstrate that the heart of education is process, not product. It is not merely preparation, but life itself.
2. To provide a self-directed, learning experience consistent with students' needs and expressed desires.
3. To employ teachers and other staff who are committed to a more personalized

education, in order to facilitate self-directed learning.

4. To promote appreciation and a greater awareness of cultural diversity and similarity through cross-cultural exchange of learning.
5. To operate as a source of information for teachers, administrators, and the public on programs characteristic of self-directed learning.
6. To provide an opportunity for participation by parents, students, staff, administration, and community.
7. To develop a sense of community, among all participants, in order to encourage co-learning and reciprocal inspiration.
8. To integrate youth with the life of the local and global community for their mutual benefit.
9. To offer diversified counseling services to all students in the process of developing their academic, social and emotional self-sufficiency.
10. To help students acquire skills needed to cope with practical aspects of adult life.
11. To provide an educational opportunity wherein classes taught by staff are supplemented by professionals, parents, students, and a wide variety of others, limited only by student interest and staff potential in the Anchorage community.

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Dee Dee Zobian & Sarah Burke
Steller Parent Group Chairs

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Education Funding
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 11:27:38 AM

From: Leah [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 5:05 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I was born and raised in Alaska and have been teaching History and Civics to Alaskan students for 22 years. I am writing to advocate for a significant, permanent increase to the BSA, tied to inflation. We can no longer kick the can down the road for another year or attempt to limp along with one time funding. The consequences of inaction will ultimately negatively impact every resident in Alaska as we continue to lose families to states that do a better job supporting schools, as we are unable to attract skilled workers to our state because Alaska doesn't prioritize school funding and as we fail to grow our own skilled workforce.

In the Anchorage School District, the 2025-26 proposed budget raises the pupil-teacher-ratio (PTR) in secondary classrooms to 35. With the current PTR of 31, class sizes in general education classes are consistently at 32-36 students. The PTR isn't a class size cap. Everyone who works in a secondary school knows a PTR of 35 will translate into class sizes of around 40 students.

Should the Legislature fail to increase the BSA, my class sizes will jump to 36-40 students. Due to projected staffing cuts, I anticipate having roughly 200 students next year. As a result, the time I'm able to spend helping each student individually will decrease. The feedback I will be able to provide on student work will have to be generalized rather than specific. I will have to reduce the number of writing assignments or provide completion grades rather than actual feedback. The number of formal essays my students write will drop from two essays per year to one. It takes repetition and individualized feedback from a teacher to learn complex skills. Next year my students will see a dramatic decrease in both because I won't have time to carefully read and provide feedback on all their written work. There will be no way to avoid the negative impact this will have on next year's student learning outcomes.

Should the Legislature fail to increase the BSA, and one third of my school's general education teaching positions are cut, I will also have to eliminate all engaging cross-curricular projects due to an inability to collaborate across content areas. Those include the Civics project "We the People: Simulated Congressional Hearings" and a cross-curricular research project and presentation. The bottom line is the quality of education I will be able to offer my students will go down and they will be forced to

move on to high school less prepared than students in previous years.

I believe Governor Dunleavy wants better for Alaska's students. However, his approach is flawed. Teacher bonuses will not buy smaller class sizes, more individual help for students or individualized feedback on student work, all of which are critical to positive learning outcomes. Bonuses might be able to entice teachers to come to Alaska, but bonuses won't retain those teachers if their classes are so large they are drowning in work and continually feeling frustrated by their lack of ability to provide a high quality education to students. We have already seen teachers take the professional experience they gained in Alaska and leave for other states. How could you blame them? Alaska's current approach does not provide certainty for next year, let alone a quality retirement. Giving teachers a bonus, while benefiting me personally, will not address the problem of retaining experienced teachers. It's inefficient, shortsighted governance and a wasteful use of State money. The way to improve education for the greatest number of Alaskan students is to lower class sizes and retain experienced teachers. This occurs through a permanent, inflation-proofed increase to the BSA.

The only one of Governor Dunleavy's proposals which I do support is removing student cell phones from schools. In my experience, student cell phones have only detracted from the learning environment.

The State has the money to increase the BSA, but it requires reducing or, better yet, eliminating the PFD. The PFD itself has become a barrier to sensible, forward thinking governance in Alaska. I have received all but a couple of PFDs since their inception and I would gladly give up all future PFDs for a state budget that funds our collective future.

Finally, I leave you with a reminder from the Civics class you once took. The purpose of government is to protect fundamental rights and promote the common good – that which is in the best interest of the community as a whole. The Founders of our country widely embraced the concept of exercising civic virtue. They understood civic virtue to mean that citizens, as well as those elected to political office, would willingly set aside their personal agendas and interests for the common good. I would like to encourage all of Alaska's legislators to exercise civic virtue as they pursue legislation for the common good of Alaskans as a whole.

Thank you for all you do to thoughtfully serve the residents of Alaska.

Thank you,
Leah Meyring, M.A., M.A.T., M.Ed.

From: [House Education](#)
To: [Rep. Andi Story](#)
Subject: FW: Fund our public schools. Increase student BSA. Suggested solutions provided.
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 3:04:00 PM

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

From: Tammy Smith
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:13 AM
To: House Education
Subject: FW: Fund our public schools. Increase student BSA. Suggested solutions provided.
Tammy Smith
Legislative Aide/Education Committee Aide
Office of Representative Andi Story
House District 3
Alaska State Legislature
(907)465-3744

From: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:59 AM
To: Tammy Smith <Tammy.Smith@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Fund our public schools. Increase student BSA. Suggested solutions provided.

From: Laura Silliphant [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:39 AM
To: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fw: Fund our public schools. Increase student BSA. Suggested solutions provided.
Dear House Education Committee CoChair Representative Story.

I am a mother of two children in Anchorage. My youngest attends Aquarian Charter School and my oldest is in his second year at Romig Middle School. I am a taxpayer, a voter, and petroleum geologist in the oil and gas industry. Both Aquarian and the HG program at Romig are excellent models for public education in Anchorage. My boys have excelled academically as well as in the after-school activities such as running club, JNYO, Battle of the Books, Cross Country, Jazz Band, and Track. I have been extremely disappointed that the State House and Senate have not funded the student base allocation rate so that it meets today's needs as well as future needs.

Relying on revenue streams from declining oil fields is not enough to manage our state resources. Implementing a state income tax for all people who work in Alaska is one option. Reducing the permanent fund dividend is another option. The one option that must end is refusing to adequately fund our public schools. We must provide excellent public education for our youth. We must continue to provide in-class standards as well as after-school activities that develop leadership, teamwork, community, and pride.

At Aquarian Charter School, to sustain our current teachers and programs, we need the Base

Student Allocation (BSA) to raise by \$1,900 per student. Please know that this is what would be needed if Aquarian didn't make any cuts or raise class sizes at all. Without additional funding, Aquarian will be forced to pull over \$700,000 from their unallocated funds. Aquarian would only be able to do this for three years before the unallocated funds would be depleted. Without a BSA increase, Aquarian may have to: decrease their nurse to half time, eliminate night custodian services, raise class sizes, and decrease staff.

The rising costs of salaries, benefits, and classroom resources make an increased BSA essential. If there is not an increase to funding for next year, salaries and benefits alone would make up 103% of Aquarian's budget. Without adequate funding, academic programs, intervention supports, and extracurricular opportunities may be impacted. Aquarian's model of high engagement, strong relationships, and academic relies on sustained funding to maintain manageable class sizes and specialized programming.

At Romig Middle School, when I attended the cake auction, a benefit put on by the students and parent volunteers to raise money for Romig's music program, the principal stated that if the base student allocation rate is not increased, Romig will lose multiple teachers. Our children, their education, and our future depend upon the excellence of public schools and their after-school activities that develop their leadership, commitment to growth, teamwork, and sense of community.

House Bill 69 is a great start at increasing the Base Student Allocation rate today and for our future. Please note that the excellent schools that my sons attend cannot sustain their normal course of action without an increase in the BSA. Please note that there is no reason to tug and war between critical missions in our state. The legislators need to agree to add additional revenue streams such as state income tax for all workers in the state of AK as well as reducing the permanent fund dividend.

In 1976, the people of the state of Alaska established the permanent fund to make sure that future Alaskans would benefit from the early revenues of the state's non-renewable oil and gas resource. 2025 is the 49th year since the people of Alaska created this funding source for the future. As expected, the non-renewable resource is much less (averaging 465 thousand barrels a day in 2024 versus over 2 million barrels a day in 1988). It is time for our current legislators to increase our revenue stream to pay for the necessary increases to the base student allocation fund. Stop the tug of war and fund education this year and beyond.

Thank you,

Laura Gregersen

[REDACTED] Anchorage, AK 99517

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

PS. I add the history of the permanent fund dividend for your reference.

(<https://pfd.alaska.gov/Division-Info/Historical-Timeline>)

1976

Voters pass a constitutional amendment to establish the Permanent Fund (Alaska Constitution, Article IX, Section 15).

1980

First Permanent Fund Dividend legislation enacted. The legislation established a program giving every adult Alaska resident \$50 for every year of residency since statehood in 1959 and also established a dividend Fund. Payment of dividends were stayed under litigation (Zobel v Williams) challenging the constitutionality of the program.

1982

U.S Supreme Court ruled the 1980 legislation unconstitutional. In response to the litigation, the legislature passed legislation authorizing equal dividend payments to all six-month residents. The first dividend amount was \$1,000. The first dividend checks were distributed June 14, 1982.

1983

Residency period defined as 6 months ending March 31. Filing due date established as June 30.

1985

Hold-harmless program funding for public assistance recipients changed from General Fund to Permanent Fund dividend Fund.

1988

January 1988 - Permanent Fund Dividend Division established. Positions with PFD responsibilities in Administrative Services (20), Enforcement (23), and Public Services (14) transferred to the new division. Enforcement and Public Services divisions eliminated.

1989

Legislature changed residency period from 6 months to 24 months. Individuals banned from assigning dividends (except to government agencies) by regulation. Felons not eligible for dividends. Physical presence requirement established.

1990

Superior Court ruled 24-month residency requirement unconstitutional and changed the residency requirement to 12 months (Lindly v Malone). Disclosure requirements established to print program costs on dividend checks.

1991

Check-off program for Advance College Tuition started. Percent of dividend subject to levy for private judgments increased from 50% to 55%. Fairbanks office closed in September 1991 (2 positions). One position each transferred to Anchorage and Juneau office. First receipt cards mailed.

1992

Individuals banned from assigning dividends (except to government agencies) by statute. Review Unit moved from Anchorage to Juneau.

1993

Direct-deposit program for full dividends established. Residency period changed to calendar year. Voter registration forms included with dividend application.

1994

Filing due date changed to March 31. Longevity Bonus Annuity check-off program began. Legislature authorizes the division to charge fee for processing claims and assignments on dividends

1995

Longevity Bonus Annuity check-off program repealed.

1996

Misdemeanants with two prior crimes not eligible for dividends.

1997

Fairbanks office re-opened February 1997 (2 positions).

1998

Internet program implemented to allow applicants to check their status online. All allowable absences defined in statutes (statutory provision for commissioner to define absences by regulation repealed). Spouses accompanying eligible residents authorized as allowable absence. Authority to file for estates (persons who die during filing period) established. Physical presence changed to 72 hours every two years (effective for 2000 dividend). Percent of dividend subject to levy for private judgment increased from 55% to 80%.

1999

On-line application implemented, but applicants required to print and sign full application. Direct-deposit program expanded to include partial dividends. Document Processing Unit night shift (17 positions) eliminated. Emergency regulations detailing alien eligibility adopted.

2000

Imaging system and new data entry system implemented January 2000. First year that applications imaged. Improved on-line Internet application implemented March 2000 (applicants required to sign signature page only). Fairbanks office moved to Cushman Street location September 1.

2001

Review and Appeals units consolidated into the Dividend Enforcement, Review and Appeals Unit. Alaska Supreme Court rules that immigrant aliens who form intent to remain in Alaska qualify for dividends.

2002

Receipt letter replaces application receipt card. Department of Health and Social Services files applications electronically. Final year securities companies participated in the direct deposit program. Misdemeanants with one prior felony or two prior misdemeanors not eligible for dividend.

2003

Online applications exceed 100,000 (155,226). Electronic signature for online applications implemented March 20, 2003. All review cases worked by year-end. Fraud Investigations moved from Anchorage to Juneau.

2004

Receipt letters eliminated. Online application expanded to cover full application and supplemental schedule. Tri-fold direct deposit advice implemented. Selective Service registration part of the application.

2005

Online applications exceed 200,000 (211,464) and electronically signed applications exceed 100,000 (129,822). Time period for applicants to respond to requests for information changed to 30 days.

2007

Over 2/3 of Alaskans apply online (420,596) and electronically signed applications exceed 275,000 (276,203).

2008

One time resource rebate added to dividend. Payment timing moved up to September in response to high energy costs. New eligibility software program implemented.

2009

The Charitable Contribution program, Pick.Click.Give is implemented allowing applicants to donate all or part of the dividend to non-profit agencies.

2010

Community distribution centers are used for distributing paper applications for the first time. Postal

delivery to every Alaskan mailbox is reduced to targeting mailings in light of over 75% of applicants filing online.

2013

The Division publishes a Facebook page to develop an additional interactive experience with Alaskans through social networking.

2014

The Division implements system changes to expand the options for Direct Deposit of dividend payments. Within months, the number of financial institutions selected by applicants for Direct Deposit jumps from 22 to over 350!

2015

The State of Alaska moved to utilizing an integrated accounting system, which greatly affected the PFD payment process. This transition was successful, and will continue to be utilized.

The Positive Payee Standards were implemented, creating a State Warrant that has security features to prevent fraud, as well as providing for a more 'uniform' State Warrant to be recognized across Alaska.

2017

A voter initiative passed, joining The Division of Elections and the Permanent Fund Dividend Division in what is termed the PFD Automatic Voter Registration process. This meant that every Adult Application filed beginning in March of 2017 registered the applicant to vote, with an 'opt out' notice being sent to the individual.

2018

In 2018, the PFD division created a new application specifically for tribal courts. In Alaska, there was a need for tribal courts to apply on behalf of a child. This occurred outside of State programs like H&SS. Because of this, we created an application catored to tribal courts so that they could continue ensuring that children in their custody are receiving their PFD.

2019

In 2019, the Education Raffle was put into the application as an option for individuals to give a portion of their PFD to benefit education statewide.

In 2019, individuals who utilize the online application as well as direct deposit will be paid in the first payment run in October. Those who utilize the paper application or request a paper check instead of direct deposit will be paid in the second payment run in October.

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Fund our Schools (HB 69)
Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 8:26:41 AM

From: Louis maurer [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Fund our Schools (HB 69)

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am writing to voicemail my support of HB 69 and similar education funding proposals that will increase base student allocation in the house and senate and tie the BSA formula to inflation to avoid future volatility.

It is extremely distressing to me that our schools are facing such a level of budget deficit. I have three enrolled in the public schools and one receiving early intervention speech therapy. These schools provide education to our children, social activities and development opportunities, and a chance to make a better future. Closing schools, and/or not funding schools to meet the needs of students will impact my family, my neighbors, my community and our state for years to come. Every child deserves the right to a safe school that provides equal opportunity to quality education and extracurricular activities. Every student should have education tools to meet special needs or learning challenges.

I urge you to make the decision to fully fund our schools and inflation proof the base rate for students this year and every year. Advocate for passing HB 69 and when it is your turn, vote "yes!"

Respectfully,

Louis Maurer

From: [LIO Anchorage](#)
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB 69
Date: Saturday, February 22, 2025 2:16:27 PM

From: Keri Pickering
Sent: Saturday, February 22, 2025 1:45 PM
To: LIO Anchorage
Subject: Re: HB 69

Yes please

On Sat, Feb 22, 2025, 12:47 PM LIO Anchorage <Lio.Anchorage@akleg.gov> wrote:

Hi Keri,
Thank you for writing, would you like me to pass on your message to the House and Senate Education Committees?
Ian Tremblay
Administrative Assistant
Legislative Information Office
[1500 W Benson Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99503](#)
Phone: 9072690178

From: Keri Pickering [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2025 5:36 PM
To: LIO Anchorage <Lio.Anchorage@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 69

As a public schools teacher in Anchorage, we desperately need this bill to pass. ASD is in so much debt that we are creating larger class sizes and cutting 300 teacher positions. My daughter's education will be affected by these cuts if we cannot provide more funding. I am pained to see people I work with lose their jobs and others feel the strain of too large class sizes. Please, work to get HB69 passed and funding to our schools.

Sincerely,
Keri Pickering

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB 69
Date: Monday, February 24, 2025 2:57:57 PM

From: Hannah Brewster [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 2:19 PM

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

Subject: HB 69

Dear Alaska Legislators,

My name is Hannah Brewster and I'm a parent of two kids in the Anchorage School District. I am a constituent of Representative Fields. I'm writing because I'm worried about our schools and hoping you'll support increased funding for education this year.

My kids are at two different elementary schools in Anchorage, our neighborhood school and an optional program. I've also worked closely with educators for years through my work in environmental education. I have seen so many examples of the phenomenal things Alaska teachers and schools can do, even with fewer and fewer resources each year.

The current budget for the next school year is appalling in how much is being cut. Not just extracurricular programs and auxiliary services, but classroom teaching positions that will leave class sizes appalling high and cuts to nursing staff that leave schools without the safety net of a skilled medical professional for half their time. These are serious and long lasting harms to our kids if you fail to act. Children should not bear the brunt of political wrangling. A substantial and permanent increase in the BSA is long overdue.

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

Could you please support:

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

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

Sincerely,

Hannah Brewster, Anchorage

—

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: HB69
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 9:04:25 AM

From: Rachel Osborn [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 9:01 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69

Dear representative,

I need to reach out to discuss HB69 with you and my strong opposition to it. I am a born and raised Alaskan and want to raise my family in our great state where freedom is still a priority- or so I thought.

I am also a nurse who was in the thick of COVID when it hit us. Homeschooling my children became a necessity during this time as our family needed the security, structure, predicability and flexibility of this option to continue our two children's educations while also working as my husband and I were both "essential workers."

When we started homeschooling we were suddenly acutely aware of how the public school system we had been entrusting our children's education to was completely failing them. Our daughter was in 3rd grade and unable to read or write- even though we had been told over and over that she was progressing on grade level by the district. I have spent the last 4.5 years trying to catch her up and find curriculum that works for her and her brother who was starting kindergarten when we started this journey. My son has several learning disabilities (like his sister) and also struggles with school but because of homeschooling I have been able to tailor curriculum to their needs and seek or change supports when things are not working for them.

HB69 has several features that will hinder my freedoms to educate my children the way I feel is best for them. If the state wants to force homeschoolers back into the public school system this bill will not do it, we left the district because they were failing our daughter and would have failed our son. We also chose the homeschool district that was most convenient for us because of their office location, hours and supports. Forcing us to use the local districts correspondence program, which will reset our allotment because it cannot transfer over, will hurt our children and their future education as they go into high-school.

If the state really cares about students and their education stop attacking homeschoolers and focus attention on fixing the public schools, supporting school choice and parents input into their children's education. If the public schools were doing a better job many parents would consider sending their kids back but with HB69 as it stands you will force many to go independent with homeschool, violate our freedoms and rights to educate our children as we see fit (case law: Meyer v. Nebraska (1923), Pierce v. Society of Sisters (1925), Troxel v. Granville (2000), Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972)) and you will encourage a mass exodus from our state. Focus your attention where it needs to be- on fixing public schools instead of over regulating and infringing on the rights of homeschoolers.

Already I have to submit work samples for every course each quarter and excessive documentation for all expenses I want reimbursed. Maybe an audit of how public schools use my tax dollars would be more appropriate- if each school has to account for every dollar they spent the way homeschoolers do they would be able to spend money more wisely, on resources directed at the children they are entrusted to educate.

Kindly refocus on what changes really need to occur in our state education system,

Rachel Osborn

40yr Alaskan Resident

Property owner/tax payer

Homeschool mom



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: In Support of School Funding
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 9:16:30 AM

From: Jessica Cochran [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 6:25 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: In Support of School Funding

Hello -

I live in Anchorage and am writing to express my support for your school funding bill. As a parent of two Anchorage School District graduates or soon-to-be graduates, I am grateful for the quality education my kids have received in Anchorage public schools, and want to make sure future children have the same (or better!) opportunities.

I was also heartened to read about your reluctance to tie school funding to Governor Dunleavy's proposed education policies; I do NOT support a statewide system to approve charter schools, taking away local control, and I do NOT support vouchers or correspondence school rules that allow public school dollars to pay for private school education, which does not have to serve all students.

Thank you for your leadership!

--

Jessica Cochran
[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Increase Alaska's Education Funding
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 9:08:40 AM

From: Allison Galbraith
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:20 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot
Subject: Increase Alaska's Education Funding

I am a life-long Alaskan from Homer and I would like to voice my support for increases in public education funding. Our schools, administrators, and teachers should never have to worry so consistently about their jobs and funding. I am also a parent who is concerned that my children's school will be closed due to our budget deficit. I can't express how much I cherish my children's school and the community it has created and supports. Losing incredible teachers due to lack of job security or, worse yet, to closing the schools is a stain on our state's reputation for greatness. We should strive to be the example of outstanding public education opportunities. Financially starving our public education system, pushing out good educators, and then using national benchmarks to claim that our schools are failing and justify further financial starvation is so absurd it almost seems comical. My heartfelt plea is that you support BSA and public school funding increases above all else. If it requires us to consider new revenue sources in the form of a state income tax, sales tax, or elimination of tax exemptions, that is the cost of greatness. We can no longer rely on outdated tax structures and exemptions that result in insufficiently funded public services. Thank you.
Allison Galbraith

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Letter in Support of HB 69/School Funding
Date: Friday, February 21, 2025 3:40:55 PM

From: Aesha Pallesen

Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2025 10:14 PM

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

Subject: Letter in Support of HB 69/School Funding

Dear Alaska Legislators,

My name is Aesha and I'm a parent of two kids in the Anchorage School District. I am a constituent of Representatives Claman and Hall.

I'm writing because I'm very worried about our schools and hoping you'll support increased funding for education this year.

Put simply, my kids love their school, Chugach Optional Elementary. It is a place where they feel both safe and challenged, and I can see them growing in every way as they move through their days there.

I am specifically concerned that a continued funding deficit will negatively impact the following:

- Classroom size: Already, my second child's kindergarten class has more kids than my first child's did three years ago. Individual attention is so crucial as kids are starting out (and beyond), and overloaded classrooms put pressure on teachers who are already balancing so much.
- Library: I am so fortunate that my kids are voracious readers. The library - and our wonderful librarian - at Chugach are truly magical for my boys. I hope for all kids to have a place to lose themselves in books and teachers to share their enthusiasm for reading.
- Ignite: Mondays can be hard, but every Monday my older child remembers that Monday is Ignite day and it gets him out of bed. I hear so much about the engaging group projects that are part of Ignite.
- Extras: Our teachers do so much more than teach during their classroom time; for example this year my older child's teacher spent many of her lunch breaks volunteering to coach Battle of the Books, which my child enjoyed and benefited from immensely.

I know you have a lot of tough choices to make about the state budget. But I truly believe that investing in our kids' education is one of the most important things we can do for Alaska's future.

I am asking you to please support:

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

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

Sincerely,

Aesha Pallesen

Anchorage

From: [Claire Fordyce](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Oppose HB 69. Support SB 82 and HB 76. Statement to KPBSD and KPB
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:08:58 AM

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

From: Donna Anderson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:26 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Oppose HB 69. Support SB 82 and HB 76. Statement to KPBSD and KPB

Feb. 3, 2025

My name is Donna Anderson. I am a recently retired KPBSD teacher. Tonight I speak from that experience as a concerned stakeholder.

I oppose HB 69. This bill has zero accountability attached to it. This bill asks for a blank check increase of \$1800 to the BSA. In 2015 DEED wrote a resolution in support of repealing the 70/30 rule. One of the reasons listed as rationale for repealing the 70/30 rule was "Stakeholders will provide oversight to the budget." The public stakeholders have made it clear that they want results and they want accountability. NEA makes it clear they support the blank check, money grab, goodbye PFD approach outlined in this bill.

On Friday, Governor Dunleavy introduced HB 76 and SB 82 to improve educational outcomes for all Alaska students. This comprehensive plan focuses on funding, student achievement, and expanding opportunities for families and educators statewide. HB 76 and SB 82 align with the Education Reform Data Survey that shows "Education spending alone isn't the answer." The 2021 DEEDS Teacher Retention Survey shows the #1 area that impacts teacher retainment and retention is salary.

The blank check approach to school funding disenfranchises the public as well as teachers. These are the families who are leaving public

schools and choosing to homeschool. These are the teachers, like myself, who leave the classroom. Its simple cause and effect. Decrease in student enrollment causes a decrease in, and need for, funding.

The blank check approach gives this board freedom to approve 8.9%-12% raises for central office staff, along with multiple \$9000 bonuses for some. According to "Open the Books" this amounts to between \$20,000-50,000 pay raise for some central office administrators. Alaska families are paying multiple superintendents more than we pay our Governor.

The blank check approach allows the repeated wasteful spending of millions of dollars on curriculum and materials.

Your responsibility is to the families and students, the stakeholders, who reside in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and not to NEA. As the Union converges on Juneau with their red shirts blazing, I hope you remember the stakeholders at home who are rightfully demanding accountability and results. If KPBSD does not make the necessary internal changes to attract and retain families and teachers, you will continue to see families choosing other options for educating their children. You will continue to see good teachers leave the profession.

I ask that you oppose HB 69. I ask for your support for HB 76 and SB 82. This comprehensive approach to educational reform is a step away from status quo and a step toward building trust between KPBSD and the stakeholders who choose to reside and educate their children here. HB 76 and SB82 align with the will of the people, asking for accountability and results. It also addresses the need for quality teacher recruitment and retention, both which have a direct impact on student outcomes.

Thank you for your time.

Donna Anderson



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Oppose HB 69
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025 1:57:55 PM

From: LUCAS DENBLEYKER [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 1:09 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Oppose HB 69

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to House Bill 69, which unfairly discriminates against correspondence students and reveals a clear prejudice among some representatives against public home education in Alaska.

While HB 69 proposes a significant \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for traditional public schools, it neglects to provide proportional support for correspondence students—many of whom depend on public homeschooling programs. This funding disparity effectively devalues these students' education, treating them as second-class within Alaska's public school system. Correspondence programs have long been a cornerstone of education in our state, especially for rural families, yet this bill sidelines them without justification. Not to mention, they have no idea where this money is going to come from in the first place and that is also problematic. Our government needs to stop overspending.

Even more troubling are the bill's amendments imposing a master curriculum list and detailed allotment reporting requirements exclusively on correspondence schools. These measures represent unequal treatment compared to traditional public schools, which face no such mandates. Why should correspondence programs be forced to first submit curriculum lists when brick-and-mortar schools retain flexibility in their instructional materials without reporting? Why must correspondence schools submit burdensome allotment reports when other public schools do not? These requirements are not only discriminatory—they signal a distrust of correspondence families and educators by representatives, implying their choices are less legitimate than those in traditional settings.

This unequal scrutiny reflects a broader bias against public home education. The rejection of Governor Dunleavy's proposals—which included equitable support for correspondence and charter students—in favor of a narrow focus on traditional schools further underscores this prejudice. It's as if some lawmakers view homeschooling not as a valid public education option, but as a problem to be controlled or marginalized. Alaska's education system should celebrate and support diversity in learning, not punish it with restrictive policies.

I urge you to oppose HB 69 unless it is amended to ensure fairness for all students. This means providing equitable funding increases for correspondence programs and striking the discriminatory master curriculum and reporting requirements. Anything less perpetuates an unjust double standard that harms Alaska's homeschooling families and undermines the state's commitment to educational choice.

Please stand for equality and reject this flawed bill in its current form.

Sincerely,

Samantha DenBleyker

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Opposition to HB 69
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:42:32 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

From: Jessica Parker [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 11:15 PM

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

Subject: Opposition to HB 69

Honorable Representatives:

Regarding Opposition to HB 69,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 69 and to advocate for equal funding for homeschool students in Alaska. The Alaska Department of Education's mission is "An Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day." However, homeschool students are being underfunded—receiving only 90% of the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and being denied the special education and other multipliers they rightfully deserve. As a former principal of a homeschool program within the Anchorage School District (ASD), I saw firsthand how our program effectively managed a \$11 million budget while providing the largest student

allotments—\$4,500 per student. We maintained an extensive, vetted curriculum database and implemented a rigorous multi-step approval process for every curriculum purchase. Every purchase required approval from a sponsor teacher, the school's accounting department, the principal, ASD accounting, and an ASD director. Oversight was never an issue—we had multiple layers of accountability in place, as do other homeschool programs. The argument for more oversight is both unnecessary and unfounded. The role of legislators and the law is to define what schools, education, and citizens *should not* do—not to dictate *what they must* do. By delving into the minutiae of homeschool operations, HB 69 represents unnecessary micromanagement rather than sound policy.

What is truly alarming, however, is the blatant disregard for homeschool students with special education needs. These students are being denied access to the BSA multiplier, even though they require the same (if not more) resources to succeed. This is not putting students first. This is discrimination based on their chosen educational path. The Anchorage School District's mission is to "Educate ALL Students for Success." The Alaska Department of Education's mission includes "Every Student." Yet, 20% of Alaska's students are in alternative education environments, and they are being shortchanged. If we are truly committed to educating every student, then homeschool students—especially those with special needs—must be fully funded. I urge you to stand against HB 69 and advocate for funding equity for all students. Please ensure that Alaska honors its promise to provide an excellent education to every student, regardless of where they learn.

Sincerely,

JESSICA PARKER, ED.D

SUPERINTENDENT

Email: jparker@mcc.academy

Website: www.mountaincitychristian.academy

MOUNTAIN CITY
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Mountain City Christian Academy | Developing Christ-Centered World Changers

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please fund our schools - I'll take a lower PFD or pay taxes!
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 3:46:29 PM

From: Julia Stutzer [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 10:37 PM
To: epresentative.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please fund our schools - I'll take a lower PFD or pay taxes!

Hello House Education committee members,
I am writing as a teacher and former student in Alaska's school systems. I ask that you please do everything possible to increase the base student allocation. As a teacher, having 40+ kids in a class is ridiculous! A 1:40 ratio is the probable number we will realistically have to deal with in ASD if they cut the proposed number of teachers, and SPED teachers' small class sizes are factored in. Learning will decrease, teachers will spend more time on classroom management and less on curriculum, and I foresee many quitting due to difficult, impractical and low paid work conditions.

As it is, conditions are not ideal, but they are manageable. I know there's not a lot of money laying around, **but I would support a smaller PFD or an income tax because good public education is worth fighting for!** I lived in a Latin American country for a year in high school and saw what happens when the upper-middle class and rich pay for their children to go to private schools and defund public schools. The rest of the population is served a sub-par public education that does nothing to help those kids advance in life and keeps the poor segregated and powerless. I don't want that kind of class segregation for our state or our country.

Even in our current situation, which is funding schools at 15% below the national average, we (at least in Anchorage - and test scores will support this) are serving our students a strong education that will only improve given the proper resources. But we cannot keep going like this without raises to match inflation and with more workload and less resources.

Thank you for your support and help!!

Sincerely,
Julia Stutzer

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please support HB69
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 6:02:15 PM

From: Brandi Askeland

Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 8:41 PM

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

Subject: Please support HB69

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

I am writing to you today in support of HB69, which is now progressing through the legislative process. As a parent and community member, I understand that balancing the state budget and ensuring fiscal responsibility are paramount. However, I believe that investing in education is not only the right thing to do—it is a **smart fiscal decision** that will have long-lasting benefits for our state's economy.

In fact, studies consistently show that investments in education pay off for states in terms of higher economic growth, increased workforce productivity, and reduced long-term costs associated with crime and social services. According to the **National Bureau of Economic Research**, every dollar invested in education generates significant economic returns for states in the form of **improved workforce outcomes** and **greater tax revenues**.

Moreover, adequately funding our schools is critical for **reducing teacher turnover**. The **Learning Policy Institute** estimates that teacher turnover costs the U.S. economy over \$8 billion annually, and in Alaska, where teacher recruitment and retention are already significant challenges, this cost is even higher. By supporting HB69 and increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA), we can provide the resources necessary to retain skilled teachers and ensure that our children receive the high-quality education they deserve.

Additionally, adjusting the BSA to reflect **inflation** is essential for ensuring that schools can keep up with the rising costs of providing education. Over the past decade, the cost of education in Alaska has increased by almost **50%**, but the BSA has remained stagnant. This gap is putting our schools in a difficult position, forcing them to make cuts that harm students' educational experiences. **HB69 offers a responsible, inflation-proof solution** that can

provide much-needed relief for our schools.

Finally, I want to note that HB69 has gained **bipartisan support** and is a **pragmatic solution** to a long-standing issue. By passing HB69, we can create an education system that prepares our children to succeed, while also helping to drive Alaska's long-term economic growth.

I urge you to consider these important points as you move forward with HB69. Thank you for your time and your commitment to securing a prosperous future for Alaska's children and the state as a whole.

Sincerely,
Brandi Askeland, MS, LPC
Constituent of Anchorage, 99504
Parent of a Chugach Optional Elementary Student

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Please vote to increase the Base Student Allocation!
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 10:36:42 AM

From: Darcy Saiget [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 10:19 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please vote to increase the Base Student Allocation!

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am a parent of a high school junior at Cordova Jr./Sr. High School in Cordova, AK. As is true in all rural school districts in the state of Alaska, school activities are critical for our childrens' mental and physical health. The valuable life skills, personal growth, and inspiration that our students gain from activities such as sports, music, student council, and robotics are an essential part of their secondary school education. For kids who have tight finances and thus little opportunity to leave Cordova (we are not on the road system), the experiences they have when traveling for activities are truly life-changing. Also, most of the students in our community come from low-income households, and free breakfast and lunch services that are provided by the school district year-round are vital for their nutrition and health.

As you know, education funding in Alaska has not kept up with inflation. As a result, our kids are not getting the quality of education they need and deserve. I'm asking you to please vote for a budget that increases the Base Student Allocation (BSA), inflation-proofs the BSA, and provides for sufficient and sustainable education funding. **In order to match inflation increases since 2017 (the last year the BSA was increased) the BSA would need to be a minimum of over \$1400 per student.**

Consistent underfunding, a failure to inflation-proof education spending (as is done with most other state funding) and a poor retirement system have had increasingly negative impacts on our school and schools across the state. And this coming year we will be facing the same, and in some cases larger deficits. **Student activities, food services and more will be on the chopping block which will fundamentally negatively affect our kids.**

Please vote to increase the BSA!

Thank you for your service to the citizens of Alaska and for the opportunity to communicate with you about this important issue.

Best,
Darcy Saiget
[REDACTED]

Cordova, AK 99574



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Prioritizing Evidence-Based Strategies in Education Policy
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 4:50:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[VLPLUS-252-Influences-Hattie-ranking-DEC-2017.pdf](#)
[Chat GPT.png](#)

From: Jessica Parker [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 2:16 PM

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

Subject: Prioritizing Evidence-Based Strategies in Education Policy

Honorable Legislators,

As you consider policies to improve education, I urge you to let **data—not politics or assumptions—guide decision-making**. The groundbreaking research of John Hattie, compiled in *Visible Learning*, provides a clear roadmap for what truly impacts student achievement (see attachment).

Hattie’s extensive study synthesizes more than 2,100 meta-analyses, 130,000 studies, and data from over 300 million students. His research identifies high-impact strategies that significantly accelerate learning. These findings offer a scientific foundation for policy

decisions, ensuring investments target what actually works in schools.

Key Takeaways from Hattie's Research:

- Teacher quality matters most (+1.57) – Investing in professional development and evidence-based instructional practices yields higher returns than reducing class sizes. While class size reduction (+0.21) is often advocated, research shows it has only slight positive impact unless paired with high-quality instruction.
- Interventions must be targeted – Response to Intervention (+1.29) is one of the most effective strategies for addressing learning gaps, ensuring struggling students receive the support they need.
- Accurate teacher assessments drive success – When teachers accurately estimate student achievement (1.29), they can tailor instruction effectively, leading to improved outcomes. Formative assessments are crucial when used correctly.
- Behavior intervention programs work – With an effect size of +0.62, behavior intervention programs accelerate student learning.
- Technology alone isn't the answer – Technology in distance learning (+0.01) has virtually no impact on achievement unless paired with effective teaching strategies. Investments should prioritize training educators to integrate technology meaningfully, rather than assuming digital tools alone will improve learning.

Look at the blue circles on the attached VLPlus chart—invest in those things! Explore Hattie's research at <https://www.visiblelearningmetax.com> and ensure our education policies reflect proven success. Don't take my word for it—Hattie's research is the gold standard in educational effectiveness. (see chat image). Our students deserve the best, and the research shows us exactly how to provide it. Thank you for your leadership in shaping an evidence-based future for education.

Sincerely,

JESSICA PARKER, ED.D

SUPERINTENDENT

Email: jparker@mcc.academy

Website: www.mountaincitychristian.academy

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From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Recommendation for Alaska Resource Education's Impact on STEM Learning
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 12:02:50 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-yzuao23u.png](#)

From: Lewis_Raymond [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 10:16 AM
Subject: Recommendation for Alaska Resource Education's Impact on STEM Learning

Greetings,

My name is Tony Lewis, and I am the Academy Coach at Dimond High School. I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the positive impact that hands-on, STEM-based, and standards-aligned curriculum has on students in Alaska. Alaska Resource Education (ARE) plays a vital role in fundamental education and workforce development for Alaska's natural resource industries through its comprehensive statewide programming.

ARE has been instrumental in supporting Dimond High School both this year and in previous years. Here are just a few examples of their invaluable contributions:

- ARE has supplemented our teaching by helping to fill curriculum gaps and providing resources, including piloting what will be our first-year course in the Natural Resource & Environmental Management pathway.
- ARE has emphasized the importance of STEM education in the classroom and its relevance to the future workforce.
- ARE has provided opportunities for our students to interact and collaborate with professionals currently working in the industry, offering real-world examples of how these skills are applied with today's technology and how they will evolve in the future.
- ARE organized a teacher externship this summer, which I had the opportunity to participate in. This experience provided educators with a firsthand look at how these skills are currently being utilized in today's workforce.

Without ARE's direct engagement with Dimond High School, our students and teachers would not have had access to the opportunities and experiences that have enriched their education this year. Their work is essential in preparing students with the skills they will need for the careers of the future—some of which do not even exist yet.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tony Lewis

Dimond High School

Academy Coach

NBCT, CMAA, CIC



From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: School funding and HB69
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 7:26:49 AM

From: Irene Quednow [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:15 PM
To: Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman <Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>; senator.matt.clayman@akleg.gov; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Forrest Dunbar <Sen.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Myers <Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Sen. Löki Tobin <Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Robert Yundt <Sen.Robert.Yundt@akleg.org>
Subject: School funding and HB69

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I'm opposed to Alaska raising school funding - period. I am tired of the Anchorage School Board having a budget that is 70 million larger than the whole city of Anchorage budget in 2024, but not produce good results. You have heard it from many people: we keep throwing money at a problem year after year after year without any improvement in results. The extra money provided gets spent without accountability on overblown administration, programs that are pushing DEI and LGBTQ+ on kids, teaching them to hate themselves and their neighbors etc. No more money of any kind for schools who do not perform until the performance comes up.

Keep the charter schools, correspondence schools, home schooling - any school performing well, funded. Any other school will have to make do with what they have - no more money for them until performance increases. That puts the ball in their court and they are solely responsible for /in charge of getting more funding or not. Make them earn their funding.

The easiest way to do that is a voucher system with school choice. Every student gets a voucher for school funding and that voucher goes with the student to whatever school they decide to attend.

Thank you for your consideration.

Irene Quednow

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Strongly OPPOSE HB 69
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025 4:25:28 PM

From: Steve Kruse [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 4:19 PM
To: House Rules <House.Rules@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jubilee Underwood <Rep.Jubilee.Underwood@akleg.gov>; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski <Rep.Frank.Tomaszewski@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Will Stapp <Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke <Rep.Rebecca.Schwanke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Dan Saddler <Rep.Dan.Saddler@akleg.gov>; Rep. Justin Ruffridge <Rep.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov>; Rep. George Rauscher <Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Elexie Moore <Rep.Elexie.Moore@akleg.gov>; Rep. Genevieve Mina <Rep.Genevieve.Mina@akleg.gov>; Rep. Donna Mears <Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kevin McCabe <Rep.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Nellie Jimmie <Rep.Nellie.Jimmie@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ky Holland <Rep.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov>; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Rep. Carolyn Hall <Rep.Carolyn.Hall@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andrew Gray <Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bill Elam <Rep.Bill.Elam@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ted Eischeid <Rep.Ted.Eischeid@akleg.gov>; Rep. Maxine Dibert <Rep.Maxine.Dibert@akleg.gov>; Rep. Julie Coulombe <Rep.Julie.Coulombe@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mia Costello <Rep.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ashley Carrick <Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jeremy Bynum <Rep.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov>; Rep. Robyn Burke <Rep.Robyn.Burke@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jamie Allard <Rep.Jamie.Allard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Re: Strongly OPPOSE HB 69

Dear House Representatives,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to House Bill 69, which unfairly discriminates against correspondence students and reveals a clear prejudice among some representatives against public home education in

Alaska.

While HB 69 proposes a significant \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for traditional public schools, it neglects to provide proportional support for correspondence students—many of whom depend on public homeschooling programs. This funding disparity effectively devalues these students' education, treating them as second-class within Alaska's public school system. Correspondence programs have long been a cornerstone of education in our state, especially for rural families, yet this bill sidelines them without justification.

Even more troubling are the bill's amendments imposing a master curriculum list and detailed allotment reporting requirements exclusively on correspondence schools. These measures represent unequal treatment compared to traditional public schools, which face no such mandates. Why should correspondence programs be forced to first submit curriculum lists when brick-and-mortar schools retain flexibility in their instructional materials without reporting? Why must correspondence schools submit burdensome allotment reports when other public schools do not? These requirements are not only discriminatory—they signal a distrust of correspondence families and educators by representatives, implying their choices are less legitimate than those in traditional settings.

This unequal scrutiny reflects a broader bias against public home education. The rejection of Governor Dunleavy's proposals—which included equitable support for correspondence and charter students—in favor of a narrow focus on traditional schools further underscores this prejudice. It's as if some lawmakers view homeschooling not as a valid public education option, but as a problem to be controlled or marginalized. Alaska's education system should celebrate and support diversity in learning, not punish it with restrictive policies.

I urge you to oppose HB 69 unless it is amended to ensure fairness for all students. This means providing equitable funding increases for correspondence programs and striking the discriminatory master curriculum and reporting requirements. Anything less perpetuates an unjust double standard that harms Alaska's homeschooling families and undermines the state's commitment to educational choice.

Please stand for equality and reject this flawed bill in its current form.

Sincerely,

Steve Kruse-Grandfather of four young Alaskans in Palmer.

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Strongly oppose HB69
Date: Monday, March 10, 2025 4:12:36 PM

From: Carmen DeVilbiss [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 2:06 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Strongly oppose HB69

Dear Rep. Himschoot,

I am writing a personal note to share my discouragement of your attempts to pass HB69. Specifically the changes you wish to make to correspondence schools. I noticed your biography on the state legislative page. Good on you for being a distinguished teacher. My guess is that you worked hard to bring the best to your students. As a homeschool parent I strive to bring the best for my children in their education. You did it through the brick and mortar system and I am bringing it through our home via a correspondence school. My way of educating my children is no less significant than the teaching you brought to the students in your classroom. Our children deserve the same equitable treatment that brick and mortar students as well as charter students receive. By requiring unequal treatment, whether it be financial, requiring excessive tests and assessments, or state oversight of curriculum, you are unfairly oppressing a large portion of students within the state. I strongly oppose the push to make the thriving correspondence schools of the great state of Alaska, fit into the failed educational institutions that brick and mortar schools have become. It is not far-fetched to say that Alaska Correspondence schools have become a pretty spectacular example of how public education can be a good thing for families, the community, and businesses that are right here in Alaska.

Thank you,
Carmen DeVilbiss

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: strongly oppose HB69
Date: Friday, March 7, 2025 8:41:12 AM

From: Kelsey Circle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 8:24 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: strongly oppose HB69

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to House Bill 69, which unfairly discriminates against correspondence students and reveals a clear prejudice among some representatives against public home education in Alaska.

While HB 69 proposes a significant \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for traditional public schools, it neglects to provide proportional support for correspondence students- many of whom depend on public homeschooling programs. This funding disparity effectively devalues these students' education, treating them as second-class within Alaska's public school system. Correspondence programs have long been a cornerstone of education in our state, especially for rural families, yet this bill sidelines them without justification.

Even more troubling are the bill's amendments imposing a master curriculum list and detailed allotment reporting requirements exclusively on correspondence schools. These measures represent unequal treatment compared to traditional public schools, which face no such mandates. Why should correspondence programs be forced to first submit curriculum lists when brick-and-mortar schools retain flexibility in their instructional materials without reporting? Why must correspondence schools submit burdensome allotment reports when other public schools do not? These requirements are not only discriminatory- they signal a distrust of correspondence families and educators by our representatives, implying their choices are less legitimate than those in traditional settings.

This unequal scrutiny reflects a broader bias against public home education. The rejection of Governor Dunleavy's proposals- which included equitable support for correspondence and charter students- in favor of a narrow focus on traditional schools further underscores this prejudice. It is as if some lawmakers view homeschooling not as a valid public education option, but as a problem to be controlled or marginalized. Alaska's education system should celebrate and support diversity in learning, not punish it with restrictive policies.

I urge you to oppose HB 69 unless it is amended to ensure equal fairness for all students. This

means providing equitable funding increases for correspondence programs and striking the discriminatory master curriculum and reporting requirements. Anything less perpetuates an unjust double standard that harms Alaska's homeschooling families and undermines the state's commitment to educational choice.

Please stand for equality and reject this flawed bill its current form.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Circle

Homeschooling mom of six years to four wonderful children

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support for school funding
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 2:12:06 PM

From: Johnna Kohl [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 2:03 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for school funding

Good afternoon Rep. Himschoot,

I would like to voice my support for HB69 and an increase to the BSA for Alaska schools. Thank you so much for your public school advocacy!!

I'm emailing all of our state representatives so I guess you get one too.

Our public schools can no longer sustain the level of services and opportunities that our students need without funding that keeps up with inflation at a minimum.

We are at risk of losing opportunities that we all had as students including reasonable class sizes, AP classes, as well as the clubs and sports that help keep students engaged in school or that provide an opportunity for college scholarships. It is heartbreaking to me that my kids are losing the opportunities my husband had attending public schools in Alaska.

I'm very concerned about the increase in class sizes that occurs when funding lags behind need. I've spent time volunteering in the classroom when my kids were in elementary school. With every increase in the size of classes, we are making it harder for our teachers to address the wide variety of learning needs that exist within each single classroom.

I know that in rural communities, the situation is even more dire. We are talking about funding that allows for proper maintenance of schools and simple things like keeping the heat on.

Just like pitching in on a group gift for a baby shower, our money goes farther when we pool our resources.

I believe the BSA increase stand on its own without being tied to the separate school choice debate. BSA increases support all students.

Please vote to give our public schools the same increases in state funding afforded to other departments to allow it to keep up with inflation and provide essential services and opportunities to Alaska students.

Thank you,

Johnna Kohl MD

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support Full Funding in HB 69 – Invest in Alaska’s Future
Date: Monday, March 10, 2025 1:38:34 PM

From: Brandi Askeland [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 1:32 PM

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

Subject: Support Full Funding in HB 69 – Invest in Alaska’s Future

Dear Members of Alaska's State Legislation,

I am writing as both a **parent of an Alaska public school student** and a **mental health professional who contracts with the Anchorage School District**. I urge you to support **House Bill 69 in its full form**, without the amendment that reduces the Base Student Allocation (**BSA**) increase. The original **\$680 per-student increase** is critical to ensuring students receive the education they need to succeed and that teachers have the resources to provide quality instruction.

At my child's school, the current funding cuts will **eliminate 2 of 11 teachers**, forcing the closure of **two classrooms** in a **well-performing, highly desired school**. The proposed cuts will also **reduce the librarian and school nurse to half-time**. The library isn't just about books—it's **the heart of the school**, a safe haven for many students who need a quiet place to read, study, or find comfort.

As a **mental health professional**, I also see firsthand how these cuts increase class sizes, **leading to more stress for both students and teachers**. Teachers are experiencing **burnout at alarming rates**, and students in overcrowded classrooms are struggling to get the individual support they need. If we continue underfunding our schools, we are not only failing our students—we are also driving more educators out of the profession, worsening an already critical teacher shortage.

Conservative, Data-Driven Reasons to Support Full Funding:

1. Increased Education Funding Has Led to Improved Student Outcomes in Alaska

- After the **2008-2014 BSA increases**, **Alaska's high school graduation rate improved from 59% (2008) to 71% (2014)** (Source: Alaska Department of Education).
- In 2013, after targeted funding for reading programs, **4th-grade reading scores improved by nearly 6%** over three years.
- Since **2017**, **inflation-adjusted per-student funding has dropped**, leading to **larger class sizes, lower test scores, and higher teacher turnover**.

2. Alaska's Poor Outcomes Are Tied to Underfunding, Not Just Performance Issues

- **Alaska ranks 49th in the nation for 4th-grade reading proficiency**, making it harder for students to succeed in the workforce (Source: NAEP 2023).
- **Since 2015, stagnant funding has led to worsening student performance and increased teacher shortages**. States that have **increased education funding have seen better test scores and graduation rates** (Source: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2021).

3. Lowering the BSA Increase Hurts Rural & Conservative Communities the Most

- Many **Republican-led districts, especially in rural areas, depend on state funding** due to **low local tax revenues**. Cutting the increase **disproportionately affects these schools**, leading to more school closures and teacher shortages.

Fiscal Responsibility – The Cost of Underfunding Education Is Higher

- **Every \$1 invested in education saves taxpayers \$3–5** in future costs related to crime, unemployment, and public assistance (Source: Economic Policy Institute).
- **Alaska already spends \$50M+ per year on remedial education** for high school graduates unprepared for college or the workforce. Preventing these gaps early saves money in the long run (Source: UAA).

The original **\$680 BSA increase** is not just about funding schools—it's about **securing Alaska's economic future and ensuring responsible governance**. I strongly urge you to stand with Alaska's students, families, and businesses by **rejecting the amendment and supporting full funding for HB 69**.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our state. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Brandi Askeland, MS, LPC

Parent of Chugach Optional Elementary Student

[REDACTED]

Thank you,
Brandi Askeland

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support HB69 & Education Please!
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 9:08:05 AM

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

From: Kim Bailey [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 22, 2025 10:25 AM
Subject: Support HB69 & Education Please!

Dear House Representatives,

I am writing in support of HB 69. As the lawmakers for our state, it is your duty to ensure that the future for our kids is secure. The only way to do this is to support our children's education in a more stable way from year to year. Our students and teachers deserve an increase in the BSA and one that can fluctuate with inflation each year. School districts should not have to go through the stress every year of presenting a budget which cuts programs, teachers, and closes schools, causing immense stress to teachers, parents and students. Every year at this time, school districts are put through a great deal of stress resulting in low morale across the state. Teachers worry about displacement. Students who had looked forward to having certain teachers in the coming year find out that that special teacher won't even be at the school the next year. Families are devastated when their neighborhood school is shut down. All of these things contribute to dissatisfaction with the entire system and result in many people deciding to leave the state or profession.

I know of several very highly qualified and excellent teachers who had recently been hired by the Anchorage School District who are now moving back out of state for the 2025-26 school year; frustrated with the annual upheaval and stress that February always brings. This sort of instability does not attract nor keep quality teachers in Alaska. It only hurts our students and shouldn't continue in the future. Families also talk of leaving the state if valued programs, such as language immersion and middle and high school athletics are removed.

I urge you, as the leaders of our state, to listen to your constituents. We want our children to have the same educational opportunities we had when we grew up in Alaska. We want them to stay in Alaska after they graduate. This will only happen if they feel connected to their communities and grow roots here. Schools are where they grow these roots.

One more important point—when Governor Dunleavy undoubtedly vetoes any and all of these education bills, I urge you to stand up for what is right and OVERRIDE HIS VETO. Ask yourself what is the ethical thing to do? Support one man who just wants his own agenda for the benefit of a small group of people or support the majority of the kids and parents in the state who want the best thing for everybody? Do the right thing, I implore you. Don't get caught up in party-politics.

Thank you for your time,
Kimberly Bailey

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Support Increasing the BSA
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 9:09:16 AM

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

From: Brady Siegel [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 1:34 PM
Subject: Support Increasing the BSA

To whom it may concern,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

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

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Time to Fix Education!
Date: Monday, February 24, 2025 2:27:14 PM

From: James Ostlind [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 9:01 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Time to Fix Education!

February 24, 2025

Dear Representative Himschoot,

The academic performance of public-school students in Alaska is unacceptably low and has been for years. Many of those involved with education blame this on inadequate funding, racism and income inequality.

I disagree.

Reading is the key that opens all other knowledge. Considering its importance, reading instruction at the elementary level should be the highest priority in the classroom every day. The Alaska school year is set by law at 180 days, less 10 days for teacher training and organization. The elementary school day lasts 6.5 hours. All this school contact time is a great opportunity for improvement that continues to be lost. Only one third of our elementary students score at or above the proficient level for reading on national testing. That number could be and should be at 70%. In math, critical for success in science and technology, the level of proficiency of our students isn't much higher and it needs to be.

Those running education have neglected academic education for far too long. We need educational leaders that recognize, encourage, promote, and reward academic progress and achievement.

Giving more money to those now running education only encourages them to do more of what has caused the failure of the system to begin with. Fixing education requires higher academic standards and expectations and a Legislature willing to enforce them.

Regards,
James Ostlind
[REDACTED]
Salcha, AK 99714
[REDACTED]

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Vote for HB 69 without amendments
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025 1:55:57 PM

From: Eve Ryan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 11:34 AM
Subject: Re: Vote for HB 69 without amendments

Greetings,

I am urging you to do the right thing and ensure state support for education. Please support HB69!

Eve

From: Eve Ryan [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 09:10
Subject: Vote for HB 69 without amendments

Hello,

I am a parent of 3 kids in the Anchorage School District writing to you about education funding, or lack thereof. Education underfunding is not limited to ASD, however. It is a state-wide issue. Just this morning, KYUK and ProPublica released their [first reporting](#) on a series that highlights how the state of Alaska has been failing its rural schools.

Please vote for HB 69 without amendments. We love our schools, but they are struggling to keep up because funding has not kept up with costs. Alaska's kids are our future, please invest in schools now!

Eve

From: [Ella Lubin](#)
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: FW: Why I Had to Leave the Classroom—An Alaskan Educator's Plea for Change
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 12:05:20 PM

From: Andrea Gardner [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 11:36 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Why I Had to Leave the Classroom—An Alaskan Educator's Plea for Change

Dear Representative Rebecca Himschoot (I-Sitka),

I am writing today as an Alaskan educator, a certified reading specialist, and an Anchorage School District parent to urge you to take immediate action to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA), improve teacher working conditions, and restore a sustainable retirement system.

Alaska's students need comprehensive, consistent, and engaging literacy and mathematics instruction—this is not in question. I have dedicated my career to ensuring all students learn to read and succeed. However, teaching and learning cannot happen in classrooms where students feel unsafe and unsupported.

As a parent, I want my child—and every child in our state—to receive an education that prepares them for a successful future. As an educator, I did everything in my power to provide that for my students. But last year, I realized that no amount of passion or expertise can overcome the reality of underfunding, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate support.

My 2023-2024 Reality in the Classroom

Last school year, my tenth year teaching, I was responsible for 35 kindergarten and first-grade students. We did not have enough chairs, tables, or materials to accommodate them all.

I worked as a classroom teacher in the Highly Gifted Program, serving students who all qualified in the 99th percentile, and many of my students were twice-exceptional. Twice-exceptionality is common in the highly gifted population; it means students are highly gifted AND on the autism spectrum, have ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), and/or other neurodiverse iterations. I adore working with twice-exceptional students. Each 2E kid challenges me in a new way, in learning to meet their needs I always grow creatively and as an educator. I also adore the sense of humor that is often present in HG students.

Despite their incredible potential, these students were placed in overcrowded classrooms with minimal behavioral support—an environment that set them up for failure rather than success.

One of my students screamed for extended periods nearly every day, another when dysregulated would throw chairs, several others would elope. I made every possible accommodation to support each of my students, but no matter how engaging or research-based my lessons were, it was nearly impossible for my other students to focus, let alone learn, during these episodes with their peers. Highly gifted students often experience the world intensely, and many of my students were deeply distressed by the chaos and fear in our classroom.

No student should have to simply endure school. Every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in an environment where they feel safe and supported. But that was no longer a possible reality in my classroom.

The Toll on Educators

My primary goal as a teacher last year quickly became keeping my students safe.

At recess, my teaching assistant was often the only adult responsible for over 100 students. He eventually quit during the first quarter, citing safety concerns and the lack of adequate supervision. In fact, three out of four of our teaching assistants resigned last year. They were never replaced.

I also sacrificed all of my contractually-required planning time to serve as a teaching assistant during Specials because without me present, my students would have no support. If I didn't do this, I would be radioed constantly to handle behavioral crises, elopements, or explosive episodes. I was on call at all times, and when I asked for help from my administration, none came.

By the end of the year, I was exhausted, emotionally drained, and physically injured.

One day, a student eloped from the classroom and was about to hit their head on the tile floor. I caught them just in time—but in doing so, I severely injured my sacroiliac joint, requiring emergency medical attention.

Even after that, I received no support from my administration. No one checked in. No one acknowledged that I had been hurt while protecting a student.

I am now on medical leave for the 2024-25 school year. I love teaching. I love working with students. I am desperate to return to the classroom—but I know that doing so means putting myself back at risk of retraumatization, returning to impossible working conditions, and continuing to teach in dangerously overcrowded classrooms with no support.

As a Tier Three employee, I also know there is little financial incentive for me to return, yet I want to teach because I care deeply about Alaska's students. However, teachers like me cannot continue under these conditions.

The Case for Increasing the BSA

The Base Student Allocation has not kept pace with inflation for nearly a decade, forcing schools to cut essential staff, increase class sizes, and remove behavioral supports. Teachers are expected to do more with less, while students suffer in overcrowded and under-resourced classrooms.

A substantial, permanent increase in the BSA is critical to ensuring that:

- Schools can afford adequate staffing, including teaching assistants and behavioral interventionists.
- Class sizes are manageable, allowing teachers to provide effective instruction.
- Students with exceptional needs receive appropriate services, rather than being placed in environments that do not support them.

I strongly urge you to support House Bill 69, which proposes a \$1,000 increase to the BSA, with adjustments for inflation.

Addressing Dangerous Working Conditions

Alaska is facing a teacher retention crisis. Working conditions are deteriorating so rapidly that many educators, including myself, have been forced out of the profession.

- Understaffed schools leave teachers responsible for far too many students with far too few resources.
- Unsafe environments—where a single adult is expected to supervise over 100 children at recess—lead to burnout and resignations.
- Lack of administrative accountability forces teachers to act as de facto social workers, behavioral specialists, and crisis interventionists—without proper training or compensation.
- Teachers should not have to choose between their own safety and their students' well-being.

If we want qualified, passionate educators to stay in Alaska, we must ensure that schools are places where they can actually do their jobs.

A Sustainable Retirement System Matters

Alaska remains one of the only states in the country that does not offer a defined-benefit pension for teachers. As a result, educators leave Alaska long before retirement, taking their experience and expertise to states with better pay and better benefits.

By restoring a sustainable, defined-benefit retirement system, we can:

- Attract and retain high-quality educators rather than losing them to the Lower 48.
- Provide financial stability that allows teachers to commit to Alaska for the long term.
- Reduce teacher turnover, which disrupts learning and negatively impacts students.

A Call to Action

Alaska's students deserve better. Alaska's educators deserve better. Alaska's future depends on the choices you make right now.

I urge you to take decisive action to:

1. Pass a substantial and permanent BSA increase to give schools the funding they need.
2. Improve teacher working conditions by ensuring adequate staffing, behavioral support, and reasonable class sizes.
3. Restore a defined-benefit retirement system to retain and attract experienced educators.

Public education is not a luxury—it is the foundation of a strong economy, a thriving workforce, and a healthy democracy. Our students and teachers cannot afford further delays.

I welcome the opportunity to share more about my experiences and discuss solutions. Please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED]. I will be in Juneau tomorrow, Wednesday, March 12.

Sincerely,
Andrea Gardner M.Ed.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 1:50:21 PM

Hello,

My name is Mary Schwarzhans, and I live on Kodiak Island in Alaska. I am writing to express my support for HB 69.

I work as a lifeguard and swim instructor at our community pool, and work closely with our public school teachers and students. I am concerned for the future of our schools. I believe raising the BSA in AK would be a benefit for all of our communities.

Thank you for hearing my voice, and representing me and my community. I appreciate your hard work, and hope to see the students, teachers, and school staff in our state get all the tools and support they possible can.

Again,
Thank you,
Mary Schwarzhans
Kodiak Island

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Sunday, February 23, 2025 7:16:08 PM

Hello House Education Committee,

I think it is rotten of you to force this bill out of committee. It tells me you are not going to listen to anyone no matter what, since your desire is to shove your will down our throats. Your minds are made up to rob Alaskans to pay for a much larger government than we need. We don't need taxes and we don't need for you to continue stealing our PFD. Period.

Do you hate Alaskans?

Why are you so afraid of the Governor's bill (SB 82)? It is common sense to expect good outcomes in our classrooms. I'm a retired public school teacher, as is the Governor - and he has the additional experience as a school principal and superintendent. He understands education. You would do well to listen to him. I remember when teachers taught the basics and children excelled. What you are advocating is throwing money at a problem that requires good teaching rather than money.

Do you hate our children and grandchildren?

Carol Carman
D29 Secretary

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 12:35:54 PM
Attachments: [HB 69.pdf](#)

Alaska Chapter

Incorporated in Alaska

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



February 20, 2025

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Jody Butto, MD, FAAP

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Executive Director
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PO Box 110573
Anchorage, AK 99511
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www.aapalaska.com

Dear House Education Committee,

We are writing today as Pediatricians that are members of Alaska's largest pediatric organization. Today, we are urging you to support House Bill 69 and ensure funding for education in our state.

Most Alaskan children receive care through a pediatrician. We see firsthand the struggles families face when their children attend schools that cannot provide necessary daily health related services or services that allow a child to return to school after illness/injury. Schools need to be able to provide in-house nursing services to allow these children to remain in school. As you know missed school days are detrimental to learning and the goal is to keep children in the classroom. For example, a child with diabetes, asthma or daily medications needs daily monitoring by the school nurse. Children with feeding tubes or tracheostomies also require daily nursing care to remain in school.

The current Anchorage School District proposed budget is showing a loss of 13 school nurse positions for the next school year. This would mean that some schools would move to a part time nurse position or to a nurse who is split between schools. This leaves the care of children to a designated adult in those schools. These adults are school personnel who volunteer to administer medications and "cover" the nurse's office but they are lay-people. They are usually Assistant Principals, Administrative Assistants, or others. These folks do not have the training to care for many of these in-school medical needs. Children may be sent home, or forced to transfer to the hospital by ambulance because their school is missing the skilled care of a nurse.

Aside from the school health issues, our children also need and deserve excellent teachers and adequate supplies. They also need smaller class sizes and in school therapies that support their education. These adjunct therapies like speech and occupational therapy allow children with unique needs to thrive at school.

The current education funding crisis in our state is shameful and hurts those most at risk in our communities. Now is the time to prioritize the children in our communities and fulfill our obligation to provide a quality public education to every child and also considers the needs of the children with medical issues.

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

Sincerely,
Anna Ogena, MD, FAAP
Patricia Clay, MD, FAAP
Jody Butto, MD, FAAP
Wesley Gifford, MD, FAAP
Benjamin Westley, MD, FACP, FIDSA
Daniel Brown, MD
Emily Davis, MD, FAAP
Jennifer Austin, APRN

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Monday, March 10, 2025 11:29:07 AM

Greetings,

We don't have any problems that education can't solve. (We being Alaskans, Americans, human beings) We have the tools to figure out healthcare, the environment, political instability, all of it. The answer always starts with education.

As a state, we've been falling down badly on this front. In our state constitution, we are required to "establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State". We "may" do other things as well. We are not maintaining our public schools and it is past time to meet our obligations.

While I am disappointed by the drop in funding for the base student allocation (and the ongoing failure to inflation-proof it as we have inflation-proofed government expenses is, to be blunt, a moral failing), I support even a less-than-optimal increase to the BSA. I've seen the news articles about mold and deterioration of school buildings; we can do better.

I do not support any increase in funding that will reach private and/or religious schools. We need to meet our constitutionally mandated responsibilities before adding on others. And increasing homeschooling funding as if they had the infrastructure to maintain like public schools--I'm curious how that is being defended.

Thank you for your support of our state's future and your efforts to meet the requirements of the Alaska Constitution.

Lisa Bricker
Anchorage resident

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 - please read, thank you for your work and time
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 12:47:39 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

It is not a secret that education is already underfunded prior to cuts, that the wealthy can subsidize additional education for children as needed, and the less fortunate, are stuck with what the state provides, if and when the state provides.

My child was diagnosed with dyslexia in second grade. We are grateful for what the Anchorage School District (ASD) provided, but realized, with so little budget and resources in the public schools, we had to find a tutor external from ASD to help our daughter. Our child went from the bottom 30% in reading to the top 93% in reading in 2 years (between the grades of 3-5 grade).

Now please understand, the education she received at her public school was top notch and was a much better fit than the private school she initially attended. Chugach Optional Elementary provided Project Based Learning and Social and Emotional Learning that helped our daughter reach her potential in all areas of education, even though she struggled with dyslexia.

Yesterday, our child informed us that she will be accepted into AP English at South High School for her sophomore year. So very exciting right. Right. But what about all the other families who could not pay for tutoring in grades 3-5? What if you tracked the progress of the other children and families we knew at Chugach Optional who's children were also diagnosed with Dyslexia, the single moms and the less fortunate? I would be interested to know where are they now? Are they still struggling to get the support they need? Can their children read? Are they battling with new behavior or learning challenges or are they also being evaluated for AP English?

Communities and people need support, no one does it alone, no one.

If I did not get academic support through my NCAA Division 1 volleyball scholarship, I too may have never been successful.

When I was growing up, in an affluent high school in Walnut Creek California, I struggled in school, specifically with reading. I would work for hours studying just to maintain a C average. I took the SATs 4x just to get into college.

- If it was not for my full ride volleyball scholarship, I would have not been able to go to a 4-year college as at the time, my single income family could not afford to put me through college.
- If I did not receive a full athletic scholarship, I would have had to go to junior college. In junior college, I would not have had the same support I did with a full ride Division 1 scholarship.
- If I did not receive a full athletic scholarship, I could have been a college dropout.

As you see, it was not until my daughter was diagnosed with Dyslexia that I finally understood that I too had struggled with a learning difference.

Several children with dyslexia or different learning types are highly gifted humans who do not fit in the current education model. My skills and high IQ helped me to creatively get through high school undetected. Several children to this day get through the system undetected and these children are some of the most creative children to attend the school!

If we cut budgets further, what happens to these kids. Behavior issues increase as they are unable to fully access their IQ, they drop out or perhaps go to detention centers, they do not become successful people who pay taxes but instead drain our community as they cannot take care of themselves or offspring?

Invest in EDUCATION now or pay later. Yes, I worked hard for my scholarship, but in the end, I got lucky. What if I was not born athletically gifted, where would I be?

The mentors I had along the way through my free college, helped me to find my gifts. My mandatory NCAA tutors and guidance counseling (weekly visits) provided me with the support so I could graduate college. Typing helped me develop neurological connections in my brain that helped me to process information quickly and improved my ability to read and comprehend. Power Point presentations helped me to gain confidence in reading out loud, and I found that working in the difficult industry I do, I excelled, as I find what is difficult for most easy and easy for most hard. That is the essence of my learning difference!

- Increase funding for schools, help teachers do their great work so they can reach more children
- Realize that an under resourced classroom IS a missed opportunity for future success
- Cutting sports, may mean cutting out a NCAA scholarship for a child with a learning difference
- Let's get to the point that once a child tests out of Special Education, they are immediately evaluated for Ignite
- Increase funding to add Social and Emotional Learning to Ignite programs as our born brightest children need to ensure they have the gift of empathy and social skills

Thank you for your work.

Thank you for your time.

Thank you for looking at different perspectives.

Kind Regards,
Marsha Peterson



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Zack Fields](#); [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
Subject: HB69.
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 12:33:35 PM

Hello,

My name is Susan Hayner. I have three children in the Anchorage School District. Chloe (8th grade at Romig), Woody (5th grade at Chugach Optional) and Tirzah (3rd grade at Chugach Optional).

*Please support an increase to the BSA of at least \$1,000. Without a substantial and sustained **increase** to the BSA our school will lose valuable teachers, have increased class sizes, and lose half of our nurse and librarian's time and student access. We will also lose Ignite, band/orchestra, ALL Middle school sports, and High School Hockey, gymnastics and swimming.*

Our community as a whole will suffer from the lack of attention to education. Families will emigrate--as their public school system is showing cracks. Emigration will cause brain drain, and create long lasting negative impacts to our community both economically and socially.

Build Up Alaska, by promoting and saving our public school system.

One disturbing fact that I recently learned was the budget for prisons has increased by greater than 40% over the years, whereas funding for our public education has gone down by ~ 5%. This should change. Our priorities should be in educating the whole child, by fostering the development of well rounded productive citizens.

Our family loves our public school system! We can say firsthand, as we have sent one of our children to a private school in Anchorage for two years, and had her return to ASD for 7th grade.

*Public school is something to be cherished and nurtured! We left private school as we believe public school has more to offer our children and family, **from an education, sports, social and emotional development and world perspective.***

Our children's schools operate with vitality and intention.

Please do everything to safeguard their school homes.

*Please continue to advocate for our children and fight for public education! **Public education is important to my family and our quality of life. Let's invest in Alaska's future!***

Thank you,

*Susan and Jeff Hayner
Chloe, Woody and Tirzah Hayner
99501*

--

*If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.
mother teresa*

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:50:53 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In Support of Funding Alaskan Education
Date: Friday, March 7, 2025 7:39:34 PM

Dear State House Education Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 46 and HB 69, and to express my concern over the potential budget issues facing the Anchorage School District next year. My issue is two-fold if there is not an increase in the BSA, because I am both a parent to 2 children in the district, as well as an advocate for dozens of children who receive special education services in the school district.

First, loss of the IGNITE program would be problematic. Both of my children have been a part of the IGNITE program which afforded them the ability to expand their learning beyond the basics of the classroom. This has allowed them valuable educational experiences, participation in academic and writing competitions and a chance to build confidence and leadership skills. Both of my children plan to use their education to gain valuable skills for jobs to bring back to the Alaskan people as scientists and healthcare professionals. If you want to create a better Alaska, you MUST invest in youth programs and education. The children in ASD right now are the future of this great state. Devaluing their education is a direct way to devalue the people you chose to provide public service to as a member of Alaska's government.

Second, reductions to the special education department would be detrimental to the children and families it supports. I am a speech-language pathologist who works directly with ~50 students who also receive special educational services in ASD. These children deserve the opportunity to meet their fullest potential as members of the community and society. They are able to learn the skills needed to become functional members of the Alaskan workforce if given the opportunity within their educational programs. A stagnant BSA would mean significant cuts to the special education department overall. It would also be negatively impactful to the families who rely on the training and expertise of the special education teachers, paraprofessionals and therapists. Additionally, limits in available nursing at schools with special needs students could lead to high risk medical situations teachers and paraprofessionals do not have the training to deal with. These situations could include mistakes made during enteral feedings that could lead to infections or allergic reactions, mistakes made in medication dosing or timing that could lead to negative physiological outcomes, or prolonged administration of emergency medications during seizures or asthma attacks that could lead to brain damage or death. Special needs children and their families deserve the peace of mind that Alaska schools are safe, inclusive and effective.

Please show us you care about children, ALL children. Please show us you care about the future of Alaska. Please increase the BSA to support our schools.

With fervor,

Keegan Gallagher

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99502

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Will Stapp](#)
Cc: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: In Support of House Bill 69 - Parent Testimony - A. Johnson
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:51:33 PM
Attachments: [Parent Testimony, House Bill 69.pdf](#)

Please see my attached testimony in support of House Bill 69.

Thank you for listening,

Amanda

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Anne Bailey](#); [Nils Andreassen](#); [Alvin Osterback](#)
Subject: Joint Senate & House Education Committee Written Testimony
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 9:15:41 AM
Attachments: [Aleutians East Borough - Joint Senate & House Education Committee FINAL \(2-26-2025\).pdf](#)

Dear Co-Chairs Himschoot & Story,

See attached written information from the Aleutians East Borough mentioned by Mayor Osterback during recent joint Education Committees hearing. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks...

Mark Hickey
Hickey & Associates
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Moose pass school/seward middle
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 12:17:48 AM

Imagine this.. you have 5 kids.. ages ranging from 5-13. All 5 are at risk of losing their schools.. 4/5
Are so young.. and potentially being forced to function from 5:30 (just to make sure they're ready to catch the bus at 6 to make it on-time) am-3pm.. (when their normal wake time is 8am because their current amazing school doesn't start until 9am) and then if they are lucky, they take a cat nap on their ride home on the bus. But when they get home they have homework, so they get maybe 2-3 hours with their family a day until the weekend. To which I'd assume they're so exhausted, they just want to rest.. I can't imagine doing this to children.. especially a kindergartner, 2nd, and 4th grader.

That's just one issue we face with the possibility of these schools closing. Not to mention the 13 year old having to be in a HIGH SCHOOL that she and her classmates won't even FIT INTO (they aren't even the biggest classes to come either!). We need moose pass school. We need Seward middle. Because I want to spend more than 2 hours a day with my kids.. because I don't want my 11 and 13 year old to be in a highschool when they're supposed to be in a middle school..

there is so much more I could say.. so many more reasons we need these schools to stay open.. but these are the big ones for me. My children deserve more than a couple hours a day off school and away from the bus and time to spend with their families... and my children shouldn't have to be squeezed into a highschool that would be busting at the seams if we tried to put anymore children into it. Please. Please. Please. Keep our schools open.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: New Pom:HB 69 Education Funding: Increase Bsa
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 8:05:13 AM

Keri Gray
[REDACTED]

Sitka 99835-9669,
[REDACTED]

Hello, I am writing today in support of HB 69. I work in the school district and have a son in 3rd grade. This funding is so important, it will help keep our student-to-teacher ratio down and continue to support students. Please invest in education! Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: New Pom:HB 69 Education Funding: Increase Bsa
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:45:10 AM

Gretchen Clarke
[REDACTED]

Sitka 99835-9618,
[REDACTED]

I urge you to VOTE FOR HB 69 and OPPOSE any amendments that would reduce the \$1000 increase or limit local school district control. Education is the lifeblood of our state.

From: [REDACTED]
To: House Education; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. Yundi; Rep. Andrew Gray; Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Jennie Armstrong; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; Rep. Thomas Baker
Subject: No more funding until the results improve throughout the State
Date: Saturday, February 22, 2025 3:02:02 PM
Attachments: IMG_5224.PNG

No more funding until our results (Graduation Rates and Performance) significantly improve otherwise we are wasting our time! Furthermore, all we are asking is ACCOUNTABILITY by All!
DB

6:55



Done

Facebook
www.akleg.gov



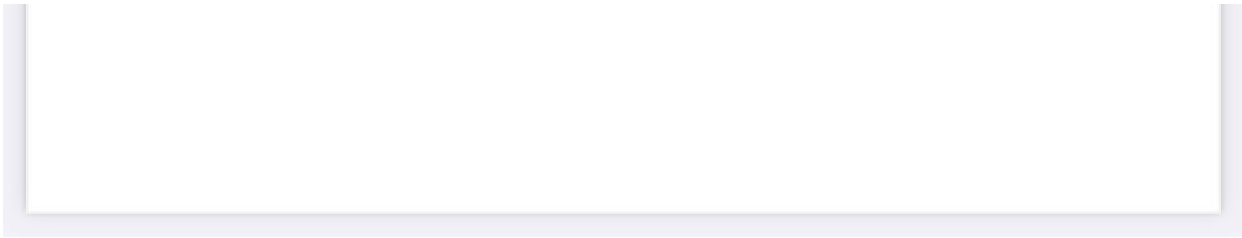
Estimated Cost Increase from Work Draft 34-LS0309\G				
	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
BSA	\$7,249	\$7,940	\$8,510	\$8,716
BSA Increase Above Status Quo	\$1,289	\$1,980	\$2,550	\$2,756
Estimated Cost Increase from Status Quo (\$millions)	326.3	501.3	645.7	697.7

In FY26, the bill's projected cost is \$326.3 million. Of this, \$73.2 million is from the inflation proofing, with the remaining \$253.2 million from the \$1,000 BSA Increase.

In FY27, the bill's projected cost is \$501.3 million. Of this, \$326.3 million is the higher funding already included in FY26. \$72.7 million is from the FY27 inflation proofing, with the remaining \$102.2 million from the \$404 BSA Increase.

In FY28, the bill's projected cost is \$645.7 million. Of this, \$501.3 million is the higher funding already included in FY27. \$42.0 million is from the FY28 inflation proofing, with the remaining \$102.2 million from the \$404 BSA Increase.

Source: Leg Finance Division



Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. DeLena Johnson](#)
Subject: Please support HB 69
Date: Monday, February 24, 2025 2:20:05 PM

Dear House Education Committee & Representative Johnson,

I want to express my support for HB 69, to increase the BSA for k-12 schools. I was raised in the Alaska public school system, and my children currently attend schools in MSBSD. I have seen vital educational programs and teacher retention efforts (e.g. retirement benefits) cut and class sizes increase as the years have passed. Unless serious changes to the BSA are made, the long-term view for MSB schools looks very grim.

We must look to a sustainable economic future for our schools, and communities. Raising the BSA must be a priority. These children are our future legislators, lawyers, plumbers, engineers, teachers, artists, doctors, care givers, etc.

I urge you to also support this bill, as we know it barely accounts for inflation and the rising costs that our schools face.

Thank you for your service and support of HB 69.

Respectfully yours,
Heather Fernstrom

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 1:26:41 PM

Hello,

As a parent with 3 children in the Anchorage School District, I am appalled, saddened, frustrated, and exhausted watching our schools go through budget issues every year. Having to write letter after letter begging to keep teachers and staff. This shouldn't be a thing, This shouldn't have to happen. Educating our children should be top priority and funding our schools should be a no brainer.

Classroom sizes are already ridiculous, I can't imagine the difficulty teachers will face if they have to teach an additional 5 or 6 kids or even more!

It shouldn't have to be a choice between cutting sports/extra curriculars or cutting staff. The BSA needs to be raised and continue to be evaluated each year to make adjustments for further inflation.

Making cuts to activities and staffing does nothing but hurt our schools, our teachers, and our students. No one wins, we all lose.

Please help fight this fight and make the right choice by raising the BSA.

Thank you for your time.

Amanda Fynskov

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [House Rules](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Jubilee Underwood](#); [Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Louise Stutes](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Will Stapp](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Justin Ruffridge](#); [Rep. George Rauscher](#); [Rep. Mike Prax](#); [Rep. David Nelson](#); [Rep. Elexie Moore](#); [Rep. Genevieve Mina](#); [Rep. Donna Mears](#); [Rep. Kevin McCabe](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. DeLena Johnson](#); [Rep. Nellie Jimmie](#); [Rep. Ky Holland](#); [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Sara Hannan](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#); [Rep. Andrew Gray](#); [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Zack Fields](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#); [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Rep. Jeremy Bynum](#); [Rep. Robyn Burke](#); [Rep. Jamie Allard](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#)
Subject: Re: Strongly OPPOSE HB 69
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025 5:40:52 PM

Dear House Representatives,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to House Bill 69, which unfairly discriminates against correspondence students and reveals a clear prejudice among some representatives against public home education in Alaska.

While HB 69 proposes a significant \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for traditional public schools, it neglects to provide proportional support for correspondence students—many of whom depend on public homeschooling programs. This funding disparity effectively devalues these students' education, treating them as second-class within Alaska's public school system. Correspondence programs have long been a cornerstone of education in our state, especially for rural families, yet this bill sidelines them without justification.

Even more troubling are the bill's amendments imposing a master curriculum list and detailed allotment reporting requirements exclusively on correspondence schools. These measures represent unequal treatment compared to traditional public schools, which face no such mandates. Why should correspondence programs be forced to first submit curriculum lists when brick-and-mortar schools retain flexibility in their instructional materials without reporting? Why must correspondence schools submit burdensome allotment reports when other public schools do not? These requirements are not only discriminatory—they signal a distrust of correspondence families and educators by representatives, implying their choices are less legitimate than those in traditional settings.

This unequal scrutiny reflects a broader bias against public home education. The rejection of Governor Dunleavy's proposals—which included equitable support for correspondence and charter students—in favor of a narrow focus on traditional schools further underscores this prejudice. It's as if some lawmakers view homeschooling not as a valid public education option, but as a problem to be controlled or marginalized. Alaska's education system should celebrate and support diversity in learning, not punish it with restrictive policies.

I urge you to oppose HB 69 unless it is amended to ensure fairness for all students. This means providing equitable funding increases for correspondence programs and striking the discriminatory master curriculum and reporting requirements. Anything less perpetuates an unjust double standard that harms Alaska's homeschooling families and undermines the state's commitment to

educational choice.

Please stand for equality and reject this flawed bill in its current form.

Sincerely,

Kendal Kruse-Mother of four young Alaskans in Palmer.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Support for HB 49
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 10:57:49 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your note and your phone message. Yes, we meant to state HB 69. Our apologies for the error and need to correct.

Best regards,
Larry

Lawrence M. Paska, Ph.D., CAE

Executive Director

lpaska@actfl.org | 703.894.2900 ext. 103

1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

actfl.org | languageconnectsfoundation.org



From: House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 7:41 PM

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Support for HB 49

Think Security – This email originated from an external source. Please exercise caution clicking any links or opening any attachments.

Hello,

Representative Rebecca Himschoot sponsored [HB 69](#) to increase the Base Student Allocation by \$1808 over 3 years (\$1000 + \$404 + \$404) and build in inflation proofing beginning FY26, and on an on-going basis.

Did ACTFL mean to state HB 69 in this support letter? I did leave you a message.

Regards,

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

From: Larry Paska [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 5:09 AM
To: House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Support for HB 49

Dear Alaska State House Education Committee Members,

On behalf of the more than 12,000 members of ACTFL, a professional membership association dedicated to providing vision, leadership, and support for quality teaching and learning of languages, and the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS), which represents over 300,000 language educators and professionals throughout the United States, we write to you today to urge you to maintain support for language education by increasing state funding for education in House Bill 49.

Please see attached for our letter of support. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Lawrence M. Paska, Ph.D., CAE
Executive Director
Director
ACTFL
NCLIS
1001 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314
07023

Amanda Seewald
Executive

JNCL-

P.O. Box 12
Fanwood, NJ

Lawrence M. Paska, Ph.D., CAE

Executive Director

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Regarding HB 69
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 12:15:26 PM

Dear Representatives,

My name is Dane Mitchell, a resident of Kodiak and partner to a public school teacher. I am writing in support of HB 69 and testifying to the devastating impact that the current lack of education funding is having on Alaskan communities.

My partner first moved to Kotzebue in 2014 because this great state provided new teachers an opportunity for adventure and better pay than the lower 48 could offer; I followed a few years later after he was offered a position in Kodiak. While we love this island and our community, our time here has been marked by increased struggle as the cost of living rises, teacher salaries stagnate, positions are cut, and class sizes increase.

These troubles got significantly worse for Kodiak (and for many communities across the state) in just the last few months as our school district, after having struggled with their budget for years due to lack of state funding, had to close an elementary school. My partner's program, that he has spent a decade developing into an incredible asset for this community, is being uprooted.

I am writing though because our experience is not unique. School districts across the state have had to take extreme measures to balance their budgets and it is having a devastating impact on our communities. Alaska school districts are one of the largest employers in this state and all the hardworking people of our communities rely on their function for stability.

It is critical that the state legislature adopt HB 69 and increase funding for our public schools. It is the first, and most necessary step in advancing education in Alaska, and it is crucial to avoiding economic devastation in our communities.

Our school districts were able to manage their budgets through COVID and years of high inflation without any increases to their base funding; I have faith that this congress, with all the tools at their disposal, is also capable of managing a budget that prioritizes our schools.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, it is appreciated.

Dane M. Mitchell

From: [REDACTED]
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
Date: Saturday, February 22, 2025 12:11:19 PM

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)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99502

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for Alaska House Bill 69 – A Critical Step for Student Education
Date: Friday, February 21, 2025 8:48:53 AM

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 8:10:35 PM

Hello,

I am writing to you to ask for your support of HB 69 in order to introduce :

- immediate inflation proofing and a \$1,000 increase to the BSA for FY26
- an additional increase of the BSA of \$404 for FY27 and FY28

I support this bill because:

- We must invest in our students and teachers, protect parent choice, and ensure accountability at the school district level.
- Cutting dedicated teachers, proven programs (IGNITE, Immersion, Sports, etc.), and
- Undermining progress will not prepare our kids – our or state – for a better future
- One child attended and the other is attending Aquarian Charter School and that is *exactly* why I support school choice and increased education funding.

I am a registered nurse working in maternal-child health. I am also the treasurer of the Romig Middle School PTSA. My children are 10 and 13, attending Aquarian Charter School and Romig Middle School. My middle schooler attends the Advanced Academy. We have seen our children flourish in these charter and enrichment programs. My husband and I have lived in Alaska for 20 years. Our family loves to bike and ski, and we love the amazing opportunities for outdoor adventure and recreation this state affords. My husband and I both volunteer to coach in the Mighty Bikes youth mountain biking program each summer. Being active is central to our family's culture and values. We want our children to grow up here and get a great education while enjoying this great state.

As I'm sure you are aware, the Anchorage School District is facing a 100 million budget deficit for FY26. Schools are having to consider impossible choices:

-

At Aquarian Charter School, without an increase in funding, the school will be forced to use nearly one-third of its savings just to maintain current staffing levels for FY26. At this rate, within three years, the entire savings—or unallocated funds—will be depleted. The allotted budget from ASD is not even enough to cover salaries and benefits for the dedicated staff.

- At Romig Middle School, the choices are even more impossible. ASD's budget proposal for FY26 with current funding levels cuts out all middle school sports, and cuts 9 teaching positions at Romig.
- All K-12 schools would increase the pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) to 1:4.

The potential loss of middle school sports is particularly heartbreaking to consider. For many students, a middle school sport may be the first time they get to try cross country running or skiing. The possibility to learn healthy habits in middle school lays the foundation for healthy life long habits. As a nurse, I consider physical activity one of the most important aspects of a healthy lifestyle.

My middle schooler already reports that Romig's hallways are very crowded at passing periods, and when I am in the building for meetings, I have noticed a very full multipurpose room before school. Since there is always a grade having PE while others are having lunch, students already do not have the opportunity to exercise in the gym during the lunch period. Neither is there enough staff to supervise them to go outside at lunch. I am concerned that student safety will decrease and bullying will increase if staffing is reduced (6th grade was added to middle school in 2024).

Increasing the PTR will erode the crucial relationships that students and educators must build in order for students to achieve and believe in themselves. The individualized attention that my students receive at both schools has benefitted them greatly. My son knows Ms. Sarah Fineman at Aquarian Charter School believes in him no matter what. My daughter knows that Mr. Jacob Berg is expecting excellence from her in science class. These amazing educators make all the difference in our students' lives.

Please protect parent choice by supporting HB 69 which will provide sustainable funding for programs and schools like Romig Advanced Academy and Aquarian Charter School!

Thank you for your consideration of this matter,

Amanda Prevel-Ramos, RN
Romig Middle School PTSA Treasurer
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99517

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [House Education](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#); [Sen. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Will Stapp](#)
Subject: Support of funding for K-12 education
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 8:47:31 AM

Dear Alaska Legislators,

I am writing in support of funding for education and of significant and sustained funding for K-12 education. We need a \$1000 increase to the base student allocation to begin to make up for 15 years of losses to inflation.

Since 2011, the BSA has fallen behind inflation by 25%. Flat funding for our schools has resulted in school closures, loss of programs, and valuable, passionate, professional teachers. 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.

Education is our absolute constitutional obligation. Beyond that it is simply good policy. We can be proactive and fund schools now or pay the much higher costs of incarceration in the future. We can drive families away, making it harder to hire and retain a resident workforce and accelerating economic decline, or we can attract and keep families by supporting strong schools.

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 now and in the future
- 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.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support our schools
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 12:19:59 PM

Support our schools. Increase funding for our schools!,
Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Supporting an increase to the BSA
Date: Saturday, March 1, 2025 8:20:32 PM

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to voice my support for fully funding public education here in Alaska, and my hope that you will support the passage of a minimum \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation. I understand that Alaska is currently facing a budget shortfall, however it is not acceptable to cover that shortfall by shortchanging Alaska's students and families - they are literally the future of our state, our communities, and our workforce.

In the twenty years I have lived in Seward, I have seen our local schools year by year lose things like our school music program, art classes, as well as teachers who have chosen to leave the community due to budget decisions continually threatening their jobs. An increase in the base student allocation is long-overdue, and would go a long way to addressing the loss of programs and teachers. In order to pay for this, I would ask the committee members to take an 'all-of-the-above' approach towards identifying revenue - increasing the amounts of the Permanent Fund draw that supports the state budget, taxing medium to large S corporations (effectively putting Hillcorp on the same playing field as other oil corporations), or even an income tax. We've skated by for years on the residuals from boom oil production, but we're coming up hard against the limits of what that can still fund.

At stake with these funding decisions are things like the continued existence of the Moose Pass School. This small K-5 school is the hub of a small rural community, and serving a population of students who have no other nearby schools. The school, with a current enrollment of 17, is well over the minimum of ten students required for a school to exist in our community. Yet it is currently at the top of the Kenai Peninsula Borough's list of schools to close due to shortfalls in their budget.

My family has roots in the Moose Pass area going back the last four decades. My cousins all attended Moose Pass School and my niece and nephew are both current students there. The school has been operational for nearly a century (the first school opened here in 1928), and is in fact the second-oldest school in the entire Kenai Peninsula Borough. Some of the current students reside as far away as Mile 36 of the Seward Highway. Google Maps estimates the drive time from there to Seward Elementary, where the Moose Pass students would be sent, to be 40 minutes - which does not take into account bus stops, or winter weather, both of which would easily stretch the commute to close to an hour, twice a day! Speaking of winter weather, the highway from Moose Pass to Seward crosses several avalanche paths. Slides, which happen with some frequency during the winter, could either prevent the students from getting to school in Seward, or strand them in Seward and away from their parents and families.

The school is also a crucial part of making Moose Pass a community that can support and attract families. In Alaska, especially on the eastern side of the Kenai Peninsula, there has long been difficulties in striking a balance between making our communities welcoming for tourism and making them welcoming for residents, families, and workers. I cannot imagine a worse turn-off for a family or young couple looking to move into the area than learning that their children will need to be bussed to a different community a half hour away in order to attend school.

I hope that you will consider communities like Moose Pass, and support fully funding Alaskan children's education and future by increasing the BSA.

Respectfully,
Mareth E. Griffith

[REDACTED]

Seward AK 99664

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#)
Subject: Thank you for Introducing HB 69
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2025 12:42:34 PM

Dear Representative Himschoot,

Thank you for supporting education in Alaska by introducing HB 69. If the state does not take action quickly to raise the BSA it will continue to lose skilled educators to states with more stability and properly funded schools.

I have been a science teacher with the Anchorage School District since 2016. In 2021 I was one of 30 educators from across the country selected to participate in NASA's Airborne Astronomy Ambassador program. In 2022 I was recognized by the Alaska Legislature for my contributions to science education due to my work in designing place-based science and engineering curriculum. I am a science department chair and have served on multiple science curriculum committees due to my science background. Every year since teaching for ASD I have either been pink slipped and sent to another school, or spent the spring months waiting for the state to pass funding so I can keep my job. Every year prior to this one I have anxiously waited it out, hoping the risk I was taking not to leave would work out. But not this year. I am tired of being jerked around year after year. It is demoralizing and stressful. I am done.

Class sizes have reach a point that make it difficult to teach effectively. I give up my scant planning time to cover other teachers because we do not have enough subs. We are covering for unfilled teaching positions, which adds to our already overwhelming work load. Over the years the strain caused by too large classes and insufficient resources has been detrimental to my health and wellbeing. Even if I was to survive the budget cuts (I'm still waiting to hear if I'll have a job next year), I'm not sure I'd want to teach for Alaska with the projected class sizes and insufficient staffing and resources. I do not want a bonus. I want smaller class sizes and buildings staffed with skilled educators. I want to be able to do science labs (large class sizes pose a safety liability and we have had to stop running certain labs due to classes being too large). I want to teach where I'm not worried every spring if my position is going to be cut or if our school will have sufficient staff and resources to do right by our students.

We are approaching the time of year when school districts across the country are starting to post open positions for next school year. I would like to stay and teach science in Alaska, but this year, for the first time, I will be applying for teaching jobs elsewhere. If another job pans out before Alaska passes adequate funding, then you will have lost a skilled NASA science educator.

It's important to note that Alaska won't just lose an educator. You will also lose my husband, a skilled RN with decades of experience in the ICU and operating room. He has worked for years as a charge nurse in the OR and is well known and respected throughout the Anchorage surgical community. You'll also lose my boys, both recent graduates of King Tech High School. One is working on his CDL, the other completing the IT program at AVTEC. And finally, my youngest, a high schooler in classes that are too large, with interests in civil engineering. We worry about what these cuts will mean for her education, which is another reason we look to leave.

We are just one family, but we have friends and colleagues who are making similar plans. My

husband works with travelers (which are more expensive than local OR staff) because nursing and tech positions go unfilled. He's seen multiple people rescind acceptance to job offers when they look into the state of our schools and local economy. He grows tired of working in an industry that is short staffed. As you can see, the lack of school funding doesn't just affect our schools.

I hope the state is able to pass HB 69 quickly to bring needed funding and stability for educators and Alaska families.

Thank you,

Erin Schneider, M.S.
NASA AAA
Science Department Chair
Secondary Science Educator

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Finance](#); [House Education](#)
Cc: [House Rules](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Subject: Thank you for moving education funding forward!
Date: Sunday, February 23, 2025 10:43:45 PM

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for moving the education funding bill forward to the Rules Committee. **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.**

We need this bill to pass this school year, sooner rather than later, so I encourage Rules Committee members to follow their colleagues' example and expedite this bill. I will be writing to the relevant Senate committees with this same message.

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 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. Our kiddo doesn't even get to attend PE 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 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 into Rules and toward the inevitable political negotiations, I urge all of you to please not compromise the quality of our childrens' 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.

Once again, thank you for your important work toward funding public education for all Alaska's children.

Sincerely,

Bridget Paule

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Bridget Paule.

Anchorage AK 99517

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: To Whom it Should Concern,
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 12:36:39 AM

To Whom it Should Concern,

I am writing this on behalf of my grandkids and their classmates at school. My oldest Granddaughter attends Seward Middle School, my three younger ones attend Moose Pass School. Their youngest sister is due to begin Kindergarten at Moose Pass School next fall.

I recently received some information about these two schools having to close due to “lack of available funding” and I am honestly very disappointed with this decision made by “officials” who are in charge and making this decision without considering the consequences & impact.

Our kids are our future, we need to put them first. We need to nurture, educate and build their education in the best way possible.

Closing these schools is not the way to do this. We need these schools to remain open so that our local students can continue to learn and grow with teachers and staff who understand their needs. We need the extracurricular activities after school as well, to facilitate a sense of purpose and confidence. Our schools are in a rural area, travel to and from is lengthy. Closing Moose Pass school would mean that these young students would be required to travel to Seward Elementary thus creating a very long day each day for these kids. That is not conducive to their learning.

Putting Middle School kids with High School age kids in my opinion is not safe. These kids are still young and transitioning through a lot of personal growth and changes.

Please reconsider your decision in this matter and KEEP OUR SCHOOLS OPEN for our children.

Thank you,

A Concerned Grandparent

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Vote YES on HB 69 – Invest in Alaska's Future
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:59:38 PM

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
[REDACTED]

From: [Jon and Ruth Ewig](#)
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Rep. Maxine Dibert](#); [Rep. Ted Eischeid](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Rep. Bill Elam](#); [Rep. Jubilee Underwood](#); [Jon and Ruth Ewig](#); Jim.matherly@alaska.gov
Subject: We oppose HB 69 which is a bad bill
Date: Monday, February 24, 2025 9:57:52 PM

We oppose HB 69 which is a bloated education bill with no accountability. This bill is meant to rob Alaskans of our PFD. It is an extravagant amount of money which will lead to an income tax and this robbery is being attempted even though Alaska's education is ranked nearly last in the nation. There is no effort to improve the broken system we have. We need School Choice not union dominance.

Respectfully yours,

Jon and Ruth Ewig

[REDACTED]

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

[REDACTED]

Copy to Jim Matherly for Governor Dunleavy

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Yes on HB 69
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 7:20:01 PM

Please pass HB 69.

The schools are the cornerstone of my community and we need to keep them strong.

Best,
Kristina Van Hoogmoed