

Michael Mason

From: Kate Veh [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:57 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support HB 69 . . . Support Education

Hi Senate Education Committee;

Please fully fund the schools by passing the HB 69 bill. My kids went through the public school system in Alaska. The teachers did an amazing job, but they were under-funded. It's time to finally fully fund the schools. Our kids deserve it.

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Kate Veh
Soldotna, Alaska
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Katherine Reeves [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:02 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Public Testimony for HB 69

Dear Alaskan Senators,

My name is Katie Reeves, and I am a Mat-Su Borough resident. My family has worked with Cyberlynx as a correspondence school, and we are very happy with it. I am concerned that HB 69 is supporting "open enrollment within districts", which would greatly limit our choice to utilize educational resource options in the state. We value the current correspondence school choices, such as IDEA, Cyberlynx, Denali Peak, or Raven, which are headquartered in other districts. The removal of options such as these is NOT in the best interest of our students or families.

I am also concerned that HB 69 includes a per student funding increase without explaining where the additional funding is coming from. Please take the time to consider the full impact of your vote on this matter, and vote NO to preserve options for families which will produce the best educational outcomes for Alaska's children.

Sincerely,

Katie Reeves
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Katy Ruff Soden [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:25 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB 69

Dear committee members,

I am an Anchorage voter writing in support of the bill to raise the BSA. I have a 7-year old in a mixed grade class with 30 students. I have a 9-year old in a mixed grade class with 31 students. Despite having great teachers who are doing their best, this is simply too many kids in the class to allow for meaningful educational growth for all students. An increase to the BSA is needed to keep class sizes at this level or, ideally, smaller.

Thank you for your consideration.
Katy Soden

Michael Mason

From: Kayla McDonogh [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:59 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Desperate Time for Funding!

Now is the time to support public education! The attacks on this important investment for democracy is chilling!

Fund public schools and give the district funding to ensure continued support for students, educators, staff and parents!

If not, important community-building programs and activities will be closed forever!

Do not let this happen!

--

Kayla McDonogh (she/her)
Wife, mother, teacher, advocate and ally

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

— Maya Angelou

I acknowledge that I and my family lives on the traditional lands of the Dena'ina People of Upper Cook Inlet.

Michael Mason

From: Kitri Walker [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 2:33 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69 concerns

Dear Alaskan Senators,

I just heard about today's hearing and wanted to voice my thoughts.

I am concerned that BH69 is supporting "open enrollment within districts" and may cause families who are in the Matsu area, but want to be with a different homeschool program other than MatSu Central, to not longer have a choice for best fit for their family.

Our family initially started out homeschooling with Mat-Su Central with my three girls, after using them with my son and having a great experience. However, my three girls have special needs , and the district was too big to actually be involved and help me move forward with their education.

So I had to move to IDEA and we have been really happy and well supported there. I am concerned that we would no longer have access to this because of the wording that says "open enrollment in public schools WITHIN districts."

I am hoping that you are going to protect the choice for educational resources of other state correspondent school options, like IDEA, Cyber Links, Denali, Peak, and Raven among others .

Please thoughtfully consider how your vote will impact all of our students and families, especially those who are investing so much of our own time and resources to see the best educational outcome for our children here in the valley.

I'm praying for wisdom over each and everyone of you and blessings.

Sincerely Kitri Walker.

Michael Mason

From: Kristina Van Hoogmoed [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 9:41 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please support HB 69

Please support HB 69 to help my local schools. I am in favor.

Best,
Kristina Van Hoogmoed
Kodiak Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Kristina Blevins [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 11:27 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69- Fairbanks

Good afternoon,

I am writing in support of HB 69. After watching our school district struggle trying to make a budget over the last couple of months and cutting our kids education down to the bare bones, this is definitely much needed money and a priority on where our money should be going. Investing straight into the future of Alaska! I believe our school district should still be held accountable on spending and this is not a boost for a free for all but they already have amendments to their budget including add backs for cuts they had to make for the money they know they have right now. These add backs I still see as necessities and positions that are needed. They have already slated to close my children's school next year and I am not interested in sending them to an overcrowded, filled to capacity school and expecting them to get the best education there. I am one of the Pearl creek elementary school parents helping and hoping to get the charter school started next school year because of this but our goal is to help the district as a whole, not just for our own benefits. They also voted in their budget last night to cut 2.5 positions (exploratory teachers) at Barnett magnet school which is a filled to capacity elementary/middle school with a waitlist and no transportation provided. This school has now lost all appeal to go here taking away the things that made it stand out and parents have to provide transportation. Please invest in the future of Alaska and our children! This should be our number one priority and can no longer be pushed aside!

Kristina Wood
Fairbanks, Alaska
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: EK C [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:18 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Oppose HB69 in current form

Dear Senators,

I'm writing to strongly urge you to vote NO on HB69 at least in its current form.

It is alarming that there is no funding source and the general fund is in a deficit as is. That's irresponsible. We can not steal even more from the PFD which isn't even legally being given to residents as is. Income tax is also not a good solution. Living here is already very expensive and has only gotten worse since 2020. Families are struggling as is.

Having said that I do support an increase to the BSA BUT no where near \$1000 the state just can't afford it. We are one of top states for spending on education yet our students are very near the bottom. That doesn't add up, money is not the issue. Cuts will unfortunately need to be made and should start with the bloated administration not teachers or sports.

The open enrollment wording is troubling and not needed. "Open enrollment" is not really open enrollment when parents are restricted to enrolling their child in the local district. Open enrollment should allow a parent to enroll their child in any K12 public school, be it neighborhood, charter, or Correspondence school. Why draw imaginary lines around a child's future?

Increasing the administrative overhead costs from 4% to 8% that a district can charge its charter schools will only impact the students in that school. It will also incentivize the district to increase its administrative costs because it can merely pass these cost on to the charter schools. This could have a seriously detrimental effect on the operation of the charter schools. We need to reduce administrative overhead, not facilitate it.

Correspondence schools are singled out where no other school type is. Why aren't all school reporting to a master list and report of curriculum and line by line expenses? You guys act like correspondence schools operate without any rules or regulations.

It is interesting that a huge number of states are expanding choice including homeschool options and rolling back burdensome regulations on choices but Alaska, who is considered a pioneer with our correspondence schools, seem to be going backwards. Our students can't even be counted as a full student. Our students also save the state money.

Take a look at the Governors proposal. It has some good ideas.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Katy Cullison
Eagle River AK

Michael Mason

From: Laird Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:23 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

I support increasing the BSA! I believe the schools have struggled due to flat funding and pulling more money away from the school districts is not warranted and will further cut general school programs.

Laird Jones
45 year resident of Juneau, Alaska
Lifelong resident of SE Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Laura Buchheit [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 3:10 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support HB 69!

To Alaska Senate Education Committee,

I urge you to support HB 69 that raises the BSA \$1000, an increase that is important support for our students, teachers and communities. Strong schools are vital for Alaska's future!

As my child starts High School in Juneau, we're counting on you to support his future by supporting public schools.

Thank you!
Sincerely,
Laura Buchheit
[REDACTED]
Juneau, AK 99801

Michael Mason

From: Laura Silliphant [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 12:12 PM
To: Senate Education; Senate Education
Subject: KEEP OUR SCHOOLS ALIVE TO THRIVE IN 2025 - Testimony to support an increase to the BSA by \$1000 and keep cell phones away during school

Through Senate Education Committee Chair Senator Tobin:

Hello, my name is Laura Gregersen. I live in Senate District H. Today, I am representing myself and my children. HB 69 was modified by the House Rules Committee. I am testifying in support of two aspects of the revised HB 69. I support a \$1000 increase to the BSA, and I support the removal of cell phone devices during school.

“We are not here to be satisfactory; we are here to be awesome.” “Don’t limit your challenges, challenge your limits.” These are two quotes my son’s learned in their public elementary school. In the past 9 years, I have watched their critical thinking minds develop, their thoughts meet words on paper, and their social and emotional toolbox grow. Their teachers have taught my husband and I how to best support their growth – types of books to read at home, Battle of the Books, and sports. I tell every parent the secret to a great start to middle school is to have your kid join a sport. In Anchorage, hundreds of middle schoolers line up at that starting line and run through the woods during cross country. No matter if they are in the lead, the middle of the pack, or the tail, teammates cheer. I’ve watched my son develop relationships with kids from all over town at track meets. Mutual respect for one another’s talent. If the BSA is not increased, ASD will remove all middle school sports and high school hockey. You want to keep kids coming to school. It is BOTH the academics and the co-curriculars that are far reaching to all. Sports do not build character, they reveal it. In a time where our teens are glued to their cell phones, putting them down for learning and for a cross-country race is more important than ever.

Public schools are so much more than learning institutions, they are community. In the fall of 2021, I started my multi-year battle against Ovarian Cancer. The teachers rallied around my sons, school families brought us food, and helped with rides... As terrible as I felt, I attended every athletic event I could make. Their resilience was my inspiration. That is what public schools and co-curricular sports do - they inspire! You must keep their schools alive and to thrive in 2025. Increase the BSA by \$1000, keep the cell phones out of their hands, and put camaraderie and sportsmanship in their hearts. Thank you

Michael Mason

From: Lauren Blanchett [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:31 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please support HB 69- Education Funding Bill

Please support HB 69 and an increase to school funding.

Thank you,

Lauren Blanchett
Midtown Anchorage

Michael Mason

From: Leilani Dodson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 9:37 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69 bill

I vote no on this bill because:

1. Where will the funding to raise these allotments come from?
2. How would we know that the increased allotment is effectively improving our children's education?
3. Families should be allowed to choose from a greater variety of schools instead of being limited to those within districts

Thank you for hearing my voice on this matter
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Michael Mason

From: Lia Calhoun [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Testimony on HB 69

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to urge your support for HB69, which proposes a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This funding is essential to stabilize Alaska's public schools and to ensure that all Alaskan children have access to a quality education.

My husband and I are both proud graduates of Homer High School, where we each earned the distinction of valedictorian. Alaska's public education system gave us an excellent foundation—one that allowed us to earn our four-year university degrees and led me to complete a Ph.D. in English. We chose to return to Alaska, the place we love, to raise our two young sons among our extended family. I now teach at the Homer campus of the University of Alaska, where I work daily with students striving to build a future here in our state.

Unfortunately, we are devastated by the current state of public education in Alaska, and we are experiencing the consequences firsthand. Since returning home and enrolling our sons in our local public school, we have felt the strain of inadequate funding in deeply personal ways:

- Our beloved neighborhood elementary school was listed by the KPBSD School Board for elimination or consolidation, as were all public schools in our Homer community, in this year's budget conversations.
- Homer Middle School Principal shared that a decade ago, advertised teaching positions would receive 30 or more applicants. Now, they are lucky to receive even a handful of applications. This is the one middle school available to my children.
- Families are leaving—not because they want to, but because they feel they have no choice when schools are under-resourced and unstable.
 - Teachers are leaving—Just this week, my third-grade son's extraordinary teacher told us she is considering leaving the profession if our school closes. She is the first teacher who has truly ignited his passion for learning, and under her instruction, he has flourished—scoring in the 98th percentile for math and the 87th for reading. The thought of my kindergartener never having the opportunity to learn from her is heartbreaking. And she is not the only one considering this choice. Many teachers and administrators have already received notices or are choosing to leave, and our high school administration is facing massive turnover.

The erosion of public education funding is taking a toll on our children, our communities, and our future workforce. It is clear that current funding levels are not sustainable. Without a meaningful increase to the BSA, we risk losing not only our educators and families but the promise of a strong, vibrant Alaska for the next generation.

Raising the BSA by \$1,000 is the minimum needed to address inflationary pressures and to begin restoring stability to our schools. It is a crucial step toward demonstrating that we value our children's futures and are committed to giving them the same opportunities for success that we enjoyed.

Please vote to pass HB69. Support our students, our educators, and the future of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Lia Calhoun, PhD
Homer, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Lia Calhoun [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:17 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please support HB 69

I am writing to urge your strong support for House Bill 69, which would increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to account for inflation. I am a lifelong Alaskan, my husband is a 3rd generation Alaskan, and we are raising our two young boys in the hometown that we love among all of our extended family. Homer, like many communities across Alaska, is reeling from the financial strain on our schools. Without action, we are at a serious risk of losing our beloved elementary school. The majority of Homer's educators received notice that their school may close/consolidate and they may lose their job.

Our schools are not suffering from inefficiency. My third grader is in a class of 27 students. My kindergartener is in a class of 25. These numbers reflect a system stretched to its limits, not wasteful spending. Without increased funding, our classrooms will only become more overcrowded, and our ability to recruit and retain talented educators will continue to decline.

Public education is the foundation of our state's future. Without adequate investment, we risk losing not only the next generation of Alaskans but also the professionals—doctors, engineers, teachers, and business leaders—who will sustain our communities. We cannot afford to let inflation erode our schools any further.

Please support House Bill 69 and work to ensure that Alaska's students and educators receive the funding they deserve. Our children's futures depend on it.

Sincerely,

Lia Calhoun

[REDACTED]
Homer, Alaska 99603
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Liana S [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 10:45 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Testimony regarding a HB69

From a worried parent of a child in the Anchorage School District- I have two children, both in ASD, both in the Japanese Immersion Program. I am also a graduate of the Japanese Immersion Program.

I saw that I could send this email my testimony regarding my hopes that the Senate will pass HB69.

To say I am worried about the future of ASD is an understatement. It is sad to see all of the political disagreements in regard to extra funding for our schools. It baffles me that not providing funding for our children's education is even an afterthought for some. Our public schools are at further risk if we don't make taking care of them a priority. We will lose more families who need or want their children to get their education through our Public Schools. And the ones who don't have the opportunity to make a choice for an alternative school, they will be left with a dwindling education system at the brink of collapse.

I ask you to ask yourself what you hope to see for the children of our community. Despite all the noise, the children, who are the innocent bystanders of all of this, deserve more. They deserve the best from us, and you are the ones who make the choice to give that to them.

Thank you,
Liana Schmidt

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Lila Lee Little [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 5:53 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Pass Education Bill

Dear Senators,

I am writing to express my strong support for the bill regarding education in Alaska. Investing in our schools and providing resources for students and teachers is crucial for the future of our state. A well-funded education system ensures that Alaskan children receive the quality education they deserve, preparing them for success in the workforce and beyond.

This bill is a vital step toward strengthening our schools, supporting educators, and giving students the opportunities they need to thrive. I urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and dedication to Alaska's future.

Lila Johnson

Michael Mason

From: Lili Misel [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 6:05 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Written testimony from HB 69

Dear Senators,

Thank you for your service on the Education committee and for taking my testimony today on HB 69. Below is my statement of my verbal comments I provided this afternoon.

My name is Lili Misel and I am a parent of two students at Fairbanks schools. Thank you to the committee for your work on behalf of Alaskans. I am a resident of District R, and fully support the \$1000 raise to the BSA and HB 69.

Some of you, like me, went to Alaska schools. We all understand the importance of a strong education and how it can help students raise themselves out of poor circumstances. However, if that ability isn't there through lack of funding, how can our students meet the needs of our state? Without students who can receive a solid base education in K-12, how can they be ready to fill the engineering, management teacher, and leadership roles of the future?

The funding of education in Alaska has been lacking for over a decade. Now is the time to rectify that. I would also ask that there be accountability for home school programs to ensure that those students also demonstrate they are meeting the same educational standards of brick and mortar schools.

We all want Alaskan students to be able to have a successful future for our state to be successful. I have been told we need to look at finances and that education is always pitted against the PFD. I think this is a false argument. Education needs to be a priority for our state, and I encourage you to support HB 69 and the \$1000 increase to the BSA.

Michael Mason

From: Lillian Olson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:22 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support of HB69

This is a written statement in support of HB69. I live in rural Alaska and out of the road system. Everything is expensive here and many families cannot afford too many things to help them in life. If our school gets good funding, it will help our people get a good education. Additional monies will help schools with the best curriculum that will help educate our people. The BSA increase is necessary to keep pace with inflation and ensure that all students have access to quality education, resources, and opportunities that they rightfully deserve under our state constitution.

I urge you to support HB69 and vote to get it passed. Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,

Lillian Olson

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"Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile" by Vince Lombardi

Lillian Olson, Principal
Chevak School
[REDACTED]
Chevak, AK 99563

Michael Mason

From: Lilly Boron [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 11:05 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 69

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Lilly Boron. I'm the k-12 principal of the Haines School, where I have worked as a teacher for 21 years and as a principal for 5 years. Next year, I will be the incoming superintendent for the Haines Borough School District. I offering this testimony as a representative of my district. Thank you for receiving testimony and for your commitment to supporting public education. I'm writing to express my support for HB 69. Haines is my home, and I'd like to share my story.

In the past 5 years as principal, I have gone from motivated and determined to nervous and hopeful and now to anxious and grieving the loss of quality education that has inevitably resulted from inadequate and unpredictable funding. Most significantly, the Haines Borough School District has suffered severely from recruitment and retention issues.

As we have lost Tier II teachers to retirement, we have had a continual revolving door of teachers and administrators who are hired and then leave the following year. I have had a different assistant principal each year for 4 years and one year with no assistant principal. Every open teaching position has turned over at least twice in the last 5 years. Last year, we had 9 new teachers and one new assistant principal. I was excited that we were lucky enough to have found them. Haines is a beautiful community with a great school, so I was hopeful. But at the end of the year, all but 3 left. The biggest issue by far was that we were not able to pay them what they needed to be able to afford to live in Haines.

This year, we started the year with 4 teachers hired late in the summer who didn't arrive until over a month into school. I stayed up every night till 2am for weeks so I could coordinate with our science teacher from the Philippines, who was waiting for her visa. Together, we wrote lesson plans for 6 high school science classes. During the day, I taught 5 social studies classes because it was easier to teach them myself than write plans for a sub. This is my reality every year. It is not sustainable. This turnover has a direct impact on our students, our schools, and our communities. I have families that are leaving our district and looking to move out of state because of this issue.

This year, I am trying to fill at least 6 teaching positions. In my school, that is 30% of my teaching staff. One teacher is an entire department. For each opening, I have 80-100 applications from other countries. If I'm lucky, I might have 3 applications from people who are certified in the U.S. We cannot attract teachers on our current salary scale. We can't offer competitive salaries without adequate, predictable, and reliable funding.

Next year, the Haines Borough School District is looking at an \$800,000 deficit, which is a significant shortfall for a small district like ours. I can't be silent and watch our school die. The Haines School is the heart of our community. I urge you to stay committed to the work you are doing in support of public education and increase the BSA. \$1000 would make a significant difference. Our students, families, and communities deserve no less.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Lilly Boron
K-12 Principal
Haines Borough School District
NASSP Region VII State Coordinator
Haines, AK 99827

Community - Commitment - Courage

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Michael Mason

From: Linda Kruger [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:42 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Education support

Please support Education at the highest level you can. Educating young people is our best hope for the future. We need children who will become adults who can reason and make sound decisions. We have dedicated teachers and parents but community schools need state funding support. This is one of the best investments we can make.

Thanks for doing the right things for our students and our state!

Linda Kruger
[REDACTED]
Juneau AK 99803
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Lindy Larson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 9:44 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support HB 69

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I support HB 69 and a \$1000 increase to the bsa. Bsa has not kept up with inflation and we are gutting our public schools and closing several in the Fairbanks Area as a result. We'll funded public schools are key to a strong community and future success of our kids.

Thank you,
Lindy

Michael Mason

From: Lisa Alexia [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 8:18 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 to raise the BSA

Honorable Senators,

I cannot stress enough how important it is to raise the base student allocation. As a parent of two sons who attended high school in Anchorage, I have been impressed with how much dedication and commitment the teachers put into their work, given the declining support from the state over many prior years.

The foundation of our society rests on our commitment to a strong and integrated public education system.

There's so much in this bill that I could hardly find the BSA information. The BSA needs a more durable fix but this is an important start. Raising the BSA is an essential element of legislation to pass this year by a veto-proof margin if at all possible.

Thank you,
Lisa Alexia, PA-C, CAQ-Psych, PMH-C
Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Lisa [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:35 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

I am writing in response to the importance of HB 69.

The increase of the Student Base Allocation is long overdue, and I am glad to see there are measures for it to keep up with inflation. This not only benefits the children and families of our state, but helps support and hopefully helps us to retain quality teachers and administrators.

In my community I see the benefit of charter schools, but often these schools have a lower percent of children with disabilities. I am concerned about children with special needs, because the extra support for those in need can greatly benefit from early intervention, which in turn can transform their lives. Not only is this the right thing to do, all schools should work with and welcome students of all learning levels. Also, children all should be offered transportation to school as well as access to free lunches if they qualify, regardless if it is a public or charter school.

I believe funding education is investing in the State of Alaska's future, and is our civic duty. Please support this bill, and keep religion out of our school systems.

Thank you,
Lisa Krebs

[REDACTED]
Homer, AK
99603
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Jay Satterfield [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:25 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support HB 69

Senators,
Please support HB 69! You know
quality education is the key to a
better life for all of Alaskans-
including you.

Please support HB 69

LISA OBERLE

Juneau, AK
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Lisa Villano [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:18 PM
To: Sen. Mike Cronk; Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Dear Senate Education Committee Members and Senator Cronk,

My name is Lisa Villano, and I am a registered supervoter in Senate District R. I am also a public school teacher at Ryan Middle School here in Fairbanks.

I had intended to call in to testify at the hearing, but I called in a bit too late. Thus, I decided to email you today to raise my voice in support of HB 69. Please uphold the House's proposal to increase the BSA by \$1,000. As a public school teacher for the past 14 years, I have experienced firsthand over and over the impact of inadequate funding has on our schools and students. For example, last year and the year before, I shared a classroom with our school's Extended Learning Program (ELP) teacher. I got to witness the challenging and enriching lessons and activities that our high academic achievers got to take part in. Last year, our school district cut ELP positions for secondary schools. While I no longer have to share my classroom, in all seriousness, the negative impact this loss has on students who need that academic enrichment is obvious. They are either not getting what they need, or teachers that may not have proper training for ELP are taking their personal time and resources to create lessons and projects to meet their needs.

Again, please support the full \$1000 BSA increase. It will go far in supporting the education of Alaska's students.

Sincerely,
Lisa Villano

[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99709
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Mimzy Wellberg [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 7:58 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

I am a retired school counselor and grandmother of ASD students. I support HB 69 and am willing to pay whatever it takes to fund education. Education funding to me is critical for children, families, our businesses and livelihood in Alaska.

In Anchorage the proposed cuts without funding will have significant negative consequences. Rural Alaskans also deserve adequate funding.

Where to cut state expenses? Less money in the PFD. Trim the prison budget, To add money: Taxes.....resources, pleasure toys.

Please fully fund HB 69
Margaret Wellberg

Michael Mason

From: Mary Asper [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Education bill

Please, please pass this funding as schools so desperately need it! In my lifetime as a teacher we were in the top states for the quality of our education. Now we are near the bottom! Why? Lack of funding for schools, lack of funding for teachers pay which is way too low, and lack of a decent retirement system for teachers. I am so saddened by this! Teachers and our kids deserve more! Thank you for what you do to help us all!
Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Mary Corcoran [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 12:39 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot
Subject: Public Testimony HB69C support

To Chair Senator Tobin, Vice Chair Senator Stevens and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. In general I support passage of HB69C. I am a retired teacher with experience in public schools—brick and mortar, charter and online. In addition, I am a mother and grandmother of Alaska school students K through University.

I question the responsibilities placed on school districts in Section 3(j). Districts have shed so many staff that could have done these tasks. If all that data must be all reported to the DEED, its website would be a logical, go-to storage site.

Does “measuring Student academic performance over time” in Section 4(a)(3) include any guidance/mandate? Is that left up to the District? Is academic performance the same as academic growth?

I support maximum local control over charter schools. The local school board must answer to their constituents and maintain control over their budgets.

I also support Correspondence study programs to be held accountable for measuring student performance similar to other public schools. I do not support raising correspondence students' funding beyond the .9 level. I do not look at this as funding a “whole child” but as funding for an education that does not entail the expenses faced by other public schools. Historically, this funding level has been raised and lowered and raised.

The schools clearly need a BSA boost in funding (not just one time) to make up for years of cuts. Once teachers and students have the resources they deserve, we can work on performance issues that remain to be addressed. Many other State agencies receive increases that help counter inflation etc. without having to pass standardized assessments. For example, why increase the Corrections budget if the recidivism rate does not go down? In addition, Legislators, the Governor and Commissioners received a notable wage increase without proving their effectiveness according to what standards?

It appears our children and those who are working hard to educate them are held hostage by those who do not truly respect public education. Some may forget that public schools must accept all students regardless of their readiness and ability. If we try to discount the bill of educating those students, we get what we pay for. We will all pay for that in the end.

Please pass HB69 out of committee and on the floor.

Thank you for your work and attention to this important funding.

Sincerely,
Mary Corcoran
Delta Junction
47+ year resident

Michael Mason

From: Mary Sullivan [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 1:07 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 task force, testimony

Dear Senators,

I'm writing regarding HB69 and the proposed task force which as it is currently written is entirely made up of legislators. This type of task force would lend itself to the political appetite of the day rather than providing expertise from outside stakeholders (perhaps correspondence administrators, homeschooling students or families, rural and urban and traditional school districts representation). A nonpolitical stakeholder task force would be beneficial for Alaska's education and accountability by informing reporting standards from those with both the relevant professional expertise as well as lived experiences with the programs to be impacted by policies enacted by such a task force. However, a task force entirely made up of legislators is likely to be swayed by paid lobbyists and interest groups and the politics of the day, rather than the constituents and experts in the thick of educating Alaskan students whether at home or public school.

My homeschooled child regularly referred to himself as a bad boy, stupid, and felt (and I'm quoting) something was wrong and broken with him when he attended public school. We attempted to utilize the special education system and private therapies to help our child thrive in public school; however, while in public school he not only trailed his peers with academics, but also with developmental and social skill milestones. He struggled to make or maintain friends and he was often in trouble.

Since bringing him home to school him at home, and being allowed the freedom to select curriculum that is centered on his interests and strengths, our son has blossomed in his self esteem and belief in his own brain's ability to learn and to build meaningful friendships. He now refers to his neurodiversity as his super power rather than feeling he is broken. Additionally he has exceeded state standards for his grade level.

Homeschooling strengthens public education. It doesn't undermine it. We can both support a thriving public education system and a thriving homeschool and correspondence school program. We already have much accountability and reporting embedded in existing homeschooling correspondence programs. Adding more reporting and bureaucracy to correspondence programs puts an undue burden on parents already taking on a tremendous task and responsibility (and honor and privilege) of educating their kids. We don't want to be told what curriculums to select or mandated to endure standardized testing which has been proven time and again to be a very poor measure of academic success or ability.

Rather than policing correspondence programs out of politics or fear, or setting homeschools up as enemies of public school, let's build a system where both correspondence students and public school students can thrive. All students deserve access to the education that best matches their needs. For many thousands of Alaskans, that is correspondence homeschooling.

Thank you.

Mary Wagner, MSW, CFRE
Mom of two homeschooled kids

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Matthew Blakeslee [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Urgent: Support Full \$1000 BSA Increase for Alaska's Schools

As you know, Alaska's public schools are facing a crisis.

HB 69 is already a major compromise that reduced the needed education funding from \$1808 per student to \$1000.

Please fight to maintain the \$1000 BSA in HB 69. \$1000 is the minimum that our students need. \$680 (BSA) is insufficient to meet the needs of our students, and will lead to increased class sizes, program cuts, and further deteriorating facilities.

We urge you to publicly support a minimum increase of \$1000 in the BSA. This level of funding is essential to allow our districts to limp along without further school closures and loss of treasured programs and experienced educators.

Anything less than a \$1000 increase will result in cuts and further damage to our education system.

Many families including mine are looking at opportunities to leave Alaska for regions that value education. Can Alaska afford to lose any more people?

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.
Sincerely,
Matt Blakeslee

Michael Mason

From: Matt Liston [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 5:12 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge your support for HB69, a critical bill that will directly impact teachers, students, and the overall quality of education in Alaska. As a 5th grade teacher in the Anchorage School District, I see firsthand how vital it is to maintain adequate staffing and resources in our schools.

I am deeply concerned that failure to pass HB69 will result in teacher layoffs and increased workloads for remaining educators. Beyond my teaching responsibilities, I run or assist with multiple after-school programs at my school, including ultimate frisbee, running club, pickleball club, basketball club, and student council. These programs provide essential opportunities for student growth, engagement, and well-being. However, if HB69 does not pass, the additional strain on teachers will force me—and many of my colleagues—to make difficult choices about continuing these programs.

Alaska already faces significant challenges in attracting and retaining qualified educators. Increasing demands while reducing support will only exacerbate this issue. It is imperative that we invest in our schools, our educators, and our students to ensure a strong future for our state.

I respectfully ask that you support HB69 and advocate for the necessary funding to keep our schools staffed and our students supported. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Matthew Liston
Concerned Teacher and Community Member

Michael Mason

From: Melanie Wahl [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 11:11 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69

Hello AK Senate,

My name is Melanie Wahl and I have two young girls enrolled in ASD. Rueby is 13 and attends Steller Secondary School and Vera is 10 and attends the Chinese Immersion program at Scenic Park Elementary.

* I plead with you to pass HB69 with a minimum of \$1000 in the BSA.

* Scenic Park will lose much needed teachers in the immersion program and be forced to combine 4th and 5th grade classes. This may not seem like a big deal....but it is! Schools can combine classes but it has to be a step approach to that type of model. My daughter will be in 5th grade next year and will be forced to learn a curriculum that she has already learned as we all know that if you teach 2 grade levels, it will need to be paced at the lowest level.

* Steller Secondary is slated to lose 3.4 teachers. Class sizes are ALREADY TOO BIG!

* My daughters both participated in the Battle of the Books for years. This program gives them a sense of pride and motivation to just READ books! This program will be cut if you don't pass the increased BSA.

* BOTH of my kiddos will lose out on after school sports if you don't pass the BSA increase!

* My daughter had a seizure two years ago at school and the full-time nurse stayed by her side and monitored her health until emergency services could get there. Part-time nurses SHOULD NOT be an option.

I thank you for your time and work on this bill. We know this is hard but our kids are worth it. We will be working hard again next year as this is not inflation proof. Urge your fellow legislators to pass an inflation-proof bill next year so we don't have to work on this issue every year.

Thanks again for your time and efforts!
Melanie Wahl

Michael Mason

From: Wilson, Melany L [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Written Testimony for Senate Education Committee

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Melany Wilson, and I'm a resident of Anchorage, a State of Alaska employee, and—most importantly—a parent of two elementary-aged children attending O'Malley Elementary, where they are enrolled in the French immersion program. I'm writing today to respectfully urge your support for House Bill 69 and to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by at least \$1,000 per student in the FY26 budget.

Our schools are at a critical point. Years of underfunding have created a system stretched too thin, resulting in larger class sizes, teacher burnout, and fewer resources for our children. Programs like the French immersion track at O'Malley, which has opened doors for global learning and cultural understanding, are at risk of being dismantled if the necessary funding isn't provided in a timely and adequate manner.

This is more than just about classrooms—it's about keeping communities strong and families in Alaska. Education is foundational to a thriving state. We need to be able to **recruit and retain talented educators**, many of whom require early hiring decisions and visa processing for the upcoming school year. That can't happen without solid funding commitments now.

Please hear the voices of parents, teachers, and students who depend on you to ensure our schools can not only survive—but succeed. Support HB 69, increase the BSA by at least \$1,000 per student, and help us preserve essential programs like immersion that make Anchorage and Alaska a place where families want to stay and grow.

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

Sincerely,

Melany Wilson
Parent, O'Malley Elementary
Anchorage, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: michal [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 9:03 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please increase school funding

Hi

I'm a dad of two Anchorage public school students, and I'm asking you to please increase school funding. Our schools are having budget problems, leading to increased class sizes and the possibility of cutting all middle school extracurricular activities. Please support our kids, our teachers, and our future.

School funding is my top priority as a voter, and I will make my voting decisions accordingly.

Thank you for your time.

Michal Stryszak

Anchorage, AK 99517

Michael Mason

From: Michael Teo [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:14 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB69

Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to support the passage of HB69 in the Senate. I am very concerned that education funding has fallen behind inflation and passage of this bill will help take a step towards resolving that. I have a job that allows me to live anywhere, but I have chosen to live in Alaska. I talk with coworkers that sometimes as about moving to Alaska and education funding is often discussed. They don't want to bring their kids (and their higher paying job) to Alaska when they are concerned that education is underfunded. Funding education with HB69 will help keep and attract families to Alaska.

I also recognize that HB69 has some components to combine the funding increase with policy changes. This means that different parts of government can get some of the changes that they want to see.

I feel the bill is the best of what is currently available to treat education as the priority it is and allow other features to be funded to produce better education outcomes. If funding is a concern, please consider ending the PFD and diverting those funds to education and other state needs. I do not support granting PFDs any more for a variety of reasons.

Please support HB69.

Sincerely,
Michael Teo
Anchorage 99501

Michael Mason

From: Michelle Nelson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Testimony for HB 69

Hello,

I am writing on behalf of our extraordinary children, who have moved around the world several times in support of their dad, who is an active-duty military officer. The eldest, Max, is eight years old and has moved five times and attended schools in three countries. We moved to Anchorage, Alaska from Belgium in June 2024. Imagine our delight when we found that the Anchorage School District provided a French-immersion program! The lottery system enabled us to send our boys to this school.

I drive an hour each day while working full-time to ensure our boys can receive this education at O'Malley Elementary School. It has helped ease the transition from living in a French-speaking region for the past three years to Alaska. As parents of children who did not choose a military lifestyle, we do our best to find ways to support them in each move, and this school has supported them during this transition beyond measure. The loss of language-immersion will require our boys to switch schools again, and I can tell you from experience how difficult that is on our military children.

Language immersion language programs are an amazing benefit to young children and provide a unique avenue to support military children arriving from around the world. I encourage the Senate Education Committee to support HB 69 that will increase the base student allocation by \$1,000, which the Anchorage School District has committed to use to reinstate language-immersion programs that will otherwise be lost.

Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Michelle Nelson
JBER, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Mike Bronson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 3:28 PM
To: sen.education.committee@akleg.gov; Senate Education; Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: Mike Bronson comments on HB 69

Comments in support of HB 69 for school funding to Senate Education Committee

Hi, I'm Mike Bronson. I'm a volunteer with the NAACP in Anchorage. My daughters went through public schools in Anchorage and recently graduated from West High.

I'm speaking in favor of HB 69 to increase the base student allocation. You can think of the increase as a downpayment toward a long-overdue debt to students. You also can think of raising the BSA as an important step for the legislature to comply with its education duty under the constitution.

Under the state constitution, you have to provide for funding for every child to have the opportunity to meet the state's performance standards in reading, writing, arithmetic and science. You're far behind in your duty because only a minority of Alaska's 130,000 students have had the chance to achieve to the state standards since 2012.

Instead, for a substantial majority of students to meet the standards, you'll have to be even more generous than HB 69 in the future. But the bill's funding this year is a step in the right direction.

Thank you.

Michael Mason

From: MICHAEL COONS [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:29 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Oppose HB 69

My name is Mike Coons from Wasilla and speaking for myself.

In in the strongest terms I oppose HB 69!

One. This bill was rammed through the house in one of the worse displays of backroom deals and next to zero input by the Republican Minority! In the interest of time, I won't go into all the violations of the rules of the House, much less decency, but suffice to say, this will go in the history books as the worse legislative farce of all time!

Two. This bill is about giving the Teachers Unions a pile of money, more money to administrative, while none going to teachers who are the tip of the spear!

Three. There is no fiscal note and the Democrat Majority have gladly indicated that it will be paid for out of the PFD! As bad as this Senate is on a 75/25 split vs what should be 50/50, last figure I heard was \$1400. HB 69 if passed will lower that to \$766, while lowering the amount left in the PF so that in the near future there will be none.

Fourth and most importantly, this has ZERO policy as to teaching standards so that the children of Alaska can read, write and do math prior to learning more advance math, learning the principles of science and the history of our nation and world! I saw yesterday that Baltimore Maryland had zero students who were able to do basic math. Other liberal/socialist States are not much better! Alaska is right in there with other liberal/socialist States! No thanks to this past few years of our legislature being taking over by liberal/socialists and RINO's that are all about spending other peoples money!

I hope that the Senate leadership does not pull the same stunt as the House did. If I was a betting man, I would not make any bets on that! If this passes out as is, without policy, that will give our children the skills they need, then I fully expect the Governor will Veto and I sure hope there is no way that a Veto override can be done!

Michael Mason

From: Miriam Roberts [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 11:58 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please Support HB 69

Dear Senate Education Committee Members,

I am unable to testify at the hearing today on HB 69, but I hope that you will support HB 69 to raise the BSA and inflation proof the funding.

We have two children enrolled in public school in Anchorage. Each year our school district is forced to cut funding and our kids lose out. We need to raise the BSA to adequately fund our children's education and help our schools make timely and informed decisions regarding their budgets.

Thank you,
Miriam Roberts
Anchorage, AK

Michael Mason

From: Misty Nelson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 4:50 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support of HB 69

My written testimony to the ASD School Board, passing along to you all:

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am a proud and dedicated Anchorage School District elementary librarian. I have served in this role for the past seven years at Lake Otis Elementary (16th year in Education, with the first 9 years being an elementary classroom teacher).

With the current ASD proposed budget, my position is slated to be reduced to 0.5 FTE. While I understand that difficult budget decisions must be made, I urge you to look beyond the numbers when considering cuts to library services. My understanding is that the decision to move schools to a 0.5 librarian allocation was based solely on whether a school has fewer than 300 students. However, this approach overlooks the significant impact that a full-time librarian has on fostering literacy and student success at the elementary level.

In a time when we are prioritizing literacy and working to improve reading scores (hello, Alaska Reads Act), cutting library services at the elementary level is a counterproductive move. At this stage, we have the crucial opportunity to instill a love of reading, provide students with access to diverse physical books, and offer essential prep time for our teaching staff. A full-time librarian is integral in supporting these efforts.

Moreover, with the Board's goal of attracting and retaining quality educators, job insecurity created by these budget cuts is undermining that very objective. Educators—especially librarians—are key in creating a stable, positive school culture. Reducing positions without considering their long-term impact does not help our schools or students.

I recognize the challenges posed by our current fiscal situation, but reducing the role of elementary librarians is not the solution. Whether I work with two classes or five in a day, the time and dedication required to curate, maintain, and organize a library cannot be understated. Beyond this, I serve in numerous other roles within our school community, including being a trusted resource for students and colleagues alike. The connections I build with my students, and the impact I have on their learning journey, is what makes the library such a special and essential space.

Additionally, the idea of splitting a librarian between two schools would present significant challenges, not just logistically, but also in terms of maintaining the meaningful connections that are so central to the library's role in the school community. These connections are vital for both student success and fostering a love for reading.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will weigh the full impact of these cuts and work towards a solution that better supports the needs of our students and the educators who serve them.

Please support raising the BSA. We need this for our kids; for Alaska's future.

Sincerely,
Misty Nelson

Elementary Librarian



Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Molly Marvel [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 8:02 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Hello!

I am not sure if you are still taking testimony, but if so here is mine:

HB 69 Alaska Education and BSA Increase

Hello!

My name is Molly Keyse and I am a public school Special Education teacher in Kodiak, Alaska. My parents (both teachers), brother and I moved to Alaska when I was in middle school, in the mid-nineties. At the time, Alaska was the pinnacle of teaching in the United States. We had competitive salaries and an unbeatable retirement and pension plan. I went to high school and college in Alaska and my husband and I have chosen to raise our own children here. We have chosen to do this because we love Alaska. We love the people, the communities, the access to wilderness, the scenery, and the smaller population sizes.

Due to stagnant education funding and decreased enrollment in the state, Kodiak, as well as many other communities around the state, have faced the unthinkable. Schools are closing everywhere. Have you had the opportunity to witness the entire process of a school closure? I am just now in the midst of the process, and let me tell you, the amount of stress that has been put on our community leaders, our board of education, our administration, our teachers, our families and our children has been immense. Kodiak has only had to close one school so far and it has cracked our community. We will recover from this and become stronger, but I would not wish this process on anyone.

Kodiak's elementary school closure, will mean that our elementary schools will now face larger class sizes with fewer staff and resources to support them. While I understand the Governor's push for charter schools, no charter schools exist or are planned for Kodiak at this time. Additionally, charter schools do not typically provide viable options for students who experience low-incidence disabilities. Public schools do provide these services, which are required by law, and (when funded appropriately) do an amazing job at it! Public schools are the heart of any community and without proper funding they will die. In many cases, this means their community will die with them.

I urge you to please vote to approve HB 69 and make the first meaningful increase to Alaska education in over a decade. This would show the people of Alaska that education matters, our children matter and Alaskan communities matter.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Again, please vote to approve HB 69 and any other bill that supports students, teachers, communities and schools.

Molly Keyse
[REDACTED]
Kodiak, AK

Michael Mason

From: Molly Webb [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 10:08 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Education Funding Crisis

To Whom it May concern,

My name is Molly Webb, and I am a concerned parent of children enrolled in the Chinese Immersion program at Scenic Park Elementary and transitioning to Begich Middle School next year. I am here to urge you to keep BSA at MINIMUM at \$1,000 so that my student can continue to participate in the Chinese Immersion program in addition to Ignite, sports, Battle of the Books and so many other activities. Ignite has been an amazing addition to the Chinese program and motivates my child in school and looks forward to those days.

Immersion programs are at serious risk due to proposed reductions in staffing. Under the current budget proposal, elementary immersion programs will lose 12 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

Eliminating these positions could permanently dismantle immersion programs, disrupting my student's learning paths and negatively affecting future enrollment.

ASD has one of the most diverse and comprehensive immersion programs in the nation, with 2,848 students enrolled in Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and Yup'ik programs.

These programs enhance student achievement, cultural understanding, and career readiness.

They are also a major asset to the district, attracting families from military, oil, medical, and other

industries who value high-quality education opportunities.



Thank you for time and consideration,
Molly Webb

Michael Mason

From: Mukkove Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 10:02 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: No on HB 69

These are 3 reasons HB 69 is a no for me.

1. The words "within district" would eliminate school choice that serves families very well right now.
2. If all the homeschooling students are forced to move to the local school district there will be tremendous disruption and all families will suffer from the confusion and staff overload.
3. There is no plan or accountability for where the extra money would come from or how we would know the extra money is actually providing better education.

Mukkove Johnson

Michael Mason

From: Nate Beck [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 11:09 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Senate support for Alaska's future

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 69, which proposes a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska's public schools. This legislation is crucial for addressing the immediate financial challenges our educational institutions face and ensuring that our students receive the quality education they deserve.

Inflation has significantly eroded the purchasing power of our schools, leading to larger class sizes, reduced programs, and difficulties in retaining qualified educators. The BSA has remained stagnant for years, failing to keep pace with rising costs. HB 69's proposed \$1,000 increase is a necessary step to stabilize our schools and provide them with the resources needed to deliver quality education. This funding needs to be approved and time is of the essence in order to avoid additional detrimental impacts on Alaska's education system, its families, and its future workforce.

Governor Dunleavy has introduced an omnibus education bill focusing on various reforms, including expanding correspondence and vocational programs, providing reading incentive grants, and allowing open enrollment statewide. While these initiatives aim to improve educational outcomes, they do not directly address the urgent funding needs that our schools currently face.

The proposed reforms, such as incentive grants for reading proficiency, are performance-based and may not provide immediate relief to underfunded schools struggling with basic operational costs. Additionally, expanding programs without first securing adequate foundational funding could strain already limited resources, making it challenging for schools to implement new initiatives effectively.

It is important to acknowledge the likelihood of a gubernatorial veto, as occurred last year when Governor Dunleavy vetoed a bipartisan education funding increase. To prevent a similar outcome, I urge you and your colleagues in the Senate to not only support HB 69 but also prepare to override any potential veto. This decisive action would demonstrate the Legislature's commitment to prioritizing education and addressing the immediate needs of our schools. While the budget deficit is daunting, cuts to education cannot be the solution.

Investing in our education system is investing in Alaska's future. While long-term reforms are important, they must be built on a foundation of adequately funded schools. I respectfully request that you support HB 69 and stand ready to override any veto that may hinder this critical funding increase.

On a personal note, my family loves Alaska and is committed to raising our family here and supporting the local community and economy. However, we cannot afford stay in Alaska and sacrifice our children's future if the state legislature does not commit to investing in the next generation of Alaskans. We know many other families who feel the same way.

Thank you for your dedication to serving the people of Alaska and for your attention to this pressing issue.

Sincerely,

Nate Beck
Vice President, Koniag Energy & Water

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516

[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Neil [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 2:38 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support Full \$1000 BSA Increase for Alaska's Schools

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am a lifelong Alaskan, educated in Anchorage public schools, a former high school teacher, and the father of one girl currently in first grade and two starting kindergarten next year in the Anchorage School District.

I have watched the discussions about raising the BSA with dismay and sadness. I have watched our local schools gutted as we've lost talented, experienced teachers, as the district is unable to provide prospective teachers the salary, stability, and support needed to entice them to work at ASD. My daughter is being taught by an unlicensed long-term sub. This is not acceptable.

I have considered going back to teach after working 15 years in state government and the private sector--experience that would be valuable to my students and the district. While I am willing to take a pay cut to teach, and I'm in TRS Tier 2 so I'm not concerned about retirement, I am not willing to sacrifice job security since I'm not independently wealthy.

Although the \$1000 BSA increase wouldn't bring schools to the funding I experienced as a student or teacher, anything less will be bad for Alaska's kids and families. If I could, I'd happily forego all of our PFDs to maintain school spending. It is that important.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,
Neil McMahon

Michael Mason

From: Nicholas Czarnecki [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 10:05 PM
To: Senate Education; Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: HB 69

Dear Senate Education Committee,

Please support a \$1000 increase to the base student allocation. This increase is needed to make up for 15 years of losses to inflation. I am in full support of lowering the PFD in order to fund this increase to the base student allocation. I do not support any amendments that would limit school district control.

I am a parent with a daughter in 2nd grade at Bear Valley Elementary in Anchorage. When my family relocated to Alaska nine years ago one of the things that drew us here were the public schools, which at the time were well regarded. Since 2018, the decline in Alaska's schools has been striking. We had hoped to remain in Alaska long term but now we're seriously considering relocating to a state that is investing in schools and our future. I know many other families have already left.

I appreciate the hard work that you all do for the state and thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Nick Czarnecki

South Anchorage resident and parent

Michael Mason

From: Olga Pal [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:10 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Dear Alaskan Senators:

My name is Olga Palko.

I live in the Mat-Su Valley. My family has worked with Cyberlynx. I am concerned that HB 69 is supporting "open enrollment WITHIN districts." This would greatly limit our choice to utilize the educational resources of other state correspondence school options such as IDEA, Cyberlynx, Denali Peak, or Raven which are headquartered in other districts. The removal of options is NOT in the best interests of our students. Please take the time to consider the full impact of your vote on this matter and vote NO to preserve options for families which will produce the best educational outcomes for Alaska's children.

Thank you, Olga Palko

Michael Mason

From: Patricia Petrivelli [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:16 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Senate Education Committee Members:

I am in support of HB 69. I am currently listening to the public testimony on this bill (4:07 pm). Some have been critical of less funding for charter schools and home schooling. I think that this bill presents a somewhat acceptable compromise as those positions as promoted by the Governor. I have a comment as to providing comparable funding for charter schools, that should only be provided when they are able to accept all and any students as public schools are required, currently when charter school students fail they are sent to public schools and there are many other instances to point out that the charter schools are selecting the top students with the least disabilities and then others are able to point to their success.

I think that this version with an increase in base funding per student would help to meet the needs of public schools which have not been addressed by the lack of increases to meet inflationary costs for too many years. Please pass this bill and ensure that it is veto proof for the sake of the students in public schools who are guaranteed an education as provided for in the state constitution!

Patricia Petrivelli
[REDACTED]
Anchorage AK 99508
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 8:56 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: MMS Message from a GCI Subscriber

Message: I would like very much to see the Alaska Senate support the Education Bill HB 69. As a proud retired teacher, I remember when our Peninsula schools/Alaska schools were known to be ! . At a school board meeting in The mid 1980's, the KPBSD's personnel director announced that their office was receiving over 200 applicants for every teaching position! 200! Now, we started school last year with 50+ positions (many in special education) open! Not filled ! No teachers. This is not acceptable for our great State of Alaska.. We need your help to find a way to support our public schools.,No one likes a state tax or school tax but.. the alternative is to watch our educational system continue to suffer.. By the way...as a retired volunteer in our local schools, I can attest to how hard the staff is working "to keep up" with the loss of funding! Wrapping up: our students are not failing.. KPBSD students' STAR test scores were up 20% in reading and math scores.. We are proud of our students and staff. As a 50-year plus resident of this state.. We must do better! How can we help? Thank you listening, and God Bless you for serving our great state. Patti Truesdell [REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Paula Addis [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:18 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Please increase the BSA by at least \$1,000. Our children deserve our support.
Paula Addis
Fairbanks
99709

Michael Mason

From: Rachel Blakeslee [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:23 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Testimony Submission for the Record_HB69_Blakeslee

Dear members of the Senate education committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Rachel Blakeslee and I'm the parent of an ASD kindergartner, resident in Senate District ____, and a nonprofit executive serving public schools across the Anchorage, Chugach, and Kenai Peninsula Borough School Districts. As you discuss the state's operating budget, I urge you to pass a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to support public education in Alaska. A \$1,000 is the absolute bare minimum that our schools can survive with. Anything less will result in massive cuts that will cause irreparable harm to our children, families, and communities.

For over a decade, we have watched our public schools be systematically stripped of resources as state funding has not kept pace with rising costs. Since 2011, the BSA has lost 25% of its buying power. Schools are struggling to recruit and retain teachers—this year began with a record 598 teacher vacancies, more than double the number in 2020. We must invest in our future before it's too late.

We are at a breaking point. Underfunded schools are driving our families away, accelerating economic decline and increasing our reliance on a nonresident workforce, which hit a record 24% in 2023. *Our family is one of the many considering leaving.* When the cost of living here is high and the public schools we rely upon are crumbling, staying in Alaska becomes untenable.

This is a self-fulfilling crisis. Schools have been pushed to the brink, and rather than restoring resources, some demand "performance" first. But you cannot starve a system and then blame it for failing. The data is clear: when schools are well-funded, outcomes improve. Schools can't innovate when they can't balance their budgets. They can't attract great teachers when they can't offer competitive salaries. They can't maintain community confidence when they're forced to close schools.

If we want a thriving state, we must give families a reason to stay. That begins with strong, well-funded public schools. I strongly ask that you pass HB69 with a \$1,000 BSA increase for the future for our students, our workforce, and our state.

Respectfully,

Rachel Blakeslee

Michael Mason

From: Rachel Munger [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 12:30 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rachel Munger and I am a parent of a student in the Anchorage School District as well as a constituent in West Anchorage.

I was once an employee of ASD and moved back to Alaska to raise my child here. I believe in the quality of our schools but they need additional funding by raising the BSA. Put Alaskans first!

Rachel Munger

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Rachel Samuelson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 9:53 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: In strong favor of HB 69 and increased funding for our schools

Senate Education Committee,

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

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

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

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

The BSA has remained stagnant for over a decade despite rising costs. School leaders and legislators from both parties have called for a permanent increase to the BSA.

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

What Alaska Actually Needs:

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

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

Sincerely,

Rachel Samuelon



Anchorage, AK 99502

Michael Mason

From: Rebecca Bezdecny [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 8:16 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: HB 69 Written Testimony

Hello,

I am writing in support of HB 69 now in front of the Senate.

I support a BSA of \$1000.

Why? I value continuity of quality teaching in our schools.

My spouse works at a local school and three years ago, he mentored a young new teacher. In the following years, my spouse and that teacher have worked together to teach a solid biology program. In fact, this year, their school has *seven* of twelve total finalists in the KPBSD Caring For the Kenai competition. But next year, it looks like my spouse's coworker will more than likely be laid off due to flat funding of our schools.

One of the founders of the Caring For the Kenai competition asked my spouse to speak at next year's in-service for science teachers about the competition to share tips about their school's success. Simply put, their school's success lies in the science department partnering with the language arts department to help create finalist-worthy projects. One of the language arts teachers in particular has been integral in this process. However, that teacher too is facing being pink-slipped next school year as well. Both of these potential layoffs are a blow to students and their education.

I'm just trying to put some real-life stories to what flat funding is going to do if we don't raise the BSA to what is proposed in HB 69. We can't continue hemorrhaging quality teachers because the BSA can't keep up with inflation.

Thank you for reading my concerns.

Rebecca Bezdecny
Kenai, AK

Michael Mason

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 5:26 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please raise the BSA

Dear Senators,

I am writing to urge you to support an increase to the Base Student Allocation for Alaskan public schools at the \$1000 or above level to keep pace with inflation and avoid drastic cuts to services in the coming years.

I care about this as a parent to continue to have the class sizes, course selections, and activities that keep my child successful, safe, and excited about school.

I care about this as a community member knowing the schools are safe places for kids and the place where today's kids become tomorrow's leaders and community members. I want them to have the teachers, support staff, and services that keep them healthy and learning.

I care about this as a teacher so we don't lose our amazing young teaching talent and have class sizes that still allow us to give kids the individual attention they need.

We are doing good work in public schools. We have great kids! Support them please!

Sincerely,
Rebecca King
Anchorage, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Renee Saunders [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 2:10 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 - vote NO!

Dear Alaska Senators:

My name is Renee Saunders and I am writing to oppose the passing of HB 69 in its current form. I live in the Mat-Su Valley. My family has worked with and currently works with CYBERLYNX. I am concerned that HB 69 is supporting “open enrollment WITHIN DISTRICTS.” This would greatly limit our choice to utilize the educational resources of other state correspondence school options such as IDEA, Cyberlynx, Denali Peak, or Raven which are headquartered in other districts. The removal of options is NOT in the best interests of our students. Please take time to consider the full impact of your vote on this matter and vote NO to preserve options for families which will produce the best educational outcomes for Alaska’s children.

As written, this bill would limit Mat-Su families to a single option: Mat-Su Central. Other Alaskan students could potentially be left with no option at all. While Mat-Su Central with its large, new building may be a great choice for some, it should not be the only choice, as other options intended to serve students across the state have been operating in this capacity for a longer time and often at a lower cost to taxpayers. Mat-Su Central serves over 2,300 students and built a 45,000 square foot facility at a cost of over \$24 million, at a time when there is a \$22 million deficit in education funds. If Mat-Su Central becomes the only option, a change in the programs offered at any time could reduce options to zero under the current bill.

I also feel that the bill is too vague and does not address how the bill will be funded. Please vote NO.

Sincerely,
RENEE SAUNDERS

Michael Mason

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:06 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Vote YES on HB-69 The Education Funding Bill

Dear Legislators,

I am fully in support of HB-69 The Education Funding Bill and I ask you to support and vote YES on this bill.

Our students are counting on us.

Thank you,

Robin Dale Ford
Fairbanks, AK 99710

Michael Mason

From: Rozlyn Grady [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 7:45 PM
To: Senate Education; sen.education.committee@akleg.gov; Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: Urgent Support for HB 69 – Fully Funding Alaska’s Public Schools

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I write to you today as a parent, an educator, a community leader, the President of the Alaska Coalition of BIPOC Educators (ACBE), and the Education Chair of the NAACP Tri-State Area Conference and Anchorage Branch but most importantly, as an advocate for the children and families of Alaska.

Our schools are at a breaking point. Across Alaska, teachers are leaving, class sizes are growing, and students are struggling to receive the quality education they deserve. House Bill 69 offers a long-overdue and necessary increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA), which has remained stagnant for years while costs have soared. The failure to adequately fund our schools is not just an Anchorage problem it is an Alaska problem.

As a parent, I see firsthand the gaps that underfunding creates: outdated materials, overworked teachers, and diminished resources that limit opportunities for students.

As a community leader, I work with families across the state who are deeply concerned about the declining quality of education and its long-term effects on Alaska’s future workforce.

As an education chair, I hear from educators who are forced to do more with less, leading to burnout, staffing shortages, and decreased student support.

As the President of ACBE, I must also stress that chronic underfunding disproportionately harms students of color, students with disabilities, and those in rural communities deepening existing inequities and limiting access to essential services.

If we truly believe in an equitable and thriving Alaska, we cannot continue to ask our schools to operate on a budget that does not reflect the needs of our students. We must fully fund public education. HB 69 is not a request it is a necessity.

I urge this committee to pass HB 69 without delay and ensure that every Alaskan child has access to the high-quality education they deserve. Our students cannot afford another year of inaction.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Alaska's future. I look forward to seeing you take bold action to support our schools.

Sincerely,

Rozlyn Grady-Wyche

President, Alaska Coalition of BIPOC Educators

Education Chair, NAACP Tri-State Area Conference & NAACP Anchorage Branch

Family Engagement Chair, Alaska PTA

Special Education Resource Teacher

Michael Mason

From: Franklin_Samantha [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 12:51 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: The need for an increased BSA

Hello, my name is Samantha Franklin, and I am an elementary teacher in Anchorage School District at Denali Montessori Elementary School. I wanted to reach out and share some of my concerns regarding the desperate need for an increase in our state's BSA.

I teach a combined class of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students. If we do not receive this necessary BSA increase, my numbers will jump from 23 to at least 30 students in my classroom - an insane number to even think about. Not only will this make it nearly impossible to teach everything that is required in the curriculum throughout the entire year, but it will also give me much less time to work with students on other social skills such as apologizing/making amends, sharing, discussing emotions, using appropriate tools/exercises to calm down, etc. On top of this, if you ask **any** parent of a 1st grade child, they would, without a doubt, be upset at the thought of their child swimming in a classroom of 30 kids with 1 teacher who is trying not to drown in the behaviors and curriculum. The belief that 30 young children in 1 room with 1 adult can all learn at the same time is false and absolutely asinine. This will result in an increase in learning deficits and an increase in adverse classroom behaviors which will not give us the learning outcomes that ASD is looking for!

In addition to this issue, I think it's disgusting that we have to have these conversations at our bi-weekly staff meetings while we have coworkers who are being displaced and STILL do not know if they have a job next year. How can we make informed decisions for our students when we don't even know what our staffing situation will be in the coming year?

If ASD wants their students to learn and be successful in their everyday lives, then it is absolutely imperative that we increase our BSA and keep our teachers at our schools. Without more money for each student and without our teachers, you will do an incredible disservice to the students in this school district and the ASD community overall.

RAISE THE BSA!

Sincerely,
Samantha Franklin
Denali Montessori Elementary School

Michael Mason

From: Sandra Garity [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69

Please support HB 69.

I have attended our School District's meetings and the funding to the schools is a dire situation.

I ask you to support the bill and the children , teachers and school buildings of our state.

Please support HB69.

Thank you

Sandra Garity

Homer, AK

Michael Mason

From: Sandy Blomfield [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Fiscal Irresponsibility in raising the BSA while the Education dept is going through a restructure!

Senators,

Please be fiscally responsible in funding Alaskan students. There needs to be ACCOUNTABILITY and obviously raising the BSA hasn't worked in the past.

I propose NO INCREASE in funding until there is accountability attached and school choice programs in place.

Let's fix education!!!

Thank you for your consideration from citizens who vote!

Sincerely,

Sandy

Michael Mason

From: Sandy Harper [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:11 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Financial Support for our schools and teachers is crucial for the state of Alaska to be a good

place to live and to nurture and provide opportunities for creative innovative citizens
who will then contribute to a positive future for everyone.

Thanks for adding my voice of support!

Sandy Harper
1110 W 6th Ave
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Sarah Harrington [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 8:07 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support HB 69 to increase BSA

Firstly, thank you to the committee for their attention and time to support Alaska's kids.

I'm writing to ask you to **support House Bill 69** to increase the base student allocation in Alaska's public schools.

I was lucky to go through the public education system when funding was high and resources were abundant. My experience was overwhelmingly positive, and I have grown into a life long learner who has contributed meaningfully to my community thanks to high quality public education.

My children are not so lucky. They are immersed in environments where staff are stressed and underpaid. School resources are insufficient. School feels more like a punishment than an opportunity, where they struggle daily to receive adequate attention and supports.

Our children are the future of our communities. Please give them hope for a bright future, give families reasons to stay in Alaska, and raise BSA which is dreadfully overdue.

Quyanaa,

Sarah Harrington

Dear Members of the Education Committee, Members of the Alaska Legislature, and Governor Dunleavy,

On behalf of the Paul Banks Site Council, I wanted to share my perspective as a teacher. Working in title 1 public schools is a passion of mine. All kids deserve to come to a welcoming school full of engaging learning opportunities that are differentiated to their needs. To make this happen public schools need funding that reflects inflation. In my current Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, we are bracing for more cuts. These cuts will affect the quality of education students receive. When I was a child, I was a student who came to school in desperate need of love, social skills, food and knowledge. I'm grateful for the support I received and strive to support kids now that I am a kindergarten teacher.

Our district has put out three funding scenarios for our schools which are dependent on state funding. Scenario one is an increase of \$340 to the BSA, scenario two is an increase of \$680 to the BSA and scenario 3 is an increase of \$1,000 to the BSA. Even with an increase of 1,000 to the BSA there will still be hardship put on students.

In all three scenarios students are losing access to school counselors. This means loss of learning time for all students due to the need for classroom teachers to pause learning in order care for individual student needs. This means teachers will sometimes be giving up their lunch time and prep time to care for hurting/struggling students. Many things happen in children's lives. For example: they lose parents, experience divorce, have a parent put into jail, experience violence, sexual assault and so on. Teachers currently care for their students in most cases on their own. However, with these big life events it really helps to have a trained counselor for them. It also helps to have counselors to run groups that teach specific social skills that are needed. Brain research shows that to learn you must feel safe and your basic needs need to be met.

In all three budget scenarios my district is also cutting quest programs. These programs are for students who excel above grade level. As a classroom teacher this creates a big challenge. In my specific scenario I teach kindergarten. Some students begin the year with no knowledge of any letters or sounds, some start with knowing all the letters and sounds, some start reading basic words, and a few start reading at a first or second grade level. Differentiation is part of the job. However, when students are far above the class it becomes almost impossible to consistently challenge them in meaningful ways. That's

where quest comes in. Students can leave for blocks of time to learn more in depth concepts and be challenged in other ways. This allows the classroom teacher to work with students on grade appropriate content.

In all three budget scenarios my district is cutting 10% of school supply money. Teachers currently spend their own money on school supplies for students. This will mean an increased amount spent. Teachers do this because we care about our students. However, it is inappropriate that it is needed.

Please fund education to the best of your ability. Those of us in the trenches are begging for support. We work to serve students to the best of our ability.

Thank You,

Ms. Sarah Lynn Jones

Michael Mason

From: Sarah Morehouse [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 8:30 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please support HB 69

To whom it may concern,

I am a long-time Alaska resident, mother and healthcare worker. The lack of increase of funding to public schools is alarming and some may argue unconstitutional. We have all seen the impact of inflation on our household budgets. There is no way that schools should be expected to continue to function without an increase in budget since 2017. Our children and public schools should be some of our greatest assets and resources in the state. If you don't support schools, there will be a continued "brain drain" from the state. It is getting increasingly more difficult to recruit qualified healthcare professionals to Alaska. Poorly funded public schools are a major reason. Almost daily I consider moving out of the state due to the lack of support for our schools. Please invest in our children, our state and our future. Please support HB 69.

Sincerely,
Sarah Morehouse
Nurse Practitioner
Mom of 2 Anchorage School District 5th graders

Michael Mason

From: Scott Crass [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 1:45 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Support for HB69 and public education funding.

Members of the Alaska Senate Education Committee,

I am writing today in my personal capacity, and these comments do not represent any body of which I am a member.

I urge you to support HB69 and provide a permanent increase to the BSA. Our schools here in Fairbanks are in dire straits with closures and ballooning class sizes; All while facing difficulty with recruitment and retention of teachers. \$1000 will not close our funding gap, I would advise you to retain the additional funding in years two and three to make schools whole for inflation.

It is unconscionable that we continue to starve schools all while providing tax rebates and loopholes to oil companies. Stand up for working class families and fund public education. Fulfill your oath to the constitution of the State of Alaska and provide education to all of the children of this great State.

Thank you for your service,
Scott Crass
Fairbanks, Ak

Michael Mason

From: Sean Campbell [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 10:45 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 Testimony

Good morning,

Please see the text below from our Site Council concerning HB 69.

Thank you.

Dear Members of the Education Committee, Members of the Alaska Legislature, and Governor Dunleavy,

On behalf of the Site Council of Paul Banks Elementary School, we are writing to express our strong support for HB 69 and urge you to vote in favor of this crucial legislation. As outlined in our state constitution, funding Alaska’s public school system is a fundamental duty, and with the vast majority of students in Alaska attending public schools, it’s critical that we ensure adequate funding to meet their needs. Currently, the funding levels are not keeping pace with inflation, which threatens the quality of education our students receive.

While the proposed \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) in HB 69 is a step in the right direction, our district is still facing a nearly \$17 million budget deficit. As a result, even with this increase, we will be forced to make painful cuts, including the elimination of elementary school counselors, eliminating in the QUEST program, reducing the number of days school secretaries and special education paraprofessionals work. These cuts will directly impact our students and undermine their educational experience.

We strongly urge you to support HB 69 and continue to advocate for increased investment in Alaska’s education system to ensure that all students have access to the resources and opportunities they deserve.

Sincerely,

Paul Banks Elementary Site Council

Sean Campbell
Paul Banks Elementary School Principal
[REDACTED]



Michael Mason

From: Stacey Dixson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 6:02 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Why are we under-funding education in a state with such resource abundance?

Dear Senator Tobin and members of the Committee,

I'm writing today to express urgent support for HB 69, with a minimum increase to the BSA of \$1000 and an annual adjustment that matches the rate of inflation.

This is the least we can do to keep Alaska's schools functional. This is the least we can do to hire and retain enough well-qualified teachers to reduce class sizes to something manageable. This is the least we can do to provide the basic school supplies needed in each classroom, keep the lights and heat on, provide adequate programming and supports for exceptional children, retain our incredibly successful language immersion programs, and most of all, restore the confidence of families who have given up on the government to **do the right thing**. Educators in schools are doing superhuman work in overcrowded classrooms, without the support and resources they need to see students succeed. Parents and PTAs are showing up constantly to fill in critical gaps that schools would otherwise go without. For a state that is incredibly resource-rich, I fail to understand why the government chooses to fund education with a scarcity mindset rather than fulfilling their obligation to our children - Alaska's most valuable resource. Alaska now ranks 49th in Why is the state of Alaska giving tax breaks to oil companies, when we cannot adequately fund our schools? As a non-native Alaskan who came here to plant roots, this business model continues to baffle me.

If the legislature and the governor continue to demonstrate that funding education is not a priority in this state, oil companies, healthcare conglomerates, transportation companies and tourism operators will no longer be able to recruit or retain skilled workers to fill critical roles that move Alaska forward. Teachers will burn out and we will have no one left to replace them. College graduates will find employment and raise their families elsewhere. Families will not stay in a state without decent education opportunities for their kids. Industries that once thrived in Alaska will die. Ultimately, when our kids and our schools lose, the state of Alaska loses.

Please do the right thing for our kids and our state. Please help Alaska to again become a destination that is desirable for families and companies. Please fund HB 69, increasing the BSA by at least \$1000.

Thank you,
Stacey Dixson
Parent of two elementary students in the Anchorage School District

Michael Mason

From: S C [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 2:42 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please pass the \$1000 BSA

I'm writing in support of permanently raising the BSA to \$1000 . The public schools in Alaska are facing a crisis in funding, which negatively impacts a number of aspects of good society. I know that skilled and talented workers are leaving the state due to fear of the demise of public education for their children. And I don't feel confident recruiting other skilled workers into the state when they ask me about the future of public education in the state of Alaska. If you want a strong Alaska, you need to support our future--our children, and the educators that dedicate their lives to teaching them.

Dr. Stephanie Chen

Michael Mason

From: Stephen Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 12:35 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69: EDUCATION FUNDING: INCREASE BSA

Dear Senators Tobin (chair), Stevens, Bjorkman, Kiehl, and Cronk,

As you as a committee, and your fellow members of the Senate consider this legislation, I urge you to increase the BSA back to \$1808 or at a minimum maintain the current amount of \$1000. Any lesser amount is a disservice to our children/youth, the professionals at all levels who serve them, and all Alaskans. We all are relying on them to help lead us and Alaska's growth in the future.

Alaska is indeed facing challenges on several fronts...economic growth, reduced revenues (oil, federal, etc.), climate changes and workforce. If Alaska is to not just weather, but survive these challenges and be stronger as a result, there must be the requisite investment in the education of our younger and future generations. The funding for Alaska's schools and our education system as a whole has been not only unstable and underfunded for years.

This has led to career Alaska professionals leaving their profession early or leaving our state completely, brain drain. Furthermore, it has led to higher teacher/student ratios, programs being reduced or eliminated, children/youth experiencing special needs not receiving the full inclusive education and supports to which they are entitled, and the degradation of school facilities and infrastructure.

The result are profound negative impacts to our children/youth, the future of Alaska AND the ability to recruit and retain a professional, skilled, and competent workforce across all employment sectors in our State.

HB69 as originally introduced included a BSA of \$1808. This was one critical piece required to not just maintain, but rebuild the education system for our children and the growth of Alaska. The House passed a version that reduced that amount to a base student allocation of \$1000.

I urge you to increase the BSA back to \$1808 or at a minimum maintain the current amount of \$1000.

Thank you for your consideration and public service.

Steve Williams (Anchorage, AK)

Michael Mason

From: Sue Rennolds [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:56 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Public Testimony

Hello,

I urge you to please fully fund education in our beautiful state. We have reached a point of crisis, and cannot afford to shortchange the education and future of our children. Even at this amount, programs and positions will be cut. Young, driven teachers will leave. The future of education in Alaska will be compromised.

It is time to start focusing on our strengths and opportunities, instead of focusing on the limitations of education within our state. We fund education below the national average when all aspects are considered (source: UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research) We cannot afford to rely solely on oil revenue to provide for the future of the state. We need to utilize other funding opportunities, such as corporate tax and income tax. Too much is at stake!

I am an Alaskan resident for almost 17 years and my husband is a lifelong Alaskan. We are raising our first grader in Homer and would like to spend many more years here. Other states are prioritizing education, and while we would very much prefer to live here, the future of our child is too important to jeopardize with inadequate educational opportunities and resources.

Thank you,

Susan Rennolds
[REDACTED]
Homer, AK 99603
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: susan ruddy [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:58 PM
To: Senate Education
Cc: Galvin Alice
Subject: HB69

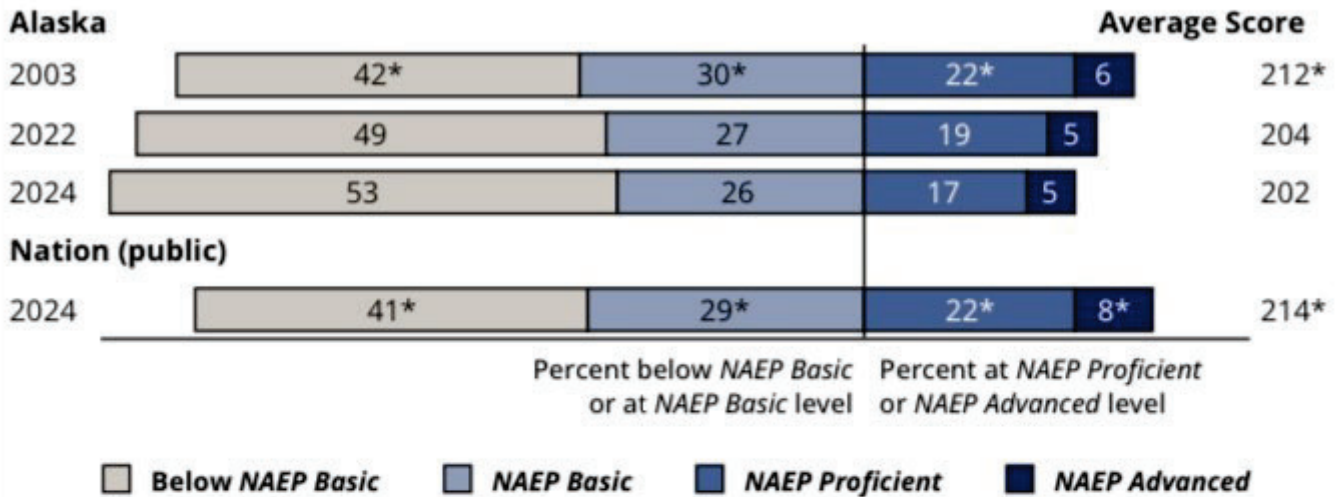
Please pass HB69! We are losing population, and poor educational opportunities are part of the reason. I have lived in and loved Alaska for over 60 years, but I would not move here now if I had young children. I also would not open a business here today because I might well have to recruit educated employees from Outside. And they would not want to come to Alaska if they had kids!

It is devastating to see results like this:

2024 READING STATE SNAPSHOT REPORT

ALASKA ■ GRADE 4 ■ PUBLIC SCHOOLS

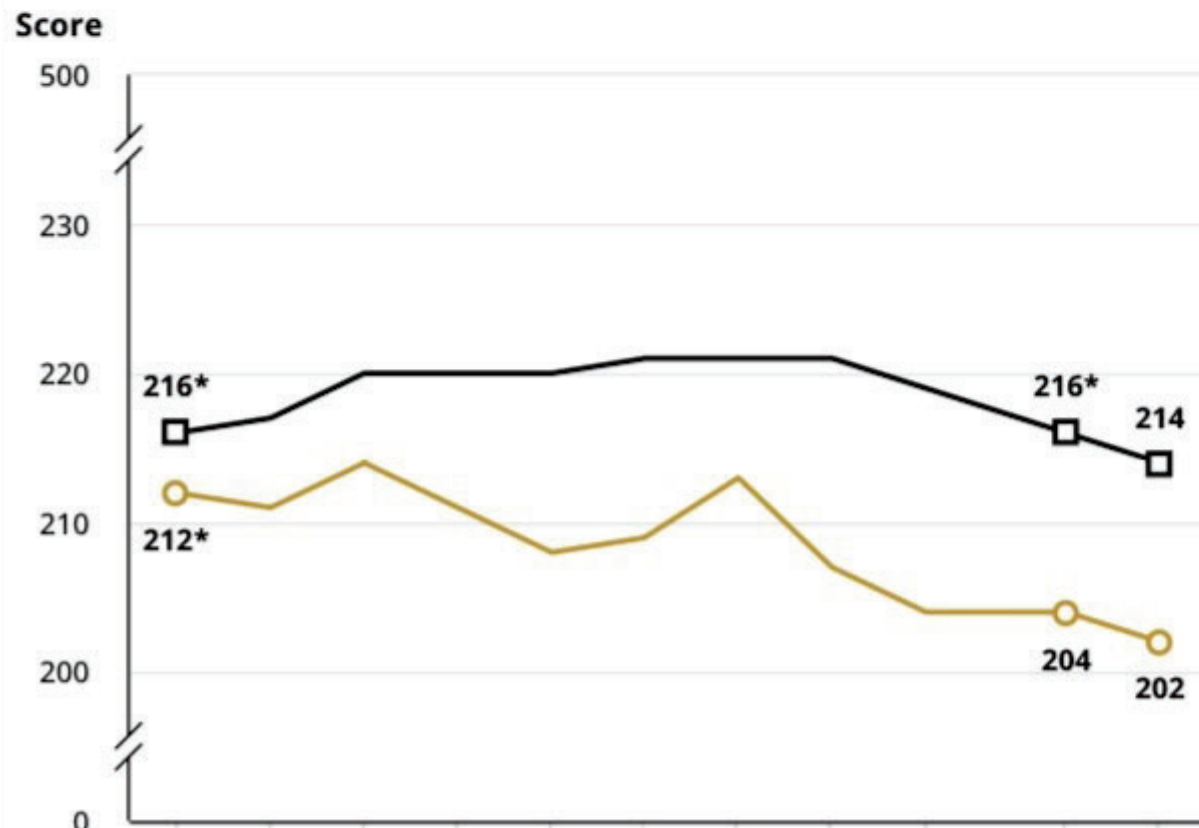
NAEP ACHIEVEMENT-LEVEL PERCENTAGES AND AVERAGE SCORE RESULTS



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from the state's results in 2024. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

AVERAGE SCORES FOR STATE/JURISDICTION AND THE NATION (PUBLIC)



You have the power to change these numbers. Please do so!

Sincerely,
Susan Ruddy

Susan Ruddy



Michael Mason

From: Susan Reed [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:34 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Public education funding

Please do all you can to raise the BSA now - do not delay. . Due to many years of underfunding school districts all over Alaska are suffering. We r cutting core classes, raising class size, ending programs and activities. Our state constitution requires public school funding. It's time to address this NOW. I graduated from an ASD high school (moved here in a military family and ended up staying0, taught in ASD schools pre-school thru HS for 27 years and continue to help in schools. Teachers are working SO hard and in shock over the cruel cuts facing the schools for 2025-26. Alaska's kids and families and communities deserve better. They are our future. Please do what's best for public education.

Sincerely,

Susan Wingrove Reed
2409,Redwood St
Anchorage AK 99508
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

Michael Mason

From: Suzi McClear [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:16 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please fund our kids

It looks like the folks in Washington are working on establishing a system where each state does its own thing. Please put Alaska on the map as supporting the education of our children. If we're on our own we should do it right. It's our (your) greatest responsibility.

Suzi McClear

Michael Mason

From: Tabitha Voeller [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 3:49 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Please Pass HB 69

Dear Senate Education Committee Members,

Who knew it would be so controversial to fund public education? I realize this is one of many messages coming your way, and honestly I'm not sure what it takes to convince our leaders that education is important anymore. Educators and parents take the time to share their personal stories, trying to convince you that our state should invest money into education, but does it matter?

Just today President Trump signed an executive order to close the federal Department of Education. Though it is reported that vital programs like Title 1 and IDEA will be retained, this decision is said to put control into the hands of each state - but what happens if our state doesn't value public education?

For my family public education is all we have. Private, religious, and charter schools are not an option because they do not welcome or accommodate children with disabilities. In our public schools my daughter gets the opportunity to be a student in an environment that values her for who she is. Public education is not taken for granted in our home, we are incredibly grateful for her team.

Please support HB 69.

Everything has gotten more and more expensive to survive in Alaska, school districts around the state cannot function on budgets developed over ten years ago. Sacrifices are being made and everyone suffers from program and staff cuts. Alaskan schools need sustainable support more than ever. A quality education will strengthen outcomes for our children and families, making Alaska a stronger state.

Thank you for your time,
Tabitha Voeller

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99502

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Tabitha Woods [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 12:58 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69 - vote NO

Dear Alaskan Senators:

My name is Tabitha Woods. I live in the Mat-Su Valley. My family works with Cyberlynx to offer my children education. I am concerned that HB 69 is supporting "open enrollment WITHIN districts." This would greatly limit our choice to utilize the educational resources of other state correspondence school options such as IDEA, Cyberlynx, Denali Peak, or Raven which are headquartered in other districts. The removal of options is NOT in the best interests of our students.

Please take the time to consider the full impact of your vote on this matter and vote NO to preserve options for families which will produce the best educational outcomes for Alaska's children.

Thank you,
Tabitha Woods

Sent from my iPhone

Michael Mason

From: Teri [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:38 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: The Base Line Allocation

Yay! Finally we can see funding per student, along with adjustments for inflation and more increase of funding for the next two years. This is so long over due.

My husband and I raised two children in the Anchorage School District and now we have two grandchildren attending public schools. Please pass this bill!

Teri Penn (retired ASD teacher)

Sent from my iPad

Michael Mason

From: tom jordan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 8:27 PM
To: Education
Subject: Public Education Funding

I support raising the BSA and encourage the Alaska Senate to pass HB 69.
Thank you for your consideration,
Thomas M. Jordan
Eagle River, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Tom Snyder [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:02 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Education Funding Bill

Education funding has not kept up with inflation for many years & is way behind the curve. Please support HB 69!

Michael Mason

From: Tori Schmidt [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:11 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

My name is Tori Schmidt. I live in the Mat-Su Valley with my husband and 7 children. My family has worked with Cyberlynx for several years, ever since the school district forced our family out of the public school system due to my child's disability.

I am VERY concerned that HB 69 is supporting "open enrollment WITHIN districts". This would greatly limit our choice to utilize the educational resources of other state correspondence school options such as Cyberlynx, which is headquartered in another district. The removal of options is NOT in the best interest of our students or my children.

Please take the time to consider the FULL impact of your vote on this matter and vote **NO** to preserve options for families which will produce the best educational outcome for Alaska's children. Our children deserve BETTER.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Tori Schmidt
[REDACTED]
Wasilla, AK 99654
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Tracy Fischbach [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 6:44 AM
To: Senate Education; Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Matt Claman; Rep. Carolyn Hall
Subject: Please support HB69 for the full \$1000 BSA increase

Dear Senate Education and Finance Committee members,

I am writing to **support HB 69 for the full \$1000 BSA increase**. I know it's a lot of money, but I also know that the governor is ready to sign off on a \$3800 PFD. As a long-time Alaskan, I want my PFD to be decreased to allow for fully funding the BSA.

Why does funding help? Because there are three things that lead to an exceptional outcome. We all talk about hard work and talent, but we seldom talk about the most important ingredient to success – investment. A meritocracy is all about people “pulling themselves up by their boot straps,” but that's only about hard work and talent. It ignores what we all know is as important or more important – investment. We see it over and over in sports. Two children are excellent hockey players, but one has parents that can send them to camps and pay for the child to be on a traveling competitive team. Who do you think is going to earn that scholarship and maybe a ticket to the big leagues? It's the same for academics.

We are also now facing the additional specter of lost federal funds. In Alaska, 301 of our 502 schools qualify for Title 1 federal funding. If the Department of Education and its programs are dissolved, then we will be even more behind. As I understand it, 12% of our school funding is federal.

I am pro-**whole life**. That means I strongly believe that when we bring children into the world, we must support them to our fullest ability. HB69 does that.

Please fully fund the BSA increase of \$1000 with \$400 increases for each of the next two years, plus inflation proofing.

Thank you for your time and important work for our amazing state,

Tracy Fischbach

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99517

Michael Mason

From: Travis Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:38 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 testimony

Dear Honorable members of the Senate Education Committee,

I urge you to pass HB69 with the BSA increase funded to the maximum extent possibly as written. As the father of a student in the Kenai Peninsula School District, it is essential that you provide our schools with the resources necessary to educate my daughter and her peers. Our district is facing a 17 million dollar deficit and has been lagging severely behind inflation for years. Additionally, our school board is confronted with the near-impossible task of deciding where to make cuts year after year. Each year they have to make personal hiring decisions before they even know what their budget is because there revenue is not forward funded. Frankly, it's ridiculous. Please pass this bill because it is a step in the right direction.

Travis Brown
Homer, Alaska

Michael Mason

From: Trevor Wilson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 12:49 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

To whom it may concern,

My name is Trevor Wilson and I am an elementary teacher in Unalaska. I am emailing you today to voice my support of HB 69 and raising the BSA. Raising the BSA is something that I think is critical to supporting our schools in Alaska, and helping to make sure that the youth in Alaska are properly supported. Raising the BSA will help to make school better staffed, and will help to make sure we are supplying students with what is necessary for their success.

Raising the BSA will help to make sure schools are better staffed. In schools all over the state, there are vacancies that are unfilled because of a lack of funding. My father was the principal here for a long time and my mom worked in the school office, and for a long time, people were clawing down the door to come to Unalaska and other communities in our state. As other states have caught up and made their pay more competitive, Alaska has lagged behind and not offered the same pay increases as other states. Because of this, schools like my own that used to be towards the top of the list for many applicants, are now not nearly as high. Raising the BSA will help to offer better pay so that we can continue to attract the best educators. It will also help so that schools have the money to make class sizes smaller so that they can hire more teachers. Elementary class sizes of 30 or 35 is not unheard of in this state. Raising the BSA would make it so that these class sizes are more manageable, and more teachers can be hired so that students can be better served.

Raising the BSA will also make it so that we can give students what they deserve: the best. Our students are the future of this state, and if that isn't something worth investing in then I don't know what is. More funding from the state would help to make it so that students are offered better supplies and equipment for learning, more books so that we can foster their love of reading, and many other supplies that are necessary to nurture a young mind. The cost to run a school has gone up significantly, supplies and basic bills like heat and electricity are much higher than they were before making it impossible for schools to properly support students without more funding.

HB 69 is without a doubt necessary and an important piece in helping to make sure that the students in this state are properly cared for. Without it, schools will be forced to cut positions, skimp on necessary materials for learning, and continue to increase class sizes when they are already far too big in most districts. I have heard those of the opposite viewpoint argue that they think of the schools like a business, and if a business is failing, how is more money going to help it succeed more? I think my argument is very clear, more money will help to attract the best educators, better equipped schools with supplies necessary for learning, and decrease class sizes which are already too large. Thank you for considering this bill and I hope that we are able to better support our greatest resource: our youth.

Sincerely,
Trevor Wilson

Michael Mason

From: Valerie T [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Valerie Truncali, and I am a resident of Anchorage since 2006. I am a pediatric dental hygienist, and I am writing today to express my strong support for House Bill 69, which seeks to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska's public schools. I urge you to advocate for its passage without hesitation.

I am the mother of two boys who currently attend the O'Malley French Immersion Program—one in kindergarten and the other in 1st grade. As an engaged parent and an active member of the Anchorage community, I have seen firsthand the crucial role that high-quality education plays in shaping our children's futures. Unfortunately, Alaska's education system has long faced significant underfunding, which has led to strained resources, school closures, larger class sizes, fewer educational opportunities, and a decline in overall instruction quality. Increasing the BSA is essential to addressing these challenges and providing our schools with the resources they need to deliver the education our students deserve.

The O'Malley French Immersion Program is a prime example of the kind of innovative educational initiatives that are vital to the success of our community and the future of our state. Research shows that students in immersion programs not only develop superior cognitive and life skills but are also highly attractive to families looking to relocate to Alaska. These programs foster global awareness and contribute to the state's growth. Unfortunately, despite growing enrollment, programs like French Immersion are disproportionately affected by budget cuts and staffing shortages. If the BSA is not increased, Anchorage's schools will struggle to maintain and expand these vital programs.

In fact, if additional funding is not allocated soon, our own school, O'Malley, may be at risk of closing. Language immersion programs like O'Malley's are critical for cognitive development and for preparing well-rounded individuals who will contribute to Alaska's workforce, national security, and global engagement. Losing these programs would have lasting consequences on student retention, family stability, and the overall growth of our state.

I believe the BSA needs to be increased by at least \$1,000 per student in order to reinstate the programs that have been lost due to years of underfunding. This increase will help provide schools with the funding necessary to restore critical programs, hire and retain qualified teachers, reduce class sizes, and ensure students have the resources they need to succeed. Without this increase, Alaska's education system will continue to face severe challenges.

Increasing the BSA is not just about funding—it is an investment in Alaska's future. By supporting HB 69, you will ensure that schools can hire and retain qualified teachers, expand extracurricular activities, enhance mental health services, and invest in technology. These components are essential to providing

a high-quality education and critical for attracting professionals and their families to Alaska, which is vital for the state's economic future.

Furthermore, I do not support HB 76 or SB 82, as these bills do not address the urgent need for increasing the BSA, and I have concerns regarding proposed changes to the charter school approval process. Alaska is fortunate to have excellent charter schools, and the current process for approval has worked well for our communities.

I urge you to support HB 69 and advocate for an increase to the Base Student Allocation by at least \$1,000. This investment will ensure that students across Alaska continue to have access to the education they deserve, and it will help preserve vital programs like Language Immersion, which have been a cornerstone of Anchorage's educational system for over 30 years.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue. I trust that, with your leadership, we can secure a brighter future for Alaska's students, our community, and the long-term success of our state.

Sincerely,
Valerie Truncali, RDH, BSDH

Sent from my iPad

Michael Mason

From: Valerie T [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 4:06 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB 69 to include min. \$1000 in BSA increase

Dear Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for your service!

My name is Valerie Truncali. I am a pediatric dental hygienist and have been serving this community for 17 years. My husband and I are raising our two boys ages 6 and 10. Both attend O'malley's French immersion program. The State of Alaska and our entire community will benefit greatly from the full and unwavering support of our public schools. Our whole family is on pins and needles for the possibility that our school won't exist next year! Time is of the essence as hiring needs to be happening now. Language immersion programs are thriving and have proven successful educational outcomes. I am urging you to see the benefits that quality public schools can provide to our community now and in the future and know that it can't happen without a significant financial boost! Our schools desperately need a minimum of \$1000 increase to the base student allocation in order to retain valued programs that keep our kids and our families thriving in our community! Our community is diverse and multicultural and beautiful! Please fully support HB 69 as it moves through the legislative process and beyond and stand up for the minimum \$1000 BSA increase!

Thank you for your time and your work as our elected legislators!

Regards,

Valerie Truncali RDH, BSDH
[REDACTED]

Michael Mason

From: Vivian Rojas [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 6:54 AM
To: Senate Education
Subject: BSA

Every year the legislature goes through the process of determining BSA funding and every year we come up short.

Education and infrastructure that supports it needs our attention and we need to step up and increase the BSA funding to a level that will support our children's education. Enough is enough support our schools with a BSA that makes a difference long term.

Thank you,

Vivian Rojas

Seldovia, AK 99663

Michael Mason

From: Walter Tape [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 3:15 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: HB69

Please support HB69.

Thank you!

Walt Tape

[REDACTED]
Fairbanks AK 99709