

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: *****SPAM***** Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:04:21 AM

Dear House Education Committee,

I often hear the argument that “throwing more money at schools doesn’t improve outcomes,” but the reality is, underfunding guarantees failure. Schools with adequate resources can attract and retain quality teachers, reduce class sizes, and provide essential student support—all of which directly impact achievement.

If funding didn’t matter, wealthier districts wouldn’t consistently outperform underfunded ones. Strategic investment in education isn’t wasteful; it’s necessary for stronger communities, a skilled workforce, and a thriving economy. I urge you to support policies that prioritize sustainable, meaningful funding for our schools.

Thank you for your time and commitment to our students.

Kindly,

Jen Lium

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Alaska Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:30:25 AM

Good Morning,

Thank you for taking the time to cover this important topic.

For far too long now Alaskan children are receiving less and less with only bandaid like solutions for gaping wounds. One time funding is not the answer and not what our children deserve. We as a state need to fully invest in our kids and their education as they are our future and we need strong and capable problem solvers to lead us when their time comes to lead.

My kids (6th and 8th grade) are in classes from 27-35+ kids. Teachers are doing everything they can to keep low, average and advanced students learning at their current levels, but what you are asking them to do, because of lack of funding is unacceptable. They stay because they care. They want what's best for each student. They want each student to succeed.

We need our state to match their dedication by not giving up and fully backing and fully supporting student education. Raise the BSA, keep up with inflation so districts in Alaska have to keep closing schools and having 30+ students for one class.

Our kids deserve better than what Alaska has been doing. Please rectify these past funding deficits and help our students receive a well funded education and provides them with an education that can meet them where they are for each topic and having teachers who are given reasonable class loads.

Thank you for your work on this very important topic.

Sincerely,
Kristen LaPlante

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Alaska School Funding Bill...VOTE NO!!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:25:06 AM

Good Morning,

First off, I vote NO! I have been researching how Alaska state schools perform, for the past 10 yrs. They have performed poorly, there has not been any improvement with graduation rates, grade level literacy, grade level math, and state test scores. My family and I recently moved to Alaska after my husband retired from the Army. We have lived all over the United States, we have some great experiences with schools and some very poor ones. The one common factor is the legislation and greedy admin and lack of accountability from the teachers to the parents. Education is not a one way, it is just not the teachers, it starts at home, continues at school and returns to home. I have homeschooled my children in the past, I know how much work goes into education. Both my husband and I have our master's degrees, which we use for our employment present day. My children now attend public school with Mat Su School District in Palmer. My children's performance is outstanding, due to home life, parent involvement and experiences within the many schools they have attended throughout the United States.

My main thought about increasing the funds for the schools per student is VOTE NO, there has been no changes with school performance even with the increase in funds per student. This funding without reform or outcome requirements by the schools will do nothing for the students and or communities. This bill does nothing to correct the performance and or graduation rates of the students due to no accountability by the districts, schools and or teachers. There are no safeguards for how the public dollar is going to be spent, what will the state do to prevent the money from being diverted to other places that are not associated with the students. Honestly it sounds like you all are the problem when it comes to money being spent elsewhere and or poorly. The Governor does not appear to support this knowing this will bankrupt Alaska communities per his state address yesterday.

In addition 70% or more of Alaska students are not at grade level....the schools have already received increased funding without anything to show for it when it comes to student performance. More money will not improve this due to evidence that shows that students' performance and or graduation rate has not changed.

Vote No!

v/r, Haleigh Howerton
Palmer, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Aquarian Charter
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 1:28:54 PM

Hi, as a parent of an Aquarian Charter School student I am concerned with future funding regarding HB69.

I received information that the school will be struggling to pay their staff as they adjust to the next few years under HB69.

This news is devastating and unacceptable. We need to increase funding to keep the hard working staff at Aquarian Charter.

I am extremely grateful to all the staff at Aquarian Charter School, and all people in our community who support our school's & students

- Jessica Maldonado
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Aquarian Charter
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 1:28:54 PM

Hi, as a parent of an Aquarian Charter School student I am concerned with future funding regarding HB69.

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I am extremely grateful to all the staff at Aquarian Charter School, and all people in our community who support our school's & students

- Jessica Maldonado
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Base Student Allocation
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:04:50 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a community member invested in our children's future, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. Current funding levels are inadequate, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. Teachers are overworked, class sizes are growing, and essential programs like special education and extracurriculars are being cut.

Increasing the BSA by \$1,808 would:

- Allow schools to hire and retain qualified teachers.
- Restore and maintain critical programs like arts, music, and special education.
- Provide students with up-to-date materials and resources.

Inflation-proofing the BSA would ensure schools are not continually underfunded in the future, enabling consistent planning and better outcomes for Alaska's children.

Investing in education benefits everyone. A well-funded system leads to better-prepared graduates, stronger communities, and a more competitive workforce. Underfunding, however, results in higher dropout rates and increased social service costs. Raising the BSA ensures every child in Alaska has access to quality education and opportunities.

Balancing the state budget is complex, but our children's education must be a priority. Please act now to raise the BSA by \$1,808, include inflation-proofing, and secure Alaska's future.

Thank you,
Alex Burkhart
Juneau

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: BSA funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 3:53:15 PM

Hello,

I am a father of two elementary students and the principal of Soldotna Elementary. I have 19 years of experience in the state as a teacher and school administrator and I would like to thank this committee for the hard work they put in in securing funding. I would like this committee to put together a package that will enable us to provide an adequate education for all the state's students, mine included.

Every year I'm asked to do the same with less and I have exhausted my resources to do so. My school is a standout school and has met or exceeded our district's charter schools averages in reading and math as reported on the state report card to the public, and yet, I have fewer resources, options, and my students are far needier, lower income, more impacted by disabilities and far more racially diverse than charter school students.

According to the state report cards to the public. Soldotna Elementary has a score of 55.68 in reading and 57.95 in math. Our four charters average 52.4 in reading and 57.99 in math. The state continues to divert resources from boundary schools to these underperforming charters who place barriers to education against marginalized and disabled students. In addition to meeting the rising costs induced by inflation, I respectfully ask that all schools be held to the same standard, be given the same privileges, responsibilities and obligations. The two tier system should be abolished. Separate is inherently unequal.

Why does the state see fit to continually divert resources from one class of students to another class? If the privileges bestowed by statute are good for charters, why are they denied to boundary schools? The executive branch needs to be held accountable for enabling this system that both underfunds the traditional schools and discriminates against students in need of more resources. This committee has the power, legal, and moral responsibility to do this. I encourage the committee to do the right thing: ensure our state's investments are paying off. Fund a reasonable amount and also provide equity for students by giving all schools the same level of freedom to operate and use its funds. One school's existence and freedom (charters) should not be contingent upon another school being held to a higher and stricter standard.

While I appreciate the time you're taking to consider this, I understand the issues are complicated. I encourage any member to reach out to me and discuss this further if they want more information on the topics I have written about here.

Sincerely,

Austin Stevenson
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: senate.education@alaska.gov; [Rep. Bill Elam](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Rep. Justin Ruffridge](#); [Sen. Jesse Bjorkman](#); [Sen. Shelley Hughes](#)
Subject: BSA increase is both ill advised and unnecessary HB 69 testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:36:16 PM

All,
Please add this as my Testimony on HB69.

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

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

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

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

- 1) Enroll all School District employees into the state health care program.
Lowers over all cost due to age pool, per Insurance actuaries.
- 2) Prohibit state funds from being used to pay administrators and central office staff.
This is money that never makes it to the classroom. This has lead since kast formula to excessive growth in school budgets for central office costs.
The previous formula had both salary and personel caps tied to classroom expenditure.
If you want to control the spending, prohibit use of state funds in excess of 1999 restrictions on Administration costs.
If districts want to exceed this amount they must use local funds only.
- 3) Increase pay to teachers. By directly sending as a yearly a COLA adjustment.
- 4) Prohibit districts from allowing union to contact new hires until after contract is signed.
- 5) Prohibit districts from closing schools which still have bonded debt, and require 90 percent occupancy in the rest of the school buildings.
- 6) Require districts to use surplus buildings and/or excess space to house charter schools at no cost, this will end the practice of charter schools having to build or lease buildings.
- 7) Allow Charter schools who have more applicants than space to operate in multiple public school buildings, especially surplus buildings.

It is also important to check that districts are complying wirth the Alaska Supreme Court

decision that school transportation must allow charter and or private school students access to routes that pass their location.

8)Prohibit Districts from paying union membership dues for their employees to the union directly.

Unions work best when members write the check foe their dues.

David Nees
Member 2014 Task Force



COOPER landing



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:16:12 PM

It is critical that Ketchikan receives more funding for their students. They are our future and are being severely underfunded and underserved. Please pass BSA funding and support our children, Alaska is not solving problems, it is creating them. Our children deserve better.
Thank you.

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: BSAI
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:27:28 PM

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

Thank you,

Kate Wedemeyer

[REDACTED]

Anchorage 99508



Virus-free www.avast.com


From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education \$
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:29:12 PM

Keep up the good work and override the governor this time if you have to!

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:08:44 AM

Please consider our children and do not raise class sizes by 10 students. This provides a learning environment that is difficult for teachers to govern students the attention they need and deserve. How can teachers be expected to reach teaching goals w more students and less money? You can not have these expectations! Our kids deserve and increase in the BSA and to be fully funded for an optimal learning environment. Furthermore, after school programs are vital for working parents. These programs keep kids safe and enriched. Please consider their futures!

-Liza Spencer, mother of 3 in KPBSD

From: 
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Bill.
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 4:14:51 AM

I am in favor of funding education per inflation and on reinstating a retirement pension.
Millie Spezialy

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Bill
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:02:32 AM

Please see my testimony below regarding school funding.

Education Bill Testimony

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts. My name is Lisa Bishop and I live in Fairbanks. I am a product of local schools and graduated from UAF with a degree in elementary education in 1990, when there were 40 jobs and 400 applicants which is the opposite of what we have now. My children attended Pearl Creek Elementary starting in 1998 and I worked there doing a wide variety of jobs for 15 years, from building sub to ERll tutor to RTI Assistant. I received my special education certification in 2015 and have worked at several other schools in the district until returning to Pearl Creek in 2023. I am thrilled to be back and appreciate even more the things that drew me back there, a strong and effective principal, a cohesive and experienced teaching team and support staff and supportive and engaged parents. I was able to see how effective this team can be for students as the school I was at previously was redistricted to Pearl Creek and students that I had in special education were now 5th graders at Pearl Creek. Many of them had made amazing progress in that year, benefiting greatly from having experienced and effective teachers in general education and special education, peers who are at or above grade level and less behavior. Although many of these students had been Title 1 at the previous school, Pearl Creek had worked hard to still provide these students with the physical and emotional support they needed such as extra clothes, food for over the weekend, and great support from the counselor for them and their families.

This is all part of why I am sharing my thoughts. I want to see all this school continue to perform so well and all of the schools in our district and state to be fully funded to carry on this important work. I am so very sad to see today's students not receive the excellent education that I and my own children did. It is demoralizing and exhausting to work in a system that seems to value experienced teachers so little. We need the funds to educate children well and to draw the best and brightest. That is not what is happening now. The public schools are being held to an impossibly high standard given the amount of funding and support we are giving. While I support schools of choice and charters and home schooling when done correctly, I am beyond tired of constantly receiving students from home schools and poorly performing charters that are two to three years below grade level. They then become part of the public schools so called poor performance. As a taxpayer, I am enraged that my tax dollars are given to these entities with no accountability or reporting mandates. I homeschooled my own child for a period of time and was appalled

at the lack of accountability and standards that I was held to. This needs to change.

Not fully funding education for our children also has long term consequences for the state of Alaska. We are not drawing new people here to work in fields like medicine and business when we have poor schools. We are hearing of job seekers turning down jobs in the state because of these concerns. This is not how we grow our economy and our state.

Lastly, the practice of importing teachers on J1 visas to teach our children is also detrimental to their education. While many of them may be well educated in their home country, it is a heavy lift to get them caught up in the Fairbanks public school system. They are particularly lacking in skills for dealing with classroom management and behavior. Until we fix our teacher retirement and pension system and start funding schools, this trend will continue and reinforce the downward spiral of our public schools.

Thank you for your time in reading this and I hope my experience of 40 years in a variety of roles in public education is helpful. I love teaching and want our schools to be the best that they can be to grow our state and our future.

Lisa Bishop

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Lisa Bishop

Special Education Resource Teacher

Pearl Creek Elementary School



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: education funding bill HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:22:19 AM

Education is of utmost importance if we want to raise the kind of intelligent people who can think clearly, solve problems and understand others.

Vote to raise the BSA, vote for funding the schools in Alaska well. Vote for our future.

Sincerely,
Teri Gardner Robus

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Exercise is the Fountain of Youth. My fountain is sculpted by Michelangelo, painted by DaVinci - and the water in the fountain is Salvador Dali!

TeriRobusStudio.com

You may also write me at my website email:

[REDACTED] >

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding Bill
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:57:20 AM

Fellow Alaskans,

Please support the House Education Funding Bill.
We need to invest in Alaska's children.

I moved to Alaska the summer I turned 16 and finish high School at Dimond.
I worked in fish processing in Nome, Unalakleet, Kotzebue, & Bristol Bay.
After getting a degree in electrical engineering, I worked 40 years in the Alaska Power and Oil & Gas industry.
My children both went through the Anchorage School District (Huffman, O'Malley, Mears, & Service H.S.).
We all still live and work here. Alaska has been good for our family. That starts with public education.
I received a loan for collage and 40% was forgiven since I graduated, returned and worked 5 years in my field.
I think that collage, trade schools, and training should be available until the Alaskan can earn a sustainable wage.

We need a strong public school system so that all Alaskans have an opportunity to prosper in Alaska.
Please support the Education Funding Bill. We must support and educate Alaska's children.
It is not an expense as much as it is an investment.

Will E. McBride, PE
Electrical Administrator
CONAM Construction Company

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 11:37:16 PM

My name is Alex and I live in Wasilla, AK. My opinion about the education in Alaska is as follows:

1. Government shouldn't be funding education. Public education is purely government indoctrination as our public education system has been hijacked by Marxist ideology. It's the parents responsibility to school their children not the STATES.
2. Encourage Homeschooling communities to work together, private education, charter schools, private school houses, ect.. The Public realm doesn't ALWAYS mean governments realm. I know the Alaska Constitution says otherwise, but it's socialism at its finest and it's unwanted. Defund the State education program all together and free up funds for other construction projects or our PFD.
3. Teachers don't need to be constantly worrying about pay or retirement via a government retirement system that's outdated. Give them control of the free market so that they can what they are called to do. Teach.
4. Consider changing curriculum to Reading, Writing, and arithmetic only. Allow history, science and so forth only in the private sector so there is no further corruption of our history.
5. Gather suggestions from every teacher retired or active to come up with better education solutions.

Alaskan public education is failing. Alaska is working with a deficit in the budget as it sits. Give the responsibility fully back to the parents and end government education. Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:16:36 PM

Education funding should be a top priority for our state! I am in full support of increasing the student base allocation as suggested. I also support forward funding, so that districts can formulate their budgets with accurate information. Our public schools need secure funding to operate successfully. This funding should not be held hostage by the desire to increase charter schools or home schools.

Thank you.

Melinda Dale.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 5:05:12 AM

With Alaska's low ranking in Education year-after-year(45th out of 50 states), it's time to prioritize funding our public education system. Industry demands an educated workforce. Alaska is currently doing little to provide that. We want our state to thrive, not just exist!

Jean McBrien

[REDACTED]
Juneau AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:09:59 PM

Please ensure that schools are well funded, a permanent increase to the bsa would be great.
Stop trying to divert money to private religious schools

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: education funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:13:22 PM

Hi,

I am writing for public testimony. We no longer have a budget line for providing adequate education by Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired or Orientation & Mobility specialist for infants 0-3 with a visual impairment. Infants with a visual impairment do not get adequate or equitable services across the state. If a child can not see or learn with low vision how will they excel in their learning or development as their sighted peers. It automatically provides them a disservice given their disability.

We also have a high prevalence for those with a Traumatic Brain Injury in the state. We need DEED to provide funding for Brain Injury Liaisons for each district that work with SERRC Youth Brain Injury Program.

Increase funding for these programs, and teachers - not admin. Increase funding and openings in charter schools. Increase funding to have highschool charter schools. Increase funding so we can stop shutting schools down. Higher more teachers- lower class sizes- better outcomes!

Thank you,

Sarah

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: FULL SUPPORT FOR HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:21:32 AM

As someone who has worked in Alaskan Education for over a decade, the increase in the BSA is incredibly overdue. Not only are we behind the times of current inflation rates, inflation PROOFING the BSA is a bare minimum action to help protect our kids' education.

Please stand with the Future of Alaska, our children, and invest in them by passing HB 69

All the best,

--

Kaile Hutton (She/her)
Administrative Assistant
Ketchikan Charter School
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Fund the Public Schools
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:23:27 AM

Dear Committee Members:

Having lived in Alaska since 1963 I cannot believe we are still fighting for school funding, something so basic to a civilized democracy and so basic to keeping Alaska a desirable place to live.

I suspect the hidden agenda is to privatize education and convert it to a profit-making religious enterprise as Charter schools. Charter schools, which siphon off funding from the public school system, making it progressively more difficult to maintain quality education in the public system.

Obviously, we need more funding to run our schools properly. A state income tax directed to education overall, including pre-school and University would help a great deal.

We had a State income tax AND a State school tax when I arrived here. It worked. So, it's possible.

Please, FUND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Thank You.

Respectfully,
Gerard Garland

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:54:56 AM

Dear Education Committee,

I am a retired teacher and a military spouse who has taught in 8 different states. Alaska has amazing, dedicated, and talented teachers. It is one of the reasons my family returned to Alaska 11 years ago. Our daughters could attend middle school and high schools here. My daughters went on to attend Northwestern University and MIT; Alaska educators were key to this.

Sadly I have watched the eroding work conditions and the toll it's taken on staff and students. The constant turnover due to teachers leaving the state leave veteran teachers with a monumental task of bringing brand new teachers up to speed, only to watch them leave Alaska a few years later, if they survive their first year.

I loved teaching, but a few years ago I just couldn't do the workload any longer. My former colleagues are exhausted, class sizes have swelled and staffing has become worse.

This is your opportunity to change the trajectory for our future. Please support fully funding the BSA and be ready to override the veto when it comes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lois Brabson
Eagle River, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:40:45 AM

I am writing in opposition to the proposed increase at this time. I am not convinced that we are at a point where more funding is (1) in fact available, given the current debt and financial trajectory and (2) that enough change in policy has been considered to reflect a full appreciation of how the public school system has ended up in present circumstances.

Respectfully,
Herder Winkelman
Fox

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#)
Subject: Further thoughts on SB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:00:18 AM

I wrote a few days ago in support of HB 69, but had hoped to testify this morning but wasn't able to do so before I needed to go to work, so I wanted to add some thoughts.

An increase in the Base Student Allocation is very important, and long overdue. I am hearing some speakers deny that education funding has decreased over the past several years. However, anyone who does the math and looks at funding as impacted by inflation will know that the decrease in funding is both real and large. Increasing the BSA to catch up with inflation, and then inflation-proofing this change would provide the predictability that will make it possible for schools to plan for the future.

On a more personal level, the previous quality of the public schools in Alaska is one of the reasons that we are currently living in Alaska. When our children were young, we lived in another state, and our son started school in that state. One of the factors that encouraged us to move back to Alaska was the quality of the public schools, which we perceived to be higher in Alaska than they were in that state. We did move back, and were happy with the education our children received. If we want young families to settle in Alaska, if we want military families to stay here, we need to adequately fund our public schools. Having strong public schools impacts our economy right now, not to mention the huge benefit to our future economy of having a well educated workforce.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard. Please support HB 69.

Sincerely,

Sarah Swift Masterman

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Sarah Swift Masterman

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); Representative.Andi.Story@akleg.go
Subject: HB 69 - Charter School Principal Support
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:36:50 AM

Co-Chair Rebecca Himschoot
Co-Chair Andi Story
Members of the House Education Committee

My name is Jarrod Decker, and I am the principal of Watershed Charter School in Fairbanks, Alaska—a school I helped establish in 2009 and have proudly served as an administrator since 2014. I am writing today to express my strong support for HB 69.

It is critical to increase the base student allocation (BSA) to address the rising costs that all public schools have been facing. Inflation-proofing the BSA will provide schools with adequate and reliable funding, ensuring they can effectively support student learning. Years of insufficient and unpredictable funding, coupled with escalating operational expenses and underfunded legislative mandates such as the Alaska Reads Act, have placed immense strain on all schools, including charters.

Additionally, because “one-time” funding falls outside the BSA foundation formula, DEED has clarified that disbursing these funds is at the discretion of local school districts—leaving charter schools without guaranteed per-pupil funding parity with neighborhood schools. This inconsistency creates further financial instability and inequity.

I urge you to support HB 69 to ensure stable, equitable, and adequate funding for all Alaska students.

Thank you.
Jarrod

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Jarrod Decker
Principal
Watershed Charter School
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 - INCREASE EDUCATION FUNDING
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:45:44 PM

Alaska House Representatives,

I'm writing in regards to the HB69 for Education Funding. I have a 2nd grader at Paul Banks and another who's about to start Kindergarten this year. We moved from Texas 7 years ago with the hopes of a great place to raise our children. I don't see how we can't cut anything from current funding when we are actually in need of an increase. Paul Banks has a teacher who splits a 1st & 2nd grade class and class sizes all around are already 24+. My children also get swimming classes at the high school pool and enjoy the theater performances there as well. I would hate to see any of these programs plus sports cut as my children are just beginning their education. If funding isn't increased, it will push families like ours who have an option out of Alaska. Please don't gut Alaska public education! There is nothing more important for Alaska's future than the education of our children.

Sincerely,
Lauren Corcoran
Homer, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 & Charter School Support
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:06:30 AM

Members of House Education Committee,
For starters, thank you for your work on the education committee. As a charter school principal I support HB 69 and any increased funding inside the foundation formula. I have been a teacher and principal in Alaska for 28 years and I believe education is the most important aspect of our community.

I have some ideas about charter school statutes that I have already shared with Representative Elam.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions about charter schools or ways that we can create new charter school language that would help get HB 69 passed.

Thanks for your time.

My personal cell is [REDACTED], feel free to text or call me with any questions.

Cody McCanna

Aurora Borealis Charter School
Administrative Leader
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:14:19 PM

Hello,

I am the parent of 2 students currently in Anchorage School District and a little one who will attend in a couple of years. I strongly support the passage of HB 69 to allow schools to continue to pay their staff fairly. Being a teacher is a tough job and they deserve to be paid a living wage. Also better paid teachers have higher retention rates and create a more stable environment for a school.

My oldest daughter goes to Aquarian Charter School and is flourishing there. She loves math, writing and roaming around the playground at recess. As a charter school they have to strictly manage their budget to continue to serve their community. Their school may need to cut staff to stay within their current operating budget. This would be a tragedy for my daughter as she loves all the aspects of the school.

My middle daughter is at special needs preschool at Northwood Elementary and she loves her teachers and the support staff of an actual in school Speech Therapist and other visiting therapists. She literally gets up everyday excited to go to school. I have watched the excellent teachers there struggle to get extra support as their classroom numbers increase in the spring- this struggle could be decreased just by an extra TA in the classroom.

My husband and I are both products of public school and believe strongly in the importance of attending local schools that are accessible to the community. Please support HB 69 and help keep our schools from further deteriorating.

Kimberly Reid
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Education Funding Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:33:27 PM

Good afternoon,

I am writing today to voice my support for HB 69.

It is imperative that the state recognizes the need for additional funding for our school districts and takes action on it.

It is disheartening to watch year after year, our school boards scrambling to make hard decisions and cuts due to lack of funding from our state and also having to deal with not having the information they need in a timely manner to make these decisions.

I appreciate the additional funding in HB69 for education/student allocation for this next year, as well as a plan that includes future years. Planning and being prepared for future school years is what our school boards deserve and is what our children deserve.

I appreciate the amount of time that has gone into HB 69 and also thank the authors of this bill for their dedication to the future of Alaska students.

Sincerely,

Ashley Eisenbeisz
Sitka, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69- In support of passing this Bill
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:58:46 PM

Dear Alaska Legislators,

I am writing to ask for your support of House Bill 69 that would increase base student allocations. I have been a resident of Salcha, Alaska for over 42 years. My children and now my grandchildren attend Salcha Elementary School. Salcha Elementary is currently on the list of schools being considered for closure by the Fairbanks North Star Borough due to lack of funding. Our school has a long history of serving Salcha families and is the heart of our rural community. I would like to share a little about our school to help you realize the importance of supporting this Bill that will help to keep our school open.

Salcha Elementary has a long record as a school of excellence, being selected for numerous state and national awards for service to military families, diverse student populations, serving low income students, and the community. Salcha School, like all rural schools, has a unique role to fill. Salcha is a geographically large community, over 40 miles along the Richardson Highway, extending from Eielson AFB to the edge of the Fairbanks North Star Borough (over 40 miles). Children and staff come to school from as far away as Birch Lake. This distance alone creates unique challenges, but Salcha School staff have utilized school and community resources to solve issues, each time strengthening our school and community.

Salcha School is a Title 1 school. Closing Salcha School will only bring hardships to our families and the students that are served. Our local community school allows families to be involved in their student's education as volunteers in the classroom, sports, and attend school functions such as School Nights, Science Fairs, and other evening events. Non-parent community members act as tutors and mentors as well. Transportation becomes an issue with students who ride the bus to another community to attend school. Elementary students will be excluded from participation in after school activities, such as sports, STEM, or tutoring, that enrich their daily educational experience due to transportation problems (no late bus transportation) Many parents who work outside the community find it prohibitive both financially and time wise to drive home from work to get their child then drive back 20 or more miles to go to a school activity in another community. Many of these families already have financial hardships. Governor Dunleavy advocates in his State of the State address charter schools and homeschooling. Yet this is not a viable option for families that live 40 or more miles (one way) from the district charter schools. Homeschooling is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for single and working parents, especially if they have young elementary students. Young children do not learn how to read, write, or calculate without adults helping them. I spent 20 years in education and have seen the negative impact on educational levels when parents do not have the time, energy, or knowledge to homeschool their children properly. I applaud families that can homeschool correctly, but most families do not have the economic ability to homeschool. Public education is for all families, all children, despite their situation.

The mental health of each student is also at risk. I know from personal experience, when young children leave a community to attend school, they become isolated due to distance, and are less likely to create friendships. Their sense of community is gone. Special needs students are also more likely to be affected by isolation from their peers. Salcha has often used an inclusion model of Special Education that benefits the child with special needs and also the other children in their class, school, and community. Lifelong friendships and understanding of differences have been the result of this teaching model. Salcha's unique classroom environment allows cross-age activities and experiences as well that encourage student leadership, empathy, and connection. Multiage classrooms also allow flexible grouping of student's without any stigma attached allowing for outstanding student growth. Salcha School's belief of "All our kids, are all our kids" results in every staff member taking the responsibility of educating EVERY child. This is the special gift of a small school environment. Salcha School is also an important part of the overall daily lives of community members. Volunteers support the ski, running, and science programs, improving the quality of mentorship, coaching, and intergenerational interactions. Salcha School is the community hub and primary gathering place for events, such as the voting location for the community, Thursday night community volleyball, and an emergency shelter for the community (especially for flooding and fires). The playground and trails are used by the community and visitors year around.

Physical activities have always been an important part of our school. Every fall Salcha School hosts over 500 elementary runners and their families for a cross-country race. We are the only school to host the event on their own trails. This event is run by volunteers. On the last day of school we hold the "Salcha 5K Challenge Race" on the ski trails behind the school. We are the only school in the state and in fact the entire country that holds a competitive race on the last day of school. The students work hard to prepare for this race. This race is not new. For about 20 years students ran "The Six Mile Run" from Harding Lake to the Salcha School along the Richardson Highway. They trained hard for the privilege of running this race.

Once it became too dangerous to use this course, a new race was created utilizing the Darrel Coe Ski Trails. Students learn to persevere and challenge themselves with this race. This is a life-long skill that translates to every aspect of life. This unique race empowers our students to believe in themselves and their ability to overcome a challenge which is a lifelong skill.


Please vote yes on Bill 69 to increase the base student allocation that will support all rural community schools and public education. Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Amy Viltrakis



Salcha, AK 99714

From: 
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 PLEASE PASS!!!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:18:49 PM

I urge you to show your support in our education system and developing young minds into future leaders by passing HB 69.


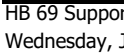
Thank you for your time.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Public Testimony
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:48:39 PM

Hello,

I am a Seldovia, AK resident and I would like to express my support for the BSA increase of \$1,808 to keep us with inflation. My district is in a budget deficit of \$17 million dollars. This increase would help us break even. I want my tax dollars going toward the future of Alaska, and for me that means making sure our children are given a quality education on par with those across the nation. If we don't keep up we will be left behind. Our children have the right to a quality public education and we can not say we are providing it with such rampant underfunding. I hope you will vote to increase the BSA.

Best regards,
Kathleen Gruber
Seldovia, AK 99663

From: 
To: 
Subject: HB 69 Support
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 4:50:40 AM

Esteemed Members of the House Education Committee,

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

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

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

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

Thank you, Heather Conn

Heather Conn, Principal
Stedman Elementary School



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#)
Cc: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Support
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:35:00 PM

Greetings. I am the mother of two adult daughters who were educated in the Anchorage School District. I am the grandmother of a kindergarten student at ASD (and his little sister who starts in 2027). I am also a retired Anchorage School District paraeducator who spent the majority of my 26 years of service working in Special Education PreK classes.

A quality public education is a bedrock of our democracy. All of society benefits when ALL kids are given the opportunity to succeed in school. Our public schools rely on our public tax dollars for support. I for one am appalled at the failure of our leaders to give the proper support to education for far too many years. Our schools and our children are suffering.

Over and over short sighted lawmakers have rejected increases to the BSA....the most fundamental step to properly fund our schools. Alaskan families and voters are fed up. Our kids deserve better. Our legislators need to band together and make education decisions that are not based on party lines but on the BEST interest of Alaskan children.

You all know schools are struggling with staffing. I can tell you first hand that the escalating challenges caused by chronic underfunding are a major factor in this problem.

You have the opportunity this year to change this. You have an opportunity to make decisions that support ALL children and families. As a voter I expect you to do so and vote YES on HB 69.

Sincerely

Anna Stensland Petersen

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Rep. Julie Coulombe](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#)
Subject: HB 69 Support
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:49:15 PM

My name is Kathleen Easley, I live in Anchorage and am a parent of students who have and do attend Anchorage School District. I am writing today to give my support for HB 69. My support is in direct opposition of the governor's view on this bill, but Alaskans want education funded! I support this bill!

We cannot continue yearly to have this battle and scrape by. School districts need to know funding is stabilized and secure so they can plan and prioritize for the best student outcomes. This bill seems reasonable and matches appropriately increases to the BSA over time. It is the responsibility of our state government to support and fund education.

Please fund education fully, raise the BSA. I support SB 69.

I have included my state Representatives and Senator in this communication.

With respect,
Kathleen Easley
Anchorage

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 support.
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:04:08 AM

Hello,

I am writing in support of HB 69. As a parent of 2 children in Petersburg School district I believe this bill is a good step toward bettering my children's educational experience in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Jeigh Stanton Gregor
Parent of 2
Petersburg Borough Assembly Member
Small business owner

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Support
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:04:01 AM

I am writing as a parent of two students in our public education system in Petersburg. My oldest is in middle school and my youngest in elementary school. Over the last 8 years I have watched class room sizes grow, staff positions eliminated, supplies reduced and opportunities missed because of a lack of funding. Operating expenses for schools has increased, just like all our own personal expenses, and now, more than ever, Alaska must step up in support of our future. I would like to express my strong support for House Bill 69 and the critical need to increase the base student allocation (BSA).

Public education is the foundation of our community and an investment in our state's future. Every child deserves access to quality education, which is only possible when we adequately fund our schools. Unfortunately, stagnant funding has left districts struggling to meet rising costs, directly impacting the resources, programs, and staff available to our students.

Quality educators are the heart of our schools, shaping the minds and futures of our children. However, without competitive wages that keep up with inflation, we risk losing talented teachers to other states or professions. Paying educators a professional, livable wage is not just about fairness—it is about ensuring stability and excellence in our classrooms. If we fail to support our educators, we jeopardize the quality of education and, ultimately, the success of our students.

As a parent, I want my children to receive the best education possible. I want their classrooms to be well-equipped, their teachers to be supported, and their learning opportunities to be limitless. Public education is not just about individual success—it strengthens our entire community. Well-funded schools contribute to a skilled workforce, lower crime rates, and a thriving economy. When we invest in education, we invest in our state's long-term prosperity.

I urge you to support House Bill 69 and advocate for an increase in the base student allocation. Our students, educators, and communities depend on it. Thank you for your time and commitment to the future of public education.

Katie Eddy
Petersburg, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:04:23 AM

Good morning,

I am writing to express my support for HB 69. As the principal of Paul Banks Elementary, a K-2 school in Homer, I can attest to the need for this bill to pass. My school district faces a \$16.9 million deficit if funding remains flat as proposed by Governor Dunleavy. The effect on Paul Banks will be significant. For example, a PTR increase of as much as +10 would result in classes ballooning to more than 30 kids in a classroom. When classrooms grow to this size, student learning is greatly impacted in a negative way. Furthermore, we could potentially lose our PE and music programs, our librarian aide, and our elementary counselor. Talks of reducing classified staff contracts by up to ten days would significantly reduce opportunities for collaboration and training to support our students in special education. One catastrophic impact of not passing HB 69 is that Paul Banks would be closed. Within our district there are conversations about school consolidations and closures and Paul Banks could be one of those schools; this would be a tremendous loss to our community.

Funding schools is a constitutional responsibility and HB 69 fulfills this responsibility. Flat funding does not. Flat funding will lead to loss of programs, loss of opportunities and loss of learning. This will damage not only my community but communities across the state. When we do not invest in education, we do not invest in our future. As our state population declines, it seems that investing in education would be a wise investment for a myriad of reasons outside of an ethical and constitutional responsibility.

Thank you for your consideration and support of Paul Banks students and families and the students and families in all of Alaska's communities.

Kind regards,

Sean Campbell
Paul Banks Elementary School Principal

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:33:10 PM

Hi House Education Committee,

I am Steven Bridwell, a lifelong Alaskan who was privileged to be raised in FNSBSD public schools, earn a UA Scholarship, and attend UAF twice (for my undergraduate 2006-2012, and teaching certificate and master's of education 2016-2017).

I am in favor of HB 69, raising the BSA. While I recognize money may not solve all of Alaska's educational issues, not funding public education won't either. Like all infrastructure, or our vehicles, we must support and maintain them otherwise they will crumble.

I was raised and have taught exclusively in Alaskan public schools. I attended Woodriver Elementary in Fairbanks, which hasn't been closed yet, but went to Pearl Creek for Cub Scouts, and it is on the chopping block. U-Park, where my sister-in-law teaches and nephew attends, was also a common stomping ground in my youth, and it's not gone yet, luckily. But Hunter Elementary, where I first tutored is. As may be Two Rivers and Salcha Elementary, both schools I subbed at. The school I worked as a special education aide at is no more, and it seems only a matter of time under the last 8 year's trend of underfunding public education until the first school I taught at, Nunamiut School in Anaktuvuk Pass, or North Pole Middle where I worked from 2019-2021, or my most recent post of Benny Benson Alt. High in Anchorage will be shuttered because of lack of funding.

From my experience last year at Anchorage's Benny Benson Alt. High School, regardless what Gov. Dunleavy and others may say, the students who need the most support are absolutely grateful for our services. Our system works, and it works best when fully funded, just like a car runs best when it's fully maintained.

Please vote in favor of HB 69, for our communities, my nephew, and all my past, present, and future students.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Steven Bridwell

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:03:15 PM

Hello,

My name is Sharlay Mamoe. I live and play on the traditional lands of the Lingit, Haida, and Tsm'syen people in Southeast Alaska, Petersburg. I am the mother of three children, all of whom will be in the public school system next school year when this funding will be dispersed.

Everyone should have a right to education. How else would a community or people survive and continue to thrive in the generations to come. I believe that in order to properly set up our future population for success we need to accurately invest in them when they are young. This investment is the most important one we will make.

In order for a society to thrive this also means that we need to invest in the people. This investment in the people can come from an increase to the BSA.

Please do what is right for the children of Alaska public school systems and increase the BSA.

Thank you!

~Sharlay Mamoe

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69 Thoughts and Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:33:00 AM

HB 69 – Thoughts and testimony

To: Alaska Legislators
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First off, I would like to say thank you for your service to our state and the people that you represent. I know first hand the difficulties that you all face in being away from your families and friends, and the constant barrage of input from your constituents (both positive and negative). Although you are often maligned in the media (social and general) and by partisan politics, there is a core that appreciate what you do and why you do it even when your decisions do not mesh with our pre-determined notions. THANK YOU!

I do not represent any organizations. I only write to you representing a concerned parent, citizen and a believer that our system needs to change.

In regards to your deliberations on HB69, I would like to point out the following and make a few suggestions for you all to consider. They revolve around the following:

- Costs of education in Alaska
- Costs of teaching students vs the costs of doing business and or supporting “programs” and overhead costs.
- Alternatives to the Public Schools

Charter Schools
Correspondence Schools
Small Group Programs

- Removing political ideology

DEI

Sex Education (aside from how things work physiologically) not practices of mating

- Reintroducing the constitution both State and Federal to our children at various points in their education.

As a parent of 4 home schooled children (1 still attending), I am a firm believer that home schooling and or charter schooling when possible is a far better option than the normal K-12 programs pushed by ASD and other districts in and around Alaska and even throughout the country. Although it is a lot of work and sacrifice for parents, the benefits outweigh the personal costs to parents and guardians. Educational outcomes are so much better for Homeschool / Charter School families. Not only does the family benefit from unity, they also benefit from a personalized education that is tailored for their children and geared to their strengths. Our oldest child who is serving our country in the US Space Force learned far better in a self directed program than our middle son (US Navy medic) and youngest who constantly needed to be cajoled into doing their work. Our other child was a nice mixture of the two. All 3 of the older children are successful and giving back to our society (while the youngest one is still in school). The curriculum that was taught to each was custom tailored and gave them what they needed to be a positive part of our society. This compares starkly to

the outcomes that we are seeing from the average public school students. With teaching to the lowest common denominator and going the speed of the slowest students the public school educational program is not producing the results that it should for the huge amount of money that the state is providing for each student. We all know horror stories of the educational system. High rates of teen pregnancy, physical trauma, and emotional abuse and bullying are the norm. If you couple that with the inability to balance budgets, think logically and critically, research (outside of social media) and function in a positive way, our educational system is fast betraying Alaska and the United States as a whole.


Additionally with schools focusing on DEI, sexualization of our youth, and other programs that are darlings of the NEA, our students do not know the importance of our political system, the good that our country does on the world stage and the importance of a representative republic. Our students should learn more about the US constitution, the Declaration of Independence (DOI) and how to bring our country out of the doldrums that we have been in due to bad education and the dumbing down of our children.

To summarize, we need to cut programs that increase dependence on government (state and federal), teach children the basics and provide money to the programs that produce positive results locally and globally. Allow more charter schools, home schools and correspondence schools that are required to adhere to state standards and then increase those standards. Raise the bar or our young people will be constantly playing limbo instead of running the hurdles, high jump and pole vaulting. Our educational failures coexist within the family, city, state and federal systems, but they can be fixed in the same way.

I appreciate your time and consideration and apologize for the length of this testimony. I feel very strongly about this.

Sincerely,

Eric "Matt" Sims
Eastbrook Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99504

From: 
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:06:44 PM

To all House members,

I urge you to increase spending for our State's public educational system. Over many years our State has been stagnant or greatly reduced its support of public education. It is time to change this trend to protect the future of our youth, their families, the communities and our state as a whole.

I have been an Alaskan resident and raised two children in our local public schools, and have witnessed the cuts to many programs and more importantly to staff. Without good teachers we fail our children and the future of Alaska. Please vote in favor of funding HB 69.

Thank you,

Lisa Krebs

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:05:48 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a community member and parent invested in our children's future, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. Current funding levels are inadequate, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. Teachers are overworked, class sizes are growing, and essential programs like special education and extracurriculars are being cut.

Increasing the BSA by \$1,808 would:

- Allow schools to hire and retain qualified teachers.
- Restore and maintain critical programs like arts, music, and special education.
- Provide students with up-to-date materials and resources.

Inflation-proofing the BSA would ensure schools are not continually underfunded in the future, enabling consistent planning and better outcomes for Alaska's children.

As a close friend of several teachers, I see firsthand how underfunding impacts students:

These teachers classrooms have consistently grown in number of students, limiting individualized attention.

Investing in education benefits everyone. A well-funded system leads to better-prepared graduates, stronger communities, and a more competitive workforce. Underfunding, however, results in higher dropout rates and increased social service costs. Raising the BSA ensures every child in Alaska has access to quality education and opportunities.

Balancing the state budget is complex, but our children's education must be a priority. Please act now to raise the BSA by \$1,808, include inflation-proofing, and secure Alaska's future.

Thank you,

Laura Maruhashi, PT, DPT, OCS, COMT

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:28:38 AM

Hello, I am Pamela Weaver of Fairbanks, AK. I strongly support HB 69. We need to raise the BSA for student education. It has been over 10 years, which is way out of step with present day costs. Education of future generations is not a back burner issue; it should be front and center to sustain a strong, healthy society. Please pass HB 69.

Thanks,
Pamela Weaver
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, Ak 99709

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:25:31 AM
Importance: High

To whom it may concern:

Once again, we find a large funding proposal, unattached to any qualification as to improved student outcomes. The conceit on which this proposal is based limns a careworn holding: Students are failing to achieve grade-level numeracy and literacy because schools are underfunded. Having watched the Alaska public school system over the last three decades, I note no statistically significant improvement in that period, even and especially during periods when districts were maximally funded and fully staffed.

I hold with the Governor: Any such funding proposal MUST tie in concrete, employable steps for improving student outcomes. Anything else is just one more blank check to fund mediocrity at best.

Thanks for your attention.

Cordially,

Charles B. Dean

Sitka

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:24:03 AM

Please vote Yes on HB69. Our “Brick and Mortar” neighborhood schools are barely holding on because school funding has been politically restricted for too many years. In reaction, many people have chosen to homeschool, by using programs offered by other school districts, such as Galena School District based IDEA, and Yukon-Koyukuk School District based Raven, both of which serve students outside their own districts. This artificially shifts revenue to other districts, complicating school funding equations and limiting resources to the homeschool students’ own local school districts, reducing classes and opportunities to all students in each community. The risks and benefits of homeschooling are invaluable in this setting, because IDEA and Raven are unregulated by the State of Alaska and any statistics comparing these publicly funded programs are unavailable.

The above conclusions are based on painstaking inquiries made to DEED, IDEA and Raven representatives and employees and to my own (Juneau) school district over the past few months. The difficulty that I experienced obtaining information on homeschool student numbers from these institutions suggests that some parties have an interest in concealing the facts behind state funding for them. I would strongly encourage Alaska Legislators to investigate and publish details of state funding for these home school organizations, local public schools and districts, and private schools receiving state funds.

Budgetary limitations have already caused the closure of one of two Juneau High schools, with some Juneau High School students lacking classroom space and critical courses. Some homeschool based high schoolers may also be affected, as they access some classes through their local public schools.

Please support our Democracy by supporting our neighborhood schools with an increased BSA with a willingness to override any Gubernatorial Veto, if necessary.

Sincerely

Linda Thompson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:07:17 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Dan Dunn. I own and operate a tender vessel in the commercial fisheries of southeast. I have had up to four kids in the Sitka school district, currently I have an eighth grader at Blatchley Middle School. I am writing to express my support for House Bill 69.

From where I sit I see our schools not as failing but as being failed by those that are constitutionally mandated to provide adequate financial support. Raising the BSA and providing inflation-proofing for our children would be a great step in the right direction.

Please move HB 69 forward and provide greater opportunities for the future of our children and our state.

Thank you for your time,

Daniel Dunn
[REDACTED]
Sitka AK 99835
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:12:09 AM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Rob Ammerman, and I am a middle school teacher at Cordova High School in Cordova, Alaska. I teach English, Social Studies, and Art to a diverse group of students, and I am proud to be part of a community where education truly matters.

I am here today to speak in strong support of HB 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As a teacher in a rural school, I have seen firsthand the challenges that both students and educators face when funding is stretched thin. The proposed increase of \$1,000 for FY26 and additional increases of \$404 for FY27 and FY28 are essential steps toward ensuring that our students, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, receive the quality education they deserve.

Rural schools in Alaska face unique and often daunting challenges. With fewer resources, both financial and human, we are forced to be creative in how we deliver instruction. Every year, I am asked to do more with less. The rising cost of materials, energy, and basic supplies continues to outpace our funding, and it's becoming harder to maintain even the most basic classroom environment. The proposed BSA increase would go a long way toward helping us meet these growing costs and ensure that our students continue to have access to a well-rounded education.

In my own classroom, I teach students who come from a variety of backgrounds, and many face economic hardships that can create additional barriers to learning. The arts have been well-funded in the past but I fear that times are changing for the worse in that regard. Art is a vital component of a student's education. The proposed funding increase would allow us to better support not just core subjects like English and Social Studies, but also vital programs like Art, which helps nurture creativity, critical thinking, and emotional expression. For many students, Art is the one place they can feel truly seen and heard, and we owe it to them to ensure that these programs remain strong.

In addition to supporting classroom resources, the BSA increase is crucial for attracting and retaining quality teachers. Rural schools often struggle with teacher retention because the cost of living is higher, and the professional development opportunities are more limited compared to urban areas. The proposed increase in funding would help offset some of those challenges, making it more feasible for dedicated educators like myself to continue teaching in rural communities and better serve our students.

The inflation-proofing aspect of this bill cannot be overstated. Inflation has eroded the purchasing power of our funding over the past several years, and without adjustments like this, schools are left scrambling to maintain even the most basic services. This bill offers a much-needed lifeline to schools across Alaska, ensuring that our funding can keep pace with the rising costs we face.

I urge you to support this bill not only for the sake of the teachers and schools but for the students who are at the heart of this issue. Our children are our future, and every dollar

invested in their education is an investment in the future of Alaska. With the increased BSA, we can help ensure that every student, regardless of where they live, has access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this critical issue. I ask for your support in increasing the Base Student Allocation, so that our schools and students can thrive.

Sincerely,

**Rob Ammerman, Jr. High ELA/Social Studies & 7-12 Art
Cordova Jr./Sr. High School**

[REDACTED]

Cordova, AK 99574

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:40:08 AM

Good Morning,

I am Marilyn Menish-Meucci, I live in Petersburg Alaska and I represent myself. I am in favor of HB 69!!! It is imperative that we increase the funding for our schools. We are educating future leaders of this state and if we hope to keep them and their parents here, in the state, we need to have a robust thriving education system. Please vote yes on HB 69.

Thank you for all your hard work in getting this bill moving so early in the session. The school districts need to know what their funding will be by March.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Menish-Meucci

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:21:25 AM

Do schools need a BSA increase? Yes, but not like this. And not this huge of an amount. I have read this bill and it has no fiscal notes attached at a glance it will increase the BSA by over \$1800 in the next 3 years, but my gut tells me it would be a lot more. Increasing (BSA) alone will not fix our schools. We need real policy changes to hold districts accountable and ensure funds are used wisely. This bill does nothing to support academic reforms or the forming of far more effective charter schools. We need to invest in teachers we need strong incentives and better support to keep and recruit great teachers. Without quality educators, nothing else matters. It also does nothing to address the continued rise in the cost of Healthcare, utilities, building maintenance and transportation.

This bill is not comprehensive, it just spends more money with zero accountability. Alaska spends more on education than almost anyone, yet our results are abysmal at best. Not to mention we all know that this money will come straight out of the PFD and hurt out most vulnerable low income families who continue to be forced out of the small communities they live in by cost of living.

We need real change and accountability from school districts. Our kids and teachers deserve better.

Sincerely
Hannah Bengtson
Copper Basin Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:45:06 AM

Please vote YES for HB 69.

Here in Kodiak the 8+ million dollar deficit has forced a school closure for next year and many cuts in staffing. It has divided the community and added angst where the focus should be on learning.

A BSA increase of \$1808 is necessary to keep pace with inflation and adequately fund education in Alaska. Our future deserves it.

Sincerely,
Kristi Lonheim

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:35:04 AM

I support increasing the BSA and this bill. While I no longer have children in school, my children were in school when the schools had significantly more funds and achieved a great education. I now have grandchildren and their parents are reluctant to move back to Alaska because the school funding is insufficient and the schools and teachers are not adequately supported.

Please take this opportunity to support education in Alaska and pass HB 69.

Nancy Wainwright

[REDACTED]
Anchorage 99508

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:33:34 AM

Honorable Members of the Education Committee,
I am writing in support of HB 69 to increase funding to Alaska schools. It could be argued there is nothing more important than the education of our young citizens, for indeed the health of our country and planet depend on it. Your time is valuable so here is my succinct opinion:

-Citizens and legislators overwhelmingly came out last year in support of increased funding only to be vetoed by the Governor.

-School districts and teachers are continually being asked to do more with less. In particular the Alaska Reads Act, which is showing promise in raising reading scores, places a tremendous time and financial burden on schools.

-This bill would peg the funding formula to inflation, a common sense measure that will ensure the state's spending on schools would automatically rise in conjunction with rising costs.

Thank you for your time and thank you for supporting Alaska students and HB 69.

Dan Sullivan

[REDACTED]
Petersburg, AK 99833

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:13:53 AM

Greetings,

My name is Roberta Bear and I live in Anchorage, 99507. If needed, my phone number is [REDACTED].

I am writing to ask you to please pass HB 69 to raise the BSA. My understanding is that, if approved, there will be a \$1000 raise initially followed by two smaller increments in successive years. These raises will bring our funding up to meet inflationary costs that have accumulated since the last change to the BSA.

Our students, teachers and parents need to have confidence that the entire community of Alaska value the education of our upcoming generations. Without increasing the BSA our education system is lacking and that sends the message that our state does not value educating our youth.

As a lifelong resident of Anchorage, a former teacher with ASD, a parent of two (now grown) children who were ASD students, and now a grandparent of two that are soon approaching the age where they attend public school, I have been frustrated and dismayed watching the funding for education diminish in value. When we do not adequately fund education in our state we lose the potential of retaining excellent educators, as well as the potential for having well educated future generations who stay in Alaska. Please pass HB 69 to raise the BSA.

Thank you for your work to continue making our state of Alaska a wonderful place to live, thrive and enjoy a good quality of life.

Sincerely,
Roberta Bear

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:34:18 AM

Please pass this bill.

Ensuring our children, all of Alaskas children, have access to top tier education means increasing funding.

The status quo of barely trying to keep up with inflation is not doing our state any favors.

Investing in education not only ensures our state will be more educated and better equipped for the work field.

It means we will have home grown resources for the well paying jobs, which in turn will aid in investment in our communities rather than monies being pumped out of state.

Getting high quality employees who are committed to this state means investing in their future by allowing their children to have a place to grow and learn.

It means people will more likely establish a permanent presence and care about the communities where they work.

If education continues to be back burnered and dismissed this will result in further out migration and deter people from being recruited into the state, or ensure a transient working population that isn't interested in permanent residence and a expensive revolving door employment.

I am a parent of public school children and am proud of our school.

The school my children attend is Aquarian, they are able to do so well due to smaller class sizes and appropriate teacher support.

Passing this bill will aid in curtailing classroom size ballooning and give students the individual time they need and deserve to be successful.

Please pass this bill.

Nicholas Van Lith
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:08:33 AM

Dear House Education Committee,
Please support HB 69.

It is a reasonable bill to support this base student allocation funding now and with this bill, into the future to create stability for school districts and rural schools statewide. The time is now to forcibly support this bill as school districts in Fairbanks and Anchorage prepare to make final decisions on closing schools.

I am a 43 year Alaskan resident who does not have children, but I support education wholeheartedly, and pay the largest portion of my FNSB property taxes to education. I do so happily because a school district that doesn't have to lay off teachers and staff, outsource janitors, close schools, increase class sizes, and scurry around every year to fill budget deficits, and deficits from inflation, is a school district or school that puts it's resources into teaching the young people of today how to be fit, critically thinking adults and leaders of tomorrow.

I myself am tired of watching my community of Fairbanks fall apart every year during school and assembly budget time as they beg the elected leaders in Juneau to do their part. It's like Groundhog Day, the movie named for a celebration coming up in just 4 days.

Do not underestimate the part that schools and school district health play in the outmigration we are seeing in this state.

Please support and do everything you can to advocate to the legislature writ large the importance of passing HB 69.

Thank you.
Sincerely
Diana Sparacino
Fairbanks, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:53:26 PM

I am writing to this committee to testify that a raise in the Student Base Allocation IS NOT WARRANTED AT THIS TIME!

It is time for cost cutting measures, such as 1) school consolidations; 2) a deep dive in to how funds are currently spent (how much to classrooms and how much to infrastructure and administration; 3) why there is such a decline in the performance of our students before throwing any more money at our schools.

Tammie & Lee Smith

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:35:09 PM

Hello,

As a mother of two seven year olds going to public school in Homer Alaska, I strongly support passing HB 69. Our schools are in desperate need of funding and I am getting very concerned at the potential loss of certain programs.

Heidi

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:26:46 PM

Dear Legislators on the House Education Committee,

My name is Linda O'Bannon. I have resided in Anchorage for 48 years. I am writing in support of HB 69. I think it is vital to the public education system in our State to raise the BSA.

In my opinion a raise in the BSA is long overdue. While at one time I believe the public schools in Anchorage were excellent, there has been a decline. Larger class sizes and inadequate funding are not conducive to a quality education.

I think a strong public education system is vital to Alaska's future. Please pass HB69.

Thank-you for considering my views,
Linda O'Bannon
[REDACTED] Anchorage, AK 99503

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:59:41 PM

I am in favor of raising the BSA. The cuts that the governor has made in the past are self-defeating, short-sighted, and indefensible. We must support public schools and teachers as a foundation of citizenship and work force.

Sandra Dauenhauer. Ester, AK

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:00:32 PM

Alaska desperately needs a rise in our BSA and the future of our kids depends on it. Kids and education are our future.

Hugh Hall

[REDACTED]

Ketchikan AK

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:08:41 PM

Good evening,

I am writing to advocate strongly for an increase in the BSA. My job takes me into all of the public schools here in Juneau, and I've been able to witness the change for 14 years. The impact of reduced funding is shockingly obvious in every single classroom I enter. The teachers are not ok. The kids are not ok. The message you are sending us all is that you don't care about our kids, which I don't believe- of course you care about Alaskan kids.

Please, at a minimum increase the BSA to keep up with inflation, funding Alaska's public school system is a Constitutional duty.

Thank you for reading,
Kelly

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:33:54 PM

Offering quality public schools to all children of our nation is a main priority for me. I will never understand why and how public education is not at the top of the list for supported programs in our state, and country.

I am a recent retired teacher who knows, without a doubt, that it is our responsibility to ensure that our schools are adequately funded and available to all. It is a constitutional duty!

Our state and federal government has fallen way below this goal. This continuous neglect and under-investment in our public schools must end for the benefit of our students, families, and communities.

A significant investment in Alaska's school system is needed NOW! Our district is facing a budget deficit of \$500,000.00. Already working with a minimal staff there is no room for more cuts to be made. One of our schools may be closed.

Please! Our schools need this extra funding desperately. Do the right thing for our children.

Most sincerely,
Anne

Anne Connelly
[REDACTED]
Tenakee Springs, AK
99841

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 1:46:42 PM

Representatives of the Education Committee,

I oppose HB 69 and urge you to dramatically change the bill or vote it down.

While the BSA has been flat funded, millions of dollars in one time funding have flowed into the school districts in addition to those BSA funds. Yet with all the millions of dollars, the outcomes have remained largely the same-poor.

The major exception to that rule is related to the Reads Act which has actually produced great outcomes, dramatically improving student literacy rates (my own son benefitting from this program). The reason it was successful is because it was a reform. Money will not solve the problems in the education system, only reform can.

We have all heard the phrase: the definition of insanity is to continue doing the same thing you have always done (throw millions at the public education system with no accountability and no reform .

Please vote this waste of money down. We need the BSA tied to reform for the future of our children.
Thank you , Audri Jirak -mom in MSBSD

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:36:14 PM

Good afternoon,

Let me begin by thanking you for your service to our state. I am a lifelong Educator and have been the principal of blackly middle school in Sitka Alaska for the past 13 years. In this time span we have lost many programs, courses and staff. Last year as a district we lost 18 positions due to budgetary restraints! It is time for our state to invest in our future by investing in our kids! House bill 69 does exactly that by adding a \$1000 inside the BSA followed by 404 two years from now and another four hundred and four three years from now. The BSA has not been touched since 2017 when a mere \$30 was added to it.

Excluding this pittance of an increase the last time the BSA was increased was 2011! I am writing to each of you to encourage you to vote yes on HB69! Our students deserve the best education we can provide them. After all, today's students will be tomorrow's leaders! Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB 69: Please support the strength of Alaskan education
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:49:44 PM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Theresa Miller - I am currently a graduate student at the University of Alaska and reside in Fairbanks.

Along with tomorrow's public testimony schedule, I want to please implore you to support this bill as an investment in our current and future Alaskans. Providing education to our children is not only a Constitutional duty, but a human right ([UN Article 26](#)) and a cornerstone to the communities we live and work in.

This is a critical step to keep pace with the inflation that cripples our schools' ability to meet students' needs and districts here in Fairbanks are closing and my loved ones' school in Nome is facing budget and position cuts due to these limited resources. **Our children deserve to begin their lives with a quality, safe education - please help them thrive!**

Thank you,
Theresa Miller

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:03:49 AM

This Alaskan and her spouse strongly support increased funding for education. Children are our greatest resource and we should not short them an education or change any opportunities for any children to get a public education. We simply cannot afford not to provide youth the best foundation possible.

We would love to see this bipartisan legislature send the governor a veto-proof bill early in the legislative session that provides increased funds for students.

On a side note, our daughter-in-law is a teacher in the Anchorage School District who is considering leaving the profession because of the lack of support for education funding and strengthened benefits for teachers. It would be a loss and without increased support, may be just of one many teachers who leave the profession for better opportunities elsewhere.

Thanks for all you do. Lets get this done early in the session and focus on our other challenges.

Anne & Tom Brooks
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 - please support
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:38:43 PM

Dear house finance committee - I'm writing you this email to urge you to support HB69 to increase the BSA.

I have lived in Alaska for over 20 years and now live in Fairbanks with my wife and two children, one in kindergarten and one in fourth grade. Our kindergartner is in a class of 28 kids. Again, 28 kids in a kindergarten class!

We love Alaska and want to raise our kids here, but only if they get the education they deserve. Please help provide this by supporting the BSA increase and supporting the future of our kids and the state of Alaska.

Thank you,
Jeff Wells

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 - Raise the BSA!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 5:31:12 AM

Hello,

I am a parent of 2 students in the ASD system and I am writing to encourage you to raise the BSA. Our schools are in dire need of funding and students and families depend on them for so much. Please do everything you can to fully fund our schools during this legislative session, starting with raising the BSA and HB69.

Thank you,

Allison Koos Fox

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 - support
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:04:30 PM

Dear Alaskan legislators,

The one-time funding increases provided by the Governor do not provide the stability that our schools need. Dragging out the process of funding education, forcing school districts to make tough choices, is not the preferred way to do business. Please approve HB 69.

Please approve the \$1000 increase to the BSA for the 2026 fiscal year that helps catch up with inflation (\$1,800 is the amount that has been calculated as the BSA needed to equal recent inflation). Adding language that would provide for increases in FY27 and FY28 to keep up with inflation would be prudent.

The majority of students in Alaska attend public schools. I have watched the Petersburg School District go with one less janitor with the teachers having to pick up the slack and clean their own classrooms (on top of their regular schedule). The math program is short a teacher in the secondary. The elementary combined kindergarten to have one less staff (the incoming kindergarten class will likely be much larger than this year's). In other words, cuts have been made, the budget has been balanced, and all resources are already stretched thin.

Alaska cannot continue to neglect and under-invest in our public schools. Please be proactive and responsible.

Thank you for your attention, Joni Johnson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 Comments
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:36:21 AM

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. I am in strong support of HB69. Education in Alaska needs to catch up on funding and then increase its support to support a system like we had in the 1970's and early 80's. We had an education system second to none in those days. Residents paid directly for it with a \$100 payment directly to schools through our state income tax.

HB69 is a pragmatic approach bringing inflation adjusted funding back to where it was in 2010 in a phased approach over 3 years. Inflation proofing for the future is included. Why are other budget items increased periodically to account for inflation and economic conditions and not education funding? It has been mired in the 2010's for over a decade. Case in point: current discussions to increase raises for the Governor, Commissioners and Legislators swiftly passed 2 years ago.

It has been suggested that we are just throwing money at education and reforms are needed. We need to get funding to a reasonable level, increase educator's salaries and benefits while attracting and retaining the best and most dedicated educator's in the nation. Then we can adjust the curriculum to help all K-12 students achieve desired results.

We do not need more school choices. Parents have all the choices needed for students to get a good K-12 education if we support teachers, staff and facilities. Students can choose public schools, charter schools, homeschooling or private schools. If parents want their kids to attend a private religious school at their expense, that's their prerogative. Public school funding should not be impacted by the choice.

Our state school system is too diverse to attempt State control of school choice. We have a mix of urban, rural, and off-highway rural schools. Public and charter schools work in an urban setting, but would be handicapped in a rural setting. Local school board control, as we currently have, seems appropriate to me. Resist State Overreach just like the administration wants to resist federal overreach.

The root cause for our lacking education and student performance, in my opinion, is funding.

- We currently have a funding deficit from years of underfunding due to inflation and budget issues.
- We cannot attract and retain quality educators due to salary and benefit deficiencies.
- We have large school fixed costs due to restrictions on budgeting needed maintenance.
- We have too large a student/teacher ratio due to lack of funding.

The argument that we are just throwing funding at education with no return holds little water, in my opinion. Examples of throwing money away under tight budgetary conditions are:

- Hiring \$600-1000/hr lawyers for lawsuits against perceived Federal overreach.
- Joining lawsuits for national causes and paying legal fees that have no practical benefit for Alaska.
- Funding \$million studies on salaries for state workers (including teachers) and then not making them public in time for budgeting purposes.

- Funding quarter \$million dollar studies to refute privately funded economic studies on AIDEA and then never releasing the results to the public.

I am a product of the public school system from a middle income family. I was able to get a BS degree in engineering as well as MS and PhD degrees in engineering. I was able to use my education for a 40 year engineering career in Alaska. The current generation deserves the same opportunity with well-funded K-12 education in Alaska.

Barry Santana, PhD PE
Wasilla, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:50:38 PM

Honorable Committee Members:

Public schools are in crisis. This isn't news. Schools across our state have closed and more are slated for closing. Our resources are being stretched thinner than ever, Alaska students are losing educational opportunities, and amazing teachers are being forced to leave the profession. Resolution of this crisis has been kicked down the road year after year and we've reached a dead end. We cannot continue to ignore the funding crisis that has plagued public education in our great state.

Our children deserve the best education possible. Every time their class sizes grow, that is denied them. Every time the community that their educators foster for them is disrupted because of cuts and displacements, that is denied them. Every time an academic or extracurricular program is eliminated because of ongoing budget constraints, that is denied them.

Teachers are doing everything they can to work with what they have, going above and beyond by dedicating their own time to find outside donors for classroom materials and often spending their own money because districts lack funding for the materials teachers need to effectively do their jobs and support their students.

I urge you to support HB69's Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase and long-term education funding solutions. Set aside political differences and focus on providing this impactful relief to our public schools, so that Alaska's school districts have the resources necessary to support the future generations of this great state.

Public schools are the cornerstone of our democracy. An informed and participating citizenry is critical to maintaining a free society. Public schools establish the foundation in which our economy generates its workforce. Public schools create the safe and welcoming space in which our children grow into the well-rounded future leaders of our communities.

My family urges you to invest in our children - in Alaskans.

Thank you for your service and leadership on this important subject. I appreciate you taking the time to listen,

Stephanie Meek
Mother of 3, fourth generation Alaskans

Alaskan educator
Eagle River, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: HB69 public comment
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:53:47 AM

Dear House and Senate Education Committees:

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

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

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

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

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

Transportation: Less school buses available for many neighborhoods (i.e. some students have to walk more than 1 mile to their bus stop on steep hilly outlying roads with no shoulders all winter). My daughter has a long bus rides of nearly 1 hour per

way. Friends' kids have bus rides of OVER 1 hour each way because they combined middle and high school routes into the same bus to save money. This means that they drop the high school kids off first and then drive across town (additional 20 minutes) to drop kids off at middle school. This makes for very long bus rides for many kids. These busing "efficiencies" done by the Fairbanks school district have a negative impact on kids and families. These transportation issues (started during COVID and continue today) are partly why many people pull their kids out of school in our district and look for other options (private school, home school, move to lower 48, etc).

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

Please provide adequate funding for our school district now.

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 raise the BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 7:39:46 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly support HB69 and raising the BSA. Our schools are a vital part of our community. They are filled with wonderful, dedicated staff but it is clear they aren't properly funded. They just need consistent and sufficient support so they can do the great work they know how to do.

Thanks,
Ellie Ishaya

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69 testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:53:12 AM

Good morning,

I called in from the Anchorage LIO this morning to testify about HB69 and the need to increase the BSA. Below is a slightly expanded version of what I said this morning. Many other people provided testimony about the larger picture issues of trying to keep providing the same level of service with funding that hasn't kept pace with inflation. They also nicely stated the flawed idea of requiring improved performance before providing adequate funding. So I decided to focus on specific examples of how school funding affects my children.

A couple of additional points I did not have time to address this morning:

-Class sizes continue to increase because of inadequate school funding. My son's kindergarten and first grade classes have had 26 students in them. Imagine trying to teach a room of 26 five year olds how to read.

-Imagine a legislator coming forward with a bill to slash the BSA by \$1800. What an uproar that would cause! How absurd to slash more than 20% of school funding! But that is essentially what has happened over the past 15 years.

-My family had the opportunity to leave Alaska when my husband's employer left the state in 2020. We made the difficult decision to give up a well paying job so we could stay here in Alaska. We love Alaska, this is home, so while finding a new job with a substantial pay cut was stressful, we felt it was the right decision. However, with every year that I see our government decide to not adequately fund our public schools I feel more and more doubt about our decision to stay.

Thank you for the work you do.

Megan Peltier
Anchorage

Good morning,

My name is Megan Peltier and I am from Anchorage.

I am not a teacher, a school district employee, a member of a union or any other special group. I am one of the ordinary everyday Alaskans that Governor Dunleavy says he is working for. I am a mom of three elementary students in the Anchorage School District. I have lived in Alaska for nearly 40 years and I am a graduate of ASD. Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the urgent need to increase education funding.

The Anchorage School District has many fantastic opportunities for its students, but every year the BSA isn't increased those opportunities are on the chopping block.

My oldest daughter is in IGNITE, the gifted program. It is her absolute favorite part of the week and provides the opportunity for her to do a lot of hands on STEM activities.

All three of my kids are in the French Immersion program at our neighborhood school.

Language immersion has been shown to increase literacy skills in English (not just in the target language) along with increasing overall academic performance, problem solving skills, and cultural awareness.

These two programs are at risk every year that the BSA is not increased.

Our school is lucky and has an active PTA that fundraises to buy things like ice melt, a snow plow tractor, and a gravel spreader for our school. Imagine having adequate school funding so our school could get that safety equipment on its own. I am thankful for our generous parents and donors, but I am concerned for schools that are not as fortunate.

Please substantially increase the BSA and inflation proof it. Today's students are the future of our state.

Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: HB69 testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:46:27 PM

To whom it may concern -

My name is Katie Rohrs and I am the current PTA president at Bear Valley Elementary in Anchorage. I am writing to you today, in hopes that you will keep education and necessary funding at the forefront as you work through the budget for this fiscal year.

As many of you are aware, Bear Valley was recently placed on the school closure list as the Anchorage School District confronts a lack of funding and budget constraints. Thankfully, through community involvement, hours of research, data analysis and testimony, corrected data was uncovered that allowed our school to be removed from the closure list. The turmoil our families were suddenly thrust into ignited our resolve to fight for education and understanding of what our district and so many others are faced with when it comes to educational funding and budgeting.

- Why and how had our state reached a point where we were relying on bandaid funding from year to year?
- Why has the BSA only increased 5% in fourteen years, falling far short of inflation?
- Why is there a shortage of qualified staff in our schools?
- Why do we lack the resources and materials to ensure our children receive a proper education?
- What else will be stripped away as various levels of government seek to balance budgets?

Our family relocated here from the Houston, TX area four years ago in support of the oil and gas industry. We have three children in the public school system and I myself taught in diverse socioeconomic schools during my time in the classroom before our move to Anchorage. The funding concerns for education are not specific to Alaska. This is a growing problem all across the United States and with the future of The Department of Education in limbo, this just further puts into light the need for a well thought-out plan by our state.

It sits with *you* to make a decision that puts our children and the future of Alaska front and

center. If there is no priority put on our youth, then where is the draw to stay, enter the work force or receive higher education here? Do we not want them to turn around and invest in our community as adults? For example, UAA recently lost its accreditation for teaching which means there are no student teachers in Alaska who can then funnel into our classrooms as seasoned educators retire.

What myself, our PTA board, and families in Anchorage are asking of you, is to raise the BSA. Not another 5% over the course of the next fourteen years, rather to a number that gives our schools the **teachers, staff, materials** and **support** they need to secure the safety and future of our youth here in Alaska. HB69 appears to be the launching point we need to get us to that place. Please vote to ensure that we do not have a repeat of last year's vote that left education behind.

Currently, PTAs, grants, private funding, and other support organizations are providing a shocking and unsustainable level of support to our school system. Within the last few years, The Bear Valley PTA has purchased a snow plow, provided functioning blinds throughout the school that are essential during lockdown drills, replaced thousands of library books, projector bulbs, computers and other technology, provided a pallet jack, replaced gym equipment and even purchased ice melt for our custodial staff, among many others. In addition, we are providing resources for enrichment opportunities and afterschool programs and Bear Valley Community Association (BVCA) offers before and after school childcare for our working families. I fully acknowledge that our school has excellent parent engagement and support and that the support structure for many other schools does not look like ours. However, this monumental level of support from families is not sustainable. Parents and grandparents cannot keep our education system afloat... We do not receive Title funding and are solely reliant on the passing of bonds and community support to get things done.

As a transplant, who has lived and worked in many different locations, there is something special about Alaska that draws you in and makes you want this to be your forever home. If our attitude and actions towards education do not improve drastically, we, and many others, will make a difficult decision about what is best for our families and our children's academic futures. Talented, generous, invaluable and skilled residents across this state will take their families elsewhere. It does not need to be this way if we prioritize funding for our education system.

I would like to invite you to visit with the Bear Valley PTA so that we may educate on areas where we need your help. We want to use our voices in a productive and meaningful way to help drive change and are here to be of service to you throughout this process as well. Thank you for your time, and look forward to additional dialogue in the future.

Katie Rohrs

Bear Valley PTA President



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB-69 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:17:33 AM

Dear Members of the House,

I am writing as a parent and community member in Kodiak, my hometown. I attended public school for Kindergarten through 12th grade in Kodiak, and my two children are now in public school. Our local school district is in dire financial straits almost completely due to the state's flat funding of public education. The lack of BSA increase while inflation has risen 30% has crippled our school district. I urge you to support HB-69 and increase the BSA. Our children, teachers, and communities deserve the best education we can give them. Our district has trouble recruiting and retaining qualified teachers due to low teacher salaries, high cost of living, the housing shortage in Kodiak, and burn out. Increasing the BSA will allow our district to increase teacher salaries and retain and recruit more qualified teachers. Our district just made the heart wrenching decision to close one of our four elementary schools. The district is looking at much larger class sizes next year as another way to save money. We know that class size is a very important factor in student success and teacher retention. Passing HB-69 will allow our school districts to address some of the shortages that are leading to low teacher retention/recruitment and large class sizes.

Thank you for supporting this bill.

Molly Odell
Kodiak, AK

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Cc: [John Hargis](#); [Michael Vrvilo](#); [Susan Steele](#); [George Smith](#); [Andrew Leavitt](#); [Esther Brown](#); [Meghan McCarthy-Grant](#); [Minnie Charlie](#); [John Walsh](#)
Subject: HB69 Written Testimony
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:27:41 PM
Attachments: [Education Committee Support for HB69 Investing in Alaska's Students and Future.pdf](#)

Good evening,

Thank you for your service and dedication to the people of Alaska. I am attaching my written testimony in strong support of HB69. We hope this legislative session will be productive and result in positive outcomes for Alaska's public education students, their families, and the dedicated educators who serve them.

Respectfully,

John Hargis
Superintendent



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:17:02 PM

Hello,

Writing to urge your support of the increase in the BSA in HB69. I have two children in school and the combination of cuts and inflation has been devastating for their education. The district is doing the best they can trying to do more with less, but the fact is that more money is needed.

Thank you
Josh Chevalier
Sitka

Get Outlook for Android

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:16:30 PM

Dear Members,

I represent myself and my family in Petersburg. My husband and I have two children in the Petersburg School District, one graduate of the District, and myself who graduated from the District in 1989. I have followed the saga of school funding for many years, testified for the last 10 years, and continue to advocate for doing what is right and what is required by the State's constitution. I have seen how different the District is than when I grew up in it and most of it has to do with funding, not the efforts of staff. We have a great group of educators working hard every day but it is not sustainable with the current funding.

I fully support HB69 and urge you to as well. This is an old story that needs to be permanently addressed. It is your constitutional duty to fund education and ignore the Governor who clearly does not have the best interest of children in mind.

Imagine if public school was sufficiently funded? Imagine what could be done in our schools! Buildings would not have to be shuttered, class sizes would not grow to unmanageable proportions, important inventive programs would not be eliminated, and districts would have sufficient staff. When the Governor claims he wants to see "results" before funding, how is that even possible when Districts have been underfunded for years and literally scrambling to just provide the most basic bare bone programs? I don't expect you to have your 2017 salary and pay for a remodel in your home with today's costs. That is essentially what he and some of you are expecting. Remodel the education system but with 2017 dollars. No one, no matter how innovative, can produce substantive results without proper funding. Refusing to pay for programs won't magically change the outcome. Maybe if Districts had been properly funded for several years I could understand the point of view, however, the Governor's office, as well as other departments, have been granted increases in funding for years without any requirement to show any results nor actually show any results at all. The double standard is obvious.

Do what is right, do what the Constitution of the State of Alaska requires of you, and fully fund public education in Alaska without additional mandates or strings. You will not regret this decision.

Sincerely,

Sarah Pawuk Holmgrain
Broker/Owner
Petersburg Properties, LLC

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:49:36 PM

Dear Alaska State Legislators,

Alaska has talented, deserving, and gifted students in every school in the state.

Please support them by approving HB69.

Our buildings, staff and community need this additional funding to provide additional and necessary resources to help students to reach their potential.

Thank you,

Pam

Pamela Blodget
Special Education Teacher
North Slope Borough School District

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:37:46 AM

I support HB69 for strengthening our educational funding. Our school districts need any support this legislature can provide.

Thank you.

Suzette Mashburn
Friends of Anchorage Pioneer School House



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:08:32 AM

Dear Representatives:

I am a mother and grandmother of students formally and currently in the ASD. I am also a property owner and taxpayer. For the past decade plus, schools have been underfunded and public schools are struggling. Class sizes have increased and special programs (including federally mandated programs for kids with disabilities and learning style differences) have been critically reduced.

I support HB69. Our schools need this help to adequately educate our children:

Paying teachers more to recruit and retain the best is not throwing money away.

Slowing the trend of increased class sizes is not throwing money away.

Maintaining buildings is not throwing money away.

Reducing the number of school closures is not throwing money away.

Bringing back music and the arts as well as adequately addressing the needs of different learners is not throwing money away.

We do not need more charter schools. We need to adequately fund the schools we have. Of course charter schools test better. The students are coming from families who opt into the program, help in the schools and generally have a higher family income and better support their children's learning. We need to help all students by giving all schools the tools to create a vibrant learning environment for each student.

Please vote yes for HB69!

Thank you
Judith Green
[REDACTED]
Anchorage

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:02:40 AM

Dear Legislators,

I am writing in support of HB 69. Alaskan children, teachers, and schools need community support and this bill comes at a tough time for education that will have lasting impacts on our schools. As a teacher and parent I urge you to support HB69.

Thank you for listening,
Lisa Schramek

--

Lisa E. Schramek Adams

[REDACTED]
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

[REDACTED]
[Sign up here to receive my art newsletter](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:53:53 AM

It is imperative to pass HB69 as it begins to repair the years of under-funding public education. This bill allows school districts to fund teachers and classrooms that keeps pace with inflation. Allocating funds to keep up with inflation is a minimum amount of funding for school districts.

Thanks,
Tim Whip
[REDACTED]
Homer, AK 99603
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:38:27 AM

Hello, my name is Haley Kinnard. I live in Homer, Alaska and my child goes to Paul Banks Elementary. I am in support of HB69 and a substantial increase to the base allocation for Alaska's kids. Thank you for taking public testimony!

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:24:24 AM

Hello,

I'm writing in support of HB69. We need to do what we can to protect various levels of funding for public schools. This is a step in the right direction of helping to support our students, our families, and our public schools. Please vote "YES" on HB69.

Jeigh and Lea Stanton Gregor

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:15:37 AM

Dear House Education Committee,
I am writing in support of passing HB69 to increase the BSA for all Alaska students. Children are our future, and their education should be a priority.

Please support the passing of this bill,
a concerned grandparent, resident of Alaska, ASD volunteer, and active constituent,
Kimberly M. Millett

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99508
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:26:35 AM

Dear House Education Committee Members,

My name is Gabby Ide from Anchorage representing myself. I have 3 children in ASD and the gross negligence with the bloated funding ASD receives without accountability. I am not in support of HB69 as it is written.

- Education spending is the second-largest category of Alaska's budget: the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) is budgeted \$1.67 billion for fiscal year 2023 (July 2022 – June 2023).
- Education spending has outpaced inflation in the last 10 years by over 50%.
- Alaska has much higher per-pupil expenditures than the nationwide average—over \$22,000 per student per year, the sixth highest in the nation—but Alaskan students lag in academic performance, ranking 49th in education according to the Casey Foundation in 2022. Alaska's current spending per pupil is 23% higher than the U.S. average.
- Between 2002 and 2020, Alaska saw a 0.7% drop in enrollment from 133,000 students to 132,000 students, yet current spending growth has kept pace with revenue growth, increasing 32% per pupil. Correspondence school enrollment has risen to 16.3% of students.
- Since 2002, Alaska has grown its education revenues and spending by nearly a third while enrollment in brick-and-mortar schools has declined.

Increases in support services have quickly outpaced the lean increases in teaching salaries.

- To improve Alaska's dismal education outcomes, funding should be used to directly support students instead of just increasing generalized education funding.
- Alaska is falling behind on all education fronts but one—Alaska's charter schools lead the nation in math and reading performance.
- Alaska's current correspondence program should be fully funded (it is currently only funded at 90%). Alaska legislators should focus on leveling the financial playing field for families who choose charter and correspondence programs for their children over traditional neighborhood schools.
- Increasing funding and access to correspondence always all Alaska's families, regardless of income or location find a system of education that will allow them to reach their educational goals.
- Only a few charter schools have been authorized in the past few years despite an increased demand. By all measures, students in Alaska's charter schools perform better than students enrolled in traditional public schools regardless of ethnicity, subgroup, or gender.¹¹
- Adding money to an antiquated, one-size-fits-all system is not the solution Alaska's students need. It is time to fund students, not systems.

Thank you,
Gabby Ide
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:44:05 PM

Dear State Representatives,

Alaska's schools are suffering! Please support HB69 so that our students are educated and can qualify to fill future jobs in our country and our state. Do you really want our education system to be in LAST PLACE in the USA? I do not!

Thank you for your support!

Sarah Campbell
Fairbanks, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:39:57 PM

Hello,

My name is Lucas Scalzi. I have two daughters in Homer area Elementary schools. I am overwhelmingly in support of House Bill 69. Our schools are a critical foundation for our kids and will have a massive impact on their futures and the future of our state. Our family has had an incredibly positive experience so far in the public school system. But that stands to change if our state government chooses, again, to not invest in our schools, our teachers, our children, and our future. Increased class sizes and diminished extracurriculars completely compromise the quality of a public education. It's already hard to find teachers, soon the state will lose families and students. Why would I continue to raise my children in Alaska if their right to a public education is provided at a quality that is a fraction of what can be found elsewhere. My children deserve to reach their greatest potential. The passing of HB69 would be an appropriate step to support every child's greatest potential. Please, do the right thing and vote in favor of House Bill 69.

Thank you,
Lucas Scalzi

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:14:55 PM

Hello,

My name is Jill Scalzi. I have two daughters in Homer area Elementary schools. I am overwhelmingly in support of House Bill 69. Our schools are a critical foundation for our kids and will have a massive impact on their futures and the future of our state. Our family has had an incredibly positive experience so far in the public school system. But that stands to change if our state government chooses, again, to not invest in our schools, our teachers, our children, and our future. Increased class sizes and diminished extracurriculars completely compromise the quality of a public education. It's already hard to find teachers, soon the state will lose families and students. Why would I continue to raise my children in Alaska if their right to a public education is provided at a quality that is a fraction of what can be found elsewhere. My children deserve to reach their greatest potential. The passing of HB69 would be an appropriate step to support every child's greatest potential. Please, do the right thing and vote in favor of House Bill 69.

Thank you,
Jill Scalzi

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:26:38 PM

Greetings --

I have been advocating for education funding for about 10 years and find that it is utterly exhausting because I feel as though the legislature isn't listening to the constituents. Our schools are in dire need of a significant boost in the student-based allocation. We have too many schools running short-staffed because they don't have the funds to fully staff schools or they can't find people willing to work at a low wage.

Please, please, please start investing in our public schools. A BSA increase of \$1,800 would allow districts to keep pace with inflation. The children and youth in our state deserve better.

Kind regards

Karin Halpin

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507

[REDACTED]
Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:04:12 PM

Dear Members,

I am a retired, 30+year elementary teacher, as well as the mother of two sons that went through both American and Italian public school systems. I know what it is to teach in a well functioning and financed school and one that is struggling. I know that when students go to schools that are well supplied, with supported and contented teachers, they learn better. When the State treasures and provides for its education system, that will make schools that create excellent citizens.

We are not doing that in Fairbanks now. Families with young children are leaving, we are in crisis.

Please support

The education situation in Fairbanks is dire; please support HB 69.

Sincerely,
Barbara Rondine
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, Alaska
99709

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69, BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:46:12 AM

I am writing to support HB69 increasing the Base Student Allowance. Our students, including my three grandchildren, have gone far too long struggling in crowded classrooms and lacking basic educational support. Please help our students succeed by passing this bill.
Daryl Farrens
Wasilla, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:57:15 PM

My name is Susan Allmeroth Two Rivers Alaska

If we tie BSA to the CPI to Anchorage and we enter a depression we will need to shutter out schools.

Let's try a new approach to the BSA by considering a few new factors:

- **Student Needs:** Schools may receive additional funding based on the needs of students, such as those with disabilities, low-income students, or English language learners.
- **State or District Budget:** The amount of funding available in the state's budget can affect the BSA. If the state has more funds available, the BSA might be higher.
- **Additional Adjustments:** There might be other factors like geographic cost differences (some areas may cost more to operate than others), and this can adjust the BSA amount.

Each borough may have different unique needs for this allocation, but the core idea is that it's tied to student enrollment and local funding policies.

If we continue to tie the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** to the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** can be troublesome for a few reasons:

- **Mismatch with Educational Costs:** The CPI measures inflation in general consumer goods and services, but it doesn't always align with the specific costs schools face. For example, education-related expenses like teacher salaries, special education needs, or school infrastructure often rise faster than the CPI. This means the BSA, adjusted by CPI, may not be enough to cover the real cost increases schools face.
- **Underfunding During Low Inflation:** If the CPI is low or there's deflation, the BSA increase could be minimal, potentially leaving schools without the necessary funds to cover rising costs, especially when the cost of providing education is still increasing. Especially, if we are heading into the next great depression.
- **Regional Discrepancies:** The CPI is a measure of Anchorage, but costs of living and inflation can vary widely across different boroughs. For example, a borough with rapidly increasing housing or labor costs might struggle if its funding is tied to a Anchorage's CPI rather than a more regionally adjusted measure.
- **Lag in Response:** The CPI is usually reported on a delayed basis (annually, for example), which means funding adjustments based on CPI may not reflect current cost

pressures in schools in real-time.

In short, while the CPI is a commonly used economic indicator, it doesn't always track the specific financial pressures that schools face, making it a potentially ineffective way to ensure schools are properly funded year over year.

While tying the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** to **standardized test performance** can be troublesome for several reasons:

- **Inaccuracy in Reflecting True Needs:** Standardized test scores don't always accurately reflect a student's learning needs or potential. Many factors—such as socioeconomic background, access to resources, language barriers, or disabilities—can affect test performance, meaning schools serving higher-needs populations may be unfairly penalized, even if they're doing their best to support students.
- **Pressure to "Teach to the Test":** If schools' funding is tied to test results, it can create an incentive to focus more on test preparation rather than providing a well-rounded, enriching education. Teachers and administrators might prioritize testable subjects and skills, potentially neglecting creative, critical thinking, and non-tested subjects like the arts and physical education.
- **Incentivizing Inequality:** Schools in wealthier areas often have more resources, which can lead to higher test scores. On the other hand, schools in low-income areas, where students may face more challenges, might see lower scores. This could create a cycle where lower funding leads to fewer resources and more difficulty improving test scores, perpetuating inequality.
- **Test Score Variability:** Standardized tests can be influenced by many factors beyond just what students have learned, such as test anxiety, student health, or the testing environment. Relying on these scores to determine funding could lead to fluctuations in funding that don't accurately reflect the quality of the education being provided.
- **Narrow Focus:** Education should aim to develop a wide range of skills, from critical thinking to social and emotional learning, not just the ability to perform well on a test. Tying BSA to test performance could diminish the focus on these important areas of student development.

In summary, while standardized tests can provide some insight into student performance, tying BSA to these results can lead to inequities and pressures that don't necessarily support the broader goals of education. So, I do not support it.

The best way to determine the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** should be one that ensures fair and adequate funding for all schools while accounting for diverse student needs, regional differences, and the true costs of education. Here are several key

considerations for determining an equitable and effective BSA:

- **Student-Centered Funding:** The BSA should reflect the varying needs of students, recognizing that some students require more resources to succeed. For example, students with disabilities, English language learners, and those from low-income backgrounds often need additional support. A weighted funding formula could allocate additional funds to schools serving higher-needs students.
- **Cost of Education:** The BSA should be tied to the actual costs of providing education, including teacher salaries, instructional materials, facilities maintenance, and other operational costs. This could be done by regularly updating the BSA to reflect actual inflation and rising costs in education, beyond just the general **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, which may not fully capture education-specific expenses.
- **Regional Adjustments:** Different regions may have different costs of living, including housing, salaries, and operational costs. A regional adjustment to the BSA would ensure that schools in areas with higher costs aren't disadvantaged in comparison to those in less expensive areas.
- **Equity-Based Distribution:** The formula should prioritize equity, ensuring that schools in disadvantaged areas receive sufficient funding to bridge the gap in resources and opportunities. This might involve using a needs-based formula that factors in poverty rates, the percentage of students with disabilities, English language learners, and other equity factors.
- **Stability and Predictability:** The BSA should provide stable, predictable funding to schools. Frequent or drastic changes in funding can disrupt educational planning and make it difficult for schools to meet their students' needs. Setting a consistent growth rate for the BSA, while allowing for adjustments based on inflation or changes in student population, would help maintain this stability.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The process of determining and distributing the BSA should be transparent to ensure fairness and build public trust. It's important that stakeholders—teachers, parents, and communities—understand how the BSA is calculated and how funds are being spent to improve student outcomes.
- **Long-Term Planning and Support:** Funding should not just address short-term needs but also support long-term educational goals. This might include investing in technology, teacher professional development, and infrastructure that improve the quality of education over time.

A balanced, **needs-based** formula that accounts for both the direct costs of education and the varying student and regional needs is likely the best approach for determining BSA. This ensures that schools receive the necessary funding to provide all students with a

quality education, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.

To reflect the **actual cost** of education beyond the Consumer Price Index (CPI), it's important to incorporate factors that more accurately capture the specific challenges and expenses schools face. Here are several ways to achieve this:

1. Education-Specific Inflation Metrics

Instead of relying on the CPI, which tracks general consumer prices, a more targeted **education-specific inflation index** can be created. This index would track the costs that directly impact schools, such as:

- Teacher salaries
- Educational materials and technology
- Facilities maintenance and utilities
- Specialized staff (like counselors, special education professionals)
- Training and professional development for teachers
- Health and safety measures in schools

This tailored metric would better capture the true costs associated with running schools.

2. Regional Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)

The cost of living can vary significantly from one area to another. For example, schools in high-cost urban areas may face higher housing costs, transportation costs, and salary expectations compared to those in rural or less-expensive areas. A **regional cost-of-living adjustment (COLA)** can be added to the BSA to account for these disparities, ensuring that schools in higher-cost regions receive adequate funding.

3. Local Wage Adjustments

Since personnel costs (teacher salaries, administrative staff, etc.) represent a large portion of a school's budget, factoring in local wage trends is crucial. **Local labor market adjustments** could ensure that schools are able to recruit and retain quality staff by providing salaries that are competitive for the region, and reflective of rising or falling wage trends in the area.

4. Differentiated Funding for High Needs Students

As mentioned earlier, certain student populations—such as those with disabilities, English language learners, or those living in poverty—require additional resources. The funding formula could incorporate **weighted allocations** for these groups, reflecting the true cost of supporting these students, which often involves additional personnel, resources, and services.

5. Technology and Infrastructure Costs

The cost of integrating and maintaining technology has risen significantly in recent years, and this will likely continue to increase. Schools need to ensure they have the equipment, software, and cybersecurity measures to support both in-person and remote learning. A dedicated portion of funding for **technology and infrastructure** would reflect the growing need for digital tools and support.

6. Health and Safety Expenditures

Post-pandemic, schools face higher costs related to health and safety, including sanitization, PPE, ventilation improvements, and mental health services for students and staff. Including a **health and safety adjustment** would ensure that schools have the resources to address these pressing needs without detracting from their core educational goals.

7. Annual Reassessment of Cost Drivers

The cost of education evolves over time. To ensure funding is always aligned with current challenges, the education funding formula could include **regular reviews** (annually or biennially) of the major cost drivers, adjusting the BSA based on factors like changes in technology, infrastructure needs, or shifts in student population.

8. Collaboration with Educators and Administrators

Ensuring that funding aligns with actual needs requires direct feedback from educators and school administrators. Their insights about specific costs or challenges faced by schools, particularly those in underserved or high-need areas, can provide a clearer picture of what funding levels are truly necessary to deliver quality education.

Incorporating these strategies would provide a much more accurate reflection of the **actual costs** schools face, ensuring that funding levels are appropriate and that schools have the necessary resources to meet the diverse needs of their students. The key is to regularly adjust and tailor funding formulas to address real-time changes in the education landscape.

An example of a needs based formula is below.

A **needs-based formula** for determining a school's **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** is designed to allocate funding based on the specific needs of students and the challenges faced by a school or district, rather than solely on student enrollment numbers. This approach helps ensure that schools with higher numbers of at-risk or high-need students receive additional resources to meet those needs. Here's how a needs-based formula can work:

Key Elements of a Needs-Based Formula:

- **Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Every Student:**

- Every student enrolled in a school would receive a standard, base amount of funding. This amount covers basic education costs like teacher salaries, classroom materials, and general school operations.

- **Weighted Funding for High-Need Students:**

- The formula adds **weights** or additional funding for students who face greater challenges, including:

- **Low-Income Students:** Additional funding is allocated for students from low-income families to help address the challenges of limited resources and access to educational opportunities.

- **English Language Learners (ELL):** Schools with a higher number of ELL students would receive extra funding to support language acquisition programs and specialized instruction.

- **Students with Disabilities:** Schools with a higher population of students with disabilities would receive additional funding for special education programs, services, and accommodations.

- **At-Risk Students:** This could include students facing homelessness, those in foster care, or those at risk of academic failure. They may require additional support like counseling, mentoring, or other services.

These weights are added to the BSA to reflect the higher cost of educating these students.

- **Regional Cost Adjustments:**

- Since the cost of living and educational expenses vary by location, the formula can include **regional adjustments** to account for geographic disparities in salaries, housing, and overall cost of living. This ensures that schools in high-cost areas can meet the financial demands of running schools.

- **Local or District Needs:**

- Some districts or schools may have unique needs based on factors like rural vs. urban locations, school size, or aging infrastructure. The formula could factor in additional funding for **capital improvements** or specific local challenges that impact the cost of education.

- **Additional Factors (Optional):**

- **Teacher Experience and Quality:** Districts with higher percentages of inexperienced teachers or those in hard-to-staff schools could receive additional funds for **professional development**, retention programs, or to attract highly qualified teachers.

- **Health and Safety Needs:** For example, if a school is dealing with a higher incidence of health issues, it may need additional resources for **mental health services** or school-based health clinics.

Example of a Needs-Based Funding Formula:

Let's say the base student allocation is **\$6,000 per student**. Under a needs-based formula, the following adjustments might be made:

- **Low-Income Students:** A school with 40% low-income students might receive a weight of **0.25** (25% more funding). For each low-income student, the school would receive **\$7,500** ($\$6,000 + 25\%$ of $\$6,000$).

- **English Language Learners (ELL):** If a school has 20% ELL students, they might receive a weight of **0.2** (20% more funding). Each ELL student could then receive **\$7,200** ($\$6,000 + 20\%$ of $\$6,000$).

- **Special Education:** A school with 15% students in special education could receive an additional **\$1,500 per student** to cover specialized services, bringing the allocation to **\$7,500** per special education student.

- **Regional Cost Adjustment:** If a school is in a high-cost area, the formula might add **\$500** per student to account for higher operational costs, increasing the BSA to **\$6,500** per student.

Benefits of a Needs-Based Formula:

- **Equity:** By accounting for students' specific needs, the formula ensures that resources are directed where they're most needed, rather than simply distributing the same amount of money to every student regardless of circumstances.

- **Targeted Support:** Schools with a higher proportion of at-risk or high-need students receive additional funding to provide the necessary support, such as extra staff, tutoring, specialized programs, and resources.
- **Flexibility:** The formula can be adjusted to account for changes in student demographics, regional cost shifts, or other emerging needs, allowing for more adaptive and responsive funding.
- **Incentive for Improvement:** Schools are incentivized to focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable populations, since funding is tied to the presence of students who require more resources, such as low-income or ELL students.

Potential Challenges:

- **Complexity:** A needs-based formula can be more complicated to calculate and administer, especially when adjusting for various factors like regional cost variations or fluctuating student populations.
- **Disincentivizing Consolidation:** Some argue that needs-based funding formulas may unintentionally create a disincentive for schools to consolidate or streamline, as they may lose additional funding when they reduce the number of at-risk students in a district.
- **Equity Concerns:** While the formula aims for equity, there could still be issues of distribution or local political influence that may affect how fairly resources are allocated.

A **needs-based formula** for determining BSA aims to ensure that funding is distributed in a way that reflects the actual challenges and costs faced by schools serving different student populations. By adjusting funding based on student needs, this approach seeks to provide more equitable and effective support for all students.

I believe if we use a needs based formula we can find a balance between helping both our children and our teachers excel.

Thank you

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB-69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:51:12 AM

Hello,

I am a retired Alaskan public-school employee. I am writing in opposition to HB-69. Alaskan schools are failing our students. Throwing more money at a failed system with no policy changes to increase positive outcomes makes no sense at all. A lack of money is not the problem. Alaska needs educational reform. Our state education system is behind the times compared to other states. Alaskan schools used to be at the top, nationally. Now, Alaskan schools are at the bottom, except for our charter schools. We need change immediately! No more money until real reform is implemented across our state.

Dorothy Denison
Wasilla, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: HB69: Please raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:01:52 PM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a community member invested in our state's future, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808.

Investing in education benefits everyone in the state. An adequately-funded system leads to graduates who are equipped to contribute to stronger communities and a more competitive workforce. Raising the BSA will allow Alaskan children access to quality education, and attract and retain young families, which contribute to productive communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Diana Baetscher
Juneau, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House bil 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:48:55 PM

Hello,

I am writing in reference to house bill 69. I am a teacher in Kodiak and have been so for 6 years. Over those 6 years I have seen more and more of our budget get eaten up by the increase in the cost of things like fuel, utilities, food and supplies. As these costs go up either the budget must go up or other things must get cut. We have seen the latter. I have seen us cut teachers, admin, programs and most recently an entire elementary school.

We are not asking for a raise in funds beyond what we have needed in the past. We are asking for our budgets to keep up with inflation. In inflation adjusted funds we are operating with \$1,808 less per student than we did in the past. No wonder that the quality of Education has suffered. We need to improve our education and that starts with getting back to baseline.

Thank you

Amanda Knutzen

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 67
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:50:31 PM

Support HB 67! You know Ak education is sagging because all things related to educational success has been downgraded for years due to lack funding support from the state. You know how to fix it.
START WITH PASSING
HB 69

Hang in there with the fact checked truth :)

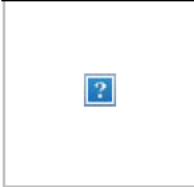
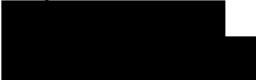
From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [YSD All Staff](#); [YSD Board](#); [Lisa Parady](#); [TLT Students](#); [AKI Students](#); [KKI Students](#)
Subject: House Bill 69 (HB 69)
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:21:14 PM

As superintendent of the Yupiit School District I support House Bill 69. With passage of this legislation the district will be able to continue improvements in the educational program for our students. Currently the district is struggling with the impact of years of flat funding. Without a substantial increase in the BSA, the district will not be able to attract or retain teachers and administrators given the current precariousness of school funding. Our communities rely on the soundness of our school buildings; they have a right to expect that our school buildings will well maintained. However, without predictable and adequate funding for ongoing repairs, it has been increasingly difficult to meet this expectation. Our parents' have a right to assume that their children will have access to full academic and extracurricular programs, so I urge passage of House Bill 69

Thank you for your time and attention,

--

George (Scott) Ballard
Superintendent
Yupiit School District



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69 Public comment
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:18:58 PM

Alaska House Education Committee,

I'm writing this comment on behalf of myself, Daniel Parks a Juneau resident and parent of two children in our local public schools. I support House Bill 69 increasing the BSA and school funding. Due to education funding that has not kept pace with inflation schools and teachers have to do more with less. This has resulted in huge class sizes and not enough para educator support. On top of that Alaska has probably the worst retirement benefits in the nation. The result is the loss of many great educators as they move to states with better funding and retirement benefits. This constant churn of new teachers is not good for student outcomes. Please pass House Bill 69 and also restore a defined benefit pension retirement for our teachers.

Thank you,
Daniel Parks

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: house bill 69 written testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:34:01 PM

Legislators: I cannot think of anything more important than having excellent schools to attract and retain the Alaskan families we want and need to grow and sustain our state. I am *happy* to pay taxes to support this important effort for our children and communities.

Thank you for considering my opinion. Joan Clover

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: house bill 69 written testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:34:01 PM

Legislators: I cannot think of anything more important than having excellent schools to attract and retain the Alaskan families we want and need to grow and sustain our state. I am *happy* to pay taxes to support this important effort for our children and communities.

Thank you for considering my opinion. Joan Clover

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: house bill 69 written testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:59:27 PM

I am deeply concerned with the underfunding of Alaska's educational system for the past several years. House bill 69 will make a difference if passed. Obviously, Alaska needs to invest in the future and education is one of the most critical areas that need further funding.
Richard Onorato, Anchorage, 99516

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:03:45 AM

Hello.

My name is Liam Laybourn. I am currently a student at Sitka High School. I think that House Bill NO. 69 is incredibly important for my education, and the education of many other students just like me. First and foremost, if this bill does not pass, it will not only harm me, and my education, but hundreds of others. Currently the Sitka school district is in a 2 million dollar deficit. This is causing our school board to take drastic measures, taking out every single class that is not immediately required for graduation. This means cutting out CTE classes. This means not being able to take 4 years of science and math, and when Colleges are looking for those with 4 years of math, english and science, along with 3-4 years of foreign language, it not only harms our highschool education, but greatly damages our choices and opportunities down the line. Furthermore, the elective and CTE classes in Highschool are incredibly important for young kids to learn other subjects besides just math and english, and get a chance to see what other career options there are. Also, in highschool, it is important to develop personal connections with your teachers to have a successful learning environment. However without our elective classes, our class sizes would become around 35-40 people per class, which is simply too much to effectively learn. Also, I would not be able to do as much extracurriculars outside of school as I am right now. I am on my school's robotics team, and we are gearing up for the state competition, but if House Bill NO.69 does not pass, we will not be able to compete at all next year. Also, i am this year's winner of the Congressional App Challenge, however, the only reason i even heard of this competition was through school, and talking to my elective teachers. These classes are so incredibly important for not only me, but future generations of young alaskans. This bill must pass so that our schools can not only be properly funded now, but properly funded going forward. Here is another way to think about this bill and how it will effect the future. This is simply just an adjustment for inflation. Households could not stay financially stable if they were paying 2025 prices while earning a 2014 income. This is the same for Schools. Our Base student Allocation has not been changed since over 10 years ago in 2014. During this time, inflation has increased by almost 31% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and is only increasing more. It is critical that House Bill NO.69 gets passed so that not only current students can get the education they need, but also generation after generation of Alaskan children.

Sincerely:
Liam Laybourn

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:59:59 AM

Good morning,

I'm a lifelong alaskan and support brick and mortar schools as essential to alaska's future, and reject the novel assertion that charter schools and vouchers can provide the breadth of education that is required for a functioning society. A reasonably funded education system is the central mission of state government, and has been neglected for nearly a decade. I firmly support House Bill 69.

Thanks for your time.
Ben Gibson
Homer

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:50:29 AM

I am writing to urge your support of increasing the BSA for our schools. This is long overdue, and vitally important to our communities across Alaska. I volunteer each week at an elementary school in Anchorage and have come to know first hand how important this support is. Our children, our communities and our economy thrive when our public education is supported.

Please do all you can to bring this bill into reality!

Thank you,

Patricia Moore

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:43:38 AM

To the powers that be,

My family supports house bill 69.

Public education is one of the best ways to invest in our future. Extra curricular activities are one of the first lines of defense to mitigate mental health issues in children.

I was raised by teachers. I have watched education fall in priority over the last 2 decades. It's time to take a stand and protect our kids right to education.

Sincerely,

Jamie Cloud

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:27:06 AM

I would like to express my concern for the state of public education in Alaska. I am a former teacher, parent of 3 very successful graduates of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and grandparent of a current student. The continual decline in financial support for students and schools is appalling. What higher priority could there be than our children who will be the future of Alaska. Please continue to push for adequate funding even in the shadow of a misguided governor. The futures of our children and state depend on it.

Sincerely,
Shannon West
Soldotna, AK

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S24, an AT&T 5G smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:39:02 PM

I would like to express my support for House Bill 69, calling to increase the BSA. Education needs to be a top priority for us as our youth are the future. Schools are struggling to make ends meet and unfortunately the ones who will be affected negatively are the innocent children. They need to be nurtured and supported in order to grow into adults and live a sufficient life. School is a basic need that should not be overlooked. Please raise the BSA and give the kids the support needed to thrive.

~Kristina Haynes~

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:01:48 PM

I am writing in favor of a substantial increase to the BSA for schools. Some of you may disagree, but I see education as necessary for a fulfilling life---- and I WANT educated people in our communities so that there's expertise in areas of business, health, law, plumbing, designing safe roads and houses, education, mental health-- you get the point. If you asked every parent if they want a good education for their children, I bet you would not get a no answer from any of them. So, vote for what the people want!

Christy McMurren
Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:13:06 AM
Attachments: [BSA.pdf](#)

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#)
Subject: House bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:11:22 PM

08:53

• Sent Public Testimony in Su...

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric Lehm

Homer, Alaska

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: House Bill No. 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:29:40 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to you today as both a principal of an elementary school and a parent of a kindergartener in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD). Our district is facing a catastrophic \$17 million deficit going into the next school year, and without a significant increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA), the consequences for Alaska's children and communities will be devastating.

The only way to bridge a deficit of this magnitude is through deep staff cuts—cuts that will impact theater technicians, pool staff, counselors, secretaries, custodians, teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. These reductions will severely diminish the quality of education and support available to students, many of whom already face challenges in accessing the services they need to thrive. Schools are the backbone of our communities, and continued underfunding is eroding their ability to function effectively.


Additionally, KPBSD's transportation deficit is so severe that bus route consolidations may force students to wait for their bus along dark highways—an unacceptable risk for our youngest learners. This is not the standard of education and safety that Alaskan families deserve.

Funding Alaska's public school system is not just a moral obligation; it is a constitutional duty. The vast majority of Alaska's children attend public schools, and yet years of neglect and underinvestment have left our schools struggling to provide even the most basic educational services. This trend must end.

To keep pace with inflation and ensure that all students receive the education they are guaranteed under our state constitution, the BSA must be increased by at least \$1,808 per student. Anything less will continue the cycle of underfunding that forces school districts into impossible financial decisions, harming students, families, and entire communities.

Alaska's future depends on the strength of its public schools. I urge you to prioritize education funding and provide the resources necessary to protect the well-being and success of all students. The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

	<p>Hannah Dolphin Principal Mountain View Elementary</p> <p>[Redacted contact information]</p> <p>[Redacted contact information]</p> <p>[Redacted contact information]</p>
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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: I Strongly Support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:12:59 AM

Esteemed legislators,

I write to you in support of HB69.

For more than a decade, Dunleavy has worked to promote his “school choice” snake oil by diverting money at the expense of our public schools.

Now, our schools lack the minimal funding they need to do their jobs.

And Dunleavy has the gall to cynically point to the system he has underfunded and tell us funding will not fix the problem.

I would say more, but this is just common sense.

Sincerely,

Justin Weaver
Private Wealth Manager
The Unceded Lands of Dena'ina Etnena - HD10

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: I support HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:15:52 AM

Dear Alaska education committees,

My name is Tory Rockefeller and I am a parent of a 1st grader and a local business owner here in Homer. I am in support of House Bill 69 and a substantial increase to the base student allocation for Alaska's kids. Homer is a rural community and our public schools are a vital part of that community. We do not have a private school option here, and homeschooling is not a realistic option for most families. Without adequately funding public schools, children will not be able to get a quality education here in Alaska, and many families will be forced to consider relocating. I ask you to please support HB 69 and invest in Alaska's future. Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: I support HB69!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:22:08 PM

Hello,

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

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

I SUPPORT HB69!

Thank you,
Shelby Hagen

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: I support HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:30:01 PM

Hello,

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

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

I SUPPORT HB69!

Thank you,
Collin Hagen

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: I support House Bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:01:32 AM
Attachments: [HouseBill69Support.docx](#)

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to convey my support for House Bill 69, increasing the base student allocation. This bill looks to help balance the major shortfalls in school funding we are currently experiencing.

Without proper funding, our students and educators will suffer the consequences, resulting in lower test scores, lower graduation rates, lower adult economic outcomes, increased disparities in educational opportunities and more.

I have three children in three different Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Public Schools and have already seen the effects of recent funding shortfalls in the ten years my children have been in the school system. We love our schools, and our educators, and know they are trying their best to provide an impactful and comprehensive education experience for our students. They need funding to be sustainable.

Our students are the future and deserve to be a priority. Unfortunately, our lawmakers have proven that school funding is not their priority, despite what they may say. Gov. Dunleavy's proposed budget in December reduced education funding by \$213 million, and his stipulations that changes to the education policy must happen before further funding will be considered is wrong. House Bill 69 is a sustainable, straightforward solution that I believe is essential.

Thank you,
Whitney Harness
Homer, Alaska

--



Whitney Harness
Visitor Services, Store and Communication Manager

Pratt Museum | [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Homer, Alaska 99603



The Pratt Museum is located on the ancestral lands of the Sugpiaq, Alutiiq, and Dena'ina People. Our mission is to strengthen relationships between people and place through stories relevant to Kachemak Bay. The story of this place is incomplete without acknowledging the Alaska Native Nations upon whose land we live and work, and whose presence and guidance continues to shape our community and stories.

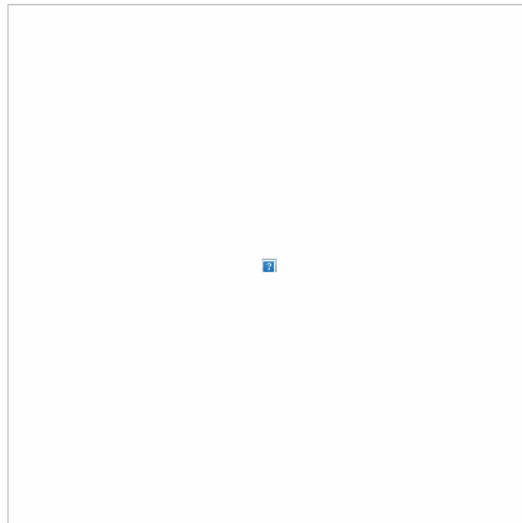
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: I support the Governor's position
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:31:49 AM

Tomorrow, make your voice heard and call-in to oppose House Bill 69. This bill is not comprehensive, just spends more money with zero accountability. Alaska spends more on education than almost anyone, yet our results are at the bottom. We need to demand real change and accountability from school districts. Our kids and teachers deserve better. Below, you'll find instructions for joining the hearing, along with key talking points to share with lawmakers so that Alaska gets better educational outcomes.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kendal Pike [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Call-In to Alaska's Public Testimony Hearing on Education Funding
Date: January 29, 2025 at 10:26:36 AM AKST
To: [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Office of the Governor [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, Jan 28, 2025, 4:01 PM
Subject: Call-In to Alaska's Public Testimony Hearing on Education Funding
To: [REDACTED]



Speak Out Against HB 69 and Demand Accountability in Education Funding

Tomorrow, make your voice heard and call-in to oppose House Bill 69. This bill is not comprehensive, just spends more money with zero accountability. Alaska spends more on education than almost anyone, yet our results are at the bottom. We need to demand real change and accountability from school districts. Our kids and teachers deserve better. Below, you'll find instructions for joining the hearing, along with key talking points to share with lawmakers so that Alaska gets better educational outcomes.



How To Call In

A public testimony hearing on HB 69 is happening Jan. 29, and we need your voice. Thank you for stepping up to tell the lawmakers that more funding *alone* won't fix the problem. We need good policy AND funding to achieve better educational outcomes. I'll be introducing laws with targeted policy solutions soon, so keep an eye out for the details.

[Call-In Info Sheet](#)

Key Talking Points For Education Change



Throwing more money at the Base Student Allocation (BSA) won't fix our schools. We need real policy changes to hold districts accountable and make sure funds are used wisely.



Parents deserve options. Backing school choice and correspondence schools gives families the power to do what's best for their kids.



By addressing the root causes, we can achieve better educational outcomes for Alaska's students.



To keep and recruit great teachers, we need strong incentives and better support. Without quality educators, nothing else matters.

Constant Contact



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In favor HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:15:41 PM

Please vote for this bill to raise the BSA to the level it should be.
Nikki Newcome
Valdez, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In favor of HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:00:35 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for Alaska Education House Bill 69. As a mother, teacher, and proud lifelong Alaskan, I believe this bill is a crucial step toward improving education for all of our children, ensuring that they have the opportunities and resources they need to succeed in an ever-changing world.

As a mother, I want nothing more than for my children to thrive in an educational environment that supports their growth, both academically and socially. HB 69 offers much-needed funding and reforms that will make a tangible difference in the quality of education available to them, especially in rural and underserved communities. It is not just a matter of improving facilities and access, but also of equipping our educators with the tools and support necessary to deliver the highest quality instruction.

As a teacher, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges our schools face, from overcrowded classrooms to limited resources. HB 69 addresses these issues directly by ensuring that funding is allocated where it is most needed, enhancing both the learning experience for students and the working conditions for teachers. With the right support, we can help our children realize their full potential, and this bill provides the foundation for that vision.

Finally, as a lifelong Alaskan, I care deeply about the future of our state. The education of our children is not only an investment in their future but also in the future of Alaska itself. By supporting HB 69, we are sending a clear message that we value the success of every child, regardless of where they live or their background. Strong, well-funded schools are the backbone of a thriving state, and HB 69 is an essential part of building that future.

I urge you to support Alaska Education House Bill 69 and work towards a brighter, more equitable future for all Alaskan children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eliza Dorn

Juneau, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In favor of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:29:34 PM

House Education,

Thanks to all of you for your hard work on behalf of Alaskans!

I am firmly in favor of HB 69. I have worked in education from preschool to high school, 15 years in the Anchorage School district. In that time I have seen and experienced a real change in how teachers and schools are supported.

I am disappointed to see how much teachers now struggle to manage classes, and disappointed in the large sizes of some of the classrooms. Student behaviors can be more disruptive and learning can decline due to more time spent on classroom management.

I am very heartened that there has been more support for preschools, where the introduction to learning and its process outside the home begins.

Please pass this much needed legislation! So many people have worked so hard to put this important bill in place.

Thanks,
Paula Davis

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In favor of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:19:05 AM

Good morning,

I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 69 and the increase to the BSA. I live in Sitka and have had the honor of working in the Sitka School District for the last 18 years. I also have a daughter in the 6th grade. Since I began working 18 years ago, positions and programs have been cut from our school nearly every year. Since I started, our middle school has lost:

- Spanish elective
- Sewing elective
- Cooking elective
- Health elective
- Technology/Typing elective
- Librarian
- Full time reading interventionist
- Art teacher
- Grade-level Science teachers
- Grade-level Social Studies teachers

I am heartbroken that my daughter does not have access to any of these learning opportunities and I fear what her education will look like if our school takes more cuts. Any additional cuts to staff will undoubtedly increase already large class sizes and reduce the number and variety of elective offerings. We owe it to our children, who are our future, to increase the BSA so schools can once again be fully funded and provide our children with the educational opportunities they deserve.

Sincerely,

Mike Kaminsky
Special Education Teacher
Blatchley Middle School
Sitka School District

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I acknowledge that I live, work and learn on Tlingit Aaní. To the people of Sheet'Ká, I say Gunalchéesh.

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In Support for HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:53:12 AM

Committee Members:

I am in strong support of HB69.

Public schools are the backbone of communities across Alaska, yet decades of state underfunding have led to overcrowded classrooms, teacher shortages, and deteriorating infrastructure. With each passing year, the uncertainty of funding continues to erode our public education system, jeopardizing the future of our students and our state.

Investing in public education is not just a moral responsibility—it is an economic imperative. Flat funding is driving families and skilled workers out of Alaska, deepening workforce shortages across all sectors. If we want to retain talent and sustain our economy, we must prioritize strong, well-funded schools.

School choice may be politically popular, but it comes with real financial costs. Expanding educational options requires adequate funding, not just rhetoric. Without proper investment, school choice risks weakening public schools rather than strengthening opportunities for all students. The state must acknowledge these costs and commit to fully funding the opportunities it promotes.

This annual cycle of uncertainty forces school districts and families into a needless struggle, diverting attention from more pressing legislative priorities. It is time to move beyond political delay and demonstrate real leadership. Please vote **YES on HB 69** and invest in Alaska's future.

Respectfully,

Terry Snyder

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: in support of education funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 7:34:57 PM

Dear Alaska Legislature,

I am writing in support of K-12 education funding increases statewide. I grew up in Fairbanks and went through the public school system, and it's been difficult to watch the steady decline of our schools since the 1980s. I have 2 kids now going through the K-12 system in Fairbanks, and it's a darn shame to watch these schools close, to watch strong teachers retire early or leave the state for better jobs, and to watch class sizes balloon over 30 kids. I understand that similar things are happening in Anchorage.

A rising tide lifts all boats, and that is the BSA. This is our future workforce that we are educating, often our kids and grandkids, and we should prioritize it above most other things in the State budget, like we're investing in the future. Please continue your support for education funding.

Thanks for your time and service.

Ken Tape

[REDACTED]

Fairbanks

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: grier.hopkins@fnsb.gov
Subject: In support of education
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:10:46 AM

To the honorable members of the House Education Committee,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In support of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:10:02 AM

Thank you Madame Chair and members of the education committee for bringing this bill forward. My name is Shelly Kocan, I am a community member in Cordova, Alaska, a 10 year business owner and a parent to a 2nd grader and a 4th grader at Mt Eccles Elementary School. I'm testifying in support of HB 69. I'm very proud of the energy that the leadership, the teachers and the staff bring to our school, their standards are high for providing these kids with an enriching and positive educational experience. They have been able to keep most, but not all, classrooms under 25 students, and continue to offer a lunch program and a PE program and extracurriculars. However this would not have been possible with the current Base Student Allocation, if the Native Village of Eyak had not stepped in and donated \$700,000 for the 24/25 school year to close some of the budget shortfall. We can't rely on the possibility of donations to cover basic spending. The school district has relied heavily on volunteer involvement to close gaps, and many parents have stepped up, but wouldn't it be wonderful for the administration and teachers to be able to focus on programming, curriculum development, teacher training and actual education rather than trying to find volunteers, monitoring the kids for crosswalk duty or staffing the scholastic book fundraiser. Both the elementary school and the high school have had a very hard time recruiting and retaining paraprofessionals, understandably, as the pay is not competitive, you could earn more working as a clerk in the grocery store.

Cordova currently doesn't offer preschool which is a dire need in our community. My fourth grader was in the last preschool class that was offered, and it never returned after covid. The lack of consistent funding has made planning difficult, for example, the need of moving the 6th grade to the high school because of space issues at the elementary school has been happening for years, but the district needs more money to make that happen. We are working with one guidance counselor for the entire district, one music teacher, no school nurse, no art teacher, no librarian, no gifted program. Cordova School District has done a good job of hiding the extent of the harm, but increased funding is necessary for sustained excellence in our schools. I hope you will support House Bill 69 and invest in the education of our children.

thank you,
Shelly Kocan

--
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In support of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:54:06 PM

Please support HB 69, it is imperative to pass this bill to provide necessary funding to keep our schools functioning!

Thank you for acting on this important legislation!

Sincerely,
Dave Thynes

--

Dave Thynes R.P.L.S. [REDACTED]
Central Southeast Surveyors
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: In Support of Raising the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:00:55 AM

Hello to whom it may concern,

My name is Emily Evans. I am a lifelong Alaskan and a public school graduate. I am writing in support of raising the BSA for the students and schools of Alaska. There has not been an increase in funding since 2017, as inflation has risen more than 15% since then. Schools are closing, classroom sizes are increasing...our youth (and educators) deserve more than this.

Thank you for your time.

Emily Evans
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase Alaska's BSA! Support of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:59:39 AM

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing as both a parent of two children in the Juneau School District and an active member of our school community. In addition to serving on the Site Council at my children's school, I volunteer with Girl Scouts, Little League, and several other youth activities in our community. My direct involvement with these programs has given me a clear, firsthand understanding of the importance of adequately funded schools and the ripple effects that underfunding creates inside and outside the classroom.

Why Supporting HB 69 Matters to My Family and Our Community:

- **Teacher Retention and Recruitment:** Inadequate funding makes attracting and retaining qualified teachers challenging. Teachers struggle to cover living expenses with stagnant salaries that have not kept pace with inflation. When experienced educators leave, our children lose the benefit of high-quality consistent instruction.
- **Overcrowded Classrooms:** Underfunded districts must repeatedly cut staff and resources, which results in larger class sizes. It is no secret that smaller class sizes foster better student engagement, safer environments, and improved achievements. Large class sizes mean fewer individualized attention opportunities and contribute to increased behavior management needs. Teachers who are overworked due to understaffing have difficulty keeping up with each student's unique needs creating a less conducive learning environment for our children. Our teachers need support to avoid burnout!
- **Behavior and Extracurricular Impacts:** As a volunteer with various youth programs, I see how a strained school environment influences students' behavior outside of the classroom. When children don't receive adequate support during the school day, it can carry over to after-school activities, affecting everything from teamwork to confidence levels.
- **Investment in Alaska's Future :** Learning is a partnership that involves both home and school. By providing families and students robust support during their formative years, we set them on a path for future success; academically, socially, and professionally. If we fail to invest in them now, we risk undermining our community's and our state's long-term prosperity. Today's students are tomorrow's workforce. If we want to grow a robust state economy and maintain strong, vibrant communities, we must invest in quality education. Providing adequate funding is the first step toward ensuring our children graduate with the skills needed to succeed and contribute meaningfully to our state.
- **Cost of Living and Inflation:** Alaska's BSA has not kept pace with inflation and soaring operational costs such as utilities, maintenance, and transportation. Because of this, districts are facing significant budget shortfalls that leave school boards and administrators forced to make difficult decisions about which critical programs or services need to be reduced. Many schools are being closed as a means of reducing costs, but this results in larger classroom sizes, negatively impacting our children's education.
- **Equity Across Districts:** Rural and remote schools face particularly difficult challenges. Rising costs for transportation, utilities, and teacher recruitment and retention create significant barriers to providing equitable education. Increasing the base

student allocation can help level the playing field for all Alaskan children.

I strongly believe that by supporting HB 69 we can provide critical resources for both teachers and students, ensuring a well-rounded educational experience for every child. Thank you for considering this legislation. I appreciate your efforts and leadership in securing the future of Alaska's schools, our children, and our state.

Sincerely,
Michelle Nakamura

--

Michelle Nakamura

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase BSA-- pass HB 69!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:09:53 PM

Greetings,

It is time to increase the BSA which has been stagnant for too long. Our children deserve an excellent education and HB 69 will go a long way toward ensuring that goal.

Sincerely,

--

Lou Brown

[REDACTED]

(Pronouns: She, her, hers)

"If you need someone else to change so you can be OK, you are really in trouble."--
Michael Singer from *Untethered Soul*

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:32:12 AM

I strongly support an increase in the BSA for our education system. Funding has not kept up with inflation. Alaska needs an increase to attract and retain talented teachers, keep class sizes at a reasonable size and to maintain buildings. The future of our State and Nation depend on successfully preparing our youth.

Thank you for your work.

Marian Charles
[REDACTED]
Willow, AK 99688

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase the BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 7:24:07 PM

I am a parent of children at a charter school in the Anchorage School District. I have seen the budget for our school and without an increase in the BSA, we cannot continue to provide the quality of education that the governor keeps talking about being among the best in the country. We need funding consistent with the cost of living! How is it that when the cost of literally everything that goes into running a school is increasing, we expect schools to continue to function without increasing their budgets?! There's no logic here.

Colleen Heaney-Mead
East Anchorage

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Increase the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:30:09 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-0p0yp4g2.png](#)

Greetings,

I am writing about the upcoming HB 69 about education funding.

I think that it is essential for Alaska to invest in our infrastructure and future of our state.

I work in a Title 1 school. Currently, we have almost every secondary school in Anchorage filled to capacity and more. There is not enough space, there are not enough services. Students are NOT getting the help they need, and are legally entitled to, because the staffing simply does not exist. I have 25 students with IEP (individualized Educational Plan) that require extra help, and I can not provide it.

I have multiple classes with more than 30 students. This makes it difficult to provide one on one help for any students, not just the ones that have SPED services.

Increasing the BSA would be the best and only way to fix the budget deficit in our state. Once upon a time Alaska had incredibly well funded education, but we have not really made any improvements since 2017. Increasing the BSA would help with teacher retention, and students would be more likely to succeed if they felt supported and not crammed into spaces that are too small or broken down.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


-Sarah Coulson

Central Middle School of Science

"Take Chances! Make Mistakes! Get Messy!" ~ Miss Frizzle

"Sois belle si tu peux, sage si tu veux, mais sois considérée, il le faut." - Beaumarchais



From: 
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: increasing BSA/House bill 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 12:57:08 PM

I'm writing in support of permanently raising the BSA . 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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: increasing the BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:13:48 PM

Folks

You should vote to increase the BSA. It's been years since that Alaska Legislature has helped school districts across the state by covering cost of living increases for the BSA. Do the right thing. I would not be against diminishing the Permanent Fund contribution to accomplish this.

Dr. Scott Smiley

Kodiak Island Borough

Assembly member.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Its HB 69 Education BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:38:52 AM

Hello,

My name is Shane Schenker. I'm a lifelong resident of AK and a product of the ASD. I urge you to oppose HB69. We need to fix our broken school system before voting to throw more money at the problem.

Thank you

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Joint Resolution of the Anchorage Assembly and Anchorage School Board re School Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:27:00 PM
Attachments: [2025 Joint Resolution of the Anchorage Assembly and School Board.pdf](#)

Dear Esteemed Members of the House and Senate Education Committees,

Attached, please find a joint resolution recently passed by the Anchorage Assembly and the Anchorage School Board in support of the fair, inflation-adjusted State funding required to maintain a quality public school system and increase student performance.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Veneklasen
Assembly Legislative Services Office

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Messages to and from this email address may be available to the public under Alaska Public Records Law.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Kodiak Family in support of HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:52:55 PM

I am emailing tonight to express my support of HB 69 and urge the state to begin investing in Alaska's future again.

As a born and raised Kodiak resident, I am troubled to see what is happening to my town and many towns around the state due to the extreme lack of support for public education.

I grew up in Kodiak in the 1990's. After spending a decade away for college and work, I decided to return to Alaska to give my four young children the childhood my husband and I so loved.

Since returning to Kodiak, we have seen first hand the effects of the childcare crisis, the lack of support for young working families, and last week, our community faced the gut-wrenching decision to close my child's elementary school.

I can't help but wonder if I grew up in Kodiak during its peak, and my children, at its decline. With old, failing infrastructure, low enrollment numbers, less opportunities, its hard to remember some days why I moved back.

I'm investing in Alaska, and I'm ready to invite more young families to this glorious place, but the state must meet us halfway. You must fund the education my children deserve, or we will continue to see declines across every sector.

My hope is that the recent pessimism pervading our town, surrounding the school closure, will be dispelled with a renewed investment from the state, for our kids.

Thank you for your time,

Kate Helligso Paulson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:59:45 AM

I am against the increase in base student allocation. While education is extremely important to my family, I do not think that throwing more money at the situation is going to help anything. Too many funds are directed towards the administration while the kids are not learning the basics and are pushed through without a good foundation to continue learning. I homeschool both of my children while working a full time, in person job. We do it without \$22k a year, per kid. While an allotment is helpful, it is also not necessary to teach our children the basics and how to become knowledgeable and contributing members of society. Fix the system before you pour more of our money into the faulty system.

Respectfully,
Sheylyn Cato

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: NAACP testimony supporting HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:39:44 AM

Testimony supporting HB 69 to House Education Committee, January 29th, 2025

Hi, I'm Mike Bronson. I am a Joe-six pack volunteer with the Anchorage branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. We have a lot of parents and grandparents with public school students.

I'm speaking in favor of House Bill 69 to increase the base student allocation.

Passage of the bill will be a big step toward complying with the education clause of the constitution. As Judge Gleason clarified in her *Moore v. Alaska* decision in 2007, the public schools must provide an opportunity for each child to meet the state's standards in reading, math and science. In a legal sense, the Legislature owns the schools. Consequently, the Legislature is responsible for giving them enough direction and money for schools to create those opportunities. In turn, whether the opportunities that you provide are legally adequate is judged largely by assessments in the core subjects. There is not much wrong with public schools that the Legislature can't fix.

Unfortunately, since the *Moore* decision and the tougher state standards in 2012, the Legislature has let its students languish. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the drop in the real-dollar value of the base student allocation was closely associated with the loss of 2,000 classroom teachers, the expansion of class sizes to among the highest in the U.S., and the loss of about one year's worth of learning in math and reading. However, those are not the trends you'd expect if the Legislature had followed the *Moore* rulings and the constitution.

The goal of the Legislature instead should be to raise up reading and math proficiency so that most of its 128,000 K-12 students meet the state's reading and math standards. That would take restoring thousands of teachers to the classroom. HB 69 is a step in that direction.

Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: New NAEP scores support HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:46:32 AM
Attachments: [NAEP reading 4th 2024 220AK4.pdf](#)
[NAEP 8th reading 2024 220AK8.pdf](#)

Dear Representatives,

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

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

Thanks, -Mike Bronson, Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: New national data support HB 69 for school funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:00:47 AM
Attachments: [NAEP math 4th 2024 219AK4.pdf](#)
[NAEP math 8th 2024 2024219AK8.pdf](#)

Dear Representatives,

If you're interested, here's today's reports of Alaska student scores on the national math test last year.

Looks like fourth graders held flat from two years earlier and are now about one year behind the rest of the US.

Eighth grade scores fell off a cliff, and lost more than a half-year of learning in two years. Now they are almost one year behind the average US.

From these data, it seems hard to see how the legislature and governor have been following the constitution and providing adequate instruction.

Thanks,

-Mike Bronson, Anchorage

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Oppose HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:15:42 AM
Attachments: [HB69 comment to oppose-Patricia Bouton.docx](#)

Patricia Bouton

Soldotna, AK

January 29, 2025

I oppose HB 69: the proposed increase to the Basic Student Allocation (BSA).

No more money until there is a third-party independent forensic audit, of the entire State of Alaska Education Department.

As of the 2022 statewide assessments, approximately 30% of Alaska's students in grades 3 through 9 were proficient in English Language Arts (ELA), meaning 70% were not meeting grade-level expectations, and only 23% are proficient in math. ([Alaska Policy Forum\[1\]](#))

The proficiency rate of our students is appalling. The Education department brags on the great schools in Alaska, and yet the proficiency rate tells a different story. Money will not increase the proficiency of our students.

If the School Industrial Matrix Machine can't account for their spending now, why reward that system with more money to waste.

Education Committee Members:

You took an oath support the State of Alaska.

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Alaska, and that I will faithfully discharge my duties as [name of office] to the best of my ability."

That means you don't bankrupt the State of Alaska to invest in a failing system. State of Alaska is living on debt. The Education Complex needs to readjust and manage with what is currently allocated to them.

Sincerely,

Patricia Bouton

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area, obscuring the name and any handwritten notes or dates that might have been present.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Subject: Oppose HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:27:50 AM

My name is Misty Peterkin, and I am from Nikiski, on the Kenai Peninsula. I am speaking for myself. I oppose this bill. We need to improve policies that will also lead to better outcomes.

We need more charter schools. Alaska has fallen behind in all education aspects except charter schools. Despite increased demand, only a few have been authorized in the past few years. Students in Alaska's charter schools performed better than those in traditional public schools, regardless of ethnicity or gender.

Adding money to a one-size-fits-all system is not the solution Alaska students need. We need to fund students, not the administration.

Thank you,
Misty Peterkin

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please fund Alaska education
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:06:01 AM

Hi,

I am writing in strong support of increased funding for Alaska schools. Strong schools mean strong communities and the ability to attract new people to Alaska and keep our citizens here. It allows us to be proud we support kids and kids to be proud to grow up here. Across the state districts are facing impossible choices on how to balance budgets, including where I live in Fairbanks. Last year you all came so close to funding schools. This year please get this bill across the finish line.

Thank you,
Vanessa

Vanessa Stevens

[REDACTED]

"Happiness is...an A on your spelling test...finding someone you like at the front door...walking barefoot in the grass...your first kiss in the rain."

- Charles Schulz, Peanuts

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please fund public schools
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:32:48 PM

- The majority of students in Alaska attend public schools, and it is a Constitutional duty to adequately fund Alaska's public school system.
- The continuous neglect and under-investment in our public schools must end for the benefit of our students, families, and communities.
- A BSA increase of **\$1,808** 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.
- A significant investment in Alaska's school system is needed NOW. Our district has faced a budget deficit of at least three million dollars each of the past two years and expect the same next year as well. As a result, will have already cut programs and staffing in the secondary schools - eliminating more than a dozen teaching positions that I know of. Next year, we will be closing an elementary school and reorganizing to reduce another ten teaching positions as well as additional administrative and staff positions.

Jonathan Acker,
Kodiak Island Borough School District

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please Raise the BSA to Better Fund Public Education in Alaska!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:58:06 PM

Dear House Education Committee Members,

Thank you for your good work on House Bill 69, which passed as written will raise the Basic Student Allocation significantly for K-12 students throughout Alaska.

As residents of the great State of Alaska, we all must do our part to raise public education's funding levels so that we can once again compete with other states for residents, good people to live and thrive in the 49th State.

We must reverse our decade-long outmigration from Alaska. Good, solid, hardworking professionals and tradespeople always consider the quality of the local public schools when considering a move to another state. When our public schools are not adequately funded, people are less apt to move to Alaska to raise their families here. People moving to Alaska want to know we have a strong system of public education.

My wife Susan and I arrived in Alaska to live and work a few years apart, but we both came here originally when educators, for example, were among the highest paid in the nation. When I was being recruited for a teaching job in Alaska, I was told that Alaska's state retirement system was among the very top in the nation. Although I was young at the time, I soon realized the benefits of a top-notch, defined-benefit retirement system. HB69 would go a long way to recruit and retain the backbone of any great public education system: well-paid, well-respected public school educators.

We need to keep teachers and other state workers in Alaska by increasing education funding. Many of our best and brightest young people, unfortunately, are fleeing Alaska to pursue postsecondary education elsewhere, never to return to Alaska. We MUST reverse Alaska's serious brain drain. HB69 is a great start.

We need to rebuild the great education system that Alaska once had so that we can stop the 49th State's outmigration in order to build a bright future for our great state. I support HB69.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

John Creed

[REDACTED]
Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:02:44 AM

Dear Alaska legislators,

Please raise the BSA. Districts throughout the state are facing incredible budget shortfalls which will result in students not getting the support they need or the education they deserve.

The BSA has not kept up with inflation or the reality of costs of running and staffing schools.

Please raise the BSA!

Frances Christensen
[REDACTED], Talkeetna, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please support HB69 - increase to BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:23:48 AM

Hello Committee Members,

Thank you to Ms.Himshoot for sponsoring this bill. I fully support an increase in BSA and a method to insure that the BSA at least rises with inflation and cost of living in the future. I would support a larger starting value but realize there might not be political will for this. I am a 45 year resident of Sitka. My daughters attended the Sitka School District and now my two granddaughters are entering the district. We MUST support public education in our state or we are truly lost. It should be the first priority of the government to provide a good public school education. Also, it was extremely disheartening to watch the legislature cave to pressure for the Governor's office over BSA funding last session. Do not let this happen again. Support our students, support our future, and stand with your convictions to do so.
Thank you for your time and consideration

--

Tory O'Connell Curran
Grateful to live on Línígit Aaní

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Robert Myers](#); [Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Rep. Rebecca Schwanke](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Please support House Bill 69 and Fund Public Education in Alaska
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:54:49 AM

Dear Senators and Representatives,

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

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

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

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

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

Creek Elementary, open.

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

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please support House Bill 69!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:01:42 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 69 to increase the base student allocation in our schools. We desperately need more funding to provide our students with the resources they need to learn! As a parent to a young child who will attend public school in Fairbanks in the next few years, it has been alarming to watch funding for schools be used in a political tug-of-war game. I am worried my child will not have the school opportunities that I had growing up. I urge all state legislators to support House Bill 69.

Thank you,

Sarah Clement

[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99707

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
Subject: Please Support Passage of HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 11:12:55 AM
Attachments: [HB69 Support Letter.docx](#)

Elizabeth Serrano

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99501
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1/28/25

Dear Alaska House Education Committee Members,

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Serrano

Parent of a child in the Alaska school systems

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: PLEASE Vote YES to Raise the BSA!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:52:13 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

We are community members highly invested in our children's future. We raised our daughter in Juneau, and spent much time working to elevate the level of education in Juneau for all children. We urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. We are very disturbed to continually see inadequate funding levels, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. It doesn't have to be this way!!

Increasing the BSA by \$1,808 would allow schools to hire and retain qualified teachers, restore and maintain critical programs like arts, music, and special education, and provide students with up-to-date materials and resources.

Investing in education benefits everyone. A well-funded system leads to better-prepared graduates, stronger communities, and a more competitive workforce. Underfunding, however, results in higher dropout rates and increased social service costs. Raising the BSA ensures every child in Alaska has access to quality education and opportunities.

Our children's education **MUST** be a priority, no matter how complicated the budget. Please act now to raise the BSA by \$1,808, include inflation-proofing, and secure Alaska's future.

With sincere thanks,

Karen and Jeff Wilson
Juneau

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Please, Support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:43:25 AM

Dear House Education Committee,

Once again, I listened to hours of disheartening and powerful public testimony during the Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board meeting tonight... At a time when public education is deeply hurting in our state, I'm urging you to please support HB69 this week. As you must already be aware of, this year it is not one but five elementary schools that are very likely to close in Fairbanks - including Pearl Creek Elementary, the best performing elementary school in our community and the one my son has been lucky to attend to since kindergarten.

I understand there are ways to improve the way funds are being used, and our district and school board members have been working hard at this together with the input of our community... but the reality is, the main catalyst for the deep crisis our community is facing right now is the consistent lack of proper state funding for public education over the past several years... funding that is essential to allow for a proper and thriving public education in Alaska. It is a shame that, for years, the BSA has not been adjusted to mirror inflation - and that most of you did not have the courage to stand up to our Governor and do what is right for the children of Alaska when you had a chance to do so last year. Now is the time to stand on the side of the people you represent, and insure proper and sustainable funding for public education in our state.

Low enrollment issues will NOT be tackled by closing schools that are a safe place to be for the most vulnerable on our community (Hunter Elementary), the best performing schools in the community (Pearl Creek Elementary), or schools that are essential to the functioning of surrounding rural communities (Two Rivers and Salsha Elementary). Please, keep in mind that the decisions you are making have very real consequences in your constituents' daily lives. Unlike some would like to believe, home schooling is not a solution for everyone, including single parents like myself who do not have the option to stay home when our job is our only source of income to feed and care for our children.

Improving enrollment in our beloved state starts by making it an attractive and safe place to be for families. Gutting public education funding has done nothing but deeply hurting our state and increasing the loss of both our educators and our students, as families decide to switch to other forms of education for their children - or to leave the state altogether.

Families all over Alaska will be closely following the decisions you make over the next few days and weeks. It is time to truly and boldly represent and defend the people who elected you, and the most vulnerable in our society - our children.

Thank you for your time and for putting our children before any political agenda. Please, vote in favor of HB69.

Loraine Navarro
Fairbanks, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Policy change BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:07:55 AM

The current plans for changes to the Alaska public school BSA will bankrupt our state in the near future. Back to the drawing board to a new plan. Eileen Becker. Homer, Ak
Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony for Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:18:30 PM

To whom it may concern,

A significant investment in Alaska's school system is needed. Schools have been forced to continue to cut programs, layoff staff and increase class sizes. These factors all impact the quality of our education system and the outcomes of our students. One time funding does not provide districts predictability or allow them to prioritize students for the long term. Inflation has driven up the costs significantly for Alaska's schools in the past decade and our school districts need a substantial, permanent funding increase to make up for years of essentially flat education funding.

HB 69 would provide immediate and permanent inflation-proofing for education funding, as well as a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation on July 1, 2026. The bill also includes an additional increase of \$404 to the Base Student Allocation in 2027 and 2028. These increases would restore the purchasing power schools have lost with high inflation.

I urge the State Legislature and Governor to support HB 69 as funding Alaska's public school system is a Constitutional duty. A BSA increase of **\$1,808** 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

Respectfully submitted,

Marina Whitacre

Thank you to Representative Rebecca Himschoot for much of the text I provide in my testimony.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:27:16 PM

Good morning committee members,

My name is Bruce Owens, and I currently live in Palmer, AK. I have two children who attend public school here in the Matsu school district. All parents and educators would agree that a quality education is paramount not only for our children but for our society. Quality education is not determined by how much or how little money is spent, it is determined by results. Right now, the state of Alaska spends approximately \$17,726 per student on education, which puts our spending at 6th in the nation. Though we spend an exorbitant amount of money per student, we rank at the bottom in the country when it comes to test results. As a taxpayer and a parent with children in our public schools, I want to see a return on my investment and right now our public schools are failing. Throwing more money at this problem is not going to solve anything.

Governor Dunleavy has published his proposed budget which already includes a \$1.5 billion deficit. This committee is putting forth HB 69 which would increase the BSA spending over \$1.47 billion over the next 3 years. Where is all the money going to come from?

Instead, why not look at what already works here in Alaska? Our charter schools are ranked the best in the nation. We need our public schools to utilize that blueprint, and it will no doubt increase our children's education results.

V/R

Bruce Owens

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony HB69 - Increase BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:50:54 AM

Good Afternoon,

I am writing in favor of House Bill 69 to increase the BSA. Please fund Alaska's Public schools at a rate that will actually help keep schools thriving and kids learning. These children are our future and if they do not get the education they deserve then what will the future of our state look like? As prices increase across the state everything goes up. Wages go up, electricity goes up, food prices increase. How will school Districts be able to function if all these things increase yet the funding the state is giving does not? The continuous neglect and under-investment in our public schools must end for the benefit of our students, families, and communities.

Please fund Alaska schools with the purposed increases.

Thank you,

Heather Savo
Dillingham City School District
Board Chair

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony in Support of HB 69 – Increase to the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:47:22 PM

Dear House Education Committee and Representatives,

I am writing to express my strong support for **HB 69**, which would increase the **Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,000**. This increase is **essential** for school districts across our state to keep up with rising costs and continue providing quality education for our students.

Across Alaska, districts are **facing budget shortfalls, school closures, and reductions in staff and essential services** due to years of stagnant funding that has not kept pace with inflation. Without an increase to the BSA, many schools—including those in rural and remote communities—will be forced to make **even more devastating cuts** that will directly impact student learning opportunities.

A \$1,000 increase to the BSA is a **critical step** in ensuring that our schools remain open, our class sizes stay manageable, and our students receive the education they deserve. Investing in our schools is an investment in the future of our state.

I urge you to **support HB 69** and advocate for sustainable, long-term education funding that allows districts to plan for stability rather than crisis.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy Azuyak
Parent to a 4th grade student in Kodiak

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony regarding House Bill 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 3:44:23 PM

Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Jennifer Myrick Pedersen. I am a lifelong Alaskan, member of the community in Kodiak, parent of 3 school aged children in the public school system, and an elementary school counselor. I encourage you to support house bill 69, and urge you to look at an education funding solution that is predictable from year to year.

Alaska's public school system is a constitutional right and in Kodiak, the majority of students attend public schools.

An investment in public education, is a direct investment in the future of our beloved state, and in our future leaders. Sadly, years of flat funding have left our Kodiak community in a school funding crisis. This must end.

The proposed increase to the BSA is necessary to keep pace with inflation and to ensure all students have access to a quality education.

In Kodiak, the school district is facing an anticipated \$8 million dollar budget deficit, and as a result, the school where I work is being closed for the 2025/2026 school year. Kodiak is reeling from the closure of an elementary school building, and a complete restructure of 3 schools. Next year we will have a stratified school district. Even with a school closure and stratification, we will face position and/or program cuts this spring to balance the budget. This is taking any of the joy and vibrancy out of education, and leaving teachers with full classes and fewer resources to support them in the challenging work of educating students. An increase in funding and a plan for the future is critical for my community, my children's future, and for those who have no one to advocate for them.

Thank you for your early start to address education funding, and for taking the time to consider how education impacts my community, my three children, and my profession.

If I can provide any additional information or testimony, please reach out.

--

Jennifer Pedersen, Three Sisters Consulting

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Public Testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:01:15 AM

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Erin Stevens, and I am a resident of the Kenai Peninsula Borough. I serve as the Title I Specialist for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, sit on the board of directors for Sprout Family Services, and am the parent of two students within the district. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony regarding the urgent need to address Alaska's education funding crisis.

Funding Alaska's Public Schools is a Constitutional Duty

Alaska's Constitution mandates the state to maintain a system of public education. The vast majority of Alaskan students rely on public schools, and yet we face a growing crisis as these schools continue to be underfunded year after year. Without adequate resources, our schools are left unable to meet the diverse needs of students, threatening the future of our children and our state.

The Urgent Need for a BSA Increase

A Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase of \$1,808 is essential to keep pace with inflation and provide all Alaskan students with the quality education they deserve. This increase is about more than numbers; it's about ensuring that schools can hire and retain qualified teachers, offer robust academic and extracurricular programs, and provide essential resources for every child.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Deficit

Here in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD), we are facing a budget deficit of \$17 million. Without immediate action, this deficit will force devastating cuts to our programs and services that directly impact students' academic growth, mental health, and extracurricular opportunities. These reductions will have lifelong impacts on the children and families we serve.

The Federal Context and Additional Challenges

Our challenges are further exacerbated by a federal memorandum recently issued under the current administration, which aims to redirect federal funding toward political priorities instead of our community needs. This approach threatens critical programs that support equity, inclusive practices, and environmental initiatives, labeling them as "wasteful."

If federal funds are eliminated or redirected, the burden on local districts like KPBSD will grow exponentially, further worsening our \$17 million deficit and leaving our students with fewer and fewer opportunities to succeed.

The Ripple Effect on Our Communities

This funding crisis extends far beyond the classroom. Our schools are the heart of our communities, providing not only education but also meals, stability, and pathways to brighter futures. Continued disinvestment in education will lead to larger class sizes, fewer qualified teachers, and diminished opportunities for students to thrive. Strong schools are essential to building strong communities, a robust economy, and Alaska's future workforce.

A Call to Action

I urge this committee to recognize the severity of this crisis and act decisively. An immediate and substantial investment in education is necessary to address the \$17 million deficit in KPBSD and the broader funding challenges facing school districts across Alaska. Increasing the BSA and protecting federal funding streams are crucial steps toward ensuring every Alaskan student has the opportunity to succeed. Investment in our students ensures Alaska's successful future.

Let us fulfill our constitutional duty and prioritize the education and well-being of Alaska's students. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin Stevens

Title I Specialist, KPBSD

Board Member, Sprout Family Services

Parent, Kenai Peninsula Borough

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:06:08 PM

Vote HB69. Vote to raise BSA. We must not let public education be underfunded. Education is our future. If we don't have an educated public, we have no future.

Gloria Jean Thompson
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:24:11 PM

I'm writing a support of HB 69.

The lack of money to support education is affecting the economy in the future of Alaska. Public funding for charter schools is not the answer, not accessible to everybody, and not equitable.

Respectfully
Madeleine Grant MD

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:59:34 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a community member invested in our children's future, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. Current funding levels are inadequate, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. Teachers are overworked, class sizes are growing, and essential programs like special education and extracurriculars are being cut.

Increasing the BSA by \$1,808 would:

- Allow schools to hire and retain qualified teachers.
- Restore and maintain critical programs like arts, music, and special education.
- Provide students with up-to-date materials and resources.

Inflation-proofing the BSA would ensure schools are not continually underfunded in the future, enabling consistent planning and better outcomes for Alaska's children.

Investing in education benefits everyone. A well-funded system leads to better-prepared graduates, stronger communities, and a more competitive workforce. Underfunding, however, results in higher dropout rates and increased social service costs. Raising the BSA ensures every child in Alaska has access to quality education and opportunities.

Balancing the state budget is complex, but our children's education must be a priority. Please act now to raise the BSA by \$1,808, include inflation-proofing, and secure Alaska's future.

Thank you,

Julius Adolfsson

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA!!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:11:04 AM

Please raise the base student allocation. Our kids needs it!

Carolyn Minor
[REDACTED]
Douglas, AK. 99824

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: RAISE THE BSA!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:34:50 AM

Better funding for public education is the SINGLE biggest issue my husband and I consider when voting and making political donations. TIME TO RAISE THE BSA!

Anna Ramsburgh

Josh Schmidt

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:31:23 AM

Thank you taking the time to read my email. I am writing to tell you about the state of our schools in Seward, AK, and implore you to do what is right for our children and raise the BSA.

I am the parent of 2 high schoolers, who have been in our public education system their whole academic careers. I am an active volunteer in schools for the past 12 years, former PTA President, member of our Site Based Council and Athletic Booster Club, substitute teacher, and tutor. I know our schools inside and out and can speak from a boots on the ground, fully informed position.

Our schools are crumbling. I have watched as the staff of our schools gets cut annually. A teacher moves and the position disappears and doesn't get refilled; the librarian gets cut; music education is cut; PTR gets raised; 1 counselor is shared between 2 schools to serve all of their emotional AND academic needs; a principal oversees 2 schools 30 miles apart; there's not enough staff to provide for lunch and recess coverage without parent volunteers coming in to school. This has been happening annually to the point that there is literally nothing left to give. What will we cut next year because all the extras are already trimmed? Math? Science? Reading?

We are failing our children. The state of their schools is not their fault and they can do nothing to change it, yet they are the ones who are suffering and will into the future. They aren't getting a quality education and they are graduating unprepared to compete and provide for themselves in the real world.

Why do we think that budget cuts and penny pinching is appropriate for our children? This is the category of spending where our investment pays dividends!!!! Fully invest in children's education and they will thrive, become productive citizens, make positive contributions to society, and take care of us when we age. Please raise the BSA, so school districts can budget appropriately into the future with sustained financing.

Thank you for reading,
Jennifer DesErnia

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:08:55 AM

Good morning,

I am a coach for 100+ high school student athletes and have been coaching in the Juneau School District since 2020.

I am requesting that you raise the base student allocation for these amazing kids, the wonderful teachers, and for all the support that our education needs.

We need critical programs and extracurriculars for these students. Additionally, ensuring that the schools are not underfunded takes the stress off teachers and administration so they can focus on the year and the future instead of having to cover budget issues.

This is critical. Please make this a priority.

Abby Jahn
Resident of Juneau Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:50:13 AM

Hello,

I'd likely strongly voice my support to raise the BSA and invest in Alaskan students. Supporting education in Alaska is perhaps the most critical thing we can do to support a bright future for our state. The well-being Alaskan children should not be up for debate.

Thank you,

Hannah Wilson
Juneau

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Senate Education](#)
Cc: [Sen. Matt Claman](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:27:20 PM

To the Alaska Senate and House Education Committees,

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

Respectfully,
Bridget McBride
Anchorage, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:56:17 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a caring community member, an auntie, a person who went to a rural Alaskan school from K-12, and as someone who now works with middle and high school aged youth as part of my job, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. Current funding levels are horrifyingly inadequate, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. Teachers are overworked, class sizes are growing, and essential programs are being cut.

Raising the BSA by \$1,808 would:

- Allow schools to hire/retain qualified teachers
- Restore and maintain critical programs, like special education
- Provide students with up-to-date materials and resources

Inflation-proofing the BSA would ensure schools are not continually underfunded in the future, enabling consistent planning and better outcomes for Alaska's children.

I have seen firsthand the way underfunding impacts Alaska's students- the future leaders, parents, and business owners of our state. This is not a party lines issue. All children go to school and all children deserve quality education. I don't see this as a liberal issue or a democrat platform- everyone wants schools to operate well and children to have what they need. Even when we can't agree on much, we can agree on that.

Thank you for taking the time to work on this complex issue, and find a way to prioritize raising the BSA.

Meryl Chew
Douglas, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Raising the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:01:17 PM

Dear Legislators,

I am 100% in favor of raising the BSA and inflation proofing it. Charter schools are not the answer to our failing education system. Only parents who have the resources to transport their children and volunteer at the school can participate, which robs local schools of those helpful parents and limits access to those charter schools. Children with special needs are excluded, as well. For most rural and Bush communities, charter schools are not realistic. This is not a "separate but equal" system.

Instead we should be strengthening all our public schools. As a retired public and school librarian, I suggest: strengthening all our schools through adequate funding, returning to a defined benefit retirement system that will attract and retain excellent teachers, and supporting teacher education and professional development. Staff school libraries with books that kids want to read and trained professionals who can create a culture of reading and information literacy; retain experienced teachers; spend less time testing and more time reading, writing, and learning; and equalize access to resources between rural and urban schools.

We are currently in a slide to the bottom that must be reversed if our state is to thrive and even survive. The cost of high turnover, importing teachers from abroad, and failing to educate students to be able to function at a high level in society is probably incalculable.

This will take money. And leadership. Yes, we need to start taxing ourselves. And/or reduce the PFD. And/or quit wasting money on lawsuits and boondoggle projects that go nowhere. And most likely revise the oil royalty set up, which is way beyond my pay grade to understand but seems to benefit oil companies more than Alaskans at this point.

In conclusion, thank you for putting forth this bill. I hope it passes.

Ann Dixon
Homer, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Oppose HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:15:42 AM

>

> Representatives of the Education Committee,

>

> I oppose HB 69 and urge you to dramatically change the bill or vote it down.

>

> I am a grandfather of four young children in Alaska and have paid very close attention to the funding and outcomes in the public system. While the BSA has been flat funded, millions in one time funding has flowed into the school districts in addition to those BSA funds. Yet with all the millions of dollars that have been flowing, the outcomes have remained largely the same - poor.

>

> The major exception to that rule is related to the Reads Act which has actually produced great outcomes, dramatically improving student literacy rates. The reason it was successful is because it was a reform. Money will not solve the problems in the education system, only reform can.

>

> We have all heard the phrase: the definition of insanity is to continue doing the same thing you have always done (throw millions at the public education system with no accountability and no reform) and then expect a different result (better outcomes). We must require accountability and reform from our public education system if we want the roughly 70% of children who are failed by the system to have a chance. We must hold the system to the standard of good outcomes and not reward failures with funding.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. The school districts especially Anchorage threw million of dollars on woke initiatives. Anchorage refuses to close the dozen schools that are not needed - if you give ASD more money they will just continue the same path they are on, which is failing most students. ASD drove thousands of kids to homeschooling or the valley with their ridiculous COVID policies

Don't throw good money after bad, the State is broke

>

>

>

> Respectfully,

>

Steve Kruse

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Oppose HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:19:20 AM

Taking my PFD to pay for a failing education system is NOT RIGHT

> On Jan 29, 2025, at 10:15 AM, Steve Kruse <steven.p.kruse@gmail.com> wrote:

>

>

>>

>> Representatives of the Education Committee,

>>

>> I oppose HB 69 and urge you to dramatically change the bill or vote it down.

>>

>> I am a grandfather of four young children in Alaska and have paid very close attention to the funding and outcomes in the public system. While the BSA has been flat funded, millions in one time funding has flowed into the school districts in addition to those BSA funds. Yet with all the millions of dollars that have been flowing, the outcomes have remained largely the same - poor.

>>

>> The major exception to that rule is related to the Reads Act which has actually produced great outcomes, dramatically improving student literacy rates. The reason it was successful is because it was a reform. Money will not solve the problems in the education system, only reform can.

>>

>> We have all heard the phrase: the definition of insanity is to continue doing the same thing you have always done (throw millions at the public education system with no accountability and no reform) and then expect a different result (better outcomes). We must require accountability and reform from our public education system if we want the roughly 70% of children who are failed by the system to have a chance. We must hold the system to the standard of good outcomes and not reward failures with funding.

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> The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. The school districts especially Anchorage threw million of dollars on woke initiatives. Anchorage refuses to close the dozen schools that are not needed - if you give ASD more money they will just continue the same path they are on, which is failing most students. ASD drove thousands of kids to homeschooling or the valley with their ridiculous COVID policies

>

> Don't throw good money after bad, the State is broke

>>

>>

>>

>> Respectfully,

>>

> Steve Kruse

>

From: [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Re: Please Support Passage of HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:07:24 PM
Attachments: [HB69 Support Letter.docx](#)

Hi Elizabeth,

Thank you for sharing your testimony. I am copying the House Education Committee to ensure your comments make it onto the public record.

@lgtobin

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

Alaska State Senator, District I
Senate Education Committee Chair

On Jan 28, 2025, at 11:15 AM, Elizabeth Serrano
[REDACTED] wrote:

Elizabeth Serrano
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99501
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1/28/25

Dear Alaska Senate Education Committee Members,

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

Over the last two years, our district has been forced to close elementary schools due to insufficient funding from the state. This has had a profound impact on the entire community. Families have had to adjust to longer commutes, overcrowded classrooms, and diminished access to vital educational resources. The closures have strained our teachers, staff, and students, creating a ripple effect that

extends beyond the classroom. The lack of adequate funding has placed our children's education—and the future of our community—at risk.

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

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

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

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

From: [Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson](#)
To: [REDACTED]; [House Education](#); [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#)
Subject: RE: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:17:39 PM
Attachments: [image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)

Dear Jaime,

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and for your strong support of HB 69. I appreciate your advocacy for increased funding for Alaska's public education system. The challenges you've highlighted—such as school closures, teacher retention, and the need for investment—are significant, and I agree that increasing the Base Student Allocation is critical to addressing these issues. I also feel that forward funding and inflation proofing the BSA is also important.

As always, I will continue to advocate for the resources our schools and students need to thrive.

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

Sincerely,

"Representing Your Interests"
SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON
District G
*Serving Spenard, Midtown,
and Campbell*
120 4th St, Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801
907-465-4930



From: jamie shearer [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:04 PM
To: House Education <House.Education@akleg.gov>; Rep. Alyse Galvin <Rep.Alyse.Galvin@akleg.gov>; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB 69

Good afternoon,

My name is Jamie Shearer, an Anchorage resident, mother to two teenagers, former teacher, and current youth advocate. I am testifying in support of HB 69. The legislature needs to increase the Base Student Allocation to help bolster Alaska's public education system.

Years of flat (or under) funding have led to school closures, teacher retention struggles, and families

seeking non-public school options. School funding has not kept pace with inflation and we haven't had an investment like this since 2014. It is important to do so now.

Governor Dunleavy has been very vocal in his opposition to funding public education. Please stand up against him and vote for our kids and future.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jamie Shearer

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Regarding education funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:01:49 PM

I plead with you to support education funding, excluding charter school promotion. Can't find workers? People leaving the state? Give them a reason to come and a reason to stay. Poor schools and results (not just good results for charter schools whose parents can drive them to other locations and actively invoked in their children's education) provide NO incentive to stay. I am 71, been here 42 years, no children and I WANT to live in an educated community.

Jeanne Molitor
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99507
Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: SB 69 testimony
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:10:02 AM

Thank you to the House Education Committee for your service and for listening to the public. I'm sure you're already aware of the crisis in public education, and how school districts around the state are unable to provide desperately needed programs and staffing.

Some may ask why we should fund schools that aren't doing well. That's like asking why we should fund DOT to fix bad roads. They need staff and equipment to build and repair roads. We can't expect DOT to just wave a magic wand to improve things. In the same way, we can't improve our schools without teachers, buildings, and supplies. We need to spend money on education.

There are two main reasons why our public schools are in such dire straits. One is the lack of a decent retirement system for public employees—that is a topic for another time. The other is the lack of funding, which is what SB 69 would fix. This bill would allow us to catch up on funding the BSA for all public schools (including charter and neighborhood schools), and maintain funding so we don't have to rehash this subject every session. That would save you all time and effort, and allow the legislature to focus on other things like energy and the permanent fund dividend.

Alaskan voters are watching and hoping you'll do the right thing. Please vote for SB 69.

Cheryl Lovegreen
Anchorage

From:

█

Cc:

[Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Sen. Robert Myers](#); grier.hopkins@fnsb.gov; [House Education](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#)

Subject:

School Closure - Salcha

Date:

Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:28:33 PM

January 29, 2025

To the Members of the FNSBSD School Board, Mayor Hopkins, and AK State Legislators,

Salcha Elementary is more than a school; it is the heart of our community, a place where education, connection, and opportunity intertwine. Beyond its classrooms, Salcha serves as a gathering space, a safe haven, and a resource hub for families. It offers world-class running and ski trails, fosters outdoor learning, and provides children with experiences they would never find elsewhere. More than just a place of academics, it builds resilience, curiosity, and a deep connection to the environment—qualities that shape students for life.

I know this because Salcha Elementary shaped me. My journey into scientific research began at just five years old, sparked by the unique opportunities this school provided. Partnering with the local watershed association, we conducted long-term environmental studies—testing water quality, identifying juvenile fish, and monitoring riparian zones. Our work began after a levee altered a local slough, and over a decade, our data revealed a troubling six-degree Celsius rise in water temperatures. What started as a local science project led me to national and international platforms. I was invited to present our research at the Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Symposiums, the American Fisheries Society (AFS), the American Water Resource Agency (AWRA), the International Arctic Research Center (IARC), the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NSF NCAR), and the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting. These experiences opened doors to paid internships while still in high school, scholarships, advanced research opportunities, and scientific publications.

Salcha Elementary made all of this possible. It instilled in me a passion for climate and environmental science, one I am now pursuing on a Presidential Scholarship at Linfield University. I may never have discovered my path without Salcha's hands-on, community-driven approach to education.

Closing Salcha Elementary is not just about moving students to another building—it is about dismantling a thriving ecosystem of learning, discovery, and community support. The loss will be profound. Busing young children for well over an hour each way will not replace the education and experiences they receive in Salcha. If we want to invest in our students' futures, we must recognize this school's irreplaceable role in shaping them.

I urge you to reconsider closing Salcha Elementary. This school is not just a place of learning—it is a foundation for opportunity, for scientific discovery, and for the future leaders of Alaska and beyond.

Sincerely,

Teslin Brannan

Linfield University, Environmental Science Student
Salcha Elementary Alumnus

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: School Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:00:39 AM

January 29, 2025

Hello,

School funding should be the TOP PRIORITY! IF we want an educated work force, families to STAY in Alaska, for families to MOVE to Alaska, teachers to serve their CAREER in Alaska, then Alaska needs to forward fund Education to its fullest extent.

As a retired teacher who chose to STAY in Alaska, it's disheartening to see families leave, see teachers resign at the highest rate ever as they have NO INCENTIVE to stay, and see our community in disarray, arguing, blaming, and so FRUSTRATED as they watch their children's education disintegrate before their eyes.

Please, do not PLAY POLITICS with the future of our State. Your job is to fully fund and FORWARD FUND, reinstate a defined benefits retirement plan, and be leaders we can be proud of.

Yes, Alaska has the funds. You just continue to give it to the oil companies in forms of tax CUTS. Look at their bottom lines. Oil companies do not need tax cuts. Alaska citizens need a STRONG, FUNDED education system!

Sincerely frustrated,

Sheila Miller

[REDACTED]
Ketchikan, Alaska citizen since 1963

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Strategic Advantage
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:30:30 AM

Is it just me or does anyone else agree that our system of public education has offered a leg up for the current crop of billionaires? They have managed to create a concentration of wealth, the largest in human history, without the benefits or significant contributions of many of the reforms proposed by Governor Dunleavy and others.

Is it just me or does it seem like the efforts by The Billionaires, the Governor, and Project 2025 are to impose, top down, an untested, unproven system of education, that would stifle innovation and creativity in the name of conservative values?

Is it just me or did America reach a consensus that Project 2025 was NOT the direction we wanted? Why then do the reforms proposed read like a Cliff's Notes version of Project 2025?

Is it just me or does anyone else agree that the teachers, support staff and the unions, have for decades consistently sacrificed their health and earnings to improve educational outcomes in the face of declining budgets?

With few exceptions, each year I worked in education in Juneau we saw education spending reduced. Each year we struggled to fill in the gaps and cover the holes, to work smarter not harder, to be creative. Some of my colleagues kept their programs going with actual chewing gum and chicken wire. The Governor (and previous legislatures), promised they would reduce spending until scores came up. They kept that promise, at least the reducing spending part. Educators scrambled and exhausted themselves and their families in this absurd political fable. 30 years after this 'experiment' began, there is scant evidence reducing budgets improves scores.

Educators know scores will not increase absent adequate funding. Educators know class size matters. Educators know that a healthy system includes pay and retirement options that permit a middle class lifestyle and valid career choice.

Educators did not scheme or plan to convert students to any alphabetic agenda. Sorry parents, they responded to experiences and needs expressed by students. That is what, in my opinion, they are supposed to do. (But what do I know, I was just 'in the rooms' for 35 years)

HB 69 offers a step in the right direction.

Is it a slap in the face to the billionaires, Authors of Project 2025 and parochial interests that seek to roll the country back to another century and reduce our freedoms? I hope it is not just me that thinks so.

Regards,

Ray C. Imel III
UAS graduate in Education, Special Education Aide, Classroom Aide, Crossing Guard:(5

years) Middle School Teacher (27 years, retired). Airport employee (Yah, still working).

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Subject: Support for House Bill 69 – Increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA)
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:16:36 PM

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 69, which seeks to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska's public schools. As a teacher at Soldotna Elementary School in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, I have seen firsthand the detrimental effects of inadequate funding on our students, staff, and educational programs. Our schools need the financial resources necessary to provide students with a high-quality education, and increasing the BSA is a crucial step in ensuring their success.

Year after year, the uncertainty surrounding school funding has resulted in the loss of highly qualified educators. When teachers and support staff face the possibility of their jobs being eliminated due to budget constraints, many are forced to seek more stable employment elsewhere. The last minute one time funding is announced too late. By that time, staff with positions that could be cut have sought work in other places. We cannot build and sustain strong academic programs without experienced and dedicated professionals who have security in their positions. Predictable and adequate funding is essential to retain and attract talented educators and professionals who are committed to serving our students.

Additionally, small class sizes and well-maintained facilities are fundamental to providing a safe and effective learning environment. With rising inflation and the increasing costs of educational resources, operating under a budget that has remained stagnant for the past seven years is no longer sustainable. The cost of providing quality education has grown, yet our funding has not kept pace. Without an increase in the BSA, our ability to meet the needs of our students is severely compromised.

Public education is the foundation of a strong society and a prosperous future for Alaska. Investing in our schools is an investment in our state's children, workforce, and economy. A well-funded public education system ensures that every child, regardless of their background, has access to the tools and opportunities necessary for success.

I urge you to prioritize Alaska's students and the future of our state by supporting House Bill 69 and increasing the BSA. Our children deserve better, and it is our responsibility to provide them with the resources they need to thrive. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
AnnMarie Rudstrom
Kindergarten Teacher, Soldotna Elementary School

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Subject: Support HB69 for the Benefit of Our Students
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:07:28 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB69 and to urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation. This bill is a crucial step toward bringing costs to run a school closer to our budget. Passing HB69 will help us serve every student. It will also help bring and retain teachers in Alaska. We have too many choices to make with little funding and can barely serve our student populations.

As your constituent, I believe this bill aligns with our community's needs and values. I encourage you to stand with your constituents and support HB69 to ensure a positive impact on students of Cordova, Alaska.

Thank you for your time and dedication to serving our district. I appreciate your leadership and hope you will champion this important cause.

Sincerely,
Barbra Donachy

Cordova, Alaska

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 (Raising the BSA)
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:47:43 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed increase in the Basic Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska's public schools. As an Alaskan citizen, parent and community member, I believe that investing in the education of our children is one of the most important decisions we can make for the future of our state.

Currently, the BSA is insufficient to meet the rising costs of providing quality education in Alaska. Many school districts, especially those in rural or remote areas, are facing significant financial challenges that impact their ability to deliver effective and equitable education. This shortfall has led to increased class sizes, reduced educational resources, and the potential loss of dedicated teachers, all of which harm the academic success of our students.

Increasing the BSA is essential for maintaining the quality of education in Alaska. By providing schools with the resources they need, we can ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, have access to the tools and opportunities required for success. This includes better support for teachers, improved classroom materials, and the ability to offer more diverse educational programs.

Investing in education is not only an investment in the future of our children but also in the future of Alaska. Our students are the future workforce, leaders, and innovators of our state, and they deserve an education that prepares them for success.

I urge you to prioritize the increase in BSA and work toward securing adequate funding for Alaska's schools. The quality of education in our state is too important to overlook, and we must act now to ensure a brighter future for all students.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and for your service to Alaska's students and families. I look forward to your support in making this necessary change.

Kelly Cates (she/her)
Douglas, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for HB 69 Ensuring Adequate and Equitable Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:56:28 AM

Co-Chairs Himschoot and Story and Committee Members

House Education Committee

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol

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

My name is Rozlyn Grady-Wyche, and I am a mother of five children in the Anchorage School District (ASD), an ASD graduate, an ASD educator, and the Education Chair for the Alaska NAACP Tri-State Area Conference. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 69 because Alaska's students deserve adequate, consistent, and equitable funding for their education.

The Alaska Constitution, Article 7, Section 1, mandates that we establish and maintain a public school system open to all children. That means every student whether they live in Anchorage or Bethel must have access to the resources, teachers, and opportunities they need to succeed. Yet today, too many of our schools lack proper materials, adequate training, and enough staff to meet student needs. Overcrowded classrooms and teacher shortages persist because education funding has not kept up with rising costs.

HB 69 is a critical step toward stabilizing school funding by increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and tying it to inflation. This will allow our schools to keep pace with real costs, ensuring students have:

Qualified teachers who stay in their schools

Up-to-date materials and technology

Purposeful training and professional development for educators

The support services they need to thrive

However, while HB 69 addresses inflationary adjustments, it must also reflect the unique and complex realities of Alaska's educational landscape. Rural schools often face disproportionately higher costs due to factors such as transportation, housing for educators, and access to resources. Without adjustments to account for these challenges, the increases outlined in this bill may not be sufficient to close the persistent gaps between rural and urban schools.

Considerations to Strengthen HB 69:

1. Incorporating a Rural Cost Differential:

The bill uses the Consumer Price Index for urban Alaska, but rural districts experience even steeper cost increases due to geographic isolation and limited infrastructure. Adding a rural cost adjustment would ensure funding accounts for these unique challenges.

2. Targeted Support for Underserved Communities:

Rural schools often serve higher proportions of Alaska Native students and communities facing systemic inequities. Increased funding should be accompanied by resources to support culturally responsive education, teacher retention, and wraparound services that address the social-emotional needs of students.

3. Equity Monitoring and Accountability:

To ensure the funding truly benefits underserved students, I recommend creating mechanisms to evaluate how these increases impact rural and urban schools differently. Transparent reporting can help guide future adjustments and ensure this bill delivers on its promise of equitable funding.

The Time to Act Is Now

Our children only get one shot at their education and they cannot afford to

wait while we debate whether their schools should receive adequate funding. Investing in education is investing in Alaska's future workforce, economy, and communities. Underfunding schools today means fewer opportunities for students tomorrow.

HB 69 is a step in the right direction, but it must be fine-tuned to ensure education adequacy between rural and urban schools. Alaska's children cannot afford for us to kick this can down the road. If we believe in Alaska's future, we must invest in it starting with our students.

I urge you to pass HB 69 with the necessary adjustments to ensure all students regardless of where they live receive the quality education they deserve. Because our kids are worth it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Rozlyn Grady-Wyche

Education Chair, Alaska NAACP Tri-State Area Conference



Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Rebecca Himschoot](#); [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 on Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:39:22 PM

Dear House Education Committee:

I support House Bill 69 on education funding. This is some of the most forward-looking proposed legislation Alaskans have seen in years. Catching up base student allocation to what it should have been and later indexing base student allocation to inflation is vital.

I am the parent to child set to enter kindergarten this fall. I also attended Alaska public school at Sitka School District and once served as an on-call substitute for Juneau School District for 1.5 years. Restoring funding to more adequate levels helps Alaska's workforce development. Let the kids today have at least the quality of education I got to have in my youth.

Thank you,
Laurinda Marcello
Sitka, AK

cc:
Representative Himschoot
Senator Stedman
Representative Galvin

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Rep. Ashley Carrick; House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 to increase education funding
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:59:04 AM

Thank you for considering HB 69. My name is Chandra McGee and I was born and raised in Fairbanks. I'm a professional biologist and parent of a kindergartener at Pearl Creek Elementary School - our neighborhood school. The current situation of education in Fairbanks is dire.

I am writing in support of HB 69 - for increasing funding to public education.

This is an incredibly important bill for our state and our community. The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is considering a consolidation plan that would close 5 elementary schools, including Pearl Creek. This would be devastating to local families and the borough's ability to attract and maintain professional residents. We all want quality education for our communities and education funding must keep pace with inflation.

The Pearl Creek community has proposed an alternate Magnet School proposal which would keep Pearl Creek open as a neighborhood school while also changing the school designation to a Magnet school to attract more out of district students. We are passionate about place based, quality education available to all students!

Please do your part to represent the Interior, support our schools, and the viability of our community. A budget that supports education reflects how much we value education and our future.

Sincerely,
Chandra McGee

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:45:48 PM

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing today in strong support for HB 69 and more generally in support of increased funding for public education in Alaska. I have two children who are in the Juneau School District, which was forced make significant and sudden changes to all of its schools. It's been painful and while everyone is doing their best, the end result is not a better education for my kids. We need to adequately and appropriately fund education in Alaska. I fear for smaller communities that have no consolidation options left.

As an employer, I can also see the impact of the lack of investment when I struggle to recruit or retain people in state, in part because they want to raise their families somewhere that invests in children. I can't blame them. I've also had friends move out of state so their kids could have better opportunities, leaving the workforce where they were needed.

We can and should do better for our kids.

Please support HB 69.

Iris Matthews
Juneau, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#); [Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:04:09 PM

Good afternoon,

My name is Jamie Shearer, an Anchorage resident, mother to two teenagers, former teacher, and current youth advocate. I am testifying in support of HB 69. The legislature needs to increase the Base Student Allocation to help bolster Alaska's public education system.

Years of flat (or under) funding have led to school closures, teacher retention struggles, and families seeking non-public school options. School funding has not kept pace with inflation and we haven't had an investment like this since 2014. It is important to do so now.

Governor Dunleavy has been very vocal in his opposition to funding public education. Please stand up against him and vote for our kids and future.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jamie Shearer

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#); [Senate Education](#); [Sen. Scott Kawasaki](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:02:52 PM

Dear Alaska Legislators,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Could you please support:

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Biberman

Fairbanks

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

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:26:58 AM

Dear House Finance Committee,
I am writing to support House Bill NO. 69 which increases the base student allocation.

My son is currently enrolled at Aquarian Charter School. It still amazes me when we walk into the school to see the principal, teachers, and administrative staff so happy and looking like they genuinely want to work there. These teachers show up and make the extra effort to ensure my son is advancing in his education while making it a fun and safe learning environment. The current BSA and budget do not cover current salaries and benefits for those dedicated staff. This increase in BSA will ensure there is funding to keep staff so my son and other students at other schools can get a quality education. Without the additional funds, Aquarian will start to use up all of its savings, leaving no buffer to protect the school should there be a need for emergency funds.

While I understand this money needs to come from somewhere to support this bill, I hope the Committee can understand that it is time to start making education a priority. What these students are learning now will benefit them and everyone in our community into the future.

Thank you for your consideration,
Marla Carter

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:12:16 AM

I am writing to show my support for HB 69. I have lived in Anchorage since 2008 and have had three children attend Anchorage School District schools. One graduated, another is a senior and our youngest is in 8th grade. Our oldest started kindergarten in 2009. Since that time we have seen the effect of not raising the BSA. Our children's class sizes have increased. The number of 'specials' in elementary school has decreased. The choices of elective classes have also decreased.

Please take action, as you did last year, and pass a substantial increase to the BSA by passing HB 69.

Thank you

Dave Mayo-Kiely
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:09:38 AM

Dear Alaska State House,

As an Anchorage parent of two kids who will enter the public school system and the spouse of a current teacher, I urge you to vote yes to pass House Bill 69.

Current underfunding of our education system is an embarrassment to this state. It's impossible to have a straight face conversation in which you say you're invested in educating our kids, preventing outmigration, and improving teacher retention if you do not fund the public school system. We are going to continue to see these issues and have a poorly educated population if we don't increase the Base student allocation to a reasonable level.

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

Thanks for considering my comment.

Becky Lipson
Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:00:05 AM

Good morning,

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

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

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

Best regards,

Connor Whiteside
2nd Grade Teacher
East Elementary School

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 5:47:22 AM

Dear Elected Public Officials,

My name is Mara Early and I live in Juneau, Alaska. I am writing today in support of House Bill 69.

I am a high school teacher in Juneau, Alaska and have been a dedicated and committed employee of the Juneau School District since 2012. First off and most important, I love teaching and I am good at what I do.

In the last 13 years, I have witnessed funding for education decrease drastically, while inflation rises and teaching becomes more and more challenging with increased responsibilities and duties. As a beginning teacher, I feared for my ability to retain my job because of budget cuts. As a veteran teacher, I am proud to have survived through my first five years, the birth of my two children, the COVID pandemic, high schools combining, the evolution of students changing due to many factors including technology, and more! However, within this time in my teaching career I have gone from a calm relaxed teacher able to focus on students to an overstimulated multitasking not able to breath teacher who is juggling way too much. My students are reminding me constantly of the task at hand simply because my nervous system and executive system are so taxed that I cannot remember what I am doing, even the moment that I am doing it.

While this is a formal testimony to support funding for public education, THIS IS ALSO A CRY FOR HELP!! Teachers and staff within the school walls continue to bear the weight of caring for and educating students, while also being responsible for keeping the entire system functioning. We need help!!

Please support HB 69 so that public schools in Alaska can function... and thrive. Not only do students deserve to be supported (as they are Alaska's greatest resource), teachers and staff need help and deserve to be set up for success.

Please email or call if you have any questions,

Sincerely,

Mara Early
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Genevieve Mina](#); [Sen. Forrest Dunbar](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:17:03 AM

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I am writing today to express my support for HB69, a bill to increase the base student allocation. As a mother of two young children (the oldest who just entered into the public school system this school year) it is incredibly important to me that our elected leaders properly invest in our schools, our children, and our future prosperity as a state. Education is the foundation for so many things that support a prosperous, high functioning society: from the self-sufficiency of reliable employment to good health and everything in between. I want my children and yours and all Alaskans' children to have access to quality education and all the benefits that come from it, and that takes investment now and in the future. It is our government's responsibility to support high quality education and our future prosperity. Disinvestment in our children and our schools will hurt us all.

I've heard our elected leaders ask: what can we do to make Alaska the most desirable place to live, work, and raise a family? Supporting our schools is one of the most fundamental things our government could do to reach this goal.

I hope you will consider supporting this bill and others that will support and enhance the quality of education in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Katie Reilly
Airport Heights Resident

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:08:07 PM

Dear Alaska State House,

As an Anchorage parent of two young children, and also having grown up here attending public schools, I find it highly important to invest in our children and our community. I urge you to vote yes to pass House Bill 69.

If our school-aged children lack access to quality education, our community will feel the ripple effect in a giant way down the line when they are supposed to enter the workforce and do not have sufficient education or skills. We will also have issues with retaining valuable teachers if we are not funding our schools appropriately.

Again, I strongly urge you to pass this bill to fund our schools the way our children deserve.

Thank you for your consideration of my comment.

Marisa Jaso
Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:43:23 PM

Dear Alaska State House,

As an Anchorage parent of one child in kindergarten and a 1 year old who will enter the public school system in five years, I urge you to vote yes to pass House Bill 69.

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

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

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

Thanks for considering my comment.

Neil Waggoner
Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Mia Costello](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:33:02 PM

Dear Members of the House of Representatives and the House Education Committee, I am the mother of 3 children at Bayshore Elementary School and I was born and raised in Anchorage and educated at my local neighborhood schools. When I was growing up, I had experienced teachers who were masters of their subject areas and effective and artful at classroom management. I fear we are losing these masterful teachers due to our lack of education funding.

I have witnessed large class sizes for my children, high teacher turnover, families moving out of state in part because of our lack of education funding and support, and friends who are master teachers leaving the profession because they are fed up with the situation and there is no pension in place to incentivize them to stay.

I fully support raising the BSA by the amount required to make up for inflation since 2011 (approximately \$1,808). We owe this to our children, our educators, and the future of our state! We do not need to pander to the unreasonable demands by the governor-we need to increase education funding now to support strong public education for all Alaskans.

Please do what is right for our children and support the increase to the BSA.

Sincerely,
Colleen Bolling
Anchorage, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:55:49 AM

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Dawn Rauwolf

Mrs. Dawn R. Rauwolf, M.A.T.
4th grade teacher
Tongass School of Arts & Sciences
[REDACTED]
Ketchikan, AK 99901
[REDACTED]

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



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From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:56:35 PM

I'm ABSOLUTELY in support of HB 69 to raise the BSA. I was the PTA President for several years at Lake Hood Elementary, and despite the fact that this is one of the schools docketed to close, all students deserve to have the best public education available to them! NOW is the time to support this plan as we are long overdue, and I hope you will continue moving this forward as we (parents and students) are depending on you to make the best choice.

--

Crystal Norman
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:07:33 PM

House Education committee members,

I am an Anchorage resident and voter, parent of two public elementary school students, PTA board member, and spouse of an ASD teacher. I am writing to express my strong support for a meaningful and permanent increase to the BSA. Our students feel like frogs in the boiling water, where each year things get a little worse but the worsening conditions start to feel normalized— class sizes at 30; mixed grade level classes; constant teacher turnover; the frequent loss of art, music, and PE class time due to a lack of substitute teachers; long-term vacancies for regular classroom positions, etc. This is not okay and it should not be normal. The State of Alaska has a duty to fund public education and it is failing in that duty. My kids and every kid in Alaska deserves better.

Thank you for expediting this bill and for your consideration of my comments.

Katy Soden
Anchorage, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:38:26 PM

Dear House Education Committee,

Please pass HB69 or a bill with similar permanent increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

As a parent of 3 children in Fairbanks, I am committed to our community and public schools. The dispiriting effects of declining funding are all too apparent: ridiculous class sizes (33 in my son's 1st grade class!! what kind of learning happens with 33 six-year olds in a room...), educators and staff departing (at least 1/4 turnover at our elementary last year), closing schools...these add up to a vicious cycle of declining educational attainment and declining enrollment.

The Governor's cruel veto of last year's proposed BSA increase and the failure of the Legislature to override that veto is nothing less than a tax on students...we mail oil royalty checks out to all Alaskans and tell our kids and teachers there's no money for a serious boost to education.

We have to do better. We elected you all to do better for our kids. Please, increase public education funding meaningfully.

Thank you for your service on our behalf,

Andrew Allaby & Family
Fairbanks AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:15:44 AM

Hello,

I am writing to express my strong support for increasing the base student allocation. As a parent of two children in Alaska public schools, I am deeply concerned about the future of their education under the current fiscal climate. I believe the current public education crisis in Alaska is driving working families out of the state, and negatively impacting our economy. I am committed to keeping my family in Alaska, and I urge you to support our teachers and students to make this possible.

Thank you,

Gabriel Wechter
[REDACTED]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support for House Bill 69 – Increase Base Student Allocation
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:08:15 PM

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing as a concerned parent with three children attending the Sitka School District. I urge you to support House Bill 69, which seeks to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,000 this year and \$404 in the following two years. The current funding levels have been devastating to our district, the teachers, the staff and our families.

Since the last BSA increase in 2017, our district has been struggling to provide a high-quality education. We are seeing talented, dedicated teachers leave for other states with more competitive salaries and a lower cost of living. Many families are being forced to make difficult decisions about whether they can continue to live and raise their children in Sitka or even stay in Alaska. The teachers who remain are stretched beyond their limits, often working extra hours, using personal funds for the classroom and juggling multiple roles to make up for the lack of resources. I fear that if this trend continues, we will lose even more teachers, and the burnout will only intensify.

My children's education is being directly impacted. Larger class sizes, limited resources, and the loss of valuable extracurricular opportunities are just a few of the consequences we face daily. As a parent, it is heartbreaking to see the potential of our students stifled because the funding is not there to support them.

Increasing the BSA is not just a temporary fix—it's a long-term investment in the future of our students. I strongly urge you to support this bill, not only to preserve the quality of education in Alaska but to ensure that the Sitka School District can retain quality educators and offer students the opportunities they deserve.

The current funding situation is not sustainable, and without permanent increases to the BSA, we risk undermining the future of our children and our communities. Please take action now to secure a better future for all of Alaska's students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Kisaka

[REDACTED]
Sitka, AK 99835



From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Alyse Galvin](#)
Subject: Support HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:06:24 PM

Hi,

I am writing to urge you to support HB 69 to raise the BSA level for Alaskan education.

An educated citizenry is a prerequisite to functional participatory democracy and to thrive in an economy of the 21st century, Alaska needs a populace with a solid education across a spectrum of learning (from vocational training for traditional infrastructure / maintenance trades to high-tech spheres that require higher levels of learning). Alaska's students need good, well-paid teachers with sufficient (but not top heavy) administrative support in their mission and solid facilities to accomplish this work.

Please support this bill.

Thank you, Erika Monahan

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:55:31 PM

I am writing in support of HB 69. Raising the BSA is long past due. We are losing young families to other states, and poor commitment to our schools is a big reason why. I personally know of several young families that have relocated to places where they feel they can count on public support for public education.

Let's stop being penny wise and pound foolish. Raise the BSA, please, to make up for lost time. Thank you.

Glenn Cravez. [REDACTED]

Law Office of Glenn E. Cravez, Inc.

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [Rep. Ashley Carrick](#)
Subject: Support HB 69, to increase the BSA and inflation-proof it
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:04:17 AM

Dear House Education Committee:

I urge you to support HB 69 which would increase and inflation-proof the BSA.

Students, families, teachers, and our communities are stressed due to large class sizes, school closures, and the disrespect (experienced by the failure to support them) shown by recent Legislatures and the Governor.

With multiple school closures having already occurred and five more pending, Fairbanks and North Pole along with other communities in the state, are at risk. We have and will continue to experience further population declines due to a diminished education system. Our children are also, obviously, at risk of diminished life and career options due to our failure to provide what was recently Alaska's norm, excellent educational opportunities.

It's time to turn this around. And please work for a veto-proof majority on this legislation.

Yours,
--Tom Baring

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sen. Donny Olson](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:44:55 PM

Dear Representatives and Senators,

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you,
Anna Rose MacArthur

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Zack Fields](#); [Sen. Löki Tobin](#)
Subject: Support HB 69-Increase the BSA!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:44:44 PM

Please pass HB 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation for Alaska's future. Tonight I heard the Governor's legislative address and he listed a whole host of projects and jobs with over a \$Billion in production coming for Alaska. Those 5,000+ jobs hopefully comes with families to live and grow Alaska's sustainability. We don't need more workers that travel from Texas, or other far off states, for 2-week "hitches" because they don't see a future in our state. Every family that leaves, or chooses never to come with a job, is a lost opportunity. The stagnant education situation is falling far short of what children need. The data don't lie.

Alaska has tremendous opportunities and potential, but we need to invest in our own as well as attract the future to stay. High quality educators and education only comes from investing.

I urge you to support this bill to send a message that Alaska is truly open for business.

Anna Bosin
Anchorage, Ak
Engineer and mother

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:25:04 AM

My name is Jaime Roth. I am the parent in Homer and the Head Coach for the Kachemak Swim Club. I am in support of HB 69 so we can keep our pool open and not increase classrooms and lose theatre opportunities. Funding education should be near the top of the list of our government's priorities.

Thank you!
Jaime Roth
Head Coach
Kachemak Swim Club

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:50:27 AM

Please vote yes on House Bill 69. We need to support our children, they are the future of our state!

Thank you,

Molly Tarby

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:29:00 PM

I urge you to support education in Alaska, which has been emaciated over the last few decades. I've lived here nearly 30 years, and I vote in every election.

Please support HB69 to increase the funding to Alaska schools.

Thank you,
Kristiann Maclean


From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:09:35 PM

I live in Homer and support funding our schools with House Bill 69. Tell Vance the people she represents want well funded education.

Thank you!

Sharon Roufa

[REDACTED]
Homer AK 99603

From: 
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support house bill 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:54:28 AM

To whom this may concern:

Stop the crisis with schools by funding.

Not having bill 69 pass: Student teacher ratios could increase by TEN. Extracurriculars could fold. I know this is threatened every year but the budget deficit has grown from 13 million to 17 million in the last year and rather than a 1 year SBA increase we need to pass this bill. Eventually these won't just be threats, and our kids will start to suffer.

With that please pass house bill 69 for our schools and kids.

Thank you
Skya Maxon

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:29:57 AM

Hello,

I am an Alaska resident who has three children attending public schools in Anchorage. I myself attended and graduated from Anchorage public schools. It is a constitutional duty to fund our public schools. A majority of students attend these schools and they deserve a good quality education. The people hurt the most by these political moves to defund public schools are our children. Please help fix the continued under-funding of our public schools. For our children to succeed and receive the educations that they are entitled to, please support HB 69. Our kids are Alaska's future and that is worth investing in.

Thank you,
Jenna Miller

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:16:51 AM

I am pleased that the legislature is working to pass HB 69. At Petersburg School District, we have demonstrated success with students despite several years of financial uncertainty in the district. In the last few years, we have seen a decrease in staffing due to rising costs and stagnant revenues. This has resulted in a substantial increase in class sizes in many of our core classes and at grade levels where teacher/student individual interactions are critical to student success. This rate of attrition with our teachers is not a sustainable trend if we are to maintain the high standards for student performance that we have been able to achieve. Please, consider this investment in our youth as a crucial component in strengthening a education system that has produced great minds for over 120 years. The American education system has produced three times more Nobel prize winners than any other country and nearly 50% of all Nobel prize winners. Our youth are worth this investment.

Thank you, Brad King

--

Brad King, Principal
Petersburg HS/ Mitkof MS

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 5:10:46 PM

I support this bill in correcting the funding to catch up with inflation. Funded education is most important for the future of all Alaskans. Both of my now adult children have attended Alaskan public schools, furthered their education, and are now working in our state. This is what we want.

Support this HB,

Amy Rowe Danielson
Sitka, Alaska

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:29:30 AM

Hello members of the House Education Committee,

I was online this morning listening to testimony on HB69. I was also in the queue for testifying, but testimony ended before I was called.

My name is LaDawn Druce and I am a resident of Sterling. Welcome to Rep Elam; I am glad to see you're on the Education Committee.

My husband Mike and I moved with our two sons (and a third on the way) to the Kenai Peninsula in August of 1993. We both taught at Soldotna High School.

We are now retired teachers in the school district. We have both also "worked" since our retirement as there is a need to fill vacant positions.

For example, Mike is the principal/teacher for the second year in a row at Susan B. English school in Seldovia.

I listened online to the presentation by Superintendent Clayton Holland on Monday to the Senate Education Committee. I believe he mentioned the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District was facing an 18-million-dollar funding deficit.

Today I appreciated the testimony of Cody McKenna, the principal at Aurora Borealis charter school. He covered many of the items on my list.

Funding for public education in Alaska must increase. It should be adequate, timely, and consistent. We are no longer able to attract and retain quality educators in our community. I have witnessed the steady decline of programs and opportunities in our schools due to lack of funding and/or staffing issues.

I object to the idea that we are "throwing money" at education. I can only speak for myself and our district when I say every dollar is accounted for in the annual budget.

I also object to the idea that education is not meeting "performance standards." For example, last night I caught some of Governor Dunleavy's address to the state. He recognized the significant gains Kindergarten students have made in the implementation of the Alaska Reads Act. I applaud the teachers who have worked tirelessly over the past two years with the implementation of this program. On the other end of the K-12 spectrum are high school graduation rates. Those can be used along with other data, to address "performance

standards."

I am in support of HB 69 and thank the committee for recognizing the serious issues facing public education in our state!

Sincerely,
LaDawn Druce

[REDACTED]

Sterling, AK 99672

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:52:33 AM

Thank you, Madame Chair. My name is Rachel Lord. I am a parent in Homer, and I am in full support of HB 69. My kids are in 3rd and 6th grade.

I wish I could give you my ideas for where to move money around to pay for this necessary increase to school funding. At the municipal level, we have revenues that are tied to our citizens and the base services we provide. Unfortunately, you're extra challenged at the state without similar ties of a tax base to support the state's constitutional obligations, and we continue to do less with less.

Our school district here in the Kenai Peninsula Borough has stretched and reduced year over year over year. There could absolutely be plenty of improvements, and we also have been in a budget crisis since the year my oldest child entered school. I hear regularly that our district administration is bloated. I ask you - if you have a company of over 1,000 employees that stretches an area the size of West Virginia with a mandate to serve over 8,000 students — what is the lower level of administration that you can imagine? How many people does it take to do payroll, ensure curriculum and policies are implemented correctly, answer HR questions, track finances and budgets? Theoretically, DEED could be working with all school districts to assess and understand administrative overhead, create some benchmarks and plans for adjustment as necessary, and truly accept and support the need for actual administration of any programs. Here at KPBSD, in my experience as a parent the District administration has crossed below that lower level with barely enough human bodies to run the programs it's charged with on behalf of our kids.

Neighborhood schools are the cornerstone of our public education system. When you look to buy a home, the rankings of your neighborhood schools are what show up. If we want a strong economy in Alaska, we need working families, and to have working families we need strong and supported neighborhood, brick and mortar schools. They are the one school choice that can never go away, and the one school choice that every single parent in the state of Alaska has the constitutional right to enroll their children and expect those kids' needs to be met. Until we have excess UGF, the Legislature and Governor should be prioritizing above all else sufficient funding for these neighborhood schools. Our fiscal challenges are real, but undermining the Constitutional right to education for all kids is not the solution for Alaska.

Sincerely,
Rachel Lord
Homer, Alaska
Parent of second generation Alaskans

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 11:05:18 PM

Dear Representatives Dibert, Galvin, Fields, Holland, Josephson, and Mina,

My name is Laura Kolasa and I am a lifelong Alaskan, residing in Fairbanks, Senate District Q and House District 34-265. Thank you for considering HB 69. I strongly believe that increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) is an essential component to fulfilling our constitutional obligation to provide education to children in Alaska. Financial adjustments due to inflation have had to occur all across our economy over the past few years, and our students both present and future deserve the educational system in Alaska to do the same. The one year funding allotments that have happened during recent legislative sessions have been helpful bandaids but also contribute to further destabilizing our educational system. I have two young children and I desire to raise and educate them in Alaska. Our family believes deeply in the importance of education for our own children. We also believe in the importance of education for all children in our community and state, as well as the impact a robust education system has on our community. Increasing the BSA by the proposed \$1,808 and adjusting annually for inflation seems to be a glimmer of hope to an otherwise bleak and disheartening status of education investment in our state. I believe moving HB69 forward can have immediate positive impacts on our communities with implications that reach far into the future of our state.

Sincerely,
Laura Kolasa

[REDACTED]
Fairbanks AK 99707

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:03:46 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As a community member and future parent invested in our children's future, I urge you to raise the BSA in Alaska by \$1,808 and provide inflation-proofing to protect its value over time. Current funding levels are inadequate, leaving schools unable to meet basic needs. Teachers are overworked, class sizes are growing, and essential programs like special education and extracurriculars are being cut.

Increasing the BSA by \$1,808 would:

- EX: Allow schools to hire and retain qualified teachers.
- EX: Restore and maintain critical programs like arts, music, and special education.
- EX: Provide students with up-to-date materials and resources.

Inflation-proofing the BSA would ensure schools are not continually underfunded in the future, enabling consistent planning and better outcomes for Alaska's children.

Investing in education benefits everyone. A well-funded system leads to better-prepared graduates, stronger communities, and a more competitive workforce. Underfunding, however, results in higher dropout rates and increased social service costs. Raising the BSA ensures every child in Alaska has access to quality education and opportunities.

The governor says he wants to make Alaska the best state for families, but his priorities and actions could not be further from that reality.

Balancing the state budget is complex, but our children's education must be a priority. Please act now to raise the BSA by \$1,808, include inflation-proofing, and secure Alaska's future.

Thank you,
Aldyn Brudie
Juneau, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Support Public Schools, HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:51:19 AM

Please increase the BSA and support public education. Help keep class sizes down in our neighborhood schools, not just in charter schools. The Governor wants to inflation proof his salary, but seems to believe rising costs don't affect education.

Dunleavy needs to be accountable for the money he throws at lawsuits, publicity agencies, countless studies with reports he keeps secret. We could fund education with the money he wastes. He collects a TRS pension at the high end that he hypocritically won't support to lower paid public employees, while collecting a governor's salary.

Follow your state constitutional duty by fully funding public education. No more cash handouts to support private schools or fund private music lessons that are now denied to our public students. Pass HB 69, then override a Dunleavy veto.

Sincerely, Michelle Gillette

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Supporting HB 69!
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:05:40 AM

Good Morning,

As a mother of two school age kids, a daughter of educators and an avid volunteer in the schools, I see first hand of the importance in keeping our schools funded and supporting our teachers and students as best we can. It is so incredibly important and I am in 100% support of House Bill 69.

Thank you for your time,

-Kayla Owen

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Supporting HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:46:24 AM

Co-chairs Story and Himschoot, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for your service to the children of our State and your consideration increasing the Base Student Allocation

My Name is Dan Polta. I am the superintendent of the Denali Borough School District.

I'm writing to you in support of HB69 and urge you to advance it with all due haste.

In short, our students need and deserve this support.

The many years of stagnant funding and under investment in our children's education in Alaska negatively impacted on our ability to fully support our students. A stagnant BSA over the years has led to a reduction in supports for our students and their learning. The erosion in supports to students appears as fewer course offerings, less CTE opportunities, and other options that students and families deserve for their education.

We can no longer offer salaries and benefits that attract teachers to nurture our students' love of learning, to recruit teaching assistants to help inspire our students to show up every morning ready to learn, to retain custodians to ensure a clean classroom for our students to work in every day, and to provide maintenance staff to repair our students' aging schools.

Our children need the support in HB 69 to ensure that their education prepares them for a successful future in our changing world. Every child in Alaska deserves an excellent education, every day. Passing HB 69 will be a powerful step toward realizing this aspiration.

Thank you

Dan Polta
Superintendent
Denali Borough School District

[REDACTED]
Healy, AK, 99743
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Testimony for HB 69 from Ketchikan, AK
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:25:59 PM

Hello,

My name is Allyson, or Mrs. S. I am a mom of three Ketchikan Gateway Borough School district students, a teacher of 5 and 6 year olds brand new to the KGBSD and a friend to multiple teachers and paras and admins in this same district.

Last school year, there was a pretty big scare in our community when it was made known that the district would need to cut their budget by a significant amount due to lack of state funding. In May, 50+ teachers, and 30+ staff received pink slips with no guarantee that they would have a job for the next school year. May! By the time state funding was secured for part of this deficit, the summer was well underway and finding qualified people was very difficult. As a result, our schools have been running way short of support staff, with some unfilled teaching positions, and especially substitutes. Our staff are tired and stressed and now we are facing another state shortage of funds, again! Please don't let our community of teachers, paras and other staff be put in a similar, stressful situation. Increase the BSA so our kids and the people they love can take care of our future in the best possible way.

I support HB 69, please support it to pass as well. Help keep all competitive and ready for the world today!

--

Haaw'aa, Gunalcheésh, T'oyaxsxut 'nüün
Allyson Sebcioglu
1st/2nd grade Teacher
Tongass school of Arts and Sciences
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Testimony from Randy Trani Regarding HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:22:18 AM

Testimony regarding HB 69
Randy Trani
Superintendent of the Matanuska Susitna Borough School District

I am Randy Trani, the proud superintendent of the Mat-Su Borough School District. Thank you for your service to Alaska. I recognize the challenges you face with prioritizing spending of limited resources.

In the Mat-Su we start meetings with good things. I would like to share some good things from the Mat-Su School District. We are celebrating the highest combined graduation rate for a 4-year period this century, we produced more Career Technical Education Concentrators than ever, and more college credit for our graduates ever. The Mat-Su, like the rest of the state, leverages resources for the good of students and their families.

Currently we are budgeting presuming that the one-time \$680 is maintained. This leaves a \$22 Million deficit or approximately 8%. IF the one-time dollars are not replaced the deficit grows to more than \$45 million or approximately 17%.

Our biggest challenge is not knowing how to plan for next year to continue our amazing academic growth. Year to year uncertainty is disruptive to producing academic growth.

Let me give you one example. Later today we will meet to begin to decide if we will offer summer school this year. We need to have this meeting now because we have no certainty regarding funding levels. If we proceed now with the planning and hiring for summer school programs and funding levels are low, we will have retained summer programs only to cut school year core programs. However, if preemptively cut summer school and funding levels materialize late in the state budgeting process, we will have unnecessarily removed critical support for struggling students who take advantage of summer school.

In summary the Mat-Su produces outstanding academic outcomes. But we need certainty in our funding levels so we can continue to grow our academic success. This bill would still leave a shortfall of about \$11 Million dollars or about 4% of our budget. But if passed quickly and supported by the executive branch we would have the certainty we need to continue to do great things for kids.

Thank you for all your work! I am optimistic that your combined leadership will help provide a consistent, predictable, reasonable funding level, so schools across the Valley and our state can build stable programming that supports academic growth for our most important resources... our kids.

Thank you!

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education; Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 69 - Increasing the BSA
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:27:28 AM

Hello and thank you in advance for your time.

My name is Tabitha Voeller, I am a parent of two children with disabilities who attend Anchorage public schools, and I work as a substitute Paraprofessional in a Title 1 school for the Anchorage School District. We personally experience a lot of challenges, but are extremely grateful for the educators and staff who support our children, we know they work very hard to provide a safe learning environment.

I write to you today asking that you please support HB 69. Right now our schools are threatened not only by underfunding from the state of Alaska, but now the federal government as well, therefore, state support is more important than ever. I have been working in a kindergarten classroom with 27 students, seven of these students have IEPs (individualized education program). My understanding is that this school does not have the resources to split the class into two separate classrooms. These are five to six year old children - that is a lot of children of this age without any additional needs! The level of need is high, students come to school unprepared. Behavioral issues distract the entire class which affects learning for all of the students. Many will argue that this is a "parent" issue, not a school or government issue, but I believe this is a much larger systemic issue. The economic and social climate of our country has the majority of our families feeling extremely strained, they are overwhelmed and trying to survive - and that is no different for most Alaskan families. We see these conditions reflected in the children in our classrooms- students that depend on free lunch programs, students who need additional nurturing and support, students who require special programs due to disabilities.

To meet the needs of our schools, adequate and full funding is imperative to provide each school with the resources - trained staff, equipment, and materials - that they need. We want to retain and continue acquiring eager and qualified educators. Our educators are under immense pressure and are doing the best they can to support students in the myriad of ways they are needed. I am in awe of the patience and selflessness our current educators and staff bring to the table, but it isn't right, no one should be responsible for that level of stress. Under the existing socioeconomic conditions our most vulnerable families are struggling and yet it is the children and schools who are penalized.

Please take the time to really consider ALL Alaskans in your decision, supporting HB 69 and continuing to fully fund education in years to come can help us develop stronger communities and a stronger future for Alaska.

I appreciate your consideration,
Tabitha Voeller

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Anchorage, AK 99502

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:35:29 AM

I verbally gave my testimony this morning and wanted to provide a written record as well.
Thank you!

My name is Erik Anderson, and I fully support increasing the BSA. I was born in Juneau and am now raising my two sons here - currently in Kindergarten and third grade.

As a parent, I've seen firsthand how vital education programs can be to the success of our children. We need to provide our schools with the funding they need to meet the growing challenges of inflation, overcrowded classrooms, and diminishing programs to support students of all abilities.

When my son started school, it was a difficult transition. He faced varied challenges that required additional assistance to integrate into the classroom. Fortunately, he was able to access programs that gave him the individualized support he needed to stay on track.

Without those early intervention programs, it's improbable my son would have caught up and kept pace with his peers. Today he is thriving in third grade and is being considered for the district's gifted student program—something unforeseeable just a few short years ago.

Many of these very programs are being stripped from our schools due to lack of funding and support.

We continue to ask our educators to do more with less, but there are limits to what they can accomplish without the support they need. Programs designed to support students at every level are critical to giving every child the chance to succeed.

Next year, my son will enter 4th grade, where class sizes can reach as high as 40 students. It's hard to imagine how any teacher could effectively engage with and support each child in such an environment.

We cannot let inflation continue to outpace the funding. We cannot continue making it harder for teachers to give individual attention. And we cannot afford to continue stripping programs and services from our schools.

I hear people calling for accountability regarding current funding, but we can't expect progress without taking action. You can't expect a plant to grow if you refuse to water it.

This is not just about numbers or test scores on a page; it's about the future of our children. It's about ensuring that every student, no matter their background or abilities, has access to the education and resources they need to reach their full potential.

By investing in our schools, we are investing in the future of our state.

--

Erik Anderson
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:52:19 AM

Thank you Chairwoman Story, and members of this committee. My name is Katie Green. I am the mother of 2 current Juneau School District students and 5 alumni JSD students.

In my family's 14 years in the district, I have my first kiddo who requires student services. For context, Jacob is legally blind in his left eye, autistic, and has a severe speech delay. Jacob requires frequent check-in's with a safe adult to help mediate his academics and help him regulate behaviors.

I am writing to you today to provide advocacy for our most vulnerable students, those with special needs.

Investing in our schools is not merely an expenditure, but an investment in our future. When we fund our education adequately, we create a ripple effect that benefit every aspect of our society. It is time to shift our perspective and recognize funding our schools adequately is not a burden but a necessity.

According to the Department of Education website, as of FY23, just over 15% of students require some form of special services state-wide. Some services are ONLY available via Zoom with a provider out of state because of staffing.

The BSA in Alaska has been flat funded since FY17, though the number of enrolled students has remained roughly the same. If my sources serve me, the national inflation rate averages 2.5% per year.

In FY20, Alaska was ranked 4th in state funding for school districts across the nation.

I am confident in this committee's ability to see the need and importance of services to our most vulnerable students. I am trusting my children's education to you.

At the very least, account for inflation. But at most, see the need for increasing the base funding for Alaskan schools and give our children a fighting chance.

I urge you to vote in support of HB69.

Respectfully,
Katie Green

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Testimony Supporting HB 69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:56:32 AM

Dear Legislatures,

My name is Heather Aruffo and I live in Fairbanks, Alaska. I am here to testify in support of HB 69. I work as a regulatory medical writer in the pharmaceutical industry, as well as own and manage a rental property. I've lived in Alaska since 2016, and my husband, who is a teacher, is a third generation Alaskan. I make a six figure income, and pay property taxes on both our income generating rental property and on our home. My husband and I plan to start a family in the next year and are excited to have children.

I am deeply concerned about the funding situation for schools in this state, especially in five to six years when our first future child will start school. I attended public schools throughout my childhood, as did my husband, and my husband and I fully intend to send our children to public schools given the lackluster quality of the private schools in Fairbanks. Additionally, I am not willing to chance my children's education on a charter school lottery. I am deeply concerned that my future children will be cheated out of the quality public education they are owed according to the state constitution. I am unwilling to compromise my future children's education and limit their earning power by staying in Alaska if this continues to be the case. School funding is an economic issue. More and more high earners will continue to leave or will not come to Alaska in the first place if the schools are not funded to a level commiserate with inflation. To defund public schools is to economically hamstring the state for decades into the future, not only in terms of current jobs but also for future jobs if our graduates do not have the skill sets necessary for professional jobs, jobs in the trades and other jobs that involve business savvy, interpersonal skills and a specialized skill set. One of my coworkers, who is also a six figure earner, and a lifelong Alaskan married to a lifelong Alaskan, has already moved to Washington and has no intent of returning to the state due to the constant defunding of schools.

As someone who fully intends to continue to contribute to Alaska's economy, as well as participate in what is a multi billion dollar industry across the United States and provide my children the best possible education, I will not be homeschooling, nor do I believe that diverting money away from public schools in the name of supporting homeschooling, where many parents opt out of required tests and whose quality is impossible to assure or regulate, is within the legislatures best interest. I have heard too many stories from my husband of the uneven quality of homeschooling, including stories of children who are illiterate at 10 years old returning to public school, to think that homeschooling is any kind of solution to this manufactured problem of defunding public schools, which is pushing more and more families

away. The wants of the few should not overrule the needs and constitutional rights of the many. The BSA has not been increased at a rate commiserate with inflation and is unsustainable for schools at its current level of funding.

As the spouse of a teacher, I have seen how teachers are forced to do more and more work without pay. An example of this is the Alaska reads act, which is unfunded. Our teachers have done a heroic job of working without funding to raise the scores of their students, however, we cannot continue to demand that teachers do more and more work without pay. That is a volunteer position, not a career, and teaching is a career that in the past provided stable, decently paid jobs to our economy and communities. Additionally, the lack of pensions for teachers has made it extremely difficult for the school districts to retain teachers who are not on the tier 1 or tier 2 pension system. At my husband's school, 2/3 of the teachers are on tier 1 or tier 2 pensions, meaning that in the next five to ten years, 2/3 of the teachers will be retired. Teaching is an essential profession, and the profession is losing out on young teachers because of the difficulties associated with one time funding and uncertainty, as well as the lack of pensions and, in Fairbanks, the recent increase in insurance costs. Teaching is a profession that should be respected and that requires a full slate of benefits in order to retain professionals who will continue to serve their communities. Spending \$3,000 per teacher per year on insurance is an investment in continued teacher retention, as well as commiserate with what someone with a masters degree working a professional job would be given in the private sector as a benefit. We will have a school system in an even deeper crisis when the last of the tier 2 teachers retire. My husband, before he met me, was considering leaving due to job uncertainty and lack of pension. He was lucky that I had a good job. However, many teachers are not as fortunate.

I strongly urge you to vote yes on HB69 for the future wellbeing of Alaska as well as the present wellbeing. If personal testimony does not move you, I hope that a focus on the numbers, and the economic importance of funding schools will. After all, isn't the essence of conservatism to make our country as economically strong as possible? The Republican Party that my father proudly voted for was a party of profit and economic success. I hope yours is as well.

Best Regards,
Heather Aruffo, Fairbanks

From: ██████████
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Thoughts
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 2:02:18 PM

We need one method of funding and one way spending it - If you held the School Administrators accountable we would not be in a kayos! Why is it that you don't require annual audits! Payments and budgets based on performance! The concept of need needs to be realistic!

We are tired of the screaming of we need money; however, at the end of the our kids are failing and can't read past 8th grade/teachers are paying for school supplies out of their own pocket/ the Administration is decked out with 100k salaries! Time to rethink and impose sanctions until the system is significantly improved!

We as Alaskans are holding you accountable for reining in the waste and miss management!
Have a great day

< **Inbox** **HB-69 BSA Increase** ^ v

Wednesday, Jan 29.

Remember, this is an issue that typically gets plenty of attention, so if you are looking to call-in, be prepared to wait on the line.

If you ever have any questions regarding call-in or write-in testimony, you can DM us, call your local LIO, or reach out to your representative!

[#akleg](#) [#alaska](#) [#education](#) [#GOP](#)

***HOW SHOULD
EDUCATION BE FUNDED
IN ALASKA?***

**MAKE YOUR OPINION HEARD
REGARDING POLICY CHANGES RELATED
TO EDUCATION FUNDING AND THE BSA!**

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
**WED. JAN 29, 8AM-10AM
AND 5PM TO FINISH**

CALL-IN NUMBERS:
ANC: 907-563-9085

An advertisement banner with a dark blue background. On the right side, there is a faint map of Alaska and the text "THE ALASKA HOUSE REPUBLICANS". The main text is centered and reads: "ANC. 907-586-9085", "JUNEAU: 907-586-9085", "ALL OTHERS: 844-586-9085", "WRITE-IN TESTIMONY:", and "HOUSE.EDUCATION@AKLEG.GOV".

ANC. 907-586-9085
JUNEAU: 907-586-9085
ALL OTHERS: 844-586-9085
WRITE-IN TESTIMONY:
HOUSE.EDUCATION@AKLEG.GOV

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Urgent Need to Increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA)
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:49:06 AM
Attachments: [Dear Alaska Legislators.docx](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Rep. Frank Tomaszewski](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#)
Subject: Vote in favor of HB 69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:54:49 PM

Dear Legislators,

We are in favor of HB 69 because we desperately need school funding to keep up with inflation. We haven't invested in our schools since 2014 which brings diminishing returns on education for our children.

Respectfully,

Robin Dale Ford
Pat Fitzgerald
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99710

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: We oppose HB 69 which is a funding bill with no accountability.
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:43:34 PM

We recommend that you fund students not systems.

Respectfully yours,

Jon and Ruth Ewig

[REDACTED]

Fairbanks, AK 99701



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Without the increase in BSA my schools will close
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:03:49 AM

House Education Committee- PLEASE HEAR US!!!

I am a therapist that works on the southern peninsula serving 10 different schools in the KPBSD. I am also a mom of a first grader. Our district is bursting at the seams. Our classrooms are already full, our staff is operating on skeleton crews due to open positions, and we are burnt out. As we continue to add more work load, have high turnover rates and our towns grow more populated, our students lose quality of care. Not just quality of education... but the ability to be seen, be heard and have an education plan that meets their individual needs.

As a therapist that specializes in sensory regulation, our classrooms and buildings are contributing to the overwhelm and dysregulation of our kids. We need to keep the teacher to student ratio down!!!!

I am begging you to fight for the increase in BSA so our district can provide the staffing and environment our kids need to flourish. They are our future and their education shapes the influence they will have on our world. There's nothing more important than that.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Anderson
Occupational Therapist
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: governor@gov.state.ak.us; SenMatt.Claman@akleg.gov; [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Subject: Written Testimony for Education Funding Bill HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 12:44:46 AM

To All Elected Officials
Members of the House Education Committee on HB 69

cc:
Governor Dunleavy
Senator Matt Claman
Representative Carolyn Hall

Hello I AM DeborahAnn Swiz Zahler from Anchorage. I Am weighing on House Bill 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation. It is my understanding that this increase, proposed is in 3 allotments first being \$1,000.00, next \$404.00 and then \$404.00, is to raise the BSA to bring it up to inflationary costs which has not occurred since 2014. I am in favor of this proposed increase and encourage you to give full consideration to this measure.

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Alaska and as a Retired Anchorage School Teacher with firsthand knowledge of the importance of this proposed increase and its direct effect on the day to day Operation of EACH Classroom and in the lives of Children! Children above All else are the most Important Part of the Future. When their Gifts and Talents that they bring within them are properly Nurtured and they are given opportunities to Creatively Develop, the Possibilities are Endless. Thus we grow in our Communities, our State, our Nation and in our World.

Let us work together to create New Pathways Forward that are supportive.

Thank you for this Opportunity to Voice this Testimony
Deborah Ann Swiz Zahler

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Cc: [Sen. Matt Claman](#); [Rep. Carolyn Hall](#)
Subject: Written Testimony for Education Funding Bill HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:20:05 AM

To All Elected Officials
Members of the House Education Committee on HB 69

cc:
Governor Dunleavy
Senator Matt Claman
Representative Carolyn Hall

Hello I AM DeborahAnn Swiz Zahler from Anchorage. I Am weighing on House Bill 69 to increase the Base Student Allocation. It is my understanding that this increase, proposed is in 3 allotments first being \$1,000.00, next \$404.00 and then \$404.00, is to raise the BSA to bring it up to inflationary costs which has not occurred since 2014. I am in favor of this proposed increase and encourage you to give full consideration to this measure.

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Alaska and as a Retired Anchorage School Teacher with firsthand knowledge of the importance of this proposed increase and its direct effect on the day to day Operation of EACH Classroom and in the lives of Children! Children above All else are the most Important Part of the Future. When their Gifts and Talents that they bring within them are properly Nurtured and they are given opportunities to Creatively Develop, the Possibilities are Endless. Thus we grow in our Communities, our State, our Nation and in our World.

Let us work together to create New Pathways Forward that are supportive.

Thank you for this Opportunity to Voice this Testimony
Deborah Ann Swiz Zahler

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Written Testimony in Support of HB69
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:56:26 PM

Dear Members of the Alaska House Education Committee,

My name is Aubrie Ellis, and I serve as the Assistant Principal of Mountain View Elementary in Kenai. I am writing today in strong support of HB69, proposing a Base Student Allocation increase of \$1,808 to ensure that our public education system remains strong, sustainable, and capable of fulfilling the constitutional promise of providing all students with access to quality education, resources, and opportunities.

For too long, school districts across Alaska have struggled to keep pace with inflation, facing annual deficits, forcing us into annual budget crises that negatively impact students, staff, and the broader community. An ongoing, inflation-proof BSA increase is essential not only to maintaining current programs but also to ensuring that Alaska remains competitive in hiring and retaining high-quality educators. Without reliable funding, we are unable to hire top-tier teachers at the beginning of the hiring season, leaving us to fill positions after the most qualified candidates have already been recruited elsewhere. Additionally, year after year, we are unable to give certainty of employment to highly qualified untenured teachers due to budget uncertainty—creating stress for educators and instability for our students.

The lack of a predictable and adequate BSA has also placed our communities in a constant state of financial distress. Every budget cycle, we face difficult decisions that involve cutting essential programs and increasing class sizes, both of which negatively impact student learning. By passing HB69, you can help ensure that our schools are adequately funded to support the needs of our students, attract and retain highly qualified teachers, and provide the stability that our education system desperately needs.

I thank you in advance for your support and urge you to continue fighting for this critical investment in Alaska's future. I appreciate your time and for your commitment to the students and families of our great state.

Sincerely,
Aubrie Ellis
Assistant Principal
Mountain View Elementary, Kenai, AK

KPBSD

Get Outlook for
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Senate Education](#); [House Education](#)
Subject: Written Testimony on HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:06:16 AM

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

attack ad.

- To the folks on the left, school choice is a reality, and one that a majority of Alaskans with children are now in favor of. Charter and magnet schools, correctly implemented at the district level, can improve the experience and outcomes of students across the socioeconomic spectrum.

- To the folks on the right, please have the vision to see that education is not a zero-sum expense on the state balance sheet. It is an investment in the future. One that, if neglected, will lead to decreasing population, decreasing outside investment, decreasing quality of life, and yes, eventually, a decreasing PFD. Education reform will not simply materialize if budgets are simply held flat while inflation erodes what these funds deliver to our children.

Ben Loeffler
Fairbanks, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#)
Subject: Written Testimony on HB69
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:28:37 AM

My name is R. Brett Stirling, and I was a teacher and principal in Alaska schools for over twenty years in the communities of Kongiganak, Toksook Bay, Tununak, Eek, Point Lay, and Delta Junction. Every single year of my career, my staff and I were asked to do more with less. The Alaska Reads Act is a perfect example. I was forced to reduce staffing, cut programs, mothball libraries, and combine classes in my buildings knowing full well it would hurt instruction, but I was given no choice. The economics of education would not allow me to do what is best for kids. Mike Dunleavy and Deena Bishop know schools need more funding, they just don't want to do the difficult work. I fully support HB69 and don't appreciate the Governor bashing it in private emails while claiming to support teachers in public.

Thank you for taking public comments.

Respectfully,
R. Brett Stirling
Delta Junction, AK

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Education](#); [REDACTED]
Cc: governor@gov.state.ak.us; [REDACTED]; [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Written Testimony to the House Education Committee, Alaska Regarding HB 69, Accountability in Education Funding, and Proposed National Elks Drug Awareness "PixelPandemic" Initiative
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:34:08 AM

**Written Testimony to the House Education Committee, Alaska
Regarding HB 69, Accountability in Education Funding, and Proposed National Elks
Drug Awareness "PixelPandemic" Initiative**

Submitted By: *Judith M. Eckert, M.Ed.*

Date: January 29, 2025

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

Thank you, Co-Chairs Representative Justin Ruffridge, Representative Jamie Allard, and Members of the House Education Committee for the opportunity to speak on **HB 69** and our urgent need to **demand accountability** in Alaska's education funding. My name is **Judith Eckert, M.Ed.** I write to address **overspending, untested online curricula and the need for fundamental policy reforms**. I also want to introduce a **collaborative proposal** for the **Elks Drug Awareness Program** (the "PixelPandemic" initiative). This proposal is urgent, as it broadens the Elks' longstanding focus on substance abuse prevention to include **screen-hazard education**, highlighting the concerning links between **excessive screen time, dopamine loops**, and the risk of **subsequent addictions**—including gaming, drugs, and alcohol.

I. WHY ALASKA NEEDS RENEWED ACCOUNTABILITY & REFORM

Speaking Out Against HB 69: Without Proper Accountability

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Simply increasing the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** will not solve the core issues in our schools. We must enact **fundamental policy changes** that require districts to demonstrate how they are using those dollars, particularly regarding **online curricula**, which often show questionable outcomes and high costs.

Overspending on Unvalidated Digital Platforms

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Many online curricula suffer from "**designed obsolescence**" and are not statistically tested. Excessive "pixelation" fosters **dopamine loops** that can harm students

cognitively, socially, and emotionally. In extreme cases, it may contribute to **addictive behaviors**, mirroring the patterns we see in substance abuse.

Calls for a Comprehensive Audit

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I respectfully request that this Committee conduct or mandate a **comprehensive audit** of all **online curricular expenditures**—especially those supported by federal funds like ESSER and **Title I**—to evaluate **cost-effectiveness** and **student outcomes**. This audit is crucial to ensure transparency and accountability in our education funding.

Hands-On, Community, and Vocational Learning

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Funding should be **reallocated** toward **hands-on, culturally relevant, and project-based approaches** that build reading comprehension, critical thinking, and social-emotional resilience—rather than fueling ever-increasing screen reliance.

Support School Choice & Invest in Teachers

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Families deserve options, mainly if local public schools rely heavily on unvetted digital tools. We must also **invest in high-quality teachers**, providing them with **incentives and training** to reduce teacher turnover and classroom chaos sparked by ill-considered tech mandates.

II. OVERVIEW: DRUG AWARENESS

"PIXELPANDEMIC" INITIATIVE This initiative has the **potential to significantly improve the mental health and academic performance of our students.**

To complement these education reforms, I propose an **expansion** of **Drug Awareness Programs**—dubbed the "PixelPandemic" Initiative—to address **excessive screen time** as a **public health crisis** and a potential **gateway** to other addictions. This initiative aims to engage:

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President Trump's Transition Team

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Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**
- **Department of Defense (DoD)** (mainly for military families in Alaska)
- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**
- **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
- **Tech Leaders** (Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos)
- **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** (advocacy/public-facing roles)
- **Various entities, including The Elks Drug Awareness Program and philanthropic partners.**

A. Rationale & Target Population

Dopamine Loops and "Pixelation"

- Repeated exposure to "gamified" digital content can foster **addiction-like behaviors**. Researchers Dr. Rebecca Jackson, Brain Balance Centers, Nicholas Kardaras Maui Recovery, Hawaii, and Dr. Michael Rich, Harvard, have documented links between screen overuse and **aggression, depression**, and compromised social-emotional skills.

Military Families in Alaska

- Alaska has the **highest per capita military population** in the U.S. Family stressors—frequent relocations, extended deployments—exacerbate reliance on digital content, increasing the risk for screen addiction and other mental health challenges.

Public Health & Legal Framework

- **CDC** guidance on adolescent mental health highlights the need to address excessive screen time as a **community health priority**.

- **DEA** alignment helps us frame digital addiction within broader **addiction-prevention** strategies.
- **SAMHSA** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) provides national leadership in behavioral health and can help direct resources and best practices to reduce both screen-based and substance addictions.
- **The EEOC** ensures non-discriminatory hiring practices, which is critical for recruiting educators who effectively manage balanced tech integration.
- **FDA** oversight applies when "therapeutic" devices or interventions (e.g., Brain Balance protocols) claim medical benefits and require evidence-based compliance.

III. OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

Incorporate Screen Addiction Prevention into the Alaska State Elks Drug Awareness Program

Dual-Focus Education: Recognize parallels between **substance** and **digital** addictions, emphasizing how dopamine-driven tech can undermine mental health.

Partner with Brain Balance Centers & Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Neuropsych Evaluations & Interventions: Address ADHD, autism, dyslexia, or other disorders often exacerbated by digital overexposure.

PLCs via Solution Tree: Data-driven methods to track reading comprehension, mental health, and screen-time habits, adapting strategies in real time.

EEOC-Compliant Hiring & Curricula

Bring **qualified educators** trained to integrate tech responsibly, ensuring **inclusive instruction** that does not depend on questionable digital content.

Strong Mental Health Referrals & HIPAA-FERPA Compliance

Tools like **Care Solace** can promptly connect students to mental health professionals while respecting **privacy laws**.

SAMHSA partnerships could facilitate additional services or funding for counseling and addiction prevention programs.

Collaboration with CDC, DEA, DoD, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and SAMHSA

Military-Focused Engagement: Tailor resources for children of active-duty and reservist parents, often in remote Alaskan communities.

Public Health Synergy: Align with **CDC** advisories on pediatric well-being; collaborate with **DEA** and **SAMHSA** on community-level awareness of addiction progression.

Advocacy Role: Robert F. Kennedy Jr. could serve as a public-facing advocate, raising awareness of the "PixelPandemic."

IV. THREE-MINUTE PUBLIC COMMENT

Good afternoon, Members of the House Education Committee, President Trump's Transition Team, DEA, DoD Officials, CDC Experts, SAMHSA Representatives, and Esteemed Guests:

My name is **Judith Eckert, M.Ed.**, and I urge you to **expand our substance abuse prevention initiatives** to address what I call the "**PixelPandemic**"—a crisis of excessive screen time leading to dopamine loops, gaming addiction, and other mental health risks. Dr. Rebecca Jackson, BrainBalance, Nicholas Kardaras, a neuropsychologist, and Dr. Michael Rich, M.D., conducted the research. Harvard Mediatrician confirms the alarming effects of digital overuse, from increased anxiety to diminished reading comprehension. This is not a problem we can afford to ignore.

In **Alaska**, where military families abound and Native communities face some of the nation's highest suicide rates, children already contending with Autism, Dyslexia, ADHD, or other needs cannot afford further harm from unvalidated digital tools. Prolonged lockdowns and the push toward more screen-based curricula have only magnified these risks.

We can foster real solutions by **partnering** with Brain Balance Centers, rolling out **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**, and forming a collaborative network with **the CDC, DEA, SAMHSA, DoD**, and tech innovators. **EEOC** oversight ensures we hire qualified educators. **FDA** compliance guarantees that therapeutic claims adhere to evidence-based standards. Finally, **HIPAA/FERPA** protections ensure student privacy as they receive the desperately needed interventions.

I call upon the **National Elks, President Trump's Transition Team**, and **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** to champion these pilot programs in Alaska and Hawaii, where the stakes are highest. Let us protect our Native Alaskan, civilian, and military children by ensuring they grow up in a balanced, healthy environment, free from the harms of unregulated digital overexposure.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Alaska's families, educators, and future leaders.

V. HOW DOES THIS SUPPORT BROADER REFORMS IN ALASKA

1.

Better Allocation of Education Funds

Instead of pouring money into **HB 69** increases for the BSA without strings attached, we can **tie funding** to responsible, evidence-based programs. We can audit digital expenditures and demand improvement in authentic literacy and mental health metrics.

2.

School Choice & Empowered Parents

Correspondence schools and other choice-based models allow parents to opt out of tech-saturated classrooms that may harm their children's progress or well-being.

3.

Teacher Investment

Attract and retain **high-quality teachers** who combine **research-backed practices** with controlled, purposeful technology use rather than relying on half-baked software or "designed obsolescence" e-textbooks.

4.

Legal & Ethical Compliance

Align with **IDEA, Section 504, ADA** (particularly in light of **Perez v. Sturgis Public Schools**), ensuring that children in special education are not "pushed online" without robust, in-person support.

Integrate **SAMHSA** guidelines to coordinate mental health services and

substance abuse prevention efforts appropriately.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS

Phase 1: Coalition Building & Funding

- Engage the **Drug Awareness Program**, philanthropic tech leaders (Musk, Zuckerberg, Bezos), and others to fund pilot Brain Balance Centers and PLC training in Alaska and Hawaii.
- Collaborate with **CDC**, **DoD**, **DEA**, and **SAMHSA** to address public health and military-family needs.

Phase 2: Pilot Program Launch

- Integrate **screen-limiting measures**, Brain Balance interventions, and PLC best practices in select school districts, Solutions Tree, prioritizing areas with high special education, military, and Native Alaskan family populations.
- Track outcomes in **academic performance**, **social-emotional well-being**, and **reduced screen reliance**.

Phase 3: Assessment & Nationwide Replication

- Evaluate pilot results against **FDA** standards for any therapeutic claims.
- Refine the approach for national expansion under the **National Elks Drug Awareness** umbrella, continuing to align with **DEA**, **SAMHSA**, **EEOC**, **HIPAA**, **FERPA**, and relevant court precedents.

CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION

In closing, **Alaska** must be at the forefront of **transforming education funding** and addressing the **Pixel Pandemic** crisis. My testimony calls on the Legislature to:

1. **Reject HB 69** (as currently structured) or **significantly amend** it to **require accountability** before increasing the BSA.

2. **Conduct a comprehensive audit of online curricular spending and demand evidence-based programs.**
3. **Embrace the Elks Drug Awareness Program "PixelPandemic" Initiative** to combat screen addiction and its link to broader substance abuse, starting with **pilot programs** in Alaska and Hawaii.
4. **We should support school choice, invest in teachers**, and ensure all policy changes comply with the mental health and substance abuse prevention guidelines set by **IDEA, Section 504, the ADA, the EEOC, the FDA, HIPAA, FERPA, and SAMHSA.**

By safeguarding student mental health and insisting on **responsible, scientifically validated** educational practices, we can secure a **brighter, more resilient future** for Alaska's children, including those from our cherished Native and military communities.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judith M. Eckert, M.Ed.

<https://pixelpandemic.org/>

Special Education, Elementary Education K–6, ELL Certification
"Highly Qualified" Educator

CC & References

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I am including full project details, legal references, and research citations for your review.

-

CC: Governor Mike Dunleavy, Alaska

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The Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development

-

Alaska State House Representative Sarah Vance

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Clayton Holland, Superintendent Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD)

- Dr. Jharrett Bryantt, Superintendent of the Anchorage School District (ASD)
- Dr. Nicholas Kardaras, Chief Clinical Officer of *Maui Recovery* in Hawaii
- Dr. Rebecca Jackson, Vice President of Programs and Outcomes: Brain Balance Centers
- Dr. Michael Rich, M.D. Pediatrician Harvard University
- Tiffany A. Budinger Chairman, Drug Awareness Program, Alaska State Elks Association Petersburg Lodge #1615
- Rick Eckert Chairman, Elks National Trust Fund, Auditing and Accounting, Homer, Lodge #2127
- Donna Hall, Elks Lodge # 2127

Thank you for considering these reforms and your ongoing commitment to all Alaskan students' **health, well-being, and academic success**. I am available to answer any questions or discuss this further.

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(See also 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.; 29 U.S.C. § 794; 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 45 C.F.R. Parts
160, 162, 164)