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Introduced By: Education Committee
Date Introduced: April 4, 2011
Date Passed: April 4, 2011
Date Transmitted: April 5, 2011

RESOLUTION 11-0404A

A RESOLUTION BY THE GREATER FAIRBANKS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 84: ESTABLISHING INCREMENTAL THREE-YEAR INCREASES IN THE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION AND SETS ASIDE FUNDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

WHEREAS, the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce places great value on public education and recognizes the powerful relationship between public schools and community and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the historic compact between the business community and public schools is based on high expectations for student achievement and workforce preparedness; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is to provide an excellent and equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students can become productive members of a diverse and changing society; and

WHEREAS, without a funding commitment from the legislature in advance, problems arise from the misalignment of the legislative session and the school district budget cycle since the school district must submit a balanced budget to the Borough Assembly by April 1 of each year (before the legislative session is over); and

WHEREAS, educators, employers and government officials agree schools must prepare students to transition from public education to a career pathway or higher education; and

WHEREAS, a lack of categorical funding for vocational (career and technical) education inhibits the school district's ability to provide a dynamic and meaningful career and technical education to its large and diverse student population; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce urges the legislature to pass Senate Bill 84, which provides an increase to the Base Student Allocation for Fiscal Years 2012 through 2014, and establishes categorical funding for career and technical education for grades 9-12, thereby sustaining and growing Alaska's investment in education; and

I N V E S T O R S

D I A M O N D

BP Exploration
ConocoPhillips
ExxonMobil
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
FMH & Denali Center
Flint Hills Resources Alaska

P L A T I N U M

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.
Carlson Center
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Fred Meyer Stores
Golden Heart Utilities
Mt. McKinley Bank
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G O L D

Birchwood Homes
Denali State Bank
Design Alaska
Doyon Utilities LLC
First National Bank Alaska
GCI
Kinross-Fort Knox Mine
MAC Federal Credit Union
Northrim Bank
Sumitomo Metal Mining Pogo LLC
Usibelli Coal Mine

S I L V E R

ACS
Alaska Airlines
Alaska Railroad
Alaska USA
AT&T
Denali – The Alaska Gas Pipeline
Everts Air Cargo, Everts Air AK
Exclusive Paving/Univ. Redi-Mix
Fairbanks Natural Gas
Flowline Alaska
Fountainhead Development
General Teamsters Local 959
GVEA
Hale & Associates, Inc.
JL Properties, Inc.
Key Bank
Personnel Plus
Spirit of Alaska FCU
Tanana Valley Clinic
TDL Professional Staffing
The Boeing Co.
TOTE
WAL-MART Stores, Inc.
Yukon Title Company

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be distributed to:

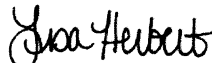
Governor Sean Parnell, State of Alaska
Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell, State of Alaska
Alaska State Legislature
Mike Nizich, Chief of Staff, Gov. Parnell
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Workforce Development
Commissioner Michael Hanley, Dept. of
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Superintendent Dr. Pete Lewis, Fairbanks
North Star Borough School District
Mayor Luke Hopkins, Fairbanks North Star
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Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
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Fairbanks City Council
Mayor Doug Isaacson, City of North Pole
North Pole City Council
General Membership of the Greater Fairbanks
Chamber of Commerce
Alaska State Chamber of Commerce

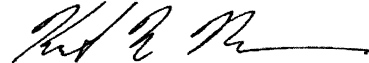
GREATER FAIRBANKS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Board of Directors, Chair



Lisa Herbert
Executive Director



Kurt Newman
Education Committee, Chair

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Saturday, February 26, 2011 12:22 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB 84

From: Sammy Crawford [<mailto:scrawfor@alaska.net>]
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2011 2:42 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Dave Jones
Subject: Support for SB 84

Subject: Support for SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

I want to offer my strong support for Senate Bill 84, an important education funding proposal. This legislation would make a huge difference to our district for the following reasons:

1. It allows us to plan three years in advance, 2. it allows us to hire and retain the best teachers with certain funding, 3. it will allow us to keep programmatic staffing including our interventionists who work with children to make sure they meet the benchmarks by third grade, and 4. would allow us to continue our vocational ed programs and add to our successful construction academies.

Our district, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, has worked diligently to cut unnecessary costs. We have an energy incentive plan at each school in the district where students and staff work to decrease energy costs. We have rebid our copy contract to reduce paper copy costs. We took a tough look at our budget and eliminated unnecessary budgeted funds from several different areas. We still have no full time librarians in any of our 44 schools as a result of cost cutting measures in the past several years.

Our district is currently looking at a deficit of \$3.5 million for next year - about 42 teachers.

We really appreciate your sponsorship of SB 84.

Sincerely,

Sammy Crawford

Kenai Peninsula Borough School Board

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 8:23 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB84

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

From: William McLeod [<mailto:wmcLeod@dlgsd.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 4:07 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; dcsd@dlgsd.org
Subject: Support for SB84

Honorable Sen. Joe Thomas,

As superintendent of DCSD, I am asking for your support to increase the funding for Alaskan schools. As an educator I sincerely appreciate the past funding efforts from our state legislature and hope you continue to assist us. I know you are aware of the ever increasing costs in locations like Dillingham for such items as fuel for energy, rising insurance costs, the need to offer competitive compensation to attract and retain rural teachers, and things as simple as the cost of a loaf of bread. More importantly is the need we have to improve the academic performance of our kids. As a district faced with not meeting AYP, being a level 5 designated school, and recognizing we need to do a better job of meeting the SBA's of the Alaska standards we have begun major initiatives for improvement. We are moving to a standards based instructional program implementing research based best practices for our district. This year we have implemented the DEED recommended model for a universal screening assessment-Measured Academic Performance program, Response to Intervention, curriculum alignment to ensure we are teaching the AK Standards in all assessed areas, and volunteered as one of 16 school district participating in the new school improvement process known by the acronym of STEPP. One result of our efforts has been the identification that we need an additional reading specialist to help our teachers and kids with interventions for success. Without some increase in funding we will not be able to make even this modest effort to help our staff and kids. We are showing gains in our students using the processes I have noted and feel confident that your investment in the kids of Dillingham will not be wasted. We are showing positive results and with a little more help we can move our students ever closer to meeting the standards of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Bill McLeod,
Superintendent of Schools DCSD

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 8:22 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 84
Attachments: SB84 Support from Anchorage School Dist..pdf

From: Olson_Robin [mailto:Olson_Robin@asdk12.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 5:48 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: School Board; 'sean.parnell@alaska.gov'; 'mike.hanley@alaska.gov'; 'bjohnson@alaskaacsa.org'; 'crose@aasb.org'
Subject: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 84

Good afternoon Senator Meyer and Senator Thomas,
Please find attached Superintendent Carol Comeau's letter in support of Senate Bill 84. It is also below for your convenience:

Dear Senators Meyer and Thomas:

On behalf of the Anchorage School District, I want to thank you for co-sponsoring Senate Bill 84. This legislation would insure that the Anchorage School District, and all other districts in the State, would be able to plan responsibly for the next three years, and would allow us to make much needed improvements to our Career and Technical/Vocational Education Programs. I applaud your leadership on this important issue.

The past three years of advance planning for education has allowed the Anchorage School District to advance their efforts in meeting our goal of graduating more of our high school students with a diploma, and reducing the drop-out rate. The efforts of the Joint Education Funding Task Force (JEFTF), chaired by Representative Mike Hawker and Senator Bert Stedman, have made a significant difference in our ability to plan ahead and we are grateful to the legislature and the governor for successful implementation of the three-year forward funding. Even with those significant increases, the Anchorage School District still had a \$12 million budget gap in the general fund to maintain current programs, pay for negotiated salary and benefit increases, pay for increased utility and fuel costs. The gap was NOT necessitated by our use of the ARRA (federal stimulus funds), but rather the ongoing general fund costs.

We still have a long way to go to insure that our students are college and/or career ready when they leave the Anchorage School District. We are very appreciative of the legislature's strong support for increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA), the Intensive Needs Factor, and to pupil transportation. We are also supportive of the phased-in Area Cost Differential for all districts, even though Anchorage does not receive any funding under this part of the education formula. The increases to the Intensive Needs factor has allowed the ASD to use our general fund resources for non-special education students and programs for the first time; we are very grateful for that as many of our over 900+ Intensive Needs students require extra-ordinary services to meet the requirements of their Individual Educational Plans (IEP's).

We support Senate Bill 84's three year increases to the BSA as a way to assist districts in meeting the costs of inflation, fuel and energy cost increases, and to allow us to retain important programs and staff who are key to increasing our graduation rate over time. We believe the proposed increases are reasonable for the State of Alaska in support of quality education. We know that we must increase the rigor of our course offerings in order to meet the challenges of the Alaska Performance Scholarship; we have a graduation task force

reviewing our requirements and soliciting input in where to make needed changes. The additional funding will allow us to retain our effective teachers while keeping class sizes reasonable so our students receive quality education.

The Anchorage School District is also increasing our Career and Technical/Vocational Education offerings in order to better meet the needs of our non-college going student population. We have made great strides in this area at all of our comprehensive high schools, as well as at the King Career Center. We have strong partnerships with Alaska General Contractors, Alaska Works, and CITC at our Construction Academy at the King Career Center. We have incorporated upgrades to our high schools and middle schools in order to offer more CTE courses at home schools, as well as the King Career Center in our upcoming school bond election. Having additional funding to support the necessary teacher positions and the professional development required will go a long way to meeting the needs of our students in this vital area of 21st century education so all of our students are eligible for the Alaska Performance Scholarship for either college and/or career and technical training.

Again, I thank you for your leadership in bringing Senate Bill 84 forward. I urge the Senate Education Committee to hold hearings on the legislation and move it forward to Senate Finance and then hopefully to the floor for a vote of the Senate. At that point, I hope that a similar bill will have worked its way through the House for passage and eventual reconciliation in a joint conference committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at comeau_carol@asdk12.org or 907-742-4312.

Sincerely yours,

Carol Comeau
Superintendent

cc School Board members
Anchorage legislators
Governor Sean Parnell
Commissioner of DEED, Mike Hanley
Bruce Johnson, Executive Director, ACSA
Carl Rose, Executive Director, AASB

Robin Olson
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Anchorage School District
5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99504
(907) 742-4312 FAX (907) 742-4318
olson_robin@asdk12.org

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2011 1:41 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB84

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

From: Kennedy_Crystal [mailto:Kennedy_Crystal@asdk12.org]
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2011 1:38 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: crose@aaasb.org; jreeves@aaasb.org
Subject: Support for SB84

Dear Chairman Meyer and Chairman Thomas,

Thank you very much for your introduction of SB 84. As the Vice President of the Anchorage School Board and the President of the Association of Alaska School Boards, I can testify to the fact that the increases to the BSA in SB84 will be of great benefit to the Anchorage School District as well as the other school districts in our state.

This week the Anchorage School Board passed a Six Year Fiscal Plan. Two projections in the plan show that if revenues to our district remain status quo or are increased by \$100 to the BSA and by one and a half percent from our local tax base, the Anchorage School District will have a \$54 - \$101 million gap within six years in order to continue to deliver the services to our students that we currently do. Please keep in mind that Anchorage does not benefit from any implementation of the Cost Differential factor but must rely on an increase to the BSA for any relief to the effects of inflation on our educational programs.

Both from the perspective of the Anchorage School District and that of the Association of Alaska School Boards, the addition in SB 84 of targeted funding for vocational programs would be well received. The Association of Alaska School Boards has a resolution crafted and supported by our membership that promotes separate funding outside of the block grant that can be specifically focused on technical/ vocational improvements in our districts. Over the past few years the Anchorage School District has made significant strides in providing greater technical/vocational opportunities to our students and many districts are making similar efforts geared toward helping our students become more prepared for careers and post-secondary education. It is important to continue to improve and expand in our vocational offerings in all of Alaska's school districts and this bill will be very valuable toward that end.

The Anchorage School District has a graduation rate of 70% and has a drop out rate that has been under the 4% mark for the past several years. We have worked diligently to make those improvements and will continue to do so. Passage of SB 84 with the increases to the BSA and the vocational funding program will go a long way toward helping us meet those educational goals and allow our students to be more successful.

Thank you again!

Crystal Kennedy

Crystal Kennedy
Anchorage School Board member

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 3:45 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Lucas_Frances [mailto:lucas_frances@asdk12.org]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 3:30 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettie Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senators,

I am sending you this email in support of Senate Bill 84. As a middle school business education and CTE teacher, I can tell you firsthand how important CTE is to education. I have witnessed students who had little interest in school come "alive" in their first computer, home ec and applied tech classes. CTE encourages lifelong learning by applying hands-on CTE concepts to real world examples. Students learn about career options and discover they have many choices.

I hope you will support Career and Tech Education programs with SB 84.

With much gratitude,

Frances Lucas

Frances Lucas
Best Practices Coordinator-CTE
Romig Middle School
2500 Minnesota Drive
Anchorage, AK 99503
PH: 907-742-5285
FX: 907-742-5252

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 1:50 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Friedman_Jeff [mailto:Friedman_Jeff@asdk12.org]
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 12:41 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Comeau_Carol; Kennedy_Crystal
Subject: SB 84

Dear Co-Chairs Thomas and Meyer, and Committee Members:

I am writing to express my support for SB 84 and for CSSB 84.

During my eight years on the Anchorage School Board, I have seen a lot of growth in the district's efforts to enhance career training in both professional and non-professional job skill areas. The added vocational and technical instruction funding will allow us to continue those efforts without reducing funding for other vital programs.

I also appreciate the planned increases in the BSA. Inflation chips away at our funding every year. The increases provided for in SB 84 and CSSB 84 will help us maintain our purchasing power. Equally important in my view, knowing for three years what our funding will be lets us plan in advance.

With increased funding comes increased responsibilities and I know the ASD will not shy away from those responsibilities. Over the last eight years, we have made large gains in our graduation rate, seen large decreases in our drop out rate, and made progress in our test scores. All of this while seeing a large influx of students who don't speak English, come from low income families, or who transfer in and out of the district repeatedly. In addition, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan put stress on our many military families, which makes teaching their children more of a challenge. Just to maintain test scores and graduation rates while teaching increasing numbers of harder to teach students is a huge accomplishment. The credit for that goes to our many dedicated employees, as well as to the Legislature's recognition that financial support, while not THE solution, is certainly a necessary element to providing the solution.

I would appreciate your support for either SB 84 or CSSB 84.

Jeff Friedman
Anchorage School Board
1534 D Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Murray Richmond

From: Mary DeSpain [timnmary@ak.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 1:01 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French
Subject: hearing for SB 84

Dear Senators,

I have become aware that there is funding in question regarding monies that could be used to help the funding of future opportunities for Career and Technology class for students in the state of Alaska.

As a parent of two students in high school and in Junior High I would absolutely encourage you to pass the Senate Bill that would bring more money to continue and add to the education in high school students. I believe there are more students who are interested in hands-on classes and having those opportunities keeps them interested in school, interested in attending school which then creates less dropout rates. I have one son who has taken multiple classes from the King Career Center and every semester those classes have been his favorite classes. He's received excellent grades in all those classes and I believe part of the reason for that is because it's more hands-on and he's been able to choose classes in areas he's interested in. My son is graduating early and as a result of attending Technology Classes he's made a decision on what he wants his further education to be and what career field he plans on building his future on.

My daughter has started high school and wants the hands-on classes so much that she's chosen to attend the after school sessions that are offered at King Career Center and as a 9th grader has even said she believes she's going to go into this field as a career. These classes have a HUGE impact on our kids.

Please consider passing the funding. More students needs these opportunities.

Sincerely,
Mary DeSpain
Parent of three in the ASD

Murray Richmond

From: Mary DeSpain [timnmary@ak.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 3:24 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senators,

I heard that Monday morning a bill was being voted on regarding putting more money towards Career and Technology education. As a freshman in the Anchorage School District I just wanted to tell you that I hope you'll spend the money on these types of classes. I have already started taking a class on Photography at The King Career Center and I enjoy in very much. I'm taking this class not only for the credit but also for the learning. It is allowing me to be able to tell if I will want to be a photographer when I grow up or if there is something else I'm wanting to be. I would love to see more of these types of classes provided at my school as well.

*****~::~Kelsey~::~*****

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 11:36 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84 and CSSB 84

Importance: High

From: Comeau_Carol [mailto:Comeau_Carol@asdk12.org]
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 11:19 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettie Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: School Board; Bruce Johnson (bjohnson@alaskaacsa.org)
Subject: SB 84 and CSSB 84
Importance: High

Dear Senators Meyer and Thomas and Senate Education Committee members:
I was unable to testify on SB 84 and CSSB 84 this morning due to an emergency death of one of our staff over the weekend. I did want to comment on this important proposed legislation.

First, and foremost, I want to thank all of you for your long-time support for public education; our students, staff, and families have truly benefitted from the past three years of increased funding in the Base Student Allocation, the Intensive Needs factor, and in Pupil Transportation. The increased funding has allowed us to fully pay for our over 900 Intensive Needs students from the increased funding, and not to have to divert other general education funding to provide these required intensive services. In addition, it has allowed us to keep up with the inflationary costs of education. By knowing our funding levels for three years, we were able to more effectively plan to our instructional programs and student needs, as well as negotiate reasonable collective bargaining agreements.

I urge you to support either SB 84 or CSSB 84 with the three years of incremental increases to the Base Student Allocation as well as the increase of a specific factor for career and technical education. For too long, our funding in the block grant which assists us with our bilingual education, special needs, gifted, and career and technical/vocational education funding has been used up with the needs of our bilingual (English Language Learners) and special needs students with little left to enhance our career and technical education. Our school board has prioritized career and technical education for the past three years, and we are seeing significant increases in student interest and participation in these courses. We have elements of C and TE in all three bond propositions on our April 5 ballot. We have added C and TE opportunities in our after school and summer school programs due to student interest. We believe that more funding in this vital area will assist us in providing more classes for our students, and thus increasing the graduation rate, and decreasing the drop out rate.

Again, we urge you to support SB 84 or the CSSB 84 in this legislative session. It will make a significant difference in the quality of education for our students.

Thank you,
Carol Comeau
Superintendent

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 4:54 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84 CTE support!

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

From: Neel_Julye [mailto:Neel_Julye@asdk12.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 9:35 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84 CTE support!

Dear Senator Thomas,

My name is Julye Neel and I am the Principal at Hanshew Middle School in Anchorage. I've learned that the Senate Education Committee is preparing to take public testimony on SB 84 increasing the Base Student Allocation and funding for vocational/career and technical-education. I'm so pleased to hear that.

This funding would support the work of educators with students through expanded CTE programs such as programs that currently exist successfully at Hanshew and our local Service High School. Currently, Hanshew offers Applied Technology, directly preparing students for high school and the construction trades, Family Consumer Science directly preparing middle school students for Service High's Pro Start program, Business Education that prepares students for business courses such as accounting and marketing at the high school. We working on offering a course next year that prepares students for Service High's Bio Medical Academy. This purpose and goal would be to prepare students for the many career opportunities in the health field.

The increase in funding will support professional development for educators so that we can continue to support student and community interest. I believe that the CTE programs are relevant to students and their future more than ever before.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please consider this an invitation to visit our school and learn more about the opportunities we are currently providing for students.

Sincerely,
Julye Neel
Hanshew Principal
Hanshew Middle School
Home of the HAWKS!

907-267-0203

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 97 and SB 84

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

From: Kennedy_Crystal [mailto:Kennedy_Crystal@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:36 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 97 and SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

I noticed the attention that SB 97 has recently gotten and I have grave concerns that this bill might be considered as the one avenue to providing any additional funding for K-12 schools for their 2011-12 budgets. SB 97 does not provide for any increase or any inflationary adjustment for this year's budget (2011-12). Many districts had to develop a reduced services budget for the next school year and SB 97 will not even come into effect until July 2012 which is after the deadline for budget development of our 2012-13 school year. That two year gap will force us to reduce the 2012-13 budget at even greater levels than we did for next year. And there is absolutely no way to speculate, let alone guarantee, what the price of oil will be in July 2012 so there is no certainty of any additional funding getting to the school districts through this mechanism. SB 97 cannot be the only way to address school funding this year but certainly could be a compliment to SB 84 should any additional resources actually materialize from this bill.

Only SB 84 provides for a guaranteed nominal adjustment in the BSA for school funding and continues that trend for the next three years. SB 84 will allow districts to build budgets on known funding levels. Though it will be a nominal increase lower than current inflationary rates it will at least be an increase that will help to mitigate devastating cuts to our educational programs and services. Keep in mind that Anchorage does not benefit from any cost differential adjustment but relies on an adjustment to the BSA for any funding increases.

Please support SB 84. Our Alaska school districts need it.
Thank you!

Crystal Kennedy
Anchorage School Board, Vice President
Association of Alaska School Boards, President
907-696-2624

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 1:13 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Comeau_Carol [mailto:Comeau_Carol@asdk12.org]

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 12:26 PM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Representative Charisse Millett; Rep. Pete Petersen; Rep. Anna Fairclough; Rep. Berta Gardner; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Doogan; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Sharon Cissna; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lesil McGuire

Cc: School Board; Carl F.N. Rose; Bruce Johnson (bjohnson@alaskaacsa.org)

Subject: School Funding

To All Anchorage Legislators and members of Senate Finance:

Thank you to many of you for meeting with us when we were in Juneau earlier in the week. I want to thank you for your time, and for your past support for increasing the Base Student Allocation, the Intensive Needs funding, pupil transportation, and for all districts except Anchorage, the Area Cost Differential. Your long-time support for debt reimbursement has been a huge benefit for our taxpayers, and I do hope our voters approve our three ballot propositions on Tuesday.

I am hoping that you will carefully consider the importance of increasing the BSA and CTE funding in Senate Bill 84. This piece of legislation would allow us to keep up with inflation and to increase our CTE offerings. We are hoping to be able to reinstate some of our \$12 million in cuts for our 2011-2012 budget that passed the Anchorage Assembly on Tuesday night; we based our budget on not increasing the BSA. Senate Bill 84 would allow some of our cuts to be reinstated. In addition, we applaud the thought behind SB 97, sponsored by Senator Hoffman. As you all know, increasing energy costs are impacting our educational offerings at a time we are trying to increase graduation rates and reducing our drop out rates. We are definitely losing ground if we receive no increases in either the BSA or SB 97 for the 2011-2012 school year.

I hope you will give careful consideration to an increase in public school funding. Thank you very much.

Carol Comeau

Superintendent

Anchorage School District

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2011 10:04 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

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

From: Barbara Thurston [<mailto:schoolboard@thurstons.us>]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2011 7:30 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Senator Bettye Davis@legis.state.ak; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: Governor@gov.state.ak.us; Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz; schoolboard@ci.juneau.ak.us
Subject: Senate Bill 84

As a long-time Alaska resident, parent of two school-aged students, and member of the Juneau school board, I urge you to support Senate Bill 84, which increases the base student allocation, and provides additional funding for vocational and career tech classes.

The single most important thing we can do to assure a successful future for our children and the State of Alaska is to make sure all of our students graduate from high school with the skills they need to succeed in college or the workforce. Like school districts around the state, the Juneau School District has been changing the way we do things in order to achieve this goal. A few examples:

-- We are increasing the number of career tech classes offered, and coordinating with the university to assure the quality of these courses and allow high school students to receive university credit for taking them.

-- We are increasing the type and number of advanced level classes offered at our middle and high schools, to allow more students to be well prepared for college.

--We are providing literacy support for students who have fallen behind, to enable them to catch up with their classmates as quickly as possible.

-- We are implementing the AVID program, which targets students in the academic "middle", helping them to prepare for college, and realize that college really is a viable option for them.

The district has been successful in adopting these approaches within the current budget, and plans to continue to do so, however, it is extremely difficult to maintain programs at a time that budgets are being cut. While it's true that "throwing money at a problem" is generally not enough to fix that problem, it is similarly true that cutting funding makes it even more difficult to make improvements.

Leaving the BSA unchanged is not "flat funding", it is an effective funding decrease for schools -- higher energy and personnel costs, among other things, mean that the same amount of funding will cover less next year than it does this year. The increase in the BSA included in SB84 and the additional funding for vocational education will go a long way toward offsetting those built-in cost increases and enable us to make the changes that are needed for our students and our state.

I urge you to support SB 84. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Barbara Thurston
789-2991

Murray Richmond

From: Roach_Wade [Roach_Wade@asdk12.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 2:35 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84 CTE Education Update

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am very involved in Alaska FIRST programs. I have seen the positive impact on students participating in these programs and their decisions to pursue STEM fields for future careers. Students that are interested in STEM fields such as engineering can advance their education by taking CTE courses in high school that would be supported by the increased funding outlined in this bill. Please move SB84 through committee and give it a positive recommendation.

Thank you.
-Wade Roach
FIRST Robotics Team 568
Nerds of the North

Murray Richmond

From: Nancy lehnhart [lehnhart@gci.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 3:10 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: education funding

Dear Senate Education Committee members,

I am writing to urge you to ensure that districts around the state are given resources to do the important work of educating Alaska's kids.

Increased funding for K12 education is important every year to keep up with rising costs, as you know. Please make sure that, with the resources we have in our state, we are not stripping our schools and reducing what students need to succeed. I can't think of anything more important.

Thank you for making sure the student base allocation keeps up with rising costs by adding at least \$100 per student per year, knowing that any more would add additional programing and resources that would make an even bigger difference for many of our students. As a parent of children in our schools, I feel that it would be drastically harmful to have larger class sizes and less individual and small group help for students who are struggling. Also, when districts have to make cuts, often the programs to go are programs like the arts which often are the key to learning for many students. Please keep our schools healthy.

I really appreciate your thoughtful service,

Nancy Lehnhart
15975 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801

Murray Richmond

From: Liebner_Sue [Liebner_Sue@asdk12.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 8:45 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,
Please support SB 84 in order for us to continue to do our jobs educating our children.

Thank you for your work on the Education Committee.

Sue Liebner
Principal of College Gate Elementary
Anchorage School District

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 4:54 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84-BSA increase is needed for improvement to education

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

From: Shelagh Sands [<mailto:shelaghsands@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2011 10:51 AM
To: Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: SB 84-BSA increase is needed for improvement to education

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am a parent of three children in Juneau. One is in college at Dartmouth College and two are in high school. I am also the President of the Arts For Kids board, which has tirelessly fought to keep the arts education in place in the Juneau School District. Our non-profit was instrumental in getting an elementary art program into our school district, after 25 years of having no elementary art across our district.

In looking at our school district, I see success. My son has gone to a very competitive college from Juneau Douglas Highschool. My children are doing well at this school also. This is because the parents, businesses and legislators have also fought tirelessly to keep funding education with inflation considered and cost of fuel considered.

To say that an increase in education money is not showing higher graduation rates, so why fund more money is foolhardy.

Our state must keep up with inflation rates and the rising cost of fuel alone, let alone the cost of drug counselors, high school counselors, art, physical fitness, and the four main core area of study,

If the legislators choose not to do this, then you will pay for incarceration rates, and adults that do not function in this society that is changing at a overwhelming rate. We want our kids to run the government in the future and we must continue to fund them to have this happen. Schools are continuing to look at ways to get test scores up. But you cannot go on test scores and graduation rates alone. You must look at the students that have succeeded and ask yourself why??? I feel it is because the legislature has continued to forward fund education, so our rates of success are not going down.

Simply put, you can feed a kid fruits and vegetables, which cost more than an unhealthy diet of cheerios and Mcdonalds. It simply cost alot to keep up with technology, abuse in the families, fitness and serving our children, that encompasses educating the whole child.

Please see that an increase to our district will keep all the programs that make a child happy and succeed. If this BSA is not increased our district will lose an art elementary specialist that services 2,000 children. This program alone is amazingly sucessful and creates learning with both sides of the brain. I could send lots of info that proves this. We will also loose a high school counselor. My son would never have made it to Dartmouth without a counselor that had time to help him in his high school carreer, but also help him get through the rigorous college application process. We will also loose our elementary EL program. You may think "oh, these smart kids will do fine without this," but studies show

that kids drop out of school that do not have their needs met with EL. These kids are considered special education because they have many needs to survive making it to adult life. I have raised three of these kids, and they have developed in a positive way due to this program.

Please make the right choice and forward fund education. We should have the best schools in the nation; since we don't, we need to let the educators try and still find success with a population base that is so diverse and facing so many issues.

Thank you for your work on this and continued effort on the part of our citizens.

Whenever I write to people I say that I am representing 200 voices because most people are afraid to contact the legislators. The average person on the street thinks that there voice is not heard and actually not worthwhile. They don't see that it matters. I have listened to 200 voices on my own that have relayed what I have said to you in this email.

Sincerely

Shelagh Sands a concerned parent.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Erin Mitchell [mailto:erin_mitchell@jsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:16 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Erin Mitchell
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senators and Represenatives,

As an educator for the past sixteen years in the Juneau School District, I strongly urge your support in passing Senate Bill 84. It directly benefits all of our children.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Erin Mitchell

4th Grade Teacher

Auke Bay Elementary

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Please increase education funding!

From: Dick Monkman [<mailto:rdm@gci.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 10:35 AM
To: rdm@gci.net
Subject: Please increase education funding!

Dear Senator:

As a parent of two students (11th and 7th grades), and as a member of our local high school's site council, I write to encourage your support for increased education funding in this year's budget. In particular, please support SB 84, which would increase the base student allocation amount by (almost) enough to keep up with inflation.

The Legislature's support for education over the last few years has been greatly appreciated and has made a difference in our children's education. By all measures, Alaska's educational system needs improvement – and your help has started to make those improvements. But it takes time, and adequate funding, to achieve educational goals. The momentum is going in the right direction. Please keep it up by supporting SB 84 and an increased education budget!

Thanks
Richard Monkman
957 Gold Belt Ave.
Juneau, AK 99801

CORDOVA SCHOOL DISTRICT

PO Box 1330 * 675 Second Street
Cordova, Alaska 99574
(907) 424-3265 * FAX (907) 424-3271

Cordova Jr/Sr High School
(907) 424-3266
FAX (907) 424-5215

Mt. Eccles Elementary
(907) 424-3236
FAX (907) 424-3117

March 31, 2011

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to encourage your support for Senate Bill 84. Cordova Schools feels that SB 84 fills a very critical need on both the Base Student Allocation as well as the need to maintain funding support for vocational/technical programs across Alaska.

I am aware of other Senate Bills that are scheduled to support the educational needs and I am very pleased with your vision for future years. The need for funding however is immediate. With the price of fuel influencing the cost of living, delayed funding support will continue to gut successful programs from our schools and put other programs at risk.

In Cordova our school board has reduced via attrition. In the past three years we have reduced classified and certified positions totaling nearly \$500,000. This reduction is coming from an already limited budget. We have provided EED with a responsible budget each year that allows for a successful learning opportunity for our students. Projections of non-support from our legislature will put our students' learning at risk.

Cordova Schools continues to lead the state in achievement and proficiency as recognized by state and federal departments. Continued loss of funding will put this success at risk.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my concerns with each of you. I encourage you to vote in support of SB 84. It meets the immediate needs of our schools and keeps successful programs in place.

Respectfully,



Superintendent of Schools

Dear Alaska Representatives and Senators:

My name is Rick Rios. I am the Coordinator for Career and Technology Education for the Anchorage School District. I also am past chairperson of Alaska Vocational and Technical Education Providers (VTEP), having served for over six years.

Thank you for your service and for this opportunity. I especially want to thank Senator Kevin Meyer of Anchorage and Senator Joe Thomas of Fairbanks, and their staffs, for their forward thinking and vision that resulted in Senate Bill 84, which supports vocational education for all Alaskans.

Please continue to advance Senate Bill 84 and persuade your colleagues in the Senate and House to pass it.

Nationally, vocational education programs were abandoned and disassembled during the 1980s and 1990s. During that era, skilled workforce education was ignored in place of federal special education mandates and college-driven admissions. This has resulted in the low graduation rates and high dropout rates of disenfranchised and misguided students. Because of other mandates and the cost of programs, CTE course became elective add-ons rather than relevant requirements. Now, the ability to revive and restore the infrastructure for CTE is beyond the capacity of local districts. This current situation is unsatisfactory and needs new vision for a smarter, engaged and relevant workforce to benefit Alaska's and America's future.

The vocational skills of the last century have changed. Skill sets and training tracks no longer serve 21st century workers. Initiatives such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, better known as STEM, are now merging both academics and application into new models of learning. Career and Technical Education (CTE) is the application component. Problem-solving, processing, innovation and creative design are the worker's tools for the today and the future. Even our military is rejecting our high school graduates as unfit for service. The military not only needs a tough fighting force, but more importantly, it needs a better thinking and innovative force.

Career and Technical Education is slowly but steadily making this transformation. It starts in middle school and continues to employment with exploration and pathway education. It includes new engineering technology literacy skills in every career area.

This is a monumental task facing a program that was abandoned more than twenty years ago. In some districts, CTE classes consist of only a few elective options to serve the students who desperately need them and thrive on them. In many rural Alaskan communities, CTE courses are completely non-existent.

The Anchorage School District has seen a recent rise in graduation rates with the addition of CTE courses in after-hour, after-school programs, which we were able to offer using special grant funds.

This summer we are offering a Summer Career Camp with 24 intensive and enrichment CTE classes serving 600 students. This is not enough when you consider we have 15,000 students. The Anchorage School Board and the Anchorage Municipal Assembly recognize the need for more CTE and they are doing something about it. Welcome home to the sound of radio campaign ads! This is the time when we hear the ring of messages that are important to all of us. You are well experienced in the process. But this is the first time I have ever heard School Bond announcements promoting and promising a better workforce and employment, as well as college, for our students.

Anchorage is providing a general school bond this spring to advance CTE opportunities with new innovative middle and high school academies in construction, health and engineering.

We are providing new middle school career guides to help students align their interests and talents with career targets, college, work, and future contributions as citizens.

We are developing new plans for our graduation requirements. We are fighting to keep students in school for all the right reasons: to learn, to train, to prepare, and to provide and contribute to the community. These are the credentials of an Alaska High School diploma.

However, none of these urgent and essential initiatives will meet the immediate need for teachers, counselors, and classes. Remodeled facilities and new graduation requirements will not provide the teachers and programs need to fill the classrooms with students. More classes will need to be offered in extended day and extended school opportunities.

While Anchorage has some capacity to make a few of these difficult changes, rural Alaska does not. Senate Bill 84 provides equitable funding for all districts, without a competitive grant processes that deflects funding from classrooms and teachers into administrative and clerical sumps.

Now is the time to drill down to the core bedrock of workforce development. The pillars are in the minds and hearts of our next generation. The work has begun as the CTE foundation forms have been constructed. Now, I urge you to pour some concrete into them and establish a solid foundation for the future of Alaska, our students. Pass and fund Senate Bill 84 this year.

Thank you

SEA LEVEL B & B

Jean L. Ellis
P.O. Box 1068
913 N. Nordic Drive
Petersburg, Alaska 99833
(907) 772-3240
jrellis@gci.net

April 5, 2011

Senator Joe Thomas
Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing in support of SB 84 Vocational Education Funding / Base Student Allocation. The Vocational Education Funding portion of SB 84 is particularly important. In Petersburg we need more electricians, plumbers, cooks, welders, and the list goes on. We are shortchanging our community and our students by not offering more training in the vocational trades. However to increase our vocational offerings we need additional on-going money that we can count on not one time funding.

Health insurance costs are skyrocketing. We just received notice from Aetna that our health insurance costs may increase by as much as 66.5% for next year. Through contract negotiations we have significantly increased the medical deductible which lowered our insurance costs for this fiscal year. This increase in Health Insurance costs is going to be very hard on our district as this will mean an increased expense of almost \$500,000.

Prior to the notice from Aetna we were projecting a budget shortfall for 2012 of \$177,000 if we add the \$500,000 for increased insurance costs that would bring shortfall to \$677,000. Obviously we are now facing some very tough choices. Any assistance you could provide through SB 84 would be greatly appreciated.

Our elementary school (Stedman Elementary) built in the late 60's has single pane windows and un-insulated walls. It is on the DEED Major Maintenance list however energy needs receive a low ranking under the current system so it remains far down the list. The high heating fuel costs are hitting us hard.

Petersburg is a great school with a very low drop out rate, high graduation rate, and high rate of students passing the HSGQE. However funding continues to be a real challenge, passage of SB 84 would greatly benefit our school district and community.

Thanks,

Jean L. Ellis

Jean L. Ellis, President
Petersburg School Board

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: HB 84

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

From: Janet Capito [mailto:janet_capito@jsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 10:16 AM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Anna Fairclough; Rep. Bill Thomas; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Reggie Joule; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Mike Doogan; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Chenault; Governor@gov.state.ak.us
Subject: HB 84

Hello,

I support Senate Bill 84 whole heartedly for many reasons. I work in the Juneau School District and see how hard the teachers work teaching the kids. They deserve more support than they are getting.

I hope you all saw the editorial page in the Juneau Empire on Wednesday where the cartoon asked "Which underperformer is getting addition U.S. aid?" The picture showed a student and a Libyan rebel.

Please support our schools and our under performing students.

Thank you for your time.

Janet Capito, RN

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 1:56 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84 - Support for Increasing the BSA

From: Mike and Andi Story [<mailto:andimike@ak.net>]

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 1:48 PM

To: Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman

Cc: Carl Rose; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Mike Doogan; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Reggie Joule; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bill Thomas; Rep. Anna Fairclough; Ellen Pavitt; Sarah Palin; Rep. Bill Stoltze

Subject: SB 84 - Support for Increasing the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Andi Story, I am a parent, 24 year resident of Alaska, and a member of the Juneau School Board. Many parents count on the Legislature and School Board members working together to provide for a sound educational system, K - 12. Let us not forget the work of the Legislative Task Force under the leadership of Representative Hawker, in prior years to providing for a stable funding picture for Alaska's school children. Many parents will not even be aware of the less resources to schools, until their children show up in school this fall.

I am writing to advocate for SB 84 to be approved by Senate Finance and moved in the legislative process, so it can come before the whole legislative body and be passed in this session. This bill provides for a three year adjustment in the BSA, and an increase for career and technical education for Alaska's high schools. The testimony in Senate Education committee was compelling for this bill. Juneau parent, Ellen Pavitt (also co-owner of Pavitt Health and Fitness in Juneau) wrote, "Many students don't intend to pursue a college degree following high school, and there is nothing wrong with this. In fact, there is a lot right with it . . . we need plumbers, electricians, and other people in the trades - why is it that their preparation at the high school level is so much less valued then that of the college bound student?"

Many commented on the importance of a multi-year funding plan for the BSA. It provides for certainty in instructional and budget planning and not the uncertainty of cuts to programs and services. As a Board member I can attest that we are working to maximize services to students in the classroom. I can attest that our Board and Board's across the state are implementing services that top performing districts are using. Whatever the career path of students; technical, military, college, work, School Board are working toward providing high standards and supportive climates for all students, Kindergarten thru 12th grade.

Please provide a stable funding picture that allows for BSA adjustment for increased costs. Please hear and approve SB 84. You have an opportunity to make an immediate difference in class size and services for students with the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Andi Story
789 - 4292
12069 Cross Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 5:26 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support school funding, Senate Bill 84

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

From: Amy Kesten [mailto:amy_kesten@jsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 4:00 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Lesil McGuire
Cc: Amy Kesten
Subject: Fwd: Support school funding, Senate Bill 84

>>> Dear Alaska Senators:

I have lived and taught in Juneau since 1989. Two of my children attend the JSD. There is no way that we can possibly do our jobs without an increase in funding. Please, please, please support Senate Bill 84. The increases that the bill proposes will help all of us to make a difference in education. Without the bill's passing, next year will be a disaster. I normally look at life in a very positive way, and I want to support you in your jobs. Please support me in my job and pass Senate Bill 84.

Sincerely,
Amy Kesten, Gastineau School Special Education Teacher

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2011 1:32 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: Jean Trainor [<mailto:jtrainor@apea-aft.org>]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2011 1:25 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas, I support SB 84 to increase the base student allocation. I hope you do, too!
Respectfully, Jean Trainor

Jean Trainor
APEA/AFT
Field Representative
825 College Rd.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
phone: 456-5412
jtrainor@apea-aft.org

Murray Richmond

From: Ellen Pavitt [ellen@gopavitt.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2011 7:15 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Re: POM

Thank you for your response, Mr Richmond. Here is something for you to include in the packet:

As a parent of a Juneau high school student, who has also raised two other older children in the Juneau community, I urge support of SB84. It is very saddening to see our education system faced with choosing which of the important student programs it provides to cut funding for. Our students need support and guidance in order to lead healthy, productive lives, and cutting back on what they receive at school is a step in the wrong direction during these times of rampant substance abuse and delinquent behaviors.

I also tutor students preparing to take their GED examination, and hold a masters degree in social work. I am very much an advocate for career tech programs in our schools, at a much higher level than they are presently provided. Many students don't intend to pursue a college degree following high school, and there is nothing wrong with this. In fact, there is a lot right about it - college is not for everybody. We need plumbers, electricians, and other people in the trades - why is it that their preparation at the high school level is so much less valued than that of the college -bound student? Instead we have countless students who are not motivated to finish high school because it doesn't give them what they need - preparation to support themselves at a decent wage after they graduate. They end up dropping out, and with low-paying jobs, thus continuing the vicious cycle of poverty, and often the associated substance abuse and other societal problems that can be associated with people living difficult lives.

Please support SB84, thus increasing the BSA and also providing some additional funding for our career tech programs.

Sincerely,
Ellen Pavitt, parent of Juneau high school students

On Mon, Mar 7, 2011 at 9:57 AM, Murray Richmond <Murray_Richmond@legis.state.ak.us> wrote:

Ms. Pavitt,

Thank you for your POM supporting SB 84. I would like to include it the packet of materials we send out to senators. Would you mind resending it as an email, and supplying your affiliation (and "parent of student" is a very good affiliation).

Again, thank you for supporting SB 84.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2011 4:52 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Brad Allen [<mailto:ballen@kuspuk.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2011 4:29 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Senator Thomas;

I am writing to ask for your support of Senate Bill 84 to help increase the Base Student Allocation and to help fund career-technical education.

With the increases felt across Alaska to school districts due to increased costs of materials and shipping/freight as well as the increased cost to keep schools open, the action of increasing the BSA is incredibly important to help districts do their job of educating kids. The funding to help provide students a quality education is paramount to the success of our young people to help guide Alaska into the next generation - and that is why this bill is so crucial to help districts' accomplish this task.

It also begins to address the long overlooked issue of career-technical education and the funding for these types of programs. While it is certainly the schools job to educate our young people, we are also tasked with helping them to be ready for employment and career options when they are ready to leave our instructional care. Having funding to help not only provide this critical component is essential but to help give all of our students the opportunity to be exposed to these resources is part of the solution to helping Alaska have a ready to hire work force - or go to college or whatever post-secondary training an individual would like to ascend to. While all district's face issues in providing these items, as a REAA, I can speak first hand about why these career readiness and vocational education programs are important to our students - they provide relative employability skills that can be readily used whether you are in bush Alaska or downtown Anchorage.

I encourage you to help make SB 84 an reality for the youth of Alaska. This piece of legislation has the opportunity to make real opportunities to our youth.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, Respectfully, Brad Allen - Superintendent, Kuspuk School District

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 9:18 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Please support SB 84

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

From: Sara Irwin-Goudreau [<mailto:sgoudreau@valdez.cc>]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 8:54 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Please support SB 84

Thanking you in advance for your support of bill - SB 84

Sara Irwin Goudreau
Career Counselor
Valdez High School

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 5:06 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84 +

From: Denise Caposey [<mailto:dcaposey@skagwayschool.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2011 7:55 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: Denise Caposey
Subject: SB 84 +

Please support school funding on SB 84 and any other bill that seeks to support public education in Alaskan schools. Schools are not being adequately funded. The communities are strangled by caps and poorly calculated funding formulas that do not take into account the needs of small schools.

Dear Senators,

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

I don't know if you are aware of what dire straights Alaska's small schools are in. School budgets are in crisis all over the state. I don't think schools should attempt to balance their budgets at the expense of teachers and programs. The teaching staffs have been hit particularly hard as programs are eliminated and positions cut. Many districts are experiencing a wage freeze. This has been happening for up to three years already in some districts. Imagine being a teacher in an outlying village and not getting a cost of living increase each year. We're in Alaska, where we pay the highest fuel prices in the nation! Please look into the current budget crisis for your districts who are, or soon will be, negotiating teachers' contracts.

I repeat for emphasis- Alaska's teachers should not be responsible for balancing budgets and finding money to run mandated programs in Alaska's schools. I did not enter the teaching profession to be a fundraiser. I am a professional and I expect that my priority and focus should be my students. Its costs more to live here.

Professionals like me will not be able to sustain living and working in Alaska with the added burden of having to subsidize our schools.

Support SB 84 and any other bill that seeks to increase state contributions to public schools. You do your job and I'll do mine.

Sincerely,

Denise Caposey, Elementary School Teacher

Skagway, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 10:44 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: Debbie Collins [<mailto:dcollins@cordovasd.org>]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 7:42 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Please support increased funding for SB 84. I am employed by the Cordova School District and more importantly a community member. I see teachers and others work hard to support our children in academics and skills for life. With increased funding we can see smaller class sizes, which to me means children are not falling through the cracks, more small group instruction. Please help us give our best to our children. We want to do everything we can to ensure the best for our children.... and they are all our children, in Cordova, and in Alaska.

I realize that increased funding does not always ensure our children will receive a better education, but money is needed to build and maintain a strong program like we are proud to have in Cordova.

Thank you,
Debbie Collins

Cordova

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 1:50 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84...vitally important to CTE needs in our state!

From: Pam Collins [<mailto:mpcollins@acsalaska.net>]
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 12:21 PM
To: Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Senator Charlie_Higgins@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Senator Johnny.Ellis@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Senator Lesil_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Albert Kookesh; Sen. Linda Menard; Sen. Donny Olson; Senator Joe.Paskvan@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Bert Stedman; Senator Thomas.Wagner@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Cc: Maker Julie; rios_rick@asdk12.org; comeau_carol@asdk12.org
Subject: Senate Bill 84...vitally important to CTE needs in our state!

Re: Senate Bill 84 "An Act relating to funding for high school vocational education as a component of funding for public schools; increasing the base student allocation used in the public school funding formula; and providing for an effective date."

A few weeks ago my colleague, Leslie Moore and I met with many of you to discuss a number of issues, including this CTE initiative and forward, full funding, with a cap on core class (English, math, science, social studies) size of 27-28 students. We are grateful for your time and willingness to listen to our concerns, since testing and graduation rates are the main focus of our state.

Legislators, the need for the passage of this legislation has not gone away, and we support this new 2011 CTE initiative, Senate Bill 84. We are so grateful to Senator Joe Thomas and Senator Kevin Meyers and their staffs for introducing this much delayed and much needed CTE funding proposal. SB 84 assures that Legislative funds as provided in the education funding formula will be spent on secondary CTE programs.

As a middle school Career Guide, I see the daily importance in our school for 'hope', when students learn more about career options, they never thought attainable or knew anything about. Learning about these early in their school environment, opens doors. Through yearly Career Fairs, guest speakers from businesses and organizations, talks by community leaders, work with School Business Partnerships and available apprenticeships, our secondary students are given the tools to research their passions and seek out meaningful elective courses.

PLEASE don't let This bill stall in committee, like HB 317 last year. Senators, we need you to take action now. It is vitally important that the hearings be scheduled and that Senate Bill 84 be passed.

Gratefully,
Mrs. Pam Collins
Mother of three successful college graduates and 50 year Alaskan resident

Murray Richmond

From: Ty Mase [tmase@lpsd.com]
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 7:32 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: SB 84
Attachments: 0clip_image002.png; 0clip_image004.png

[Image]

THE

LAKE AND PENINSULA

SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive

P.O. Box 498

King Salmon, Alaska 99613

Phone (907) 246-4280 / Fax (907) 246-4473

[Image]

March 11, 2011

Alaska State Senate Education Committee

The Honorable Joe Thomas and the Honorable Kevin Meyer, Co-Chairs

Senators,

On behalf of the Lake and Peninsula School District I am writing in support of Senate Bill 84 – Base Allocation Increase and High School Vocational Education Funding. The multi-year increases applied during the past several years were very helpful in our strategic planning process. SB 84 proposes a similar multi-year plan.

Along with the ability to plan ahead financially, SB 84 also gives districts much needed funding increases that allow us to better respond to rising costs. In the past several years LPSD has experienced dramatic increases in medical insurance and utility costs. The yearly increase to the base allocation formula allows us to respond to such increases without cutting educational programs.

While the rest of the country is cutting teachers and educational systems are faltering, this is a positive step for Alaska. A sustainable, stronger education system is sure to be the result. On behalf of my Board and School District, I urge your support for multi-year funding of schools.

Sincerely,

Ty Mase
Superintendent

Ty Mase, Superintendent
Lake and Peninsula Borough School District P.O. Box 498 King Salmon, AK 99613
(907) 246-4280
(907) 246-4473 -fax

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Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 11:29 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB 84

From: Wendy Jacobsen [<mailto:wjacobsen@cordovasd.org>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 9:29 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support for SB 84

Senator Meyer and Senator Thomas,

Thank you for taking the time to consider support for SB 84. As a secondary special education teacher, I urge you to support SB 84. Often times the students I work with thrive in vocational educational programs and having specific funding for such programs would ensure that students who don't always thrive in traditional classes, can feel success and build employability skills through vocational education programs. I also urge you to support the increase in base allocation for student funding. Being able to anticipate student allocations for the next few years, will help administrators in the budget process. Please continue to support districts throughout Alaska by providing the funding that we need to continue to build and maintain successful programs for our students.

Thank You,
Wendy Jacobsen
Cordova

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 7:14 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84 K-12 funding

From: Anne Kilkenny [<mailto:annekilkenny@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2011 10:14 PM

To: Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Linda Menard; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Albert Kookesh; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Tom Wagoner; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. John Coghill

Subject: SB84 K-12 funding

Senators,

I support SB84 but think that it needs to be amended to provide increases in the BSA of \$170, 175 and 180 in FY2012, 13, and 14.

My reasons are:

- 1) The increase you are proposing doesn't even cover the increase the MatSu Borough District has incurred in health insurance expense this year.
- 2) Our schools need to do a better job of educating students in order to be competitive on the world market. You can't expect better performance without better funding.
- 3) The increase you are proposing (1.9%) is less than the 10 yr average for inflation of 2.8%. With the price of oil going up, expenses will increase, especially for rural districts which are disproportionately impacted by increases in the cost of diesel and transportation expenses.
- 4) We can afford it. House Finance passed a budget with a 5.2% increase in spending. A 5.2% increase in the BSA would be \$295. Certainly, under those circumstances we can afford a 3% increase for k-12 education.
- 5) Due to borough ordinance which confiscates 50% of the year-end fund balance of the MSB School District, the MatSu Boro SD has no reserves into which it can dip to cover budget shortfalls.
- 6) If you can consider giving TWO BILLION DOLLARS to the oil companies with nothing in return, you can give \$50 million more to our children who will be supporting more seniors than any other generation of Americans.
- 7) This is starvation funding. Our children deserve more than a 1.9% increase.
- 8) Without an increase the MatSu Boro Sch Distr will have to lay off about 35 teachers and class sizes will go up 4 to 6 students.

Thank you for consideration of my concerns,
Anne Kilkenny

Anne Kilkenny
P. O. Box 870163
Wasilla, Alaska USA
99687-0163

907-376-6225

Live Simply. Love Generously. Care Deeply. Speak Kindly. Leave the rest to God.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 5:36 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support SB 84
Attachments: letter SB 84.doc

From: Jean Ellis [<mailto:jrellis@gci.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 2:10 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support SB 84

Senator Thomas, The attached letter is in support of SB 84 Vocational Education Funding / Base Student Allocation.
Thanks, Jean, Petersburg

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 1:44 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB 84

From: James Schwartz [<mailto:schwartz.jp.lf@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 1:30 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support for SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing you in support for SB 84. I am a Petersburg school board member and I taught here for 27 years. Our school district will be cutting or not replacing several certified and classified positions and one administrative position next year. Our health insurance company has advised us to plan for a 10% increase amounting to \$130,000. Fuel costs will increase \$60,000 next year. Our business manager has projected even with our planned cuts a \$177,000 deficit in our budget for next year. This budget was based on "flat funding" from State appropriations. Of course, flat funding means significant reduced funding as a result of rising inflation. The increases detailed in SB 84 represent less than a 2% increase each year for schools. In light of the extraordinary budget surplus seen this year and the surplus projected next year it seems reasonable to pass SB 84. Please support SB 84 and voice your influence with other members of the legislature for their support. It will make a huge positive difference for our school district. Thank you for the work you do for Alaska.

Sincerely,

Jim Schwartz

Petersburg School Board member

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 8:23 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: support SB 84

This woman is also a constituent. Can we get a letter back to her detailing all the boss's awesome work on this bill?

From: Martha Tomeo [<mailto:marthatomeo@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2011 10:36 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: support SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing to encourage you to support Senate Bill 84, in particular to increase the Base Student Allocation used in the formula for state funding of public education. Our school district budget in the Denali Borough is tighter each year, while student numbers are relatively stable and costs are increasing. SB 84 will increase the Base Student Allocation incrementally in the next three fiscal years, providing needed funds. Please support Alaska's students and our schools, particularly in rural Alaska, by increasing the Base Student Allocation and passing SB84. This legislation will bring positive support for our Denali Borough students, and schools statewide. A vote for SB84 is an investment in Alaska's future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Martha Tomeo
Denali Park, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 8:26 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

Also a constituent – can you contact to get first name and mailing address?

Thanks! Be sure to save letters going out to constituents into the “Constituent” folder under “Correspondence” with the name of the person included in the title.

Thanks!

From: T Graham [<mailto:blueticee@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2011 8:06 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: Senate Bill 84

Dear Senator;

I am writing to encourage you to support Senate Bill 84, in particular to increase the Base Student Allocation used in the formula for state funding of public education. Our school district budget in the Denali Borough is tighter each year, while student numbers are relatively stable and costs are increasing. SB 84 will increase the Base Student Allocation incrementally in the next three fiscal years, providing needed funds. Please support Alaska's students and our schools, particularly in rural Alaska, by increasing the Base Student Allocation and passing SB84. This legislation will bring positive support for our Denali Borough students, and schools statewide. A vote for SB84 is an investment in Alaska's future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 8:28 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Denali Borough Schools

Another constituent...

From: Dana Morningstar [mailto:dana_mo@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2011 4:02 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Denali Borough Schools

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing to encourage you to support Senate Bill 84, in particular to increase the Base Student Allocation used in the formula for state funding of public education. Our school district budget in the Denali Borough is tighter each year, while student numbers are relatively stable and costs are increasing. SB 84 will increase the Base Student Allocation incrementally in the next three fiscal years, providing needed funds. Please support Alaska's students and our schools, particularly in rural Alaska, by increasing the Base Student Allocation and passing SB84. This legislation will bring positive support for our Denali Borough students, and schools statewide. A vote for SB84 is an investment in Alaska's future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Dana Williams
Cantwell, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 11:06 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 84

Another constituent...

From: Stephanie Stickle [<mailto:stickle@mtaonline.net>]
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 9:08 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Senate Bill 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing to encourage you to support Senate Bill 84, in particular to increase the Base Student Allocation used in the formula for state funding of public education. Our school district budget in the Denali Borough is tighter each year, while student numbers are relatively stable and costs are increasing. SB 84 will increase the Base Student Allocation incrementally in the next three fiscal years, providing needed funds. Please support Alaska's students and our schools, particularly in rural Alaska, by increasing the Base Student Allocation and passing SB84. This legislation will bring positive support for our Denali Borough students, and schools statewide. A vote for SB84 is an investment in Alaska's future.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Stephanie Stickle

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB84
Attachments: image001.gif

From: Sherrie Lyon [<mailto:SLyon@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:51 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB84

Hello,
I am both a school nurse and a grandparent and wish to express support for the above bill. Our children are our future. Please do not vote for SB97. Thank you.

Sherrie Lyon, RN, School Nurse

McNeil Canyon School
Susan B. English School
Port Graham School

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:59 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Please support Senate Bill 84

From: Karen Cleary [<mailto:kcleary@aptalaska.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 10:11 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Please support Senate Bill 84

Please support Senate Bill 84 which will give our school increases to the Base Student Allocation for K-12 education for 3 years and funding for increased Career and Technical Education opportunities. The school needs to keep pace with inflation, and increased energy and health insurance costs. Our CTE programs provide a pathway to success for the about 80% of HS students who do NOT graduate from a 4-year college program. Please support this bill.

Thank you.

Karen Cleary
Klawock, AK

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 12:00 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: Michael Byer [<mailto:mbyer@hbsd.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:55 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

Continued increases to the BSA that allow districts to contend with the increasing cost of goods and services are vital. Energy costs are skyrocketing along with the cost of health care. Keeping vocational education classes and other classes that students are interested in our schedule keeps them coming to school. This helps reduce the dropout rate, which though low, at less than 10% in Haines, still needs to improve. These costs are worth funding.

Forward funding is also of extreme importance. It is cost-effective. It reduces uncertainty and helps us to more quickly and efficiently budget. This allows us to spend more time focusing on ways to improve our students' education. It was one of the essential recommendations to come out of the work of the bipartisan task force on education back in 2007 and should be sustained.

Right now **SB 84** is the best vehicle for maintaining necessary funding increases and forward funding. It also addresses vocational education. **The Haines Borough School Board has passed a resolution supporting this SB 84.** This bill is in Senate Finance and we hope it will quickly get on the schedule and be kept moving forward. We hope that we have your active support and that you will exert whatever efforts you can. We will continue to follow the movement of this bill and will be available to provide additional testimony as needed.

We thank you again for your time and for your service to the needs of our school district and other districts across the State.

Thank you,

Michael Byer, Superintendent
Haines Borough School District
PO Box 1289
Haines, AK 99827
(907) 766-6725

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 12:00 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Eisemann, Jane [<mailto:Jane.Eisemann@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:12 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

As a teacher of vocational education at Kodiak High School, I see first hand the return on vocational investment dollars in Kodiak as well as the state. I fully support the passage of SB 84.

Thanks for all you do!

Sincerely,

Jane Eisemann
Kodiak High School
Natural Resources
Maritime Science and Technology
FFA Advisor

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 12:00 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Education Funding

From: Janet Reed [<mailto:jbirdreed@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:03 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing in your support for your important education-funding proposal, Senate Bill 84. I would encourage action on this important legislation raising the BSA from the current \$5,680 per student to \$5,790 in July 2011, and then to \$5,905 in 2012 and to \$6,025 in 2013. The increases will be affordable to the state and important to the quality and stability of public education. It will help stabilize the ability of school districts to plan for the future rather than guessing from year to year.

I also support the portion of Senate Bill 84 that proposes the state fund a separate grant program within the foundation formula for high school vocational education. This is an investment that will help keep students in school and be prepared for Alaska jobs upon graduation from high school.

Sincerely,

Janet Reed

Juneau School District 10014 Crazy Horse Drive Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Kevin Meyer
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol, Room 103
Juneau Alaska 99801.1128

The Honorable Joseph Thomas
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

7 March 2011

Dear Senator Meyer and Senator Thomas:

On behalf of Alaska's fifth largest school district, we thank you for sponsoring Senate Bill 84, Vocational Education Funding/Increasing Base Student Allocation (BSA).

I understand that some legislators are reluctant to increase the BSA due to frustration that increases have not resulted in improvements to student learning. The Juneau School District is frustrated that progress is slower than desired, but we are proud of the results achieved so far:

- ❑ Reading proficiency of students rose from 83.1% to 84.7% between 2009 and 2010
- ❑ Math proficiency of students rose from 71.1% to 73.9 %, between 2009 and 2010 reversing a declining trend over the past several years.
- ❑ In 2010 six of the seven elementary schools, including all Title 1 elementary schools, met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under "No Child Left Behind". The percent of AYP targets achieved in 2010 increased to 94% up from 93% in 2009. Those schools that have yet to meet AYP are precariously close in all but a few hard to serve student populations.
- ❑ The Juneau School District achieved \$1 million in cost savings in 30 months after forming a strategic alliance with Energy Education, a national energy conservation company. The district received an *Energy Excellence Award* and four schools have received *Energy Star* ratings for their progress in energy conservation.

Recent increases in the BSA have helped the Juneau School District toward its goal of creating a local education system that ensures all students possess skills to compete in the world labor market. Steps the Juneau School District are taking to improve our local educational system include:

- ❑ Increasing the number of instructional school days by one day in each of three years.
- ❑ Requiring a one-hour early release of students every other Monday so teachers may assess student data and collaborate on ways to improve teaching to specific student needs.
- ❑ Implementing a common formative assessment (Measuring Academic Progress) in which all of our students take a one-hour nationally-normed computerized test three times a year. Results are available the next day (not the next school year) so teachers may assess student performance and take immediate steps to improve teaching to that student.
- ❑ Examining our graduation requirements and looking to increase the number of credits required as well as the rigor of course offerings to be sure our student graduate with mastery of core subjects and a well-rounded array of classes.
- ❑ Investing in teacher training for a nationally renowned program called AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) which is designed to provide often overlooked talented and minority students with the skills and abilities to succeed with their studies.


- ❑ Implementing a zero-tolerance substance abuse policy of random drug testing, voluntary for all students and mandatory for all students engaged in state sanctioned school sponsored activities.
- ❑ We are in the third year of a five year plan to build high school programs in which students connect their core academic subjects with possible post-secondary plans in Alaska and in global markets.

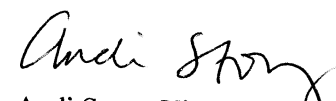
The final point above is the perfect segue to the second part of your bill, which would provide schools with a specific funding algorithm for career and technical education (formerly known as vocational education). Current Federal Carl Perkins funds amount to less than \$80.0 in Juneau and come with so many strings that it takes creativity and fortitude to use them wisely to build our career and technical options that are being aligned with Alaska jobs. Funds provided by this legislation would help ensure we have a sufficient number of teachers trained to deliver curricula resulting in real-world endorsements that make our students more marketable beyond high school. I have attached a copy of the career options we are building in our district to give you a good idea of the structure we are creating.

In closing, the increase to the BSA proposed in this bill would enable us to progress more quickly in our efforts to redesign teaching and learning to help our students leave our schools poised and prepared to enter the world ready to contribute. Our goal is that students leave our district with less need for remedial university course work (thus saving limited postsecondary dollars for higher level classes), and possessing the skills to enter an apprenticeship, the military or the world of work with the skills employers demand to be competitive in our world economy. Our job is to help them master those skills and make those connections.

Thank you for sponsoring this bill and recognizing that budget certainty enables our district to operate effectively and efficiently, while providing our employees with the knowledge that they will be employed next year. This enables them to focus on teaching as opposed to looking, or wondering if they should be looking, for a new job, and this enables us to continue to structure our operations to successfully prepare our students.

Sincerely,


Sally Saddler, President


Andi Story, Vice-President

CC: Sean Parnell, Governor

The Honorable Dennis Egan, Senator

The Honorable Beth Kerttula, Representative

The Honorable Cathy Munoz, Representative

The Honorable Mike Hanley, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development

Carl Rose, Alaska Association of School Boards

Juneau School District
“Next Generations”
High School Structure for Post-Secondary Success

Juneau’s two comprehensive high schools are comprised of smaller learning communities for freshman to build a strong foundation to move into classes organized by career pathways. ** Pathways align with Alaska career clusters. After the freshman year, students may select a pathway, which is a series of classes that offer a career endorsement. ***

Juneau Douglas High School Learning Communities

Freshmen Learning Community 1

Freshmen Learning Community 2

ACE-Architecture, Auto, Construction, Engineering Learning Community pathways and endorsements *Students are engaged in hands-on learning including the design and construction of a house or industry internships. The Engineering Pathway has adopted the national pre-engineering program, Project Lead the Way, with a full sequence of courses. Students can earn up to 24 credits through dual credit opportunities with UAS that lead to postsecondary and apprenticeship programs.*

- Architecture Pathway and Endorsement
- Auto Mechanics Pathway and Endorsement
- Construction Pathway and Endorsement
- Engineering Pathway and Endorsement

Athletics, Recreation and Medicine Learning Community pathways and endorsements

Students prepare for pathways into high demand health occupations and gain skills supporting healthy living and lifelong fitness. Students can earn certifications in ETT, EMT, First Aide and CPR, Lifeguarding, Water Safety, and apply their skills in community-based experiences. Students can earn up to 16 UAS credits that lead to postsecondary programs by completing courses in these pathways.

- Health Sciences Pathway and Endorsement
- Fitness and Recreation Pathway and Endorsement

Business and Communications Learning Community pathways and endorsements

The Business and Communications Pathways and Endorsements prepare students with skills for high growth occupations in finance, business, and media communications. Students gain hands-on media training in writing and video production courses. Desktop publishing and web design courses are aligned with digital arts to prepare students with skills for working in graphic design. Students can earn 6 UAS credits for Accounting I and II.

- Finance Pathway and Endorsement
- Marketing Pathway and Endorsement
- Graphic Design Pathway and Endorsement
- Media Communications Pathway and Endorsement

Humanities Learning Community pathways and endorsements

Humanities offer broad-based experiences that require students to earn credits from nearly every department including two years of a foreign language. Literature, history and philosophy are connected with communication and cultural studies, and linguistics. Fine Arts endorsements provide students with opportunities to engage fully in the arts world and express themselves in visual and performance venues.

- Instrumental Pathway and Endorsement

- Theater Pathway and Endorsement
- Visual Arts Pathway and Endorsement
- Vocal Performance Pathway and Endorsement
- Humanities Pathway and Endorsement

Thunder Mountain High School Learning Communities

Blue/Freshmen Learning Community

Silver/Freshmen Learning Community

10-12th grade: Exploration and Discovery Learning Community pathways and endorsements

The Exploration and Discovery Learning Community applies math, science and technology courses to explore local environments and issues that affect people and the environment. Pathways connect students with Juneau's natural resources through courses that engage students in scientific research, apply math and science skills in engineering technology courses, and build specialized skills for health-care related occupations.

- Health Care Pathway and Endorsement
- Marine and Environmental Sciences Pathway and Endorsements
 - Marine and Environmental Sciences Endorsement
 - Outdoor Education Endorsement
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math -STEM Pathway and Endorsement

10-12th grade: Global Studies Learning Community pathways and endorsements

The Global Studies Learning Community focuses on the arts and humanities to build awareness and understanding of cultural influences that shape our world. Pathways connect students with workplace skills in the business and hospitality industry, focus skills in the fine arts including state of the art technology and design skills through digital animation, and engage in opportunities to explore occupations in government, law and education.

- Business and Hospitality Pathways and Endorsements
 - Culinary Arts Endorsement
 - Entrepreneurship Endorsement
- Fine Arts Pathways and Endorsements
 - Digital Communications Endorsement
 - Performance Arts Endorsement
 - Visual Arts Endorsement
- Leadership, Law and Education Pathway and Endorsement

****Learning community:*** an academic grouping with a focus that usually will consist of three or four teachers who share the same students. All students will be part of a learning community, whether it's a ninth grade team or a pathway area.

- *Students choose at least one learning community pathway (can shift each year) with guidance and advisement*

*****Pathways and endorsements:*** An emphasis in an area of study (linked to one of the 16 national "career clusters") that requires a minimum of 3.0 credits in that specialty. The endorsement would appear on a student's transcript.

Honors endorsement is available to any student

- ***Heritage Honors at TMHS*** is available to any student who has an interest in Alaska and Native Studies

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 11:25 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Bob Hutton [<mailto:hutton99829@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 7:12 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas:

As a member of the school board of Hoonah City Schools, I urge you to approve increases to the Base Student Allocation and also to career and technical education funding for high schools as reflected in SB 84.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Hutton
P.O. Box 185
Hoonah, AK 99829
hutton99829@yahoo.com

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 11:25 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: support education

From: Karyn Janssen [<mailto:kjanssen@ptialaska.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 11:12 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: support education

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am not sure of the specifics of Senate Bill 84, but encourage you to support anything that can help keep class sizes down, or helps teachers in classrooms. I think it would be great if more money was designated for only teachers and classroom aides/support staff, and less was for district office positions. I was a teacher and am currently a parent volunteer and active PTA member. I see, and have experienced, first hand how much is put on a teacher's plate. I also know that tutoring programs continue to need funding, but I believe money would be better spent on aides in the classrooms assisting teachers with those that need more help. I see students pulled out multiple times a day by various tutors and aides and feel that the constant disruption to both the students that need the help, and the rest of the class is just more for teachers to have to keep track of, distracting them from teaching- and students from learning.

Our children are the future of Alaska. Please support them by supporting funding for the employment of teachers and support staff that work directly with the students.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Karine Janssen Chingliak, Fairbanks mom

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 11:23 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB84

From: Lee Ann Andrew [<mailto:landrew@swrsd.org>]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 10:33 AM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens

Subject: Support for SB84

Members of the Senate Finance Committee;

I would like to express my support for SB84 on behalf of Southwest Region School District and as a parent of a student of Dillingham City School District.

Currently Southwest Region School District has built a budget the on FY11 foundation amount which has caused us to be conservative on our programs that are offered to the students. If we knew we were getting an increase in foundation we could either add a reading specialist at our largest site or we could properly budget for our science curriculum review and possible adoption of a new program. As it stands we cut a regular classroom teacher for the reading specialist and do not have the science curriculum review in the budget. Our classroom sizes will be increased to a point that may be detrimental to our current academic program but we had to make the choice. If we knew we could finance the science curriculum review and adoption we could be gearing up now so that we will be farther along in the fall and possibly finalize the decision in one year. With forward funding we would know if we had the funding for budget items such as these and could maximize our educational program each year as opposed to holding back and jumping when we find out funding is available. The sooner we know the actual funding the better chance we have of hiring an additional top notch teacher and we can move forward with the process for reviewing, adopting and implementing a new science curriculum. Our state dollars could be spent much more efficiently if the foundation amount is known up front during the budget development process.

Thank you for your consideration on SB84.

Lee Ann Andrew
Parent and
Director of Administrative Services – Southwest Region School District
907-842-8207

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 10:16 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

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

From: Watkins, Bill [<mailto:Bill.Watkins@kodiakschools.org>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 9:41 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

Below is a written statement I prepared for members of our community in Kodiak, Alaska. We are encouraging our Senate to do what's best for youth in Alaska - please support SB 84. Sincerely,

Bill Watkins
KHS Principal and Parent

Without SB 84 moving forward, KIBSD staff and programs are in Jeopardy. The senate finance will be hearing SB 84 on Wednesday, April 6th. SB 84 is a bill that increases the base student allocation in an attempt to keep up with inflation and ensures consistent funding for vocational education. Another bill (SB 97) will provide school district and municipal energy relief when the price of oil is above \$89.00 per barrel. While SB 97 is potentially helpful, it does not provide additional funds until FY 13, nearly two years from now! SB 97 does not offer a guarantee that funds would ever be appropriated given the required trigger price of \$89.00 per barrel for Alaska crude oil. A few Senators are trying to convince the public that SB 84 is dead and they are now focusing on SB 97 as the solution for education funding. SB 84 is not dead! But the Senate Finance committee needs to hear from their constituents that without SB 84, education programs (especially vocational, the arts, music and physical education programs) are in jeopardy. Do we really want our children's educational funding to be tied to the unpredictability of the oil market? SB 97 gives us no consistent formula for funding education from year to year. It is a great solution for high-energy costs and when available in FY 2013 would be a welcome tool to assist school districts and communities with high-energy costs. SB 97 will not solve our current dilemma of being forced to lay off teachers, administrators and cut programs with the additional funding from SB 84. Without SB 84, the pressure is put on the back of our local communities to increase funding - which means a direct burden on the local taxpayer. KHS has the potential of losing teaching and administrative positions and when staffing is cut we see a direct negative impact on programs. Districts cannot afford to cut Core (Math, English, Science and Social Studies) programs with the requirements for meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP). Instead, districts will be forced to cut the programs that make practical connections to physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of every child we serve. These programs are our vocational classes, art classes, music classes and physical education classes. SB 84 allows consistent funding to support the existing staff and programs. SB 97 would not allow any additional funding for 2 years and only if the price of oil is above \$89.00 per barrel. Again, do we really want our children's educational funding to be tied to the unpredictability of the oil market? One year we have it, the next year we don't?

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 10:15 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support Education

From: karine chingliak [<mailto:kchingliak@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 9:18 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas; david_guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us; joe_paskvan@legis.state.ak.us; scott_kawasaki@legis.state.ak.us; steve_thompson@legis.state.ak.us; tammie_wilson@legis.state.ak.us; eric_feige@legis.state.ak.us; bob_miller@legis.state.ak.us; john_coghill@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Support Education

I am not sure of the specifics of Senate Bill 84, but encourage you to support anything that can help keep class sizes down, or helps teachers in classrooms. I think it would be great if more money was designated for only teachers and classroom aides/support staff, and less was for district office positions. I was a teacher and am currently a parent volunteer and active PTA member. I see, and have experienced, first hand how much is put on a teacher's plate. I also know that tutoring programs continue to need funding, but I believe money would be better spent on aides in the classrooms assisting teachers with those that need more help. I see students pulled out multiple times a day by various tutors and aides and feel that the constant disruption to both the students that need the help and the rest of the class. Plus, all of the pull- outs for so many students is just more for teachers to have to keep track of, distracting them from teaching- and students from learning.

Our children are the future of Alaska. Please support them by supporting funding for the employment of teachers and support staff that work directly with the students.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Karine Janssen Chingliak, Fairbanks mom

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 10:15 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: Putt Clark [<mailto:clark.putt@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 8:57 AM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Rep. David Guttenberg; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Bob Miller; Sen. John Coghill

Subject: SB 84

Please support Senate Bill 84. As other funding for schools decreases, class sizes increase. Larger classes mean there are more students who are sitting on the fence and will fail to learn without the funding programs provided by SB 84. Math and reading tutoring is hugely successful, and is fundamental.

The vocational and technical training funding in this Bill are also vital to certain students' futures. They keep kids in school and provide a trained workforce for Alaska's future.

PLEASE support Senate Bill 84!

Thanks you,

Putt Clark
Fairbanks

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 9:53 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 84

From: ehhills@gmail.com [<mailto:ehhills@gmail.com>] **On Behalf Of** Sunni Hilts
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2011 6:36 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senator Thomas,

Thank you for your continuing work for the children of the State of Alaska. I believe that their safety, health, education and future should be our top priority. So I applaud the discussion that is beginning to take place.

As we have worked with those involved in the legislation regarding education, we have attempted to be responsive to specific questions and requests. We have seriously taken your stated concerns to our local school districts to provide more and better data showing the results of your financial commitment. We brought that information to you. We have been careful to use Stimulus funds and any other one time money in a way that did not create ongoing need for support. We documented that. We have shown the improvement in our administration when we had the ability to plan ahead because of forward funding. We have explained the need for more and continued funding for career tech programs, documenting our use of those stimulus funds for equipment, technology and training.

Now it is the time to pass legislation. Our support for SB 84 is unequivocal. It is a vehicle that provides the minimum increase to maintain our programs across the state. It gives us forward funding which is one of our greatest needs and it provides for Career Tech monies, which we do not currently receive. Please consider getting this bill passed out as quickly as possible.

Thank you,

Sunni Hilts
Board of Education

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Murray Richmond

From: Kris Benson [kbenson722@gci.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2011 1:09 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Lesil McGuire
Cc: Sen. Dennis Egan
Subject: SB84

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

Please pass SB 84 for education funding. Even if this bill passes, with an increase in the BSA, our schools in Juneau will be cutting numerous important teaching and support positions and programs. I hate to imagine the depth of cuts if the bill doesn't pass.

I would like to see Alaskans be able to be proud of our public schools some day. Without the planned increase in BSA, our schools will degrade further from the current evidence of funding shortfalls.

Kris Benson
145 Behrends Ave.
Juneau, AK 99801

Murray Richmond

From: Tom Conley [prophet@ptialaska.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2011 10:21 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB84 & SB97

Dear Senator Thomas-Thank you and the committee for the work on SB97 providing supplemental funds to schools and municipalities pegged to the fluctuating price of oil. It will be particularly beneficial to bush/rural communities where the price of heating and transportation fuel is so ruinous and an impediment to providing other routine services.

I am also delighted that the committee has decided to hear SB84 on April 6. For all of the state's schools this is critical legislation as it proposes to enact a three year schedule of modest increases to the Base Student Allocation and provide categorical funding for career and technical education (VocEd) in our high schools. With inflation, the need to ready students for the technological demands of our future workplaces, and rising insurance and other expenses we need the increased funding to keep our heads above water. The three year cycle of forward funding also permits more rational planning and budgeting. Importantly the targeted career and technical funding gives us the wherewithal to address this sadly neglected area of curriculum and begin the training the majority of our students will need for Alaska's future jobs.

As adjournment rapidly approaches, I would urge that SB84 get speedy attention so that it can get to the Senate floor and have time for consideration by the House.

Tom Conley
Sitka School Board

Murray Richmond

From: Robert Thomason [rft@me.com]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 5:57 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: SB 84 Support

Dear Senator Thomas,

Thank you for your concern and interest in doing what is best for students and schools across the state of Alaska. As a small rural school district, Petersburg City School District is especially vulnerable to rising fixed costs (insurance rates, fuel oil, electricity, gasoline). Each additional dollar devoted to heating fuel is one less dollar available for education. As an example, the cost of fuel oil has increased from \$2.69 in March 2010 to \$3.37 in March 2011.

SB 84, while not completely "filling the gap" is certainly better than flat funding for the coming year. This bill will allow districts to plan for the future through the forward funding mechanism and it will allow district to infuse valuable but underfunded vocational education programs.

I support SB 84 because it is needed, it is responsible, and the kids of Alaska need stable, functional schools.

Sincerely,

Robert Thomason
Petersburg, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Pete Lewis [pete.lewis@k12northstar.org]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 3:39 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Senate Bill 84

Senator Joe Thomas,

Please ensure the future of Alaska. Funding for public education does just that. Currently SB 84 calls for an increase in the BSA of \$110, \$115 and \$120 over a three year period. It also contains a provision that provides funding for vocational education (CTE) that is vital to sustaining and enhancing programs that deliver job-ready graduates. Your support of this legislation is critical to our future.

With or without a surplus I would be advocating for an increase in the BSA. However, with a current surplus of over \$2.5 billion dollars, funding SB 84 with a fiscal note of \$37 million (1.5% of the surplus) is logical and a moral imperative. Failure to fund an increase of the BSA (SB84) will mean additional cuts of over 2.6 million dollars to the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. A loss of \$2.6 million will dramatically impact what we do each and every day for students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Pete Lewis, Superintendent

Murray Richmond

From: John Conwell [jconwell@UCSD.net]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 3:05 PM
Cc: John Conwell; Bruce Johnson; aasb@aasb.org; Dan Masoni; magnusen@akwisp.com; Sonia Handforth-Kome; Tammy Pound (AASB); Tammy Pound (local); Tonya Miller
Subject: In Support of SB 84
Attachments: AJC Article.docx; SB84 Letter of Support.pdf; SB84 UCSD Letter of Support.pdf

Dear Senator,

Attached please find two letters written in support of Senate Bill 84 and a recent article from the Alaska Journal of Commerce.

Sincerely,

John P. Conwell
Superintendent
Unalaska City School District
P.O. Box 570
Unalaska, AK 99685
Office: 907-581-3151 Fax: 581-3152 Mobile: 359-3151
jconwell@ucsd.net www.ucsd.net

"To Provide an Exemplary Education"

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Unalaska City School District

Senate Finance Committee
Juneau, AK 99801

March 31, 2011

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill 84. SB 84 provides a modest increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for each of the next three fiscal years and funding within the foundation formula for vocational education. Similar to the forward funding bill passed in 2007 at the recommendation of the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force, this bill enables school districts to plan their budgets and programs for at least the next three years with greater certainty.

Knowing the education funding outlook for the next three years will enable our District to plan more precise budgets and eliminate some of the uncertainty of fluctuating health care and energy costs. Further, our District hopes to implement the additional high school courses needed to meet the eligibility requirements for the Governor's Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) program.

The vocational education funding component of SB 84 will enable UCSD to build capacity within its Career and Technical Education programs. UCSD would utilize the additional vocational education funding to upgrade equipment, technology, and shop and classroom facilities. The District hopes to expand its Tech Prep Program to include career paths in addition to welding, which is presently offered at UCSD through a partnership with UAF.

With North Slope oil at \$118.44 per barrel today, the State of Alaska is in a position to appropriately fund its K-12 public education programs. As the father of two school-age children, and as a school district administrator responsible for the education of many more children, I implore you to invest in Alaska's children and pass Senate Bill 84.

Sincerely,



John P. Conwell, Superintendent

Cc: Representative Bryce Edgmon
AASB

Murray Richmond

From: Cindy Reilly [creilly@yksd.com]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 2:50 PM
To: Sen. Albert Kookesh
Cc: Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: In Support of SB84
Attachments: image001.jpg

Senator Kookesh, Senator Stevens, Senator Stedman, Senator Hoffman, Senator Thomas, Senator McGuire, Senator Egan, Senator Olson and Senator Ellis:

I am writing in support of SB84, the education funding bill which relates to funding high school vocational education as a component of funding and increasing the base student allocation used in the public school funding formula. I would respectfully ask you to consider passing this bill which is so badly needed for our public schools.

During the past three years, we have been so very fortunate as school business leaders to have the benefit of forward funding which came about as a result of the Education Task Force. I want to sincerely thank you for that. It made planning for the best use of our state funding possible because we could depend on getting a base amount when writing our annual budgets. Here at Yukon Koyukuk School District (YKSD) forward funding allowed us to bargain with our teacher's union for a period of three years, allowing our teachers to spend less time at negotiations and more time in their classrooms with students. Last year, when we began bargaining with our teachers, we could only do so for a year at a time because we didn't know at what level we would be funded beyond FY11. We did the same this year when we reopened bargaining for salaries, deciding only on FY12 salaries, making it necessary to plan to come back to the table next year once again. And even now, we have arrived at a salary schedule for which we hope funding will be available since these decisions have not yet been made.

As with most school districts, we have been moving ever closer to reductions in staffing due to inflationary costs, not only in salaries and benefits, but also utilities, staff travel and the high cost of shipping necessary supplies and equipment to our villages. The Stimulus funds were very helpful in staving off these cuts, but we have been planning for them to go away this year as we had been told at the time they were given. I am thankful for the boost these funds gave our district; however now we find ourselves in the unenviable position of needing to cut staff. Seven of our nine village schools have fewer than 40 children K-12. Many of them are staffed to the bare bones now with multi-age classrooms, so there is no place to cut but in the jobs that are available for our local people. This is a further hit on the villages and their economies. By investing in our schools, you have the opportunity to multiply the State dollars as they bolster local economies.

I am very excited about the addition of vocational education funding as part of the foundation formula. YKSD has been analyzing student data looking particularly close at what happens to our graduates. In one study, we found that nearly three quarters of our 2009 graduates had not begun "real life" choosing instead to hang out at home in their village. Our school board and Superintendent Boyd has been moving us toward more vocational education in our schools for the purpose of making sure our graduates have practical and usable skills when they leave high school, realizing that many of them have no aspirations for post-secondary education. Our villages will be stronger and better places with skilled laborers in them to upgrade infrastructure. We have been able to provide intensive 2 week academies in the villages over the past few years in the areas of construction and welding. Next year, we hope to add a health care academy and to join with Kuspuk School District in their "Kick Ash" Firefighting Academy. Knowing we have the funding support from the State would certainly make attaining these goals easier.

With the predictions of falling oil production and dwindling state funding from oil, I know the temptation must be great to pull back and conserve the huge dollars our state is currently reaping from the oil industry. However, I would ask that you consider instead investing the money we have now in our State's future by touching our young residents who will be

the great minds leading us in the future. Please consider carefully the position we are in currently as a State with healthy coffers that are the envy of the rest of the United States, and pass SB84. Your support of Alaska's students is so very much appreciated, and will pay huge dividends in the future.

Thank you for your kind consideration and time.

Cindy Reilly, SFO
Chief Financial Officer
Yukon Koyukuk School District
4762 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709
(907)374-9410



Murray Richmond

From: Kristina M. Brophy [kristina.brophy@k12northstar.org]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 1:50 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Donny Olson
Subject: SB 84

Dear Senators Thomas, Stedman, Hoffman, Egan, McGuire, Ellis, and Olson,

Alaska's future lies in the hands of our children. The decisions you make regarding SB 84 will impact our children's ability to receive a good education and make Alaska even greater than it is today. Whether college bound or pursuing a career in the trades after high school, each student deserves our support. In order for us to do our good work for the benefit of Alaska's students, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of a multi year funding plan for the BSA and an increase in career and technical education in Alaska's high schools.

In Fairbanks, the budget we forwarded to the Assembly includes a \$100 increase to the BSA. This was not a random decision, but based on avoiding a climate of uncertainty and fear for district staff and the community prior to knowing conclusively what the legislature's decision would be regarding education funding. Currently, our budget includes cuts to technology, the curriculum, middle school math tutors, and graduation success coaches. Without the \$100 increase to the BSA, we will face an additional 2.6 million dollars in cuts. Knowing the increase to the BSA for the past three years has been extremely helpful as we conscientiously developed a reasonable budget. I am hopeful that you will once again support a three-year schedule of increases to the BSA.

Thank you for your consideration and for all you do for the citizens, and students, of this great State of Alaska!

Kristina Brophy