

Doniece Gott

From: Liz Bacom <liz.bacom@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 03, 2025 8:50 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Hello, my name is Elizabeth Bacom, a constituent from Petersburg. I am asking the senate to match the house to increase the BSA to \$1000. The Petersburg school board has for years been fiscally responsible but with an inadequate BSA, an erosion of services is inevitable.

A friend has lost her special ed teaching job in wasilla, and 100 staff are being cut in that school. With DOE being cut off at the knees, stable school funding for all kids is imperative. I was on our school board for 6 years. You hurt one group of kids, you hurt all kids and it will take years to recover from the gaps created. If you think Covid was bad for education, this will be much worse. I urge you to be creative: Arizona has a flat 2.5% income tax. A power ball lottery. A special Oil tax dedicated to education (k-university). I support creative ways to sustainably, forward fund the youth of today for a great Alaska tomorrow. We need creative thinkers in Juneau right now. Put yourselves on the right side of history.

Thank you for serving our state.

From: [Linda Slaght](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 9:19:00 AM

Hello, I am writing to express my support for HB 69 which would raise the BSA by \$1,000. This is an overdue partial correction to account for inflation in the years since it was last updated. I live in Petersburg, where the school system is the heart of the community. It has been managed carefully and conservatively over the years, with broad community and local government support. As is the case with many school districts across Alaska, we are now looking at a situation where draconian cuts would have to be made in order to balance the budget. Families with school aged children and employees of the school district would suffer immediate effects, but the community would suffer over the long term as families leave town in search of a stable educational environment for their children. My children have benefited from a safe, secure, quality education in Petersburg, and now my granddaughter, who is in first grade, deserves the same opportunities.

We have been hearing that the finance committee is faced with a difficult decision, balancing the constitutional mandate to provide for a quality educational system in Alaska with the mandate to balance the budget. I hope the committee will take a hard look at reasonable options for new revenues, such as reducing the oil company tax credits and closing oil company tax loopholes. It is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your service to Alaska!

Linda Slaght

[REDACTED]

Petersburg, AK 99833

[REDACTED]

From: [Dani W](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Oppose HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 9:47:35 AM

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am alarmed that HB 69 has advanced through all its committees and was approved by the House. The Senate Education Committee actually made this bill worse with its additional amendments regarding Correspondence schools. Now this bill sits before you, still as fiscally irresponsible as it was at its inception. How is this bill to be funded? Where is the money coming from? Throwing more money (that we don't have!) at the same problem, expecting positive change without accompanying changes to our educational framework, is the definition of insanity. Alaska already funds its students at a far higher rate than the vast majority of the other 49 States, and yet our performance continues to lag far behind. Why do failing systems deserve more significant funding without proving how they will improve their outcomes?

Meanwhile, the attempt to just bring correspondence students up to a full student for BSA funding purposes has failed as this bill has moved through the legislature, despite the fact that homeschoolers save the State of Alaska a lot of money and provide the most efficient means of educating our students on the taxpayer dime. We should be looking to expand these delivery systems rather than increasing administrative burdens on them and the families that choose this educational path. Why is a school finance bill being used to usher in sweeping changes to only one kind of public school--the correspondence schools? (The only public schools not benefitting from the increased funding in any meaningful way, by the way.) There are no increased accountability measures being proposed for the brick and mortar schools--just a blank check without strings attached. But the latest version of this bill coming out of the Senate Education committee ties student allotments to standardized testing, unfairly singling out one type of student and compelling participation in a specific activity in order to be granted funding. If a parent exercises their right to opt out of testing at a brick and mortar, that student is still funded. Their educational money is not cut off due to this choice. This will not be true for correspondence students who will see their funding cut off if the parents determine to opt out of testing.

Nobody wants to be the one denying" more funding to students." The propaganda around that issue creates a hot button most of you don't want to touch. You don't want to be perceived as harming our students by not increasing funding, even though nobody has really proven how increasing funding will do anything meaningful to help our kids. Instead of finding actual ways to improve our education in Alaska, the easy way out to make it look like you care and are doing something is to increase funding. But that's not the answer here. And you in the finance committee are supposed to be concerned about the fiscal ramifications of a bill and whether or not the expenditures are justified based on expected outcomes. I hope you have the courage to actually do the right thing and kill this bill before sending it out of committee and kicking the can down the road. We have no funding source for it. And until we really look at other options for improving education in Alaska, it isn't going to solve the problems it purports to solve.

This bill looks good on the surface--who wouldn't want to increase funding for schools?!? But it's a terrible bill for the above reasons, among others. I strongly oppose HB 69.

Sincerely,
Danielle Witczak, Palmer

From: [Cheryl & Mark Lovegreen](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 10:02:57 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I support HB 69 approved by the Senate Education Committee. It is vitally important to increase the BSA by \$1000 to remedy the education crisis, and the amendments help assuage other concerns. We can pay for this through a \$1000 PFD and taxing S corporations.

Please pass this BSA increase.

Thanks for your time,

Cheryl Lovegreen

From: [Paul Rioux](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: School funding
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 10:09:57 AM

Honorable senators,

Article VII of the Alaska Constitution states:

"The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State"

The use of the word shall indicates a mandate.

My argument is that failure to maintain funding levels that keep pace with spending power is a failure to maintain.

School programs are vanishing, infrastructure disintegrating..

I acknowledge that the state's budget is tight for this, but I also acknowledge the legislature has the responsibility and the power to plan fiscally for this burden, and no other governing body does.

The work lies with you.

The future of Alaska's next generation of leaders lies with you.

Fund the schools

Paul Rioux, Sitka

From: [Cindy Long](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support Our Students
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 10:18:10 AM

Dear Finance Committee Members,

I am a retired Alaskan teacher. I spent 20 years off the road, living without amenities and dedicated to my students and their families.

I watched the Gavel to Gavel coverage all week to see what is happening. It was painful to relive experiences as a teacher where the school I worked at had poor building conditions and no one cared. I was a displaced teacher for the second half of my 20 years in Alaska. I agree with the testimonies of the administrators, especially the one that described Alaska's education system as STARVED.

I support a \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation. Anything less does not keep up w/inflation. If you support AK kids & public schools you will not falter in your support.

Mrs. Cindy Long

[REDACTED]

Kasilof, AK 99610

From: [Chandler O'Connell](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please call a hearing on H.B. 69
Date: Monday, April 07, 2025 1:31:55 PM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to request that you schedule a hearing on HB 69 and support the \$1,000 BSA increase.

I am a graduate of Alaska public schools (K-12), I am a parent of Alaskan kids, and I volunteer weekly in my daughter's kindergarten class. I believe that public schools are at the heart of Alaskan communities, institutions where people of all backgrounds can come together to support the next generation and make concrete investments in a better future for everyone. Every challenge can be better handled and every opportunity can be better seized by well prepared and healthy youth.

Alaska's schools need stability. They need to be able to focus on retention and to make hiring and administrative decisions based on what is best for students, families and long term school functioning. The underfunding and uncertainty of the past several years has resulted in waste, inefficiency and demoralization, hurting Alaska's students. It has been incredibly frustrating to witness. HB 69 is a good first step in rectifying this situation and getting us on a better path.

Increased funding for schools is a critical need for Alaska. I support revenue-generating policy changes to support this priority, including rewriting tax law to cover Hilcorp, eliminating the per-barrel oil tax credit, and evaluating and instituting progressive taxes that can diversify the State's revenue sources.

Thank you for your service.

Chandler O'Connell
Sitka, Alaska

From: [Tara Craytor](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Fund education
Date: Monday, April 07, 2025 9:02:57 PM

Please fund education by whatever means necessary.

I have just left the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District School Board meeting and am devastated. Listening to children begging for their education is heart wrenching. Children from Kenai Alt. talking about losing the only place that has ever felt like home, the only place they've felt worthy and capable. Quest (our district's gifted, talented, and enrichment program) students speaking about losing the only environment they've been able to learn in. Teaching our students public advocacy is one thing, but requiring children to beg adults to meet their basic needs is barbaric.

With the current budget proposal our schools are being gutted in Seward. One huge loss for our family will be the shuttering of the Quest program.

This decision will be particularly devastating to my third son. He was identified as needing "more" in kindergarten. His teachers approached his father and I about moving him into the first grade, but we decided to keep him with his peers because it seemed his needs would be able to be met through enrichment and Quest.

He has gone to enrichment with the Quest teacher for reading and math since kindergarten and has been officially in the Quest program since third grade. He is now in 4th grade and in accelerated 5th grade math - we have purposely asked that he be kept at only one grade ahead and enriched instead of accelerated in the curriculum further. This math class and his Quest class are the two times in his day when he can stretch and grow as a student during his school day. We're now learning that this will not be an option going forward.

I am so concerned for my son's mental health and well being. I am unconvinced that Seward Elementary will be able to meet his educational needs, and our family is being forced to look at moving out of state due to our public schools' continued inability to provide for our 4 children.

Please, please fund our public schools. This is our family's number one priority.

Thank you.

Tara Craytor
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Seward, Alaska 99664

From: [Sen. Donny Olson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support Public School Funding HB 69
Date: Tuesday, April 08, 2025 1:56:23 PM

From: Shannon McBride-Morin <shannon@alaskawildernesslodge.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>; mayor@kpb.us; KCooper@kpb.us; Dunne, Willy <WDunne@kpb.us>
Subject: Support Public School Funding HB 69

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

As an Alaskan who received a great Public School education, I write to implore you to fully fund public school funding and pass House Bill 69. My grown kids got a great education here in Homer as well, and I am disheartened to see massive cuts to Public Schools. They are the heart of our community, and we must support our kids, educators, families and communities by fully forward funding public - not private - education.

Here is some additional info on why I support this bill to fund public education now:

According to the Economic Policy Institute, **“a well-educated workforce is the key to state prosperity.”** (Report by Noah Berger and Peter Fisher, August 22, 2013)

Major findings:

- Overwhelmingly, high-wage states are states with a well-educated workforce.

- States can build a strong foundation for economic success and shared prosperity by investing in education
- Cutting taxes to capture private investment from other states is a race-to-the-bottom state economic development strategy that undermines the ability to invest in education.
- States can increase the strength of their economies and their ability to grow and attract high-wage employers by investing in education and increasing the number of well-educated workers
- Investing in education is also good for state budgets in the long run, since workers with higher income contribute more through taxes over the course of their lifetimes.

Possible revenue sources suggested by members of the legislature that could increase taxation of oil and gas companies in the state by hundreds of millions annually.

- Reduction in the per-barrel tax credits given to oil companies
- An amendment to the state's tax code to apply corporate income tax on certain private corporations, including Hilcorp Alaska.

Our school district, the Kenia Peninsula Borough School District

- Even with a permanent increase of \$1000 BSA to the school district, it doesn't make up for all the years of inflation from 2012 to now when the budgets did not include raises in BSA (With inflation that number should be \$1800 for 2026)
- If funded with \$1,000 BSA, there will be program cuts as there will still be a \$43,888 deficit in the 2026 KPBSD budget.

If funded at a lower BSA, the school district will be forced to eliminate or reduce more:

*teacher and staff positions and/or programs and services

On the KPBSD website, kpboroughsd-budget.abalancingact.com inviting people to provide feedback on the FY2026 Preliminary budget by using their interactive Balancing Act tool. The simulation starts with an estimated deficit of \$17 Million

(\$16,935,754)

Thank you for your work in the Legislature on behalf of us Alaskans. Please pass HB 69 & work to fully fund our public schools.

Shannon McBride-Morin

[REDACTED]

Homer, AK 99603

[REDACTED]

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Shannon McBride-Morin
Co-Owner & Operator

Kachemak Bay Wilderness Lodge
China Poot Bay & Homer, Alaska

www.AlaskaWildernessLodge.com [REDACTED]

Please read our [reviews](#) on

[REDACTED]

From: [Sen. Donny Olson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: a 58 year Alaskan asks you to please support school funding HB 69
Date: Tuesday, April 08, 2025 4:48:41 PM

From: Michael McBride <michael@alaskawildernesslodge.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 3:30 PM
To: Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>; Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>; mayor@kpb.us; KCooper@kpb.us; Willy <WDunne@kpb.us>
Subject: a 58 year Alaskan asks you to please support school funding HB 69

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

As an Alaskan who received a great Public School education, I write to implore you to fully fund public school funding and pass House Bill 69. My grown kids got a great education here in Homer as well, and I am disheartened to see massive cuts to Public Schools. They are the heart of our community, and we must support our kids, educators, families and communities by fully forward funding public - not private - education.

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(\$16,935,754)

Thank you for your work in the Legislature on behalf of us Alaskans.

Please pass HB 69 & work to fully fund our public schools.

--

Michael's personal cell: [REDACTED]

For reservations at the

Loonsong Mountain Lake Chalet

My website: www.loonsongmountainlakechalet.com



Nicole Acevedo 04.08.2025 School Board Meeting Testimony

Good evening,

My name is Nicole Acevedo. I am the parent of a very bright Chugach Optional Elementary student.

My husband and I chose Chugach Optional because we felt it was uniquely equipped to keep our son engaged and learning while also providing exceptional social/emotional growth opportunities. Our school's program, philosophy, and curriculum were designed to benefit and grow the whole child.

Every aspect of this program was carefully thought out—from the curriculum, to the number of grades and classrooms, to the building's layout, and the number of teachers. And our program works. Our students consistently rate highly for growth and achievement. (Our school's scores are consistently in the top four.)

We currently operate at 108% capacity. We have a 25:1 ratio of students to teachers; my son's primary class (1st and 2nd grade) has 26 students. Next school-year, primary classes will have 28 and 29 students per teacher, as is. If we lose two classroom teachers, our school ratio would be 30:1, but there would be 43 students per teacher in the primary classrooms. That's insane!

Our school operates a streamlined, cost-effective, successful program in which students thrive. Every aspect of the program is crucial to its success. Shuttering the library during half of the school week will be a significant loss to our students, losing two classroom teachers in addition to that would be a crippling blow that will cost our children dearly.

Please allow Chugach to continue to offer an exceptional alternative education option to Anchorage's children. Please allow us to keep the two teacher positions we are being asked to cut.

Thank you.

Sammy's Testimony for the School Board Meeting on April 08, 2025

Hi! My name is Samuel Acevedo and I am in 2nd grade at Chugach Optional Elementary.

I would like to ask you to please not take two teachers away from Chugach Optional Elementary, please.

I love learning at Chugach Optional!

This year my class has 26 students. If we lose two teachers next school year, some classes could have more than 40 students. That's too many! It's so much that people would not be able to learn! That would make me feel bored and frustrated. I want to be able to learn.

Please let us have our teachers.

Thank you!

From: [Sen. Donny Olson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB-69
Date: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:21:36 AM

From: E K <liska.alaska@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 5:55 PM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kelly Merrick <Sen.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>; Sen. James Kaufman <Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Cronk <Sen.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB-69

While stating that South Korea pulled out of the depression by focusing on education is an oversimplification, it most certainly played a huge role in reversing the country's trajectory. Let's do this in Alaska.

I understand that AK is in a fiscal crunch but let's pull our collective pants up and wade over.

I am advocating for funding of the BSA increase of \$1000.

Don't worry your precious cuts will still have to be implemented but not as draconian. Let's get those corporations paying their fair share. Alaska been touted as this rich resource or are you willing to sell for cheap?

Please support and say yay on HB 69. Let's take care of the kids first!!!!

Elizabeth Kandror.

From: [Lorene Bertagnoli](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 12:21:56 PM

Hello,

This is Lorene Bertagnoli, a constituent from Petersburg, and I am reiterating that I am asking the Senate to match the House and pass a \$1,000 BSA increase; \$680 is too low and will force our district into deficit spending.

I also support SB112, 113, 92, and 109.

Thank you for your time.

Lorene Bertagnoli

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Petersburg, 99833

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bonnie Gurney](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 2:38:58 PM

I'm writing to state that my support is to pass HB69 with a \$1,000 BSA in tact.

I am a fiscal conservative voter in the south Anchorage location with 3 elementary age children in public school. I understand the challenges of today's environment but the funding not keeping up with inflation with our education is important. It is essential to our future of the state and we all know that Alaska is not a poor state by resources, it is struggling due to the revenue systems in place that benefit only the large corporations rather than its people.

Please stand with our kids.

Bonnie Gurney

From: [Sarah Morehouse](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69-Pass the \$1,000 BSA increase
Date: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 2:40:11 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to implore you to pass the \$1,000 BSA increase. There are mechanisms to pay for this by re-allocating existing funding. Our children depend on this money. Your constituents do not support only a \$680 increase. We want the \$1,000 BSA increase. Please support our children and our schools.

Sarah Morehouse
Mom of 2 elementary school students
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Stats <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 11:18 PM
To: Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story; House Finance; Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Jesse Kiehl
Subject: Finance Education

Dear Representative Stori, Hannan, Senator Kiel, Senate and House Finance

I am in favor of bold action to spend money wisely and know where the money will come from to pay for the needed spending on HB 69. I am in favor of leaving the BSA amount in HB69 not to be pared down in a Senate proposal to decrease the BSA.

The PFD checks to Alaskans are icing on the cake that I believe we as a state can no longer afford. I believe the founders of the permanent fund would agree. We cannot keep borrowing from the earnings reserve and Alaskans cannot expect PFD checks in amounts that leave the state in deficit spending.

I have read that eliminating the deficit entirely and passing HB 69 as written would require reducing the dividend to about \$736 per recipient. I am entirely for that proposition. Doing otherwise does not serve the whole.

Education is a cornerstone of a democracy. Please fully fund education.

Sincerely,
Laura Stats

Doniece Gott

From: Matthew Blakeslee [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2025 2:17 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Support the \$1,000 BSA Increase ~ Alaska's Future Depends on It

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I urge you to pass the \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to ensure a viable future for Alaska. Without adequate funding for our schools, we are jeopardizing not only the education of our children but also the long-term sustainability of our state.

If this increase is not funded, Alaska will continue to see worsening educational outcomes, driving more families and professionals to leave the state in search of better opportunities. Outmigration is already a growing concern, and failing to invest in our schools will only accelerate the trend, weakening our workforce, economy, and communities.

A strong education system is the foundation of a thriving state. Please prioritize Alaska's future by passing this necessary increase to the BSA.

Sincerely,

Matt Blakeslee

Doniece Gott

From: Amy Pocewicz [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 09, 2025 9:23 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Amy Pocewicz
Subject: Fund schools instead of the PFD

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I'm asking that you please prioritize the funding of public schools this year, with at least \$1000 increase to the base student allocation. Please reduce or eliminate the PFD dividend instead.

Thank you,
Amy Pocewicz
[REDACTED], Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Bonnie DeArmoun <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2025 1:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: advocating for education

Dear Legislators,

I'm writing to urge you to vote for HB 69 and reject amendments that limit local school district control. We need at least a \$1000 increase to the base student allocation to begin to make up for 15 years of losses to inflation. Invest in education, not incarceration. Thank you!

Bonnie DeArmoun
Alaskan parent and small business owner

Doniece Gott

From: beth mclaughlin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2025 11:12 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support HB69

My name is Elizabeth McLaughlin and I have one child in the Anchorage School District.

I cannot believe that once again, we have to beg our leadership to fund education. It should be the priority investment that our state makes in its future and for the future of our country. The Anchorage School District, where my daughter attends school has provided an amazing education for our child. The cuts proposed by this year's budget are devastating.

Please support an increase to the BSA of at least \$1000. Without substantial and sustained increase to the BSA our school will lose valuable teachers, see increased class sizes, and lose half of our nurse and librarian's time. Public education is important to my family but it is also an investment in the future of our state. Please commit the resources our we and our children deserve.

Best wishes,
Elizabeth McLaughlin

From: [Sharon Hansen](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Finance testimony
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 2:26:39 PM

My name is Sharon Hansen. I've lived in Fairbanks for 25 years. I came here to get my master's degree in geophysics, I've worked for the state and the university. I am currently a stay at home mom.

I have:

-1 kid at a neighborhood school

-1 kid at a charter

While I am grateful that I have the privilege of choosing what educational model best fits each of my children, it comes down to this:

my "choice" REALLY is between either

- Me or
- My community

I am harming my community by making this "choice".

As parents "Choose" other educational options such as charters on top of not increasing funding to education, we end up closing 9 neighborhood schools overall and gutting them to the point that we can't even recognize their former glory.

My community is being torn apart. My community that I rely on. My community that I need, that my kids need to thrive; the community that keeps me here in Alaska. The community is pointing fingers at the school board, the school district, the superintendent's office furniture, even the PTA for crying out loud. It is ugly.

And guess what? Charters experience inflation too! It's not all flowers and sunshine just because it's a charter school. Outside the BSA funds aren't guaranteed to go to charters

and charters need inflation proofing too.

Please do not make me choose between me and my community, charter versus neighborhood, and whether or not I choose to have Alaska remain my home. Increase and inflation proof education funding. Also, please figure out a better more equitable way to get Impact Aid dollars to education.

Thank you.

Sharon Hansen

Doniece Gott

From: Rebecca Bernard [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 2:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please increase the BSA

Dear Co-Chairs Hoffman, Olson, and Stedman, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As this committee is currently taking public testimony on the state operating budget, I am writing to express my strong support for a substantial increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). Our public schools are in desperate straits, and while an even larger BSA increase is needed to catch up with the increase in operating costs and inflation since the last BSA increase, I urge you to include in the budget an increase of at least \$1,000 per student.

I am the parent of two children, a college freshman and a high school freshman. My older child benefited greatly from the Ignite program starting in fourth grade; it was there that she was able to develop her remarkable problem-solving skills and learn about computer coding, and now she is majoring in computer science in college. The Anchorage School District just adopted a budget that eliminates the Ignite program, a cut that would mean the failure of our schools to develop students' full potential. The ASD also cut middle-school sports, which were an important contributor to both my kids' health and well-being during that difficult middle school period. These and many other devastating cuts -- several high school sports, many teacher positions, and more -- would not be necessary if state funding for public education were keeping up with inflation and rising costs.

Please include in the state operating budget a BSA increase of at least \$1,000. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Bernard

[REDACTED]
Anchorage AK 99501
[REDACTED]

Doniece Gott

From: Virginia Morgan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 3:24 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Supporting Education

Good afternoon,

It is essential to raise the BSA by at least \$1,000 this year, and by smaller amounts over the next two years, as well as implement an inflation-proofing mechanism. An increase of \$680 would amount to another cut, after years and years of cuts. All of our state's schools are suffering, and schools in rural communities are being cut to the bone.

Increasing the BSA by a minimum of \$1,000, and inflation-proofing it, will allow districts to:

- pay teachers more, and recruit and retain the best instructors
- provide enough funding to stop the increase in class sizes
- implement the READS Act with fidelity
- maintain buildings
- reduce school closures
- bring back music, the arts, and other programs that are part of a well-rounded education

It is heartbreaking to face the imminent possibility of closing Moose Pass School, located in a community similar in size to mine and 30 miles away. Closing small schools causes small communities to die. In addition, communities with 10+ school-age students have a right to an equitable education without having to be transported 40+ miles, one way, through volatile weather and mountainous avalanche areas. That is not an acceptable educational experience.

Thank you for your service,
Virginia Morgan
Cooper Landing resident
[REDACTED]

Doniece Gott

From: Bonnie DeArmoun [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 3:31 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please fund the future of Alaska with HB69

Dear Representative,

I am writing to you as a third generation Alaskan, small business owner, parent of school age children and an educator at an Optional School in the Anchorage School District. I know that stemming the outward migration of young working age families is of upmost importance to the Alaskan economy. The ability to recruit and retain employees depends on strong public schools. Working age adults with school aged children or people planning on starting a family, simple will not consider settling where their children cannot access a quality education.

I am urging you to support House Bill SB 69. For years unstable funding and inconsistent messaging has been impacting teacher retention and morale. It is imperative that if we'd like to keep new teachers in our state we must treat them with professional respect, handing teachers a pink slip at the end of the year is not respectful in the least. Would you stay at a job where your employment was threatened every year? If we hope to stem the tide of outward migration poor school funding is not the way to do it.

While our education system requires careful reforms, we must first stabilize the existing framework, which has suffered under years of underfunding. Our focus should be on students success in the classroom, that will not happen with huge class sizes and less school choice. Teachers can not teach the material if their roof is leaking onto a student's desk - we moved the desk but nothing disrupts a middle school class like water drops on the neck of a 13 year old. Huge classes distract from learning and create an atmosphere or chaos. If you want the cake to bake correctly you must first make sure the ingredients are correct: funding, students who are healthy and fed, safe buildings and parents who make sure their children are going to school. All the ingredients must be there, please don't say that funding depends on academic outcomes, there are so many things that go into academic outcomes, the only person who would link these two is someone who hasn't in the last ten years. Clearly enacting new policies that improve outcomes is happening at a glacial pace, how do you plan to enact new curriculums and instruction techniques with no funds to do it? With no teachers to do it? Teachers with a current certificate are becoming very hard to come by, withholding funding is no way to improve the education of Alaskan children.

Respectfully,
Bonnie DeArmoun
Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Meghan Holtan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 4:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: I support school funding!

Hi,

My name is Meghan Holtan and my son, Archimedes, is in second grade at Inlet View elementary school in Anchorage, Alaska. He's also in Ignite and it's the highlight of his week. I urge you to increase the base student allocation. Alaska has an incredible school system compared to much of the country, but it is not funded to reflect its full potential. We just moved back to our home in Anchorage after two years in Buffalo, New York, where decades of underfunding has resulted in a three part school system of charters, public schools and private schools and elaborate bussing options that benefit few at the expense of neighborhoods and families. Let's invest in what we have now and increase funding to improve it! Rather than trying to cobble together a very expensive three part version of education, let's invest in neighborhood schools - the most efficient and effective use of public money.

Furthermore, we're spending money anyway - in the form of incarceration.

Thanks,
Meghan Holtan
817 West 19th Ave
Anchorage Alaska 99503

Doniece Gott

From: Bonnie DeArmoun <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 4:13 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please support HB 69 because Alaska deserves a chance at better education

Dear Finance Committee,

I am writing to you as a third generation Alaskan, small business owner, parent of school age children and an educator at an Optional School in Alaska. You and I both know that stemming the outward migration of young working age families is of upmost importance to the Alaskan economy. The ability to recruit and retain employees depends on strong public schools. Working age adults with school aged children or people planning on starting a family, simply will not consider settling where their children cannot access a quality education.

I am urging you to support House Bill SB 69. For years unstable funding and inconsistent messaging has been impacting teacher retention and morale. It is imperative that if we'd like to keep new teachers in our state we must treat them with professional respect, handing teachers a pink slip at the end of the year is not respectful in the least. Would you stay at a job where your employment was threatened every year? If we hope to stem the tide of outward migration poor school funding is not the way to do it.

While our education system requires careful reforms, we must first stabilize the existing framework, which has suffered under years of underfunding. Our focus should be on students success in the classroom, that will not happen with huge class sizes and less school choice. Teachers can not teach the material if their roof is leaking onto a student's desk. Huge classes distract from learning and create an atmosphere of chaos. If you want the cake to bake correctly you must first make sure the ingredients are correct: funding, students who are healthy and fed, safe buildings and parents who make sure their children are going to school. Clearly enacting new policies that improve outcomes is happening at a glacial pace, how do you plan to enact new curriculums and instruction techniques with no funds to do it? With no teachers to do it? Teachers with a current certificate are becoming very hard to come by, withholding funding is no way to improve the education of Alaskan children.

Respectfully,

Bonnie DeArmoun

Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: MarkaAnne Brooks <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 4:26 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Marka Anne Brooks
Subject: Education funding and revenue

Brooks & Associates (a civil engineer in private practice) spent the last 30 years completing public involvement for planning and design projects, mostly transportation, throughout Alaska. During those years, we employed many Alaska students, used local ROTC groups from area high schools, and made presentations in schools. Our aim was to encourage students to pursue degrees in engineering or construction trades.

To prepare students for advance degrees or the trades, they need a quality K-12 education. I am increasingly concerned about the continued lack of funding for public education in Alaska. The Alaska constitution mandates that the legislature provide for and fund our public schools and I consider this a fundamental obligation for future generations and our state. We are not preparing our children for their future or the future we all want to Alaska.

My two children were educated in Anchorage's public schools, went outside for college and returned to work in Alaska as civil engineers. One has left for better opportunities in Canada. Thankfully, one child remains in Alaska. I now have an Alaskan grandson who will be entering the public school system in 4 years and his opportunities will be very different than the opportunities my children had, all because of the draconian cuts to education. I am very worried that we will not have a public education system in 4 years or at least not one with teachers as committed to Alaska as the teachers who taught my children. Those bright committed teachers are leaving the profession because we undervalue and underpay them.

The ability to recruit and retain employees is crucial for the success businesses like mine, yet the declining quality of our schools makes this increasingly difficult. Families will not relocate to, or remain in, a state where their children cannot receive a quality education. Of note, Alaska's non-resident workforce hit a high of 24% in 2023. If a 1/4 of our workforce are people not living, spending and supporting our communities it damages our state and local economy.

The defunding of neighborhood schools is not just harming students. Schools are the heart of a community; when a school is underfunded or closes, families move away, and local businesses suffer or shut down entirely. The economic impact of this extends far beyond education—it affects housing markets, healthcare access, and overall stability.

I urge you to take immediate action to 1) raise the base student allocation and 2) raise revenue to fund our public schools.

Thank you for your time and for your service to Alaska. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Marka A. Brooks, P.E.
[REDACTED], Anchorage, AK 99508
Owner

Anne Brooks
brooks.markaanne@gmail.com
[REDACTED]

Doniece Gott

From: Beth Okamoto <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 4:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Increase Testimony

Hi! My name is Beth Okamoto. I have two children in the Anchorage School District. Please support an increase to the BSA of at least \$1000. Without substantial and sustained increase to the BSA our school will lose valuable teachers, see increased class sizes, and lose half of our nurse and librarian's time. Public education is important to my family and our quality of life. Let's invest in Alaska's future!

Beth

Doniece Gott

From: Anna Rose MacArthur <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 5:33 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support HB 69

Dear Senators,

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you,
Anna Rose MacArthur

Doniece Gott

From: Heather Harris <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 7:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase BSA by \$1k

Our children are suffering because of the lack of stable funding for our schools. It's time to increase the BSA by \$1,000 to establish and maintain a system of public schools open to ALL children of the State.

Thank you,
Heather Harris
Anchorage 11-F

From: [Cassandra Gardner Raun](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please Increase the BSA by \$1000
Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025 9:36:19 PM

Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for your service and leadership on behalf of all Alaskans.

I am a resident of midtown Anchorage, a graduate of Anchorage School District, the mother of three current ASD students, a middle school PTSA Board Member, and a 20 year Realtor in our community. I am asking the Senate Finance Committee to make an investment in Alaska by funding public schools in a manner that upholds the values mandated by Article VII of the Constitution of the State of Alaska.

I am asking for three things:

1. Your vote for a durable education funding solution: A 2-3 year education funding plan.
2. Your vote for a significant, affordable investment in education funding: A \$1,000 (or larger) BSA increase.
3. Your timely action: Hearing and approving an education funding package not later than mid-March.

I appreciate your Committee's responsibility to steward State finances, and I understand the budget challenges our State is facing.

Respectfully, I do not accept the argument that we can not afford a \$1,000 BSA increase, and I expect each of you to fight hard to achieve an BSA increase of at least that much. Please remember that you have a Constitutional Duty to maintain a system of public schools (Article VII), and the Constitution retains no such Duty relative to the Permanent Fund Dividend or other State "priorities". Furthermore, a \$1,000 BSA increase is achievable with no new revenue and a moderate dividend. It should not be lost on anyone that a \$1,440 Dividend eats approximately \$269 Million of the State's budget more than a \$1,000 Dividend would. If one is to pit Education Funding against the Dividend, then consider that as a \$269 million tax on our children's backs, pushing them further and farther behind. Is \$440 more in PFD an investment in Alaska's future? Does it stem the tide of out-migration? Does it attract families to move to Alaska? Does it help build tomorrow's workforce, today? No. No. No. And No. However, investing in education achieves those objectives.

I was raised in Alaska. I returned with my husband after college to raise our own children here. There has not been an increase to school funding that matches inflation since our oldest daughter started Kindergarten and she is now a Junior in high school! I love Alaska, Alaska is my home, and I can tell you honestly that if my girls were three years younger, we would consider leaving. We want to raise our girls in a place that prioritizes education and, in this moment, Alaska is not that place.

Strong schools attract and keep families and right now we are losing families. As a Realtor, one of the first questions families always ask me is "how are the schools?" Here are two quotes from clients considering moving from the Lower 48.

"I saw a few Anchorage houses that have some low scoring schools, which surprises me."

"The big hesitation for us about the Wasilla and Palmer regions is the school(s). Ratings of 4-6/10 do give us pause."

Additionally, JBER Colonel Lisa Mabbutt recently stated "I think schools are what the families and service members on JBER are most concerned about right now."

Funding public schools is not just about schools or education. Funding public schools is about Alaska, it's about the economy, it's about our future. **Business and labor leaders support investment in education because they understand that a strong economy requires a trained and well educated workforce.**

Please vote to increase the BSA by a minimum of \$1000.

Thank you for your consideration and for your investment in Alaska!

--

Sincerely,

Cassandra Gardner Raun

A black rectangular redaction mark covering the signature of Cassandra Gardner Raun.

Doniece Gott

From: John & Gretchen [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 10:44 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please support an increase to BSA

Hello,

I am a retired educator of the Anchorage School District who enjoyed a fulfilling career of classroom teaching and work as an elementary librarian for 25 years. I currently work as an assessment proctor three times a year in our public schools and observe first hand how urgently our schools are in need of significant and consistent funding to build a strong community for Alaska's future.

Considering that state funding for schools has not kept pace with inflation I ask that you invest in our public schools to keep up with the costs to serve all types of kids. Strong schools attract business and families who want to live, work and play in this great state.

Please support an operating budget that increases the BSA and keeps up with inflation because education should be our first priority not our last.

Thank you,
Gretchen Nelson
[REDACTED] Anchorage, AK 99508

Doniece Gott

From: Cliff Wilson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 9:10 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Re: Educate our kids!

Here's to AI so those of you who need concise will get it :

Senators,

The budget's stagnation during inflation explains itself. Fund education properly and ensure the governor can't veto it. This would be a crime against families and against our generations to come, not to mention a weak workforce and "brain drain."

Please vote to fund education for the future. Ironically, the governor runs on "north to the future" but vetoed a budget barely funding public education last year. Now, we face cutting crucial programs, including my children's French immersion program and art and sports. Private interests drive the governor's ideology, but elected officials have a broad constituency and can't override public education's essential mission of supporting a democratic society.

Charter schools, religious education, and homeschooling can't prepare our population for the challenges ahead. It enrages me that the state budget prioritizes those programs and teacher bonuses over adequate base student allocation for public school students. Board members are proposing cuts at the expense of high-quality experiences and optimized educational models in public schools but denying the BSA (even at last years request plus inflation)

Will deny more fundamental curriculum basics such as proper class size and special periods for music art science etc.

Underfunded public funding means my children won't be educated properly, and we'll lose crucial workforce participants. Please vote appropriately.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 27, 2025, at 10:26 AM, Cliff Wilson <cliffordwilson@gmail.com> wrote:

Correction:
See italics below:

Here in the "last frontier", charter schools and religious education, not to mention homeschooling, ~~do not fully prepare people~~ *cannot stand alone to prepare our population* engagement in the challenges moving forward for the state, the nation, the world. It enrages me to think that the state budget would prioritize those programs over public education, especially when this has to happen at the expense of programming that allow for high-quality experiences and optimized educational models in our public schools.

Doniece Gott

From: Amy Olson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 9:17 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 69

My name is Amy Olson. I have 1 child in the Anchorage School District. Please support an increase to the BSA of at least \$1000. Without substantial and sustained increase to the BSA our school will lose valuable teachers, see increased class sizes, and lose half of our nurse and librarian's time. Public education is important to my family and our quality of life. Let's invest in Alaska's future!

Amy Olson
[REDACTED], Anchorage, AK 99508

Doniece Gott

From: Ute Schmidt <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 1:30 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: support for HB 69

My name is Ute Schmidt, and I have 2 children in the Anchorage School District which is facing a huge budget deficit. I would like to urge you to please support an increase to the BSA of at least \$1000. Without substantial and sustained increase to the BSA not tied to other conditions, I understand our school might lose valuable teachers, see even more (!) increased class sizes, and lose half of our nurse's time at school. Public education is important for as a parents as we want to give our children the best start in life. If we don't feel that is possible in Alaska, we would consider moving out of state. Please invest in our children and our / Alaska's future!

Thank you,
Ute Schmidt from Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Brittany Sofia <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 2:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding

Senate Finance Committee,

I hope this testimony finds you well. This is my 20th year teaching for the Anchorage School District. During my time as a teacher for ASD, I have been a Kindergarten and First Grade teacher and a Title One Reading Interventionist. Currently, I am an Elementary School English Language Learner Resource Teacher. I am writing to encourage you to increase the BSA to at least \$1,000.

There are so many reasons Alaska school funding needs to be greatly increased. Today I want to bring to attention one area of concern statewide that impacts Alaskan communities and children throughout the state. "Alaska has the third-highest intimate partner violence against women lifetime prevalence in the United States" (See reference list). This means that the children in Alaska are impacted by domestic violence at a greater rate than most of the country. To dig deeper, domestic violence in ones' home during childhood increases a child's level of trauma. Higher amounts of trauma are associated with negative learning outcomes. Traumatic childhood experiences can change brain development significantly in the areas of the brain that regulate emotions, being able to pay attention and focus, and processing (See reference list).

In conclusion, the state of Alaska needs a fully funded education system with extensive supports for students who are arriving in our schools with high levels of trauma. Possibly, some of the highest levels of trauma in the country! We need funding to create an education system and network of supports for these children. It's going to cost more, because they need more support. Let's not let them down. We can do this! Please increase education funding to at least a \$1,000 BSA.

Thanks for your time,

Brittany Bauman

Anchorage, Alaska

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

References:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8068725/#:~:text=In%20sum%2C%20consistent%20with%20prior,early%20interventions%20for%20traumatized%20children>.

<https://www.alaskachildrensalliance.org/child-abuse/>

<https://nwef.org/2024/07/02/domestic-violence-how-does-it-affect-schools-students-and-teachers/>

<https://alaskapublic.org/news/2023-12-08/alaskas-domestic-violence-rates-remain-high-as-advocates-push-for-more-preventative-measures>

https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2497/ncadv_alaska_fact_sheet_2020.pdf

Doniece Gott

From: Ryan McCourt [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 4:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: INCREASE THE BSA

Importance: High

Hello,

My name is Ryan McCourt. I have 2 children in the Anchorage School District. **I have lived in Alaska for about 15 years and my observations lead me to believe public education is a low priority for Alaskans. Simply put, Alaskans are spoiled and selfish. No state sales tax, no state income tax, and an annual PFD handout. Please, for the love of god find a way to invest in the future of Alaska by supporting an increase in the BSA of at least \$1000.**

Sincerely,
Ryan McCourt

Doniece Gott

From: john sonin <sojohn61@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 10:27 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee; House Finance; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; kiny@ptialaska.net; Murky-Robert Bruce ; Murky-Aleksander Rentz ; Murkowski - Kate Sterne; Rep. Andy Josephson; rep.benjamin.nageak@akleg.gov; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; rep.chris.tuck@akleg.gov; rep.craig.johnson@akleg.gov; Rep. Dan Saddler; rep.geran.tarr@akleg.gov; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.kurt.olson@akleg.gov; rep.steve.thompson@akleg.gov; Rep-Colleen Sullivan-Leonard; repJonKreiss-Tomkins; repLora Reinbold; Sen. Shelley Hughes; repWesKell; Rio Tazwell w/Jonah; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen.click.bishop@akleg.gov; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; sen.berta.gardner@akleg.gov; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Rep. Chuck Kopp; Rep. Jamie Allard; Rep. Robyn Burke; Represetativ.Jeremy.Bynum@akleg.gov; Rep. Maxine Dibert; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. Ted Eischeid; Rep. Bill Elam; Representative.Delana.Johnson@akleg.gov; Rep. Kevin McCabe; Rep. Elexie Moore; Rep. David Nelson; Representative.Mike.Prax@akleg.org; Rep. George Rauscher; Rep. Justin Ruffridge; Rep. Calvin Schrage; Rep. Rebecca Schwanke; Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; Rep. Jubilee Underwood; Rep. Sarah Vance
Subject: Educate, Do not placate, capitulate, or voucher OUR fate!

April 21, 2025

OUR need for an educated, rationally informed voting majority to sustain OUR pursuit of Justice, or "egalitarian fairness," can only be achieved when those of us with genuine consideration for this Constitutional command, and oath-taking deference, recognize a mandatory deferral of any contemporaneous needs, and the forbearing of our personal resplendent glory, to insure OUR children with an ability to discover any fulfilling pursuit of these enumerated goals, by way of that private covenant - publicly and equally administered statewide!

In other words, all else in your Capital & Operating Budget deliberations, most notably this affliction with a STATUATORY PFD, need be of reduced relevance when my State's absurdly personal income tax limitations delimit OUR revenue.

John Sonin

2201-A6 Crow Hill Dr.

Douglas, AK 99824

(907) 586-8212

Doniece Gott

From: Brynn Bolling <Brynn.Bolling@comconnections.org>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 10:28 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: budget

Please keep the Infant Learning Program budget increase in this year's budget. Even with a deficit it has been 11 years since our last state increase. We are responsible to follow federal law and I expect everyone in the legislature to support ILP funding so we can continue to follow the law and serve families.

Thank you,

Brynn Bolling M.ED. ECSE
Community Connections
Program Director
Early Learning Program
PO Box 420
Craig, AK. 99921
907.826.3891work
907.826.3892 Fax
907.401.0229 cell

There are no perfect parents and there are no perfect children, but there are plenty of perfect moments along the way. Dave Willis

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depends on bold and decisive leadership!

Increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) offers several benefits for Alaska's education system:

1. **Improved Funding for Schools:** A higher BSA provides more resources to schools, enabling them to maintain programs, hire qualified staff, and address operational costs.
2. **Inflation:** The BSA has not kept pace with inflation over the years. Increasing it helps schools cope with rising costs and ensures sustainable funding.
3. **Preventing Cuts:** With adequate funding, schools can avoid drastic budget cuts that impact student services, extracurricular activities, and essential programs.
4. **Supporting Student Achievement:** More funding allows schools to invest in quality education, which directly benefits student learning and achievement.
5. **Recruitment and Retention:** Increased funding can help attract and retain teachers, administrators, and support staff, addressing shortages and improving education quality.

These benefits highlight the importance of advocating for a significant increase in the BSA to ensure Alaska's students receive the education they deserve. Let me know if you'd like to explore this further!

Please take a long hard look at your decision and think boldly about the importance of INVESTING and DIVESTING in education for the State of Alaska. My husband and I are successful products of the Alaska public school system with 3 of our own in elementary school at Bear Valley in Anchorage. My husbands parents are retired Alaska school teachers and it is terrifying to see such large amounts cut from our education budget.

Do in your heart what you know the right this to do.

Regards,

Larissa Aaberg

Lifelong Alaskan

Mother of 3

PTA Executive Board Member, Bear Valley Elementary

907-229-1524

Doniece Gott

From: Larissa Villar Aaberg <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2025 8:41 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Re: Increase the BSA to \$1,000

Hello Again,

As you continue have discussion about increasing the BSA \$1,000 consider these facts. When you consider cutting middle school sports these are negative impacts it will have on our community and infrastructure:

1. **Reduced Physical Activity:** Students lose opportunities to stay active, which can lead to health issues like obesity and decreased mental well-being.
2. **Decline in High School Sports Participation:** Middle school sports often serve as feeder programs for high school teams. Eliminating them can reduce the pool of skilled athletes.
3. **Loss of Social and Emotional Development:** Sports help students build teamwork, leadership, and resilience. Without these programs, students miss out on these critical life skills.
4. **Community Pride and Engagement:** School sports foster a sense of pride and unity within the community. Their absence can diminish community spirit.
5. **Financial Strain on Recreational Leagues:** Families may turn to recreational leagues, which could face increased demand and higher costs.

These impacts highlight the importance of carefully considering alternatives before cutting sports programs

Larissa

On Apr 9, 2025, at 9:51 PM, Larissa Villar Aaberg <aklarissa@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

As elected officials, you are the financial voice of our community and are to speak and made judgement in the best interest of our community.

That being said, legislature must take immediate action to approve a \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). After over a decade of stagnant funding, this increase is not optional—it is essential. The proposed \$680 increase falls far short of what is needed to maintain quality public education and uphold their constitutional obligation to all Alaskans. By increasing the BSA by \$1,000, the Anchorage School District can avoid the majority of devastating cuts included in the new budget. The time to act is now. The future of Alaska's students depends on bold and decisive leadership!

Doniece Gott

From: Alyssa Nielsen <alyssanielsen22@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 2:17 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education bill

Dear Senators,

Please pass HB69 quickly and with at least a \$1000 permanent increase to the BSA and nothing less. While we all understand that the budget is tight, education needs to be the first priority. Every child in Alaska deserves a quality education. Please pass this quickly so our schools and teachers have the resources they need. I urge you to support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

Sincerely,

Alyssa Nielsen
Mother of 2 in ASD

Doniece Gott

From: Jamie Kirkpatrick <ols11006@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 8:51 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Senate Finance Committee

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to you today as a concerned constituent and parent to respectfully request your support in hearing and moving forward with a \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). I hope I am not too late in sending this request.

While I understand and appreciate the ongoing concerns regarding the state's budget deficit, I firmly believe that education should be the paramount priority for our state's resources. Investing in the education of our children is not merely an expenditure, but a crucial investment in the future prosperity and well-being of Alaska. As the saying goes, states that fail to educate and invest in their future leaders, ultimately fail themselves.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed a concerning trend of teachers leaving our state. This exodus is often a direct consequence of the uncertainty surrounding education funding and the erosion of their pay and benefits. The loss of experienced and dedicated educators has a direct and negative impact on the quality of education our students receive.

Increasing the BSA by \$1000 would represent a significant step towards stabilizing our education system, retaining our valuable teachers, and ensuring that all Alaskan students have access to the resources they need to succeed. This investment will not only benefit our students but also strengthen our communities and our state as a whole in the long term.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. I urge you to prioritize the future of Alaska by supporting this crucial increase to the BSA. I look forward to hearing about the progress of this bill.

Sincerely,

Jamie Kirkpatrick

Doniece Gott

From: Theresa Bounassi <tbounassi@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: \$1000 BSA intact!

To whom it may concern:

I am emailing you as an Alaskan resident and a voting member of the public to keep the BSA at \$1000.

The students of our state deserve a quality education. How can you do that with any less funds? You can't.
You get what you pay for!

Thank you,

Theresa Bounassi
16643 Waterford Pointe Circle
Anchorage, AK 99516

Sent from the future

Doniece Gott

From: Katie Rohrs <katie.e.rohrs@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB69

Good evening, I am writing to you this evening to encourage you to pass HB69 with a \$1,000 BSA in tact. This proposed increase of \$680 is a cut to education and does nothing to put our students on a path for success. Sincerely, Katie Rohrs Bear Valley Elementary (Anchorage) mother of 3 and PTA President

Doniece Gott

From: Erica Rose <rose.ericallynn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please vote to fund HB 69

To the Senate Finance Committee,

I implore you, please do whatever you can to fully support HB 69 and increase the BSA by \$1000. I believe that it is evident by the way Alaska voters have showed up en masse that this is a fundamentally important bill, widely supported and desperately needed.

I am hoping and praying that at the meeting tomorrow we will have a unanimous decision to support our schools and our students in this very tangible way. The future of public education in our city and state is at stake.

Sincerely,

Erica Rose

ASD parent x3

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Josh Corbett <joshuacorbett@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:53 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Support HB69!

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am a parent of a first grade student at Chugach Optional School within the Anchorage School District. Chugach Optional is a high-achieving alternative public school of choice, and we are currently facing the loss of teachers and our librarian, which will threaten our entire program. Please support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

Thank you for your consideration, sincerely,

Joshua Corbett

Joshua Corbett
www.joshuacorbett.com
(202) 615-8844

Doniece Gott

From: Molly Caskey <mjcaskey7@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Chugach Optional

I am a parent of a student at Chugach Optional School within the Anchorage School District. Chugach Optional is a high-achieving alternative public school of choice, and we are currently facing the loss of teachers and our librarian, which will threaten our entire program. Please support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

-Molly Caskey

Doniece Gott

From: Renee Cox <coxreneem907@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for HB69

PLEASE provide a minimum \$1,000 increase to the BSA. The future of Alaska depends on it... our students and educators are worth it and deserve it! Taking away programs and increasing class sizes will not have positive impact on student outcomes.

Renee Cox

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Renee Cox <coxreneem907@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for HB69

PLEASE provide a minimum \$1,000 increase to the BSA. The future of Alaska depends on it... our students and educators are worth it and deserve it! Taking away programs and increasing class sizes will not have positive impact on student outcomes.

Renee Cox

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Clara Underwood <cunderwood001@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 69

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a parent of a student at Chugach Optional School within the Anchorage School District. Chugach Optional is a high-achieving alternative public school of choice, and we are currently facing the loss of teachers and our librarian, which will threaten our entire program. Please support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

***Yours Sincerely,
Clara Underwood***

Doniece Gott

From: Lindsey Meyers <lindseymeyers2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Budget

I am a parent of students at Chugach Optional School within the Anchorage School District. Chugach Optional is a high-achieving alternative public school of choice, and we are currently facing the loss of teachers and our librarian, which will threaten our entire program. Please support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

***Sincerely,
Lindsey Meyers***

Doniece Gott

From: Jana Seaman <seamanj@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB69

To whom it may concern:

I am a parent of three kids in the ASS. I am emailing to let you know I support the HB 69 and am asking for a \$1000 increase to the BSA.

Thank you,

Jana Seaman

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Kasey Michell <kcmichell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:50 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA please

I am a parent of students at Chugach Optional School within the Anchorage School District. Chugach Optional is a high-achieving alternative public school of choice, and we are currently facing the loss of teachers and our librarian, which will threaten our entire program. Please support the current version of HB 69, which includes common-sense reforms and includes major compromises. Do not settle for less than \$1,000 BSA!

Sent from my iPhone

Earl E. Krygier
12840 Johns Road
Anchorage, AK 99515

April 9, 2025

Senate Finance Committee
Alaska Legislature
State Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge your support for the passage of HB 69, a critical measure to address the chronic underfunding of public education in Alaska. For over a decade, school funding has been either flat or insufficient to meet the growing needs of our students and educators. This has placed an undue strain on our schools, compromising their ability to provide the quality education that is constitutionally mandated for every Alaskan child.

The Base Student Allocation (BSA) must be increased by a minimum of \$1,000 per student to even begin to meet the basic requirements of a robust public education system. This adjustment is not a luxury—it is a necessity to ensure that our schools can offer the resources, programs, and support that our children need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world.

As our elected representatives, you bear both a public obligation and a moral duty to prioritize the future of Alaska's youth. Investing in education is not merely an expenditure; it is a commitment to the prosperity and well-being of our state for generations to come.

I implore you to act decisively and pass HB 69. The time to invest in our children's future is now.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Earl E. Krygier

Doniece Gott

From: Christy Everett <followingelias@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:48 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support Alaska's children

We have an obligation to educate the children of Alaska, please increase funding to public education and raise the BSA by at least \$1,000. Thank you!

Christy Jordan

--

Doniece Gott

From: Lisa Earnhart <lisaearnhart8@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Dear Members,

I urge you to quickly pass a BSA of at least a \$1000 increase. As an educator I can tell you our situation is dire. The proposed cuts to staffing, thus increasing class sizes will be detrimental to our children. Our state wants to see progress in our students' reading and math scores but cutting funding will only hinder us in achieving that goal. As an Alaskan I would gladly give up an annual permanent fund check in order to properly fund education. Our children are our future!

Thank you,
Lisa Earnhart

Doniece Gott

From: Anjali Madeira <anjalimadeira@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fund a \$1000 BSA increase in HB69

Dear Senators,

Please pass HB 69 quickly and with at least a \$1,000 permanent increase to the BSA. A \$680 increase IS NOT ENOUGH.

I'm the parent of 2 children attending school in the Anchorage School District and a little one who will be starting kindergarten next year. Both my 1st and 4th grader have attended the Spanish Immersion program at Government Hill Elementary as well as the Highly Gifted Program at Rogers Park Elementary. These special programs have been essential to stimulating their growth, curiosity, and learning, but they are suffering in large part due to the woefully inadequate education funding. Last year, the highly gifted program lost 78% of its teaching staff. Most of these teachers left because they simply did not have the support they needed from ASD to do their jobs well.

This year, a group of dedicated parents, including myself formed a science fair planning committee at Rogers Park Elementary School, but according to district rules, we needed a teacher sponsor to plan and carry out the fair. We had to ask 5 teachers at the school before we found one open to sponsoring the science fair. This was not for lack of passion and desire to support a science fair, but rather due to burnout. Large class sizes, lack of subs, and inadequate teacher staffing are largely to blame for this burnout. My daughter's 4th grade class has 32 students. She came home one day recently to report her teacher was absent and there was no sub available, so her class was divided into groups of 3-6 students and dispersed across all other classrooms at the school. Imagine. 4th graders were sent to younger grade classrooms to work quietly in a corner without the guidance of an educator. This is not the school's fault. This is a symptom of the larger funding crisis.

Currently Alaska ranks as nearly the worst place in the US to receive a childhood education. My husband and I moved to this beautiful state over 6 years ago and like many transplants, we've stayed longer than we planned. I'm a midwife and my husband is a public defender for the State of Alaska. We are now left with the very difficult decision of if and when to leave Alaska. Our children's education (or lack thereof) is the number one reason we are leaning towards leaving the state. Failure to adequately fund education in Alaska will result in economic loss as families move out of state in search of better educational opportunities for their children. I support a minimum \$1000 BSA increase as a critical start to getting our schools, and our kids, back on track. Thank you for acting to **save Alaska's schools.** Because make no mistake, this is a sinking ship.

Thank you,

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Gregersen <laura_silliphant@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:43 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please increase the BSA by 1000. Our Alaska Children are our renewable resource - invest in their education so they take care of our lands and our state's future.

Teacher's Prayer

I want to teach my children how to live
this life on Earth.

To face its struggles and its strife and how
to improve its worth.

Not just the lesson in a book or how
the rivers flow,

But how to choose the proper path
wherever they may go.

To understand eternal truth and
know right from wrong.

And gather all the beauty of
a flower and a song.

For if I help the world to grow
in wisdom and in grace.

Then I shall feel that I have won
and I have filled my place.

And so I ask your guidance, God,
that I may do my part

For character and confidence
and happiness of heart.

Slightly modified poem by James Metcalf.

Painting inspired by my love for education, our
teachers, and our children.

Doniece Gott

From: Rachel Blakeslee <rachel.g.blakeslee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:37 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Pass a \$1K BSA increase via HB69

Good evening members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I just wrapped up a school PTA meeting, and cannot begin to convey the level of exhaustion, anxiety, frustration, fear, and worry that permeated the room tonight. Parents are losing sleep. We are looking for other jobs. We are exploring cities that have the markers of being a good "next home."

The feelings of dread are palpable. We need better from you now. We need you to give our families and teachers and communities the relief we are desperate for. **We need you to pass HB69 with a \$1K BSA increase.** Now- in this moment. Not next year, or when you feel more comfortable. And not at a \$680 level or something lower. \$1K BSA increase now. We are drowning.

You have the means to increase and diversify state revenue. There are many pathways that have already been proposed. You just need the will to do it. It is beyond time to make decisions that are forward thinking for the state. We will not continue to suffer as you deliberate and make excuses. We will leave. We are leaving.

Give us a reason to stay. \$1,000 BSA increase like the future depends on it. Because it does.

Respectfully,
Rachel Blakeslee
Senate District E
House District 9
Anchorage resident, parent, employee

Doniece Gott

From: Todd Petrie <toddjp3006@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:37 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support of \$1,000 BSA

Please support a \$1000 BSA increase for our children. I am a lifelong Alaskan resident and a product of our public schools. I am also the parent of 2 who graduated from the Anchorage School District. Supporting a \$1,000 BSA increase is imperative to the success of our children in Alaska. We can't provide for the academic needs of our students without a BSA increase.

Thank you again for supporting our public schools.

Todd Petrie
Eagle River, AK

Doniece Gott

From: ingrid McKinstry <ingamck@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:37 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for HB 69

Dear Sir:

I am writing you to let you know I am in strong support for HB 69 with the \$1000.00 increase to the SBA.

Without that support our students will not be able to receive the education they deserve.

Without your support in this, teachers will lose their jobs, programs will be cut, and class sizes will be increased. Our children deserve better.

Thank you so much for doing the right thing.

Sincerely Yours

Ingrid McKinstry

Doniece Gott

From: Maggie Gray <maggie@bhhsalaska.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:36 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA!

My kids attend Chugach Optional Elementary in downtown Anchorage and our family is imploring you to vote to increase the BSA at minimum the \$1000 needed to avoid the terrible cuts ASD is trying to enforce!

Please save our teachers and give the kids the education they deserve.

Maggie Gray

Save our schools where are you

Doniece Gott

From: Jenny Gilyard <jmgilyard@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:35 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 69

To whom it may concern,

I am a mother of three children in the Anchorage school district. We've seen so much change in the last few years, most of which have not been beneficial.

Please consider increasing the BSA to \$1,000. Our children deserve better!!

Thank you,
Jenny Gilyard

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Gregersen <laura_silliphant@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:31 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Rep. Carolyn Hall; Sen. Matt Claman
Subject: Increase BSA by 1000 and remove cell phone from school

Dear Senators,

I have been exploring for, drilling, and marketing the state of Alaska's oil and gas resources since I first arrived with Anadarko Petroleum in 2001. I have passionately worked for the state for almost 19 years with the vision that I was helping our state be excellent stewards of our lands. I did it so my sons would have a great place to grow up and go to school.

I have published multiple maps and coauthored papers in the Cook Inlet basin and north Alaska. My first research project was at UAF in 1994 in the northeast Brooks Range and I plan to present an update to my 2019 exploration drilling targets map and data base in 2 weeks. This work highlights the successful efforts of explorers and delineates the geologic oil and gas plays. The geoscientists and engineers finding and developing our oil want well funded public schools. The workforce today is next to me at track meets and band concerts. Middle school sports in Anchorage will go away without the 1000 dollar increase. Our state cannot afford the excellent scientists leaving because you won't fund our public schools.

I am happy to pay taxes and receive a smaller PFD. It is the legislatures responsibility to ensure that our public schools are properly funded. The 2025 cuts to my son's schools will be devastating.

My sons are excellent students and excellent athletes. My oldest son ran the 400 meter dash in 60 seconds as an 7th grader last year. This last week, he broke the minute barrier at practice. His educators and coaches are outstanding, and I want these programs to stay rich in knowledge and opportunity for my younger son coming up on his coattails. Please increase the BSA by 1000 dollars. Please increase revenue streams in our state. I grew up in Ohio where we pay taxes. Alaska used to have income taxes. Citizens pay for their services. Our north slope oil production is about to ramp up with Pikka coming online. Revenue is coming. Increase the BSA by 1000 dollars.

Sincerely,
Laura Gregersen
4021 Woronzof Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Jamie Grund <jamiegrund@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fw: Governor's correspondence HB69

Dear Committee Members,

In recent days I have shared correspondence between the Governor, one of his Directors, Senator Claman, Senate President Stevens, Speaker of the House Edgmon, and Brandon Locke, Ph.D. of the Anchorage School District. I invite you to read the exchanges below while enjoying a beverage of your choice. For the sake of valuable time, here's the overview.

The Governor believes it the role of the Governor and Legislature to pass adequate funding for education, and the districts roles to spend the funding appropriately for their communities. Odd how he demands reforms directing how to spend the money then, isn't it. I'm not sure how he defines "adequate" since the Base Student Allocation is so far below inflation calling even a \$1,000 increase adequate is laughable.

With that for context, answer these simple questions:

When was the last time people were happy with test scores? The 1980s? '90s? '00s?

What was the Base Student Allocation at that time? \$3K?, \$4K? \$5K?

Have the Governor and Legislature done their duty to maintain education funding with inflation?

So, be Leaders who provide for the people and fully fund education at the funding it should be at given inflation (somewhere around \$10K per student) and not just this petty \$680 or even \$1,000 more. Make education funding inflation proof moving forward.

To fund this, follow the advice of multiple economists and modernize taxes of mining, fishing, tourism, and yes, even oil & gas. Do NOT rob our PFD more nor tax the people unless absolutely necessary.

Thanks,

Jamie Grund

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Jamie Grund <jamiegrund@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 4, 2025 5:43:29 PM
To: Representative.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov <Representative.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov <Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>; Senator.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov <Senator.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>
Cc: locke_brandon@asdk12.org <locke_brandon@asdk12.org>; Smoldon, Todd D (GOV) <todd.smoldon@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: Governor's correspondence

Not to start a debate but I must rebut your first paragraph, the Governor made certain to directly call out support for Charter Schools while ignoring an existing program with decades of documented success. That doesn't happen unless his PR team is truly not good at their jobs. Instead of calling for stabilizing and growing success where it exists (immersion), he chose to call out support for a pet project (charters). Pretending that somehow, using the Governor's pulpit to espouse one program over the other, isn't eschewing support is a little disingenuous, no.

If the Governor has people like yourself with such experience involved, surely you understand that short funding every year requires school districts to make changes that will inevitably include things like increasing child-to-teacher ratios. This makes it challenging for immersion programs to continue when they can't just add students at any time. Again, blindly blaming ASD without recognizing the negativity introduced by politicians is disturbing.

I was hopeful the Governor meant what he said about funding schools, but each year it seems like it's just a game to get his desired programs backed. The Harvard study about Charter schools being referenced by the Governor was funded by the Walton Family Foundation, a group whose main philanthropic efforts are to see expansion of Charter schools throughout America. With WFF's focus on their home region, I probably shouldn't be surprised the Governor's presentations you linked below reference Mississippi as a comparison for Alaska so heavily, Mississippi being one of the home states WFF has focused on over the years.

I certainly hope that as a former educator, you are not trying to convince me that the current and former Governors and Legislators neglect to maintain BSA with inflation is acceptable public policy. The BSA of \$5,480 in 2009 compared to \$5,960 in 2025 is absurd! Everything is up 40-50% since pre-COVID. That would equate to \$8K-\$10K today, a substantially significant delta. How can we expect schools to properly budget with such poor support? You reference increased funding each year under this Governor, but again, the devil is in the details. Making districts budget based off the underfunded BSA and then come request extra funding from politicians has opened the whole process up to negative influence by those very politicians. Attaching strings to those requested dollars above the BSA is again disingenuous at best.

The Governor and Legislature refusing to raise the BSA to keep up with inflation is politics at its worst. If they were serious about "reforms" then fully fund education and begin engaging teachers and parents on what reform should look like. Create a bipartisan (or better yet, non-partisan) committee who brings together experts from across the gamut to support the programs that are currently successful like immersion while developing other and new programs like Charters in a responsible manner that limits negative or competing influence on existing successes. Some of the Governor's proposed reforms could make sense, but some are clearly aligned with special interests or are just political in nature.

I am tired of hearing that Alaska's budget issues mean we can't fund our schools, or other needed programs for that matter. When was the last time we raised taxes on the mining industry? Fishing industry? Tourism? I know we can't always go to the oil trough, but for education a true Leader of a Governor would gladly take it up with the oil companies. What wonderful PR for O&G companies if they stand against Alaskans raising money for education! Why don't we have a manufacturing sector in Alaska but instead simply a resource development sector? There are plenty of ways to fund schools without taxing the public, but heck even taxes could be considered. This is what the Governor and Legislators should be doing to fund education, not using funding as a crutch to lean on so they don't have to be real leaders, or a stick to force changes that one party or the other desires.

with community members, are responsible for prioritizing how funds are spent. Your local school board has made the decision to not support immersion programs in the ASD, not the Governor.

When discussing funding, it is important to understand that total funding has increased every year that the Governor has approved a budget. Additionally, Alaska spends significantly more per student than many other states. The Governor has stated many times publicly that he supports an increase in funding, but he also believes that we need statewide reforms to improve results.

I understand that some people believe that HB69 is the correct path forward for education funding, but it doesn't look like there is legislative support to pass the bill. This is mostly due to the cost of the legislation. It is estimated that HB69 will cost 1.4 billion dollars over the next 3 years. The state currently has a 1.5-billion-dollar deficit. Based on our current fiscal constraints, a majority of the legislature and the Governor do not believe that HB69 is fiscally responsible or sustainable. Additionally, the Governor will not support additional funding without reforms.

If you would like to learn more about the Governor's legislation, please go to this link: [Governor Dunleavy Introduces Education Reform Legislation - Mike Dunleavy](#)

For more information about the Governor's education reform ideas and to see how Alaskans feel about them, please check out the information here: [Education Reform - Mike Dunleavy](#)

Feel free to reach out to me directly if you have additional questions or concerns. I hope that the Legislature passes legislation that includes both funding and reforms so that there is additional funding for next year.

Todd Smoldon
Director, Matsu Office of Governor Dunleavy
907-761-5691



Doniece Gott

From: Matthew Blakeslee <m.w.blakeslee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Maintain the \$1000 BSA Increase in HB 69 — Our Kids Deserve It
Attachments: Add.png

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I'm writing to urge you to keep the \$1000 Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase in HB 69. Anything less is effectively a cut to education — and our schools, students, and communities simply cannot afford that.

We are already seeing the consequences of chronic underfunding: larger class sizes, fewer support staff, poor academic results, and educators leaving the profession or the state altogether. Many of us are now receiving ads encouraging us to move *out* of Alaska — a painful reminder that families and professionals are actively weighing whether to stay. Please see the attached image as just one example.

We love this state. But if the legislature continues to shortchange public education, the message to families and educators is clear — Alaska is no longer investing in its future. The time to act is now.

Please, do what's right for our kids and communities. Keep the \$1000 BSA increase in HB 69. At a minimum, that level of support is necessary just to stabilize what we already have. Anything less would be a step backwards.

Thank you for your time and your service.

-Matt Blakeslee, CPG (Anchorage, Senate District E)

Doniece Gott

From: Adrian Furman, MD <adrianfurmanmd@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 69

Dear Senators,

Please pass HB 69 quickly and with at least a \$1,000 permanent increase to the BSA. While we all understand that the budget is tight, education should be the first priority for spending. My children (and every other child in Alaska) deserve a quality education. Please pass HB 69 quickly so our schools and teachers have the resources that they need the highest quality education opportunities across the state of Alaska.

Thank you!

**Adrian Furman, MD
LaTouche Pediatrics**

Doniece Gott

From: Evelyn Carlson <evelyn.carlson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2025 8:27 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please pass HB69 with a \$1,000 BSA in tact

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to request your support in passing HB69 with a \$1,000 BSA in tact. I also encourage you to consider diversifying our state revenue sources, including introducing taxes to fund education, social and health systems adequately.

Thank you,
Evelyn Carlson
Anchorage, AK