

From: [Larissa Villar Aaberg](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Re: Increase the BSA to \$1,000
Date: Thursday, April 10, 2025 8:41:10 PM

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

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Gregersen <laura_silliphant@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 5:59 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please fund schools this session

Dear Senate finance committee:

> Please increase BSA this session. 700 increase to BSA is good. No cell phone is good. Please add a line item to get this year's funding up to 1000 dollars per student. Critical school teachers and programs cannot get cut. My sons are excellent students with terrific educators!

>

> I am attending a conference this week and parents are considering leaving because of school funding issues. You have to get this right. We cannot lose these petroleum industry professionals. We need them to get the oil and gas out of the ground.

> The oil and gas workforce have families in public schools.

> Sincerely,

> Laura Gregersen

> Sent from my iPhone



LOWER YUKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 32089 · Mountain Village, Alaska 99632

Phone: (907) 591-2411

www.lysd.org

George Smith
Chairman

John Hargis
Superintendent

April 6, 2025

Subject: Urgent Call to Action: Support HB69 for Enhanced Educational Outcomes in Alaska

Dear Senator Olson and Esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As an ardent advocate for the educational success of Alaska's students, particularly those in our most isolated and rural communities, I urge your strong support for House Bill 69 (HB69). This bill is a pivotal opportunity to adjust the Base Student Allocation (BSA), ensuring that funding is predictable and sustainable and reflective of the real-time needs impacting our students' daily learning experiences.

Our school districts have consistently faced severe financial challenges, further exacerbated by inconsistent funding streams. This ongoing uncertainty has forced many schools into untenable positions, cutting crucial educational programs, increasing student-to-teacher ratios, and eliminating vital extracurricular activities. These reductions directly undermine the quality of education we can offer and impede our ability to attract and retain the talented educators crucial to our students' success.

Currently, our district is grappling with a daunting \$9 million budget shortfall, projecting a scenario without one-time funding allocations. This stark financial predicament underscores the urgency for increased support. A proposed BSA increase of \$680 would significantly alleviate this burden, reducing our deficit to \$3.5 million and curbing the need for deep educational cuts. An adjustment to \$850 would further decrease the shortfall to \$2 million, providing some flexibility to adapt and plan proactively. However, a more robust increase of \$1,000 in the BSA is essential; it would minimize impacts on our current programs and allow our educators to focus entirely on fostering environments conducive to teaching and learning.

Despite our best efforts to maximize every resource through the absorption of several positions and restructuring our classified staff, the rising costs in utilities, staffing, transportation, and healthcare, compounded by inflation, continue to strain our budget. These increasing expenses, reflecting broader economic trends, highlight the critical need to reassess the BSA. Over the past decade, as costs have risen, funding has not kept pace, making it increasingly challenging to sustain the high educational quality and operations our communities deserve.

Our recent district achievements further illustrate the effectiveness of targeted educational investment. Over the past two years, we have seen a 3.5% increase in our 4-year graduation rate and an 8% increase in our 5-year rate. Last year, nearly 60% of our K-5 students met or exceeded their growth goals in literacy and math, with four out of seven grade levels surpassing national growth norms in early literacy. These accomplishments are a testament to the exceptional quality of our classified staff and the creativity of our teachers, who are committed to crafting effective educational solutions. Our students attend school filled with hope and good humor, contributing to a vibrant learning environment that is supportive and conducive to progress.



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However, despite these encouraging trends, the challenge remains that our students often appear to be below grade level when assessed against national norms. This discrepancy raises significant questions about our long-term educational strategies and the resources necessary to support them. As we envision where we want our communities and students to be in the next 5 to 10 years, aligning our educational practices with this vision is crucial. We are poised to make necessary changes to ensure our students are competitive in the 21st century, but continual budget cuts and financial constraints severely limit our capacity for innovation.

I appreciate your commitment to our state's educational system and implore you to support the passage of HB69. By doing so, you will make a decisive investment in our communities' future and ensure that our educational system can focus on teaching and learning, helping our students meet and exceed the expectations set before them.

Thank you for considering this crucial legislation and for your continued dedication to the welfare of Alaska's students.

I also encourage you to read the opening letter from our spring family newsletter, written by our board chair, George Smith. Chairman Smith's letter uses the metaphor of a turtle on a fence post to describe the current state of Alaska's public school funding formula. Originally established under Senate Bill 36 in 1998, the funding formula has seen only a minor increase of about 5% in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) from 2011 to 2024, despite a roughly 30% inflation rate during the same period. This discrepancy highlights the outdated nature of the formula, influenced by past political decisions rather than current economic realities. The letter argues that, much like the turtle that didn't get to the top of the fence post, the funding formula is placed and maintained in its current state by external forces, namely outdated policies and political backroom dealings. Chairman Smith calls for revising the funding formula to make it fair and equitable, advocating for an annual adjustment of the BSA to account for inflation and need, not political influence. This change is presented as necessary to honor the intentions of Alaska's founding fathers, who established education systems that allowed children to remain local for their schooling. The legislative session is an opportunity to correct this issue, hoping the legislature will recognize the inequity and vote for an updated, fair formula.

Thank you for your dedication to the welfare of Alaska's students. I implore you to support the passage of HB69, making a decisive investment in the future of our communities and ensuring our educational system can prioritize high-quality teaching and learning. I also invite you to read our board chair's insightful letter in our spring family newsletter, which eloquently parallels our current challenges with a vivid metaphor that underscores the urgent need for reform. Please find the letter attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Time to Act – A Message from the RSB Chairman

If you are walking along a fence and spot a turtle sitting atop a fence post, you know the turtle didn't get there by itself. The State of Alaska Education Funding Formula is like that—someone put them there.

The current Alaska public school funding formula was adopted under Senate Bill 36 in 1998 and is defined in Alaska Statute 14.17, State Aid to Public Schools.

From 2011 to 2024, inflation has risen by approximately 30%, while the Base Student Allocation (BSA) has increased by only about 5%. It has remained flat for a long time while inflation and the costs of education and operations have risen.

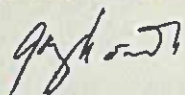
Today's BSA reflects the backroom politics of a previous generation and has not been adjusted for inflation.

A turtle temporarily elevated on a fence post needs to return to its humble roots. We must remember the quarry from which we were dug—the strong determination of our founding fathers, who paved the way for our children to remain home and receive their high school education and helped create the REAA program as a solution.

When you see a turtle on a fence post, the right thing to do is set it back on the ground. You don't just stare at it, expecting it to escape the predicament alone. It's the same with the education funding formula. With the current administration, we can't just sit and stare in silence, and it is unreasonable for the state legislature to stand by and expect the program to fix itself. We must demand that the Alaska legislature take that turtle off the fence post and make the BSA fair and equitable, adjusted for inflation.

The legislature should adopt a BSA formula that adjusts for inflation annually.

This legislative session has the chance to take the turtle off the fence post and fix the BSA formula. Hopefully, when the House and Senate take up the bill, they will recognize the inequity in the program and vote to adopt a formula that allocates the BSA, adjusted for inflation and need, not political influence.



George Smith
Chairman of the Board



George Smith



Max Aagyar



Christine Teganlakla



Fred Beans



Sheila Minock



Edgar Hoelscher



Fred Lamont



Doug Redfox



Caroline Ulak



Esther Brown



Tungwenuk Family Oupak Design, used with permission

KAWERAK, INC. April 3, 2025

REPRESENTING

Brevig Mission

Sitaisaq

Council

Akauchak

Diomedea

Ingalik

Elim

Neviarcuratluq

Gambell

Sivunaaq

Golovin

Chinik

King Island

Ugiuvak

Koyuk

Kuuyuk

Mary's Igloo

Iglaaruk

Nome Eskimo

Sitnasuami Inuit

Savoonga

Sivungaaq

Shaktoolik

Saktuliq

Shishmaref

Kigiqtak

Solomon

Anuutaq

St. Michael

Taciq

Stebbins

Tapraq

Teller

Tupqaqruk

Unalakleet

Uqalaqliq

Wales

Kinigin

White Mountain

Natchigvik

Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy
3rd Floor, State Capitol
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

Kawerak, Inc. is a nonprofit tribal consortium that provides over 30 different programs to the Inupiaq, St. Lawrence Island Yupik and Yupik people who reside in 16 communities of western Alaska and represents the 20 federally recognized tribes in the Bering Straits region. The Kawerak Board of Directors is comprised of the Tribe's President or representative.

The region 2023 Nome census area population is roughly 9,628, with one-third of the population under 18 years of age. More than half of households (54%) in the region include children younger than 18 years of age, compared to 33% statewide. In some communities, a much larger proportion of households include children: 77% in Savoonga, 78% in Brevig Mission, and 80% in St. Michael.

Within the Bering Strait region there are two school districts: Bering Straits School District (BSSD) and Nome Public Schools (NPS). For the FY' 26 school year, BSSD anticipates a budget shortfall of \$8-\$10 million and NPS anticipates a \$2.25 million shortfall.

The mission of Kawerak is *To advance the capacity of our people and our Tribes for the benefit of the region.* Education has been a strategic priority area of the Board for many years and is an important avenue to ensure the success of our people.

Therefore, the Kawerak Board of Directors strongly support:

- An increase to the Base Student Allocation(BSA). Keeping a \$1,000 increase to the BSA will allow both school districts to better support staffing levels. Without an increase to the BSA, NPS would have to cut personnel in classrooms. With a \$8-\$10 million shortfall for BSSD, the Kawerak Board anticipates potential cuts to personnel, classroom aides/supports, extracurricular activities, staff training and travel would have to take place (areas important to student success).
- An increase to the BSA, will allow school districts to continue to support children and families served by each district and to maintain the positive gains that have been made with math, reading and language scores.
- Having adequately funded schools is significant to recruiting qualified professionals to meet the needs of our communities and students. NPS hired five

KAWERAK, INC.

PO Box 948 • Nome Alaska 99762 • 907.443.5231 • www.kawerak.org

Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.

international teachers in 2023-24 to address teacher shortages, and one-third of the BSSD staff are from the Philippines. The 2023-24 school year was the first in which NPS sought international teachers, whereas BSSD began hiring internationally in 2020.

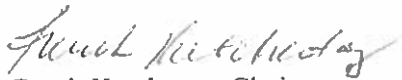
- Funding for education must keep pace with inflation. Each year districts are having to make difficult budget decisions. The cost to provide education is increasing and the BSA must keep pace with these rising costs.

The Kawerak Full Board of Directors urges a minimum increase of \$1,000 to the BSA. The increase to the BSA will provide school districts and professional staff and teachers with a sense of stability, allowing them to focus on what is important – educating our children. Our schools play a critically important role to our communities, and in many instances is the heart of the community.

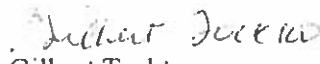
Thank you for your public service and attention to this important issue.

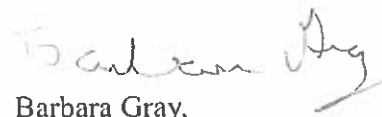
Sincerely,


KAWERAK, INC.


Frank Katchatag, Chairman
Native Village of Unalakleet


Melanie Bahnke, President



Gilbert Tocktoo,
Native Village of Brevig Mission


Barbara Gray,
Native Village of Council



Robert Keith,
Native Village of Elim


Jill Campbell,
Native Village of Gambell


Martin Aukongak,
Chinik Eskimo Community


Lola Hannon,
Native Village of Koyuk


Lucy Oquilluk,
Mary's Igloo Traditional Council



Dawn Wamke,
Nome Eskimo Community


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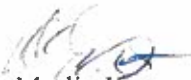

Benjamin Bungowiya,
Native Village of Savoonga

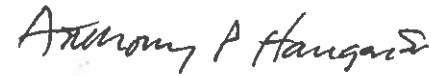

Nancy Kokeok,
Native Village of Shishmaref


Agatha Foxie,
Stebbins Community Association


Robert Tokeinna Jr.,
Native Village of Wales


Rebecca Ozenna,
Native Village of Diomede



Merlin Koonooka, Elder Representative
Gambell


Anthony Haugan, Representative,
Norton Sound Health Corporation


Matilda Hardy,
Native Village of Shaktoolik


Kirsten Timbers,
Native Village of Solomon


Charlene Kobuk,
Native Village of St. Michael


Katya Gray,
Native Village of White Mountain


Jerry Okbaok,
Native Village of Teller


Charlie Fitka Jr., Elder Representative
St. Michael

Cc: Chief of Staff: Tyson.Gallagher@alaska.gov;
Legislative Director: Jordan.Shilling@alaska.gov

Senator.Donald.Olson@akleg.gov

Representative.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov

Senate.Education@akleg.gov

Senate.Finance.Committee@akleg.gov

senator.gary.stevens@akleg.gov

representative.bryce.edgmon@akleg.gov

Lobbyist: Jordan Marshall <jm@jordanmarshallalaska.com>

Kawerak Board of Directors

Bering Strait School District

Nome Public Schools

KAWERAK, INC.

PO Box 948 • Nome Alaska 99762 • 907.443.5231 • www.kawerak.org

Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.

From: [Marilyn Menish-Meucci](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: school funding
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 10:46:32 AM

Hello, my name is Marilyn Menish-Meucci and I live in Petersburg. I am asking you to pass HB 69 and increase the BSA by \$1000!! Right now our district is on a bare bones budget and the senate proposal of \$680 is too low and will force our district into deficit spending. Now is the time to step up and give the funding our constitution demands. You cannot kick this down the road anymore.

I know you are concerned about the state budget. I support you passing SB 112 (which will reduce oil tax credits), SB 113 (which will collect income tax on outside business and SB 92 (which will eliminate the oil tax loophole) . Also you need to support SB 109 (for a sustainable PFD formula).

Thank you,
Marilyn Menish-Meucci

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Katy Ruff Soden](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 8:12:55 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee members,

I am an Anchorage voter and public school parent writing in support of the bill to raise the BSA. An increase of at least \$1000 is needed. I have an 8-year old in a mixed grade 2/3 class with 30 students. I have a 9-year old in a mixed grade 4/5 class with 31 students. Despite having great teachers who are doing their best, there are simply too many kids in the class to allow for meaningful educational growth for all students. An increase to the BSA is needed to keep class sizes at this level or, ideally, smaller.

Thank you for your consideration.
Katy Soden

From: [jill.kisaka](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for House Bill 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:05:45 PM

Dear Representative,

I am writing as a concerned parent with three children attending the Sitka School District. I urge you to support House Bill 69, which seeks to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,000. The current funding levels have been devastating to our district, the teachers, the staff and our community.

Since the last BSA increase in 2017, our district has been struggling to provide a high-quality education. We are seeing talented, dedicated teachers leave for other states with more competitive salaries and a lower cost of living. Many families are being forced to make difficult decisions about whether they can continue to live and raise their children in Sitka or even stay in Alaska. The teachers who remain are stretched beyond their limits, often working extra hours, using personal funds for the classroom and juggling multiple roles to make up for the lack of resources. I fear that if this trend continues, we will lose even more teachers, and the burnout will only intensify.

My children's education is being directly impacted. Larger class sizes, limited resources, and the loss of valuable extracurricular opportunities are just a few of the consequences we face daily. As a parent, it is heartbreaking to see the potential of our students stifled because the funding is not there to support them.

Increasing the BSA is not just a temporary fix—it's a long-term investment in the future of our students. I strongly urge you to support this bill, not only to preserve the quality of education in Alaska but to ensure that the Sitka School District can retain quality educators and offer students the opportunities they deserve.

The current funding situation is not sustainable, and without permanent increases to the BSA, we risk undermining the future of our children and our communities. Please take action now to secure a better future for all of Alaska's students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Kisaka

[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

[REDACTED]

From: [D.L.](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 12:51:24 PM

Dear Senate Finance Committee

I am writing in full support of HB 69 and encourage you to keep the BSA raise of at least \$1000. Our education system has leaned into "school choice" and it has failed us. School choice has left the Fairbanks school district with the "choice" of which 5 elementary schools to close just after we got to "choose" which schools to close the past year. Charter schools and home school programs are a luxury. Those luxuries have choked our public schools. Our most vulnerable students, our poorest kids, our special needs children do not have a choice of where they go to school. They need their public schools and we have failed them because we have not funded their schools. Our luxury school choices get to pick who attends those schools. Our public schools welcome all. My kid doesn't have an Art teacher at his K-5 school, neither do any of the other public schools in Fairbanks. Meanwhile, we have charter schools that get that. We have home school students that get even more than that. They get private dance lessons and horseback riding lessons. Why has such inequity occurred? Because of school choice. The rich have gotten richer while we leave the poorest behind.

I implore you to raise the BSA. I am also strongly supportive of more accountability in our education system by requiring testing for home school students that receive state funds. I would encourage you to go further and limit home school allotments to core curriculum like math, science, history, and English. Our state funds should not be used to subsidize horseback riding lessons, private dance lessons, or overseas trips. If it's not available to our brick and mortar students, why should it be available to our home school students.

Put our public schools first. They are the most important tool we have in our community. School choice is harming our schools. It is harming our communities. Fund our public schools and reform school choice so our public schools aren't left with more terrible choices to make.

Sincerely

Don Larson

Father of 3 children, 1 currently in elementary school.

From: [Kat Morin](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69 - School Funding Bill
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 12:40:43 PM

Esteemed Members of the Finance Committee,

As a parent of a school-age child in Alaska, I support a \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation. It is our responsibility to our kids and our state's future to keep up with inflation and anything less than a \$1000 increase falls short. I strongly support Alaska kids and our public schools and I hope you will too.

Thank you!

Kat Morin
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99501
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Lisa Busch](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: support education funding at the \$1000 increase
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 12:20:15 PM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I urge you to support the education funding bill - have a hearing on it in the senate finance committee and vote in favor of it. There is nothing more important than education. And you have the courage to support what is right and good about Alaska right now. As a woman of science, I've seen first hand the value that positive learning environments, good teachers and reliable school funding. With your support we can educate a new generation of Alaskans who will innovate, think critically and solve the BIG issues of today and tomorrow.

Please,
Lisa Busch

--

Lisa Busch

Sitka, Alaska



Ask questions, think critically and validate

From: [Betty Richter](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#)
Cc: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 11:58:34 AM

Dear Senator Stedman and Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 69, which proposes a \$1000 increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for school funding. As a teacher at Sitka High School, parent and advocate for public education, I believe this bill is crucial for the future of our schools, communities, and youth.

Public education in Sitka and across the state has faced significant budget cuts, severely impacting the quality of education our students receive. My twin children in grade 7 at Blatchley Middle School do not have the option to take an art class and now our district is looking to make even more cuts. HB 69 represents a vital step towards achieving this goal.

I respectfully request that you schedule a hearing for HB 69 in Senate Finance and move forward with the proposed BSA increase. Our schools are in desperate need of this funding to ensure that every student has access to quality education and the resources they need to succeed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I urge you to consider the positive impact that passing HB 69 will have on our schools and communities.

Sincerely,

Betty Richter

Doniece Gott

From: Susan Compagno <susancompagno2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 03, 2025 11:46 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Sitka School District

Senate Finance Committee

I am writing as a concerned parent of two children in the Sitka School District. I am concerned about the continued cuts to our school affecting our teachers and school programs. We are unable to retain our teachers and we are unable to hire good teachers as our salaries and retirement packages do not offer incentives to come to our state. We continue to put education as a low priority and I am encouraging you to make education a top priority . Please pass the bills and finance our schools as they should be, we owe it to our future to invest in our children today.

Thank you for your service

Susan Compagno and Robert Calhoun

Sitka AK

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Judith Phillips](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FUND PUBLIC EDUCATION
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 11:05:01 AM

Dear Senators,

We can no longer excuse or ignore the dismal state of public education in Alaska. I don't believe that increasing funding will solve all our problems, but we have got to fund our ailing schools, provide a decent benefit package for our teachers, and provide proper ongoing training to teachers so they can be at the top of their teaching game. As a retired teacher, I understand the value of good mentoring and continuing education. My teaching improved from the district sponsored classes I was able to take, the programs like Alaska Tsunami Education Project (ATEP), and Science Teacher Education Project (STEP). Please continue to fund our public schools. HB69 has passed the house, please pass it in the Senate.

Thanks for your continued service,

Judy Phillips
Kodiak, AK

From: [jeff budd](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: School Bill
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 11:05:00 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee, To my thinking, the school bill is most critical. How can we get out of the mess we are heading for and are already in if we do not have educated students. Thank you. Cheers, Jeff Budd

From: [mtrotter](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please save our Schools and education for Alaskans
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:09:05 PM

Dear Alaska Senate Finance Committee ,

I am reaching out to you today to please help save the Alaska education system and I am begging for your support of HB69, which would raise the BSA by \$1,000.

We do appreciate the concern for the deficit, education should be the **first call** - not the last - on our state's resources. States that fail to educate and invest in their future leaders, fail.

I have witnessed & watched friends and neighbors leave the state, frustrated with the declining support for schools and anxious about the real or threatened loss of beloved schools and programs. We have also watched an exodus of teachers who have lost their jobs or are voting with their feet due to uncertainty and erosion of pay and benefits.

We truly believe that we are at a breaking point. For example in Ketchikan, the superintendent and school board chair, and another school board member resigned in the past month amidst distress over budget cuts.

Our schools are not failing, they are starving. Alaska has a low debt burden, no broad-based taxes, and a massive sovereign wealth fund. There is no reason to starve our schools and deprive our kids of opportunity.

Thank you for all you do for the communities and education of Alaska schools, we so appreciate this and you

With Respect & Grace
Mike
Mike and Sally Trotter
BARANOF WILDERNESS LODGE

[REDACTED]
Sitka, Alaska 99835
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Melinda Shore](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Base Student Allocation
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:08:59 PM

Hi -

I'm a Two Rivers resident, where we've recently seen our school closed. Although I don't have children, I am a strong supporter of increasing the Base Student Allocation by \$1000, to keep up with inflation. Alaska's future depends on educating our kids.

Melinda Shore
[REDACTED]
Two Rivers, AK 99716
[REDACTED]

--

Melinda Shore
melinda.shore@gmail.com

Software longa, hardware brevis

From: emmcdonald28@gmail.com
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for HB69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:24:28 PM

> Good Evening Senate Finance Committee.

>

> I am writing to urge you to support HB69 and an increase in the base student allocation of no less than \$1,000. The inflationary cuts to our school budgets have gone on for too long. I am the mother of a three year old and I am very concerned about what the state of our schools will be by the time he is ready for kindergarten. should the current trajectory continue. Investing in public education is an investment in the future of our state.

>

> Best,

> Erin Clay

>

> [REDACTED]
> Sitka, AK

> 99835

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Nancy bERG](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Sb 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:10:30 PM

Good afternoon

I am a constituent in Petersburg Alaska requesting that you match the bsa from hb69 of 1000. This would bring much needed relief to our school district who has been cutting to maintain a balanced budget over the last several years. More cuts would mean higher classroom sizes and losing teachers

The revenue needed for this could come from for instance sb 112 that could raise from 100 million to 300 million in revenue from oil companies

Let's not hurt our children and teachers who are doing so well with the children here

Nancy Berg
[REDACTED]
Petersburg ak

From: [Jenny Ballif](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: School funding
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 8:09:27 AM

Hello,
I'm writing to urge you to support an increase to the BSA. Education is essential to our community's well being. Anything less than a \$1,000 increase won't keep up with inflation. Please support Alaska kids and public schools.

Sincerely,
Jenny Ballif

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

--

Jenny Ballif

Science Mom | www.science.mom

jenny@science.mom



From: [Tiffany Pearson](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Mindy Barry](#)
Subject: Addressing the funding crisis in Alaska
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 8:02:32 AM

Dear Senator Stedman and Members of the Finance Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to you as a concerned member of our community, deeply invested in the future of our schools and the education of our children. Our educational system is not merely a pillar of our community; it is the foundation upon which our future leaders and innovators are built. As we watch our friends and neighbors express their frustration and leave the state in search of better educational opportunities, it becomes increasingly clear that we are at a crossroads.

While we understand and appreciate your concerns regarding the state's budget deficit, I urge you to consider that education should not be the last priority for our state's resources; it should be our first. States that neglect to invest in education inevitably fail to secure a prosperous future for their citizens. We cannot afford to allow our beloved schools and vital programs to fall by the wayside.

The Sitka School District has experienced an alarming 31% loss of classroom teachers since 2014, with 19% of that loss occurring just last year. This exodus of dedicated educators is a grim reflection of the uncertainties surrounding funding and support. Our teachers, who are the backbone of our educational community, are leaving, either due to job loss or disillusionment caused by diminishing pay and benefits. If the current trend persists, we risk reaching a breaking point where our educational quality is compromised, to the detriment of our children's future.

It is also crucial to recognize that our schools are not failing—they are starving. As the cost of living and inflation has increased by 28% since 2014, the Base Student Allocation (BSA) has only grown by a mere 5%. This discrepancy leaves our schools with a significant funding shortfall. To uphold even the status quo in staffing, we require an additional \$1,460 to the BSA. The proposed increase of \$680 will not suffice, and we are left with unanswered questions about our children's educational experience.

We are at a pivotal point in time, and I cannot emphasize enough the urgency of addressing these funding challenges. Alaska is uniquely positioned, with a low debt burden, no broad-based taxes, and a sizable sovereign wealth fund. We have the resources to ensure that our schools are well-funded and equipped to provide every child with the opportunities they deserve.

In conclusion, I ask you and the Finance Committee to prioritize increased funding for education in Alaska. The students of Sitka and the entire state depend on your

commitment to investing in their future. Together, let's ensure that no child in Alaska is deprived of a quality education.

Thank you for your attention to this vital matter. I appreciate your service to our community and your dedication to building a brighter future for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Pearson

[REDACTED]

Sitka, Ak 99835

[REDACTED]

--

Tiffany Pearson

Sitka Weddings and Events

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

From: [Susan Brandt-Ferguson](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 9:32:10 PM

Dear Senator Stedman and Senate Finance Committee,

I am in my 31st year of teaching music, my 29th in Sitka. The past few years have been hard ones in the Sitka School District. Budget cuts due to flat funding from the state (in fact reduced funding due to inflation) have meant larger classes, people teaching in positions outside of their area of expertise, less planning time and more classes to prepare for. Teachers have moved away to find better-paying and security. They have taken their families with them. Alaska needs to support the education of our children. The \$1,000 increase to the BSA in HB69 is a step in the right direction. Please support Alaska's future by supporting HB69!

Sincerely,

Susan Brandt-Ferguson

[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

[REDACTED]

From: [Sharlay Mamoe](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 8:42:02 PM

Hello,

My name is Sharlay Mamoe. I am a mother of three children who will be studying in the Petersburg School district next year. My oldest will be in her first year of middle school, my middle child will be in third grade, and my youngest would be in Kindergarten. I work as the executive director of a childcare facility and I know how expensive it is to educate the youth of today; I also know how important good wages and benefits are to keeping staff members and how that subsidy would be from the state of Alaska because we do not have any other way to obtain money for public education.

Without this necessary funding the children in Alaska will be suffering from ill prepared and underfunded schools and teachers. This isn't fair to our children and when the governor says he wants a family friendly state for people to want to live in I imagine he wants our schools to be strong and beautiful.

This funding is absolutely necessary and I hope you fund our future, by funding the organizations who care and educate our children.

Thank you; please fund our children's education in all the ways we need it to be funded.

From: [Kristine Fulton](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please schedule hearing on HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 7:22:36 PM

Dear Senator Bert Stedman and Senate Finance Committee,

Our public schools are facing a funding crisis.

Please schedule a hearing for HB 69 and support the \$1000 BSA increase.

Public education in Alaska has been underfunded for far too long. The consequences of this neglect are felt in our classrooms—larger class sizes, fewer resources, and the loss of critical programs that support our students' success.

Sincerely,

Kristine Fulton

From: [Daniel Sullivan](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 7:02:13 PM

I am asking the Senate to match the House to increase the BSA to \$1000. My school District, Petersburg, has always had a conservative, balanced budget, with local matching support. While they always "done more with less, an erosion of services is inevitable, especially with the unpredictable nature of current federal funding and the decimation of the US Dept of Education. Thank you for your work and consideration.

Dan Sullivan

[REDACTED]

Petersburg, AK 99833

In Support of House Bill 69 - Education Funding: Increase Bsa

Rebecca Olson

April 3, 2025

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Rebecca Olson, and I live in Sitka. I am the parent of students at Xóots Elementary and Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary in the Sitka School District. I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 69 - Education Funding: Increase Bsa.

In 2022, the Alaska Reads Act was passed, setting some high expectations for the children. Despite being a family that always read to our children right from the time they were babies, and always having books and reading in our home, our son was identified as needing reading intervention. As a mother, I questioned what we did wrong... He's such a bright kid! Was it that his first years of school were during the height of COVID, did we not do something right? Whatever the case, he is behind in reading. That first year, the school was able to provide a reading interventionist to help him, and they were hoping to do a summer reading program, but it wasn't able to happen. Due to budget constraints, Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary has lost two reading interventionists and there currently isn't any to support the students in grades 2-5.

This year, our youngest started Kindergarten and he too needs additional support. In the 2023-2024 school year, his school received a grant from Alaska Reads allowing three reading interventionists to do amazing work with the students. Now, in the current school year, there is one reading interventionist left to take care of the youngest students in our school district.

In a time when the expectations of reading and education are higher than ever, the Sitka School District, like a lot of schools around Alaska, don't have the funding to get behind their students to fully support their needs. The education of our students should be the highest priority. I strongly support House Bill 69 and the positive impact it will have on our students and their future, if passed. Thank you for your time and effort in support of Alaska's students.

Rebecca Olson

[REDACTED]

From: [Susan Beesley](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support the Full \$1,000 BSA Increase in HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 5:05:17 PM

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As a pediatrician and mother of three, I urge you to support the full \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation in HB 69. I care for children and families across Anchorage, and I see every day how deeply underfunded schools are harming our kids—especially those who rely on school-based support systems for learning, safety, and mental health.

We cannot ask schools to continue doing more with less. When districts are forced to cut teachers, counselors, nurses, and special education staff, it doesn't just affect academics—it impacts the emotional and developmental well-being of our children. School is often the first and only place where kids receive mental health support, social-emotional learning, and early intervention. These services are essential to preventing crises later in life, from dropouts to incarceration to untreated mental illness.

Over the past several weeks, multiple families in my practice have told me they are preparing to leave Alaska. They originally moved here, bringing their families, businesses, and talents, because of the strong public school system. Now, they feel they can no longer stay. If we do not invest in our schools, we will continue to lose not just students and teachers, but entire families and the economic vitality they bring.

Funding our schools isn't just about preserving programs—it's about protecting children's futures. Please pass the full \$1,000 BSA increase in HB 69 without delay. Our kids—and Alaska's long-term health—depend on it.

Sincerely,
Susan Beesley, MD
Anchorage, Alaska

Susan Rymer Beesley MD

Mindful Growth LLC

[REDACTED]

Anchorage AK 99503

[REDACTED]



From: [Norman & Toby Campbell](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please!!!
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 4:25:25 PM

- While we appreciate the concern for the deficit, education should be the first call - not the last - on our state's resources. States that fail to educate and invest in their future leaders, fail.
- We have watched friends and neighbors leave the state, frustrated with the declining support for schools and anxious about the real or threatened loss of beloved schools and programs.
- We have watched an exodus of teachers who have lost their jobs or are voting with their feet due to uncertainty and erosion of pay and benefits.
- We are at a breaking point. In Ketchikan, the superintendent and school board chair, and another school board member resigned in the past month amidst distress over budget cuts.
- ***Our schools are not failing, they are starving.*** Alaska has a low debt burden, no broad-based taxes, and a massive sovereign wealth fund. There is no reason to starve our schools and deprive our kids of opportunity.

Children are our future!! Please fund our schools!

Toby Campbell, retired teacher

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

From: [Lorene Bertagnoli](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 4:08:06 PM

Hello, I am Lorene Bertagnoli, a Petersburg constituent. I am asking the Senate to match the house and pass a \$1000 BSA increase. \$680 is too low and will force our district into deficit spending.

Petersburg's schools are the heart of our rural, remote community; not only do they do an excellent job educating students But they do double duty for all citizens as theater, gym event, space, etc.

Thank you,

Lorene Bertagnoli



Petersburg, AK. 99833

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Keri Gray](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman; Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 3:24:11 PM

Hello,

My name is Keri Gray from Sitka, AK. **I am writing in support of HB 69.** I currently have 1 child in 3rd grade and another who will be entering the school system soon. I've seen first-hand what lack of funding has done to our school district. Last year, we lost 19% of our classroom teachers. My son's class size went from 18 to 24. The amount of work his 3rd grade teacher has to do has increased tremendously, not to include the extra behavior problems because of the number of kids in the room.

I've seen great non-tenured teachers leave the district because they are not certain if they will have a job next year. I've seen fewer elective course offerings at the middle and high schools. How are we preparing our students for jobs in the trades if we can't offer these classes for students to try?

The time to fund education is now. Inflation has risen 28% over the past 10 years, and the BSA has only risen 5%. This does not seem right. How can you expect schools to stay open, stay warm, and stay well-maintained with no money to work with?

Please support HB 69 to the full amount and provide schools with money to help them stay open.

Thank you,
Keri Gray
Sitka, AK

From: [Judith Lehmann](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: \$1000 BSA increase
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 3:14:12 PM

Hello Bert Stedman,

I have met you and appreciate the many opportunities that you have given our children in Sitka. I know that \$ now are tight, but our schools and our students are having difficulty because of it. I have three grand children in the school system and hate to see more drastic cuts made. Please move forward with the \$100 BSA increase.

Thank you, sincerely. Judith Lehmann

Sent from my iPad

From: [Lisa Hodges](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 3:09:57 PM

I have 2 children in the school system and work with young children and families who will benefit from your support of HB 69!

Thank you in advance for placing value on education!

Lisa Hodges, MA, IMH-E®
Early Learning Program Coordinator
Developmental Specialist
Infant Mental Health Specialist

Center for Community
Early Learning Program

[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Becky Martello](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 2:40:45 PM


Hello Senators.

I'm a homeschool parent concerned about the latest additions to HB 69. I won't take up too much of your time, but treating homeschool students differently than students in brick and mortar schools is wildly inequitable and may be illegal. For example, tying homeschool allotment funds to testing or submission of a portfolio would be akin to requiring districts to submit tests or portfolios for each enrolled student in order to receive their BSA. If this passes, it at least needs to have equal standards between homeschool and brick and mortar students.

It is troubling that so many amendments that affect homeschool students are being stuffed into a bill being promoted as simply "raising the BSA." This is divisive and not transparent. I believe that many teachers and parents who are supporting this likely don't understand the entirety of the contents of the bill that negatively impact homeschoolers. In part, this feels like an underhanded attempt to make things more burdensome for homeschool families hidden under the guise of "supporting education."

Additionally, I have concerns as a citizen where extra BSA funding will come from. Without first identifying how these funds will be procured, and giving citizens a full picture of how the funds will be raised (and used), ignores fiduciary responsibility to Alaskans.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Becky Martello
Sitka, AK


From: [Kimberly Bakkes](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 2:35:22 PM

Please support HB69. Please support increasing the BSA by \$1000.

There has been no increase for years. Meanwhile costs are going up.

I hear lots of talk about how can we get more people to move to Alaska?... Meanwhile, declining school funding is pushing people to move out of Alaska.

I love living in southeast Alaska, and I have started to wonder whether I should take my kids elsewhere for high school as I watch school budgets decline, excellent teachers leave, programs disappear.

Thank you for your support.

Kimberly Bakkes
Sitka, AK

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [M O'Shea Spring](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support \$1000 BSA increase
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 2:16:44 PM

I am a parent who homeschools my children. I come from a family of public school teachers and I support public education. I was fortunate enough to attend a well funded public school district in northern VA in middle school & high school. I have seen first hand the difference between well funded public education & underfunded schools. Alaska children deserve well funded public education.

I support a \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation. Anything less does not keep up with inflation. Well funded public education benefits all of our communities and helps Alaskan kids have a better future.

Thank you,
Meghan O'Shea
Kasilof, AK

From: [Pat Race](#)
To: [Sen. Jesse Kiehl](#); [Rep. Sara Hannan](#); [Rep. Andi Story](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: What I would like.
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 2:08:24 PM

To my Juneau delegation and to the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to request that you increase the Base Student Allocation. And, if it's not too much to ask, that you balance our budget without drawing down savings or gutting the dividend.

I'm not too prescriptive about numbers, just do the very best you can and don't shy away from the revenue measures that are necessary to get us there.

The effort to close the corporate tax loophole is a good one. It probably shouldn't be targeted at one company, anyone who is making tens of millions each year in our state can and should pay taxes to support the firm and lucrative foundation on which they stand. Our schools, our public safety officers, our courts, our ports, are all essential to doing business in Alaska and they must be funded. Particularly by those who benefit most.

The per barrel credit has cleverly been exempted from the budget debate as forgone revenue. I find it unsettling how willing the legislature is to take money out of my Permanent Fund year after year while leaving hundreds of millions on the table for oil companies.

I suggest that if you don't have the stomach to tamp down on this forgone revenue, a good first step would be to put it on the books. Make it part of the budget. No more forgone revenue, but a line item for all to see. A check to the companies for their claimed credits each year. This will help Alaskans to see what a huge part of our financial equation these credits actually are and will entirely change the debate so that these dollars can be weighed equally in consideration with education spending and PFDs. I think all forgone revenue should be treated this way for transparency's sake.

There are other revenue options as well. It's broadly unpopular but legislators and leaders need to start being more vocal about our lack of an income tax or any broad based revenue. If we experience a population boom driven by climate refugees, Alaska is in a position where our underfunded state services will be swamped and see no corresponding increase in revenue. We need to tie some aspect of state revenue to population sooner rather than later. [Gov. Gruening made this same argument](#) over half a century ago. His income tax was the foundation for statehood, but only after we missed out on an incredible growth spurt and influx of jobs during the build out of WWII infrastructure.

I encourage you to work together, House and Senate, to put a plan on the table that pencils out. A plan that identifies new sources of revenue, increases education funding, pays a respectable dividend, and balances the budget.

Then give that plan to our terrible dead-end governor and message hard to your constituents on your successes. Paint him in as best you can.

"The governor gave us an unserious budget with a massive \$1.5 billion dollar deficit. The legislature listened to countless hours of public comment and worked with the people of Alaska to develop this budget that identifies new sources of revenue, increases education funding, pays a respectable dividend, and outlines a real fiscal plan for the FIRST TIME in decades. Now it is up to the governor to sign that budget or to recklessly blow it up after months of out-of-state travel, disengaged from the process."

The best thing you can do, the incredible opportunity you have here, is to put a real fiscal plan on the table and show this state what's possible. Maybe Dunleavy just forgets to veto it. Maybe it's something we can build around in 2026 and into the future.

Thanks for all your hard work. I realize you're all far more in the weeds on these issues but I hope this perspective can at least offer some helpful direction from one engaged citizen.

Pat Race

[REDACTED]

Juneau, AK 99801

From: [craig powers](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Thursday, April 03, 2025 1:56:08 PM

Good afternoon Senator Steadman et al.

I write to this afternoon from beautiful Sitka. We're a Coast Guard Veteran family with three kids in the school system. We retired here despite the rest of our family living down South, in the mid west.

We love Alaska and we want our children to have a successful future here.

Representative Himschoot has been working hard and communicating with her constituents to share the importance of education funding bill HB 69.

This bill is so important for our communities, teachers and families to ensure a happy and healthy future for upcoming generations and prosperous Alaska communities.

Let's do the right thing and give this bill the green light and be proud to support our state, communities, families and constituents.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Craig Powers

USCG Ret.

From: [Anthony White](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Rep. Louise Stutes](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#)
Subject: Strategic Investment in Alaska's Future through Responsible Resource Management
Date: Monday, April 07, 2025 9:56:22 AM

Dear Senators,

As the Senate Finance Committee deliberates HB 69, I urge you to address the critical need for strategic adjustments to our state's fiscal policies, particularly in resource extraction revenue, to support and sustain our educational systems. Alaska stands at a crucial juncture where immediate action is essential to reverse a concerning trend impacting communities across our state, including the Kodiak Island Borough School District, which currently faces an alarming [\\$8 million budget deficit](#).

In Kodiak, our community has struggled painfully to determine which school must close to address this deficit. The chosen closure directly affects my family, as we reside within the impacted service area. While consolidation may be necessary under current budget realities, the repercussions are severe: increasing class sizes despite established caps, exacerbating teacher shortages, prompting parents to withdraw their children, and creating a tangible sense of desperation and frustration. Recent school board meetings have become platforms of fear and anger, not directed at our local leaders but toward a broader system of inadequate legislative funding.

Alaska can learn from other states [such as New Mexico](#), where strategic fiscal adjustments, like raising oil and gas royalties to 25% and creating permanent education-focused funds, have provided significant, sustainable investment in schools. Leveraging similar fiscal opportunities through responsible management of our state's abundant natural resources is imperative. This would ensure substantial revenue streams that directly benefit our educational systems, stabilizing funding, and enabling long-term planning and growth.

Given uncertain future federal support, Alaska must now "grab the moose by the horns" and boldly commit to investing in our children and our communities. By reallocating fiscal priorities toward education and adjusting legislation such as resource extraction policies, we can secure robust economic development, improve workforce stability, enhance community infrastructure, and ultimately attract new residents and businesses.

Your leadership and decision-making at this pivotal moment will significantly shape Alaska's trajectory. Please commit to adequately funding education and positioning Alaska as a beacon of innovation and responsible resource management.

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

Sincerely,

Anthony White

[REDACTED]

Kodiak, AK 99615

[REDACTED]

From: [K Kreiss](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Monday, April 07, 2025 9:46:44 AM

I request that the senate finance committee support the \$1000 BSA increase in order to support our public schools. For too long, our students in Sitka and elsewhere have not had support that kept up with inflation. We need to strengthen our public education to support our economy and our future generations.

Kay Kreiss

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sitka AK 99835

From: [Kelly Buxton](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69 – Request for Hearing and Action on BSA Increase
Date: Sunday, April 06, 2025 6:13:12 PM

Dear Senator Stedman and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to schedule a hearing for House Bill 69 in the Senate Finance Committee and to support its advancement with a \$1000 increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

Alaska's public schools are facing unprecedented challenges due to inflation, aging infrastructure, and growing demands on educators. Districts across the state have made difficult cuts, and without meaningful increases to the BSA, the quality and accessibility of public education are at risk.

The Alaska Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, mandates that "The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State." This mandate includes ensuring our public schools are adequately funded so that every student—regardless of zip code—has access to a high-quality education.

A \$1000 BSA increase is not just a number—it represents restored support for teachers, smaller class sizes, safe facilities, and critical programs that prepare Alaska's youth for the future. HB 69 passed the House with strong support, and now I respectfully ask the Senate Finance Committee to provide this vital legislation with a fair and timely hearing.

Thank you for your leadership and service to the people of Alaska. I hope you will stand with students, educators, and communities across the state by moving HB 69 forward with a meaningful BSA increase.

Sincerely,
Kelly Buxton M.Ed.



From: [Retha Winger](#)
To: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Sunday, April 06, 2025 12:53:04 PM

Hello,

I am writing to support HB 69. Education is critically important. Please support our educators by increasing the BSA.

Thank you,
Retha Winger
Sitka

From: [wendy.alderson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support HB 69 \$1,000 BSA increase
Date: Sunday, April 06, 2025 10:11:35 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Please schedule a hearing on HB 69 and please support the \$1,000 BSA increase.

I have lived in Sitka for 35 years and I'm so pleased to see many of my friends' adult children choosing to return home and raise their families here in this community. It has never been terribly affordable to live anywhere in Alaska, especially Southeast, but the families trying to make a go of it are willing to make that financial sacrifice for the quality of life this small tight knit community provides.

One sacrifice they will not make, however, is the quality of public education provided their children. Without this raise in the BSA, that quality will suffer to the point that we WILL start losing families. A recent report on population dynamics noted the exponential rise of transient workers in Alaska. We are losing residents at an alarming rate. I strongly believe a larger PFD is not going to keep families here, but investing in their children's education will.

Thank you for your time,
Wendy Alderson

From: [Ariane Goudeau](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please support our schools
Date: Sunday, April 06, 2025 10:02:53 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am sending you this letter urging you to vote for school funding. I understand that the deficit is a serious concern and that balancing the budget is needed. However multiple studies have shown how investing in our schools is an investment in our future economy. A study published in 2015 showed that increasing the per-pupil spending each year for the 12 years of public schooling by 10% led to 0.27 more completed years of education, 7.25% high wages and 3.67% reduction in the incidence of adult poverty ([Jacson et al., 2015](#)). Less poverty means less coming out of the state's social safety net. Keep in mind, this is an average, Results were even more significant for those coming from more impoverished households. Another study, showed that the same 10% increase (\$1000) in Michigan, led to those students being 3% more likely to enroll in college and 2.3% more likely to earn a postsecondary degree ([Hyman, 2017](#)). Lastly, a 2021 study showed that, again, just that 10% increase of \$1000 per pupil led to a decrease in violent crime. Those students who had received greater financial support during their K-12 years were less likely to be arrested before the age of 30 ([Ades & Mishra, 2021](#)). This also translated to a cost savings for the state as well as a better quality of life for its people.

Let's talk Alaska specific. A study conducted by the University of Alaska Anchorage found that in this state, we spend a good chunk of change on our students. In 2022, K-12 spending came out to \$20,191. This is higher than most other states. Since then, inflation has only increased, not decreased. However, if cost of living is accounted for, per pupil spending is 15% below the national average whereas in 2017, Alaska was only 2% below the national average. We are not keeping up. In 2017, local funding accounted for 22% of the funding for schools, in 2023, it was 23%. State funding, however decreased from 64% to 55%. The remaining chunk came from the federal government and was mostly related to pandemic relief which is now gone. Additionally, from 2017 to 2022, inflation increased by 19%. We are expecting our schools to do more, with less ([Berman & DeFeo, 2025](#)).

Zooming into my district, Sitka this has painted a very sad picture. Since 2014, we have lost 31% of our teachers with 19% of that being last year. Since 2014, inflation has increased 28%, but the BSA from the state has only increase 5%. After cutting the significantly last year, our district is facing even more cuts. Just to break even, we need out BSA to be at \$1460 per student. I found out earlier this week that both of my kids' teachers are probably getting cut. They have both been teaching for many years and came to the school district with that experience. My youngest is in kindergarten and isn't a fan of going to school. She will regularly say "I don't like school, but I love Ms. Pearson. My oldest, second grade come home excited to be learning "4th grade stuff." Mr. Jenson has been so good at meeting each student with where they are at. They were both up for tenure this year, which would have given them a bit more safety with their position. My kindergartener's school had to cut the librarian last year. The music teacher position was also cut. To adjust, the PE teacher is now also the music teacher. Many parents have also stepped up to volunteer their time to subsidize the funding cut. For example, my second grader has a parent going in and teaching them art on a weekly basis. I also

go read with them on a weekly basis. I love the creative solutions that our district has come up with and I love and trust that this community will continue fighting for our children's education. However, there is only so much that can be done by our community alone. We need the state to step up their support.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this. I understand that you are in the tough position to balance everything and are constantly having to make hard decisions. Please let this be one of your easier ones. We need this funding. We need to do right by our future generations. We need to keep our people here. We need to keep Alaska strong and competitive against other states.

Sincerely,

Ariane Goudeau

Citations:

Ades, J., & Mishra, J. (2021). Education and crime across America: Inequity's cost. *Social Sciences*, 10(8), 283. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10080283>

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Hyman, J. (2017). Does money matter in the long run? Effects of school spending on educational attainment. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 9(4), 256–80. <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20150249>

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From: [Lorene Bertagnoli](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Saturday, April 05, 2025 2:52:49 PM

Hello,

I am a Petersburg Constituent and 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

From: [Joel Jenson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: 2nd Grade, Keet Gooshi Heen, Sitka
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 3:14:39 PM

Dear Finance Committee,

My name is Joel Jenson of Keet Gooshi Heen in Sitka. We have been learning about writing persuasive letters. With the budget cuts possibly in store for our district, my students were more than willing to address our situation. I can recognize the challenge that is before you, which many of us don't know the "big picture" of what all has to be considered.

Last year Sitka lost 19% of our teaching staff. This year there will be at least 6 or more that will be cut again, I being one of those being cut.

Thank you for your time and I hope you have a chance to read what my students have written.

Thank you,
Joel Jenson

From: [Brian Farley](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for HB 69
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 1:40:38 PM

Senate Finance Committee

Alaska State Legislature

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to support the HB 69 bill funding our schools. Education is a top priority for our family, and many of our major life decisions—including where to live—are based on access to high-quality public education.

Two years ago, our family moved to Sitka from Ann Arbor, Michigan. In our first year here, we were deeply impressed by the strength of Sitka's public schools. Our children thrived in smaller class sizes—they received heightened attention from teachers and participated in artistic programs that helped build their confidence and creativity.

Last year, our oldest daughter was identified for the Gifted and Talented program, where she found both academic challenge and a community of peers. It was a transformative experience. Unfortunately, this year, we've already seen significant cuts to both the GT program and many artistic programs. The quality of education that once excited our children is now at risk.

We are deeply concerned about the future of public education in Sitka and across Alaska. Continued budget cuts not only threaten the success of our children but may also influence whether families like ours choose to stay in the state. We want to raise our children in Alaska—but we will only do so if we believe they can receive a strong education.

Please vote in favor of HB 69. The proposed \$1,000 increase to the Base Student Allocation is an essential step toward restoring and sustaining the quality of Alaska's public schools. Investing in education means investing in the future of our communities, and it is an investment that will keep Alaskans who care about education here in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to public education.

Sincerely,

Brian Farley



Sitka, AK 99835

From: [Mike and Kristie Wall](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB69
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 12:57:48 PM

Yes - I fully support this bill... It's about time we invest , rather than divest in our future citizens of Alaska.
Kristie Wall
Life time Alaskan resident
40 year retired teacher
Mother of 3 (2 of which remain Alaskan residence)
Grandmother to 5 future residence.

From: [Kathleen Brandt](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Educ #69
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 1:05:27 PM

Dear Committee Members

We all know education funding has suffered due to various factors over the past several years:

- 1. Gov Dunleavy vetoes and threatens of same**
- 2. Panic over price of oil**
- 3. Legislators who don't fully support public education**
- 4. Limits placed on local taxation**

HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOW REACHED A TRUE CRISIS POINT. I listened to a remnant of the Ketchikan HS Principal testifying before the legislature. Here he is, probably one of the very best administrators in Alaska stating:

1. "I have my application out many places, especially Oregon, where I can get defined retirement benefits, higher salary, more sensible work load and I don't have to get plane tickets to go somewhere." I know this is not a precise summary, but the essence of what he says sums it up.
2. He is ready to move to Oregon if things don't get better.
3. Uncertainty about schools, offerings in the curriculum, class size and such are affecting the mental health of educators, students and even members of the community.

The Ketchikan HS Principal also stated that it is extremely difficult to find applicants for administrative jobs with the public schools in Alaska. That the leadership of public schools is suffering.

In plain English, public education needs more funding and more stable funding, more timely funding. It is time for the legislature to step up. Senators ,I know you take a lot of heat from all sides of the planet. Being in a leadership position, you most certainly hear about many different NEEDS for Alaska's people. But, priorities must be established and public education is paramount when one thinks about a good foundation for our social order, our economy, our stability as a state (our population is static due to many issues -- one of which is lack of stable/sufficient funding for our public schools).

Senators, we ask you to do the right thing. It is time to ACT. The request for a \$1,000 increase is on the table. Let's get this job done. We are grateful for your hard work and this is going to be a heavy load, but we ask you to do this and move this funding legislation on to a successful conclusion.

Harvey and Kathleen Brandt, Sitka

--

Kathleen C Brandt

[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Lorene Bertagnoli](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Fwd: HB 69
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 12:06:05 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lorene Bertagnoli <lorenejb@gci.net>
Date: April 4, 2025 at 11:49:33 AM AKDT
To: Lorene Bertagnoli <joybertag@gmail.com>
Subject: HB 69

Hello,

I am a Petersburg Constituent and 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 ,

Lorene Bertagnoli
[REDACTED]
Petersburg, AK 99833

from my iPhone

From: [Megan McBride](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Fund Schools!
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 11:20:22 AM

Senate finance committee,

My name is Megan McBride. I live in West Anchorage. I am a parent of two kids, one who will be starting Kindergarten in the Anchorage School District this fall. I'm also a former high school teacher at Betty Davis East Anchorage High School.

I am writing to urge you to increase the BSA by a minimum of \$1000 and to inflation-proof education funding.

Public education is in crisis, but it is not fundamentally broken. Some say our schools are failing, but the truth is they are starving. This body has the power to change that. With appropriate resources, our public schools in Alaska can continue to provide world class education for our youth.

Our schools have been underfunded for over a decade. High inflation coupled with increases in other costs like health care and technology have left classrooms in dire need. We used to be known for paying teachers well, not anymore. Our education spending is below average for the U.S., and our costs are inherently higher.

You get what you pay for. We are bankrupting our schools and our children's futures. Every child deserves a free, high quality education.

We need a minimum of \$1000 increase in the BSA and to inflation-proof education funding for the future.

Support HB 69! "An Act relating to education...."

And Pass REVENUE to pay for public schools!

Support SB 92 - "An Act establishing an income tax on certain entities producing or transporting oil or gas in the state; and providing for an effective date."

Support SB 112 - "An Act relating to credits against the oil and gas production tax; and providing for an effective date."

Or implement a statewide income tax! Alaskans and the out-of-state residents who work here should be investing in our state.

Too many lawmakers believe taxes are political suicide. But it's not about the taxes - it's about thriving communities, thriving local economies, confidence in our childrens' future. We are happy to pay taxes if they are going to public schools and other services that enrich our communities.

Thank you.

Megan McBride

From: [Beth Short-Rhoads](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Please pass HB 69
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 9:50:21 AM

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I urge you to pass HB 69 and raise the BSA. It is our responsibility as adults to ensure Alaska's children aren't made to pay the price for the economic mess we find ourselves in today.

Supporting education is not only the right thing to do, it's also the wise thing—the student's of today are those who will lead in the future. They will be the ones to build businesses, balance budgets, and stick around through thick and thin. To do the excellent job they'll be asked to do, they will need a solid and reliable education. Just as much, they will need role models who demonstrate the courage, uprightness, and fortitude practiced by great leaders.

Thank you for your service,

Beth Short-Rhoads
Parent and business owner
Sitka

From: [Jeremy Peterson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: funding
Date: Friday, April 04, 2025 9:34:36 AM

The United States spends well over half a million dollars per active-duty service member². The total personnel-related costs, including costs for running the Defense Health Program, family programs, and other initiatives, exceed \$200 billion

500,000\$ per adult soldier!!

Many of them could have been better people/soldiers but we only spend 500\$ a year educating them.

Please try and do your part to correct this obvious error.

Jeremy Peterson
Sitka Alaska
Middle School Educator.

From: [Adrienne Voss](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: decrease PFD for HB 69
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2025 9:51:59 PM

I am an Anchorage constituent, zip code 99503, and previously wrote to support HB69. After further reading, I was reminded how difficult your decisions are in presenting a balanced budget. I feel strongly enough about the importance of passing HB69 and supporting public education with a permanent increase to the BSA, that I am in support of decreasing the PFD to \$1,000 and/or adding a state income tax. Public education must be a top priority in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of Alaskans,

Adrienne Voss

From: [Lisa Miller](#)
To: [Senate Education](#); [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support of \$1,000 minimum BSA increase and reduced oil tax cuts
Date: Sunday, March 30, 2025 7:38:12 PM

Good evening, Senate Education and Finance Committee members,

As a parent of a 4th-grade student enrolled in the Anchorage School District, I see firsthand why raising the BSA by a minimum of \$1,000 is critical. I'm encouraged by the progress on HB 69, though inflation-proofing would truly break the cycle we are currently in.

I am writing to challenge the narrative that a BSA increase equals a PFD cut.

I strongly support discussions in the Senate on alternative solutions, including reducing oil tax credits as a means to fund education.

When my son was approaching kindergarten age, I considered returning to my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio, to be closer to family. After comparing the Cleveland School District and surrounding districts to ASD, I decided to stay in Alaska because I appreciated the "choice schools" offered throughout the Anchorage School District. By staying in Anchorage, I had access to a wide variety of charter, alternative, and specialized programs through ASD, as well as strong neighborhood schools. My son was selected through the lottery for Polaris K-12 in kindergarten and is thriving in their optional program. The Polaris classroom model of intentionally combined grade levels has allowed him to advance to 5th-grade math. He also receives reading interventions—through his own dedication and phenomenal support from educators, he is part of the "COVID kindergartener cohort" that has made above-average gains in testing and is now reading at grade level.

The work of the educators in his school every day is incredible. Please think outside the box to make high-quality education sustainable in Alaska.

Please note that while I am an ASD employee, this message represents my own opinions and experiences as a parent and does not reflect the Anchorage School District.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Lisa Miller
Turnagain/Anchorage resident

From: [Kacey Hammer](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Kacey Hammer, Petersburg AK
Date: Tuesday, April 01, 2025 5:36:43 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher in training, substitute, and most importantly a mother of 3 living in Petersburg, AK. I am writing today to urge you to increase the per student budget. I have spent quite a bit of time in many classrooms. I think that those who choose to teach are miracle workers. Spend time in a classroom and you will see that we need to make sure the schools are given the proper tools needed to keep the machine running. We are cutting back on PE and swim, in spite of the proven benefits because of funding. I worry that we will continue to cut back on services that are proven to make for better students. This says nothing about the federal government which will likely not provide the kinds of services that they have been at the expense of our kids.

Thank you for taking the time to read my request.

*Best wishes,
Kacey Hammer
She/Her*

From: [Malena Marvin](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Sen. Bert Stedman](#)
Subject: I support a \$1000 BSA increase
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 9:46:11 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

As a 10+ year Petersburg resident, I have seen first hand how hard our elected school board works to balance budgets and act conservatively for the best interest of our students and teachers. Petersburg is so small that all of us rely on a healthy school district at the heart of the community. Please show your support for Alaska's rural and remote communities and keep our school districts strong for everyone. Without a \$1000 BSA, we are looking at deficits. We need partners in the legislature who put kids and schools first. Please step up and raise the Senate's proposed BSA increase to \$1000.

Malena Marvin
PO Box 1611
Petersburg, AK 99833

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Malena Marvin


From: [karen.severson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69 Petersburg Schools
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 10:15:46 AM

April 2, 2025

RE: HB 69

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

We live in Petersburg and have always been so proud of our school system. Petersburg Stedman Elementary Principle received the highest honor in 2024 and was in DC in March to accept that award. Mitkof Middle School and Petersburg High School have exceptional Educators, Coaches and Administrators.

There has been a decade of underfunding and it has left our schools all across the state in dire straights, and the neglect is no longer sustainable.

We urge the committee to pass HB 69 with the same increase to \$1000 BSA passed by the House. If not passed Petersburg School District will have a \$850,000 deficit for Fiscal Year 2026!

We are so proud of our Educators and Administrators who have put blood sweat and tears into making the most with ever increasing little. Without the \$1000 BSA our schools will further deteriorate, Teachers will be fired, basic programs and activities will be cut. Familie will be forced to leave our communities.

This is heartbreaking and we should all fight to make Educating our Children a priority. They are our future and we should value them with every power of our being!

We would favor other sources of State revenue such as the long overdue fair Oil and Mining tax, and looking at a reasonable income tax. Alaska is headed in the wrong direction and solving our problems and protecting children should be priority.

Thank you for your time!

Karen and Mark Severson

From: [Ann Rappoport](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#); [Sen. Lyman Hoffman](#); [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Sen. Donny Olson](#); [Sen. Kelly Merrick](#); [Sen. Jesse Kiehl](#); [Sen. James Kaufman](#); [Sen. Mike Cronk](#)
Cc: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#); [Rep. Ky Holland](#)
Subject: Re: Please pass
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 10:19:49 AM


Hello Senate Finance Committee -

I want to reiterate my comments below: **Please pass an increase of \$1000 for the Base Student Allocation to bring education funding back up to the bare minimum it should be!!** Funding for education has been flat for far too many years while costs have increased and new requirements have added additional costs.

I know the price of oil is down and the projected deficit in our overall state budget has increased. But education is NOT where you should decrease the budget. Please consider instead decreasing the Permanent Fund Dividend - \$1000 is fine. Also please turn your attention to the three bills that could provide some additional new revenue - we need an income tax on large private corporations like Hilcorp; please have hearings and pass SB 92! I believe there are two other bills that would similarly provide some additional taxes. Next session, perhaps you can turn your attention to a fair, income tax. You get what you pay for and Alaskans refusal to consider paying for anything means we get less and less every year in terms of state services and we continue to lose valuable, dedicated public employees. Please also swiftly hear and pass the bill to provide defined benefits for our hard-working public employees!

Your first priority: pass the \$1000 increase in the BSA, NOW!!

Thank you!
Ann Rappoport


Anchorage, AK 99516

On Thu, Feb 27, 2025 at 10:30 AM Ann Rappoport <agrappoport@gmail.com> wrote:
Dear Senate Finance Committee -

I'm excited that you are having hearings about proposed supplemental funding for education, specifically, that you are considering an increase of \$1000 in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) Program. I urge you to support this increase!! My support is echoed by so many others as you can see as this is the one issue that most people are addressing in letters and opinion pieces in the Anchorage Daily News and was a major concern in last year's election and election results!

This increase in the BSA will begin to make up for 15 years of losses due to inflation. You've seen the headlines that the Anchorage School District and so many other school districts around our state are having to make drastic cuts to their budgets. The resulting increases in class sizes and loss of many programs will have tremendous negative effects on our students around the state. This is unconscionable! Yes we need to improve our student's scores in the basics of reading and math, but maintaining the current low level of funding for education will not do it! Nor will pouring more money into homeschooling and charter schools that only benefit a small segment of our kids - and only the ones whose parents have

the time, transportation, and usually money to provide those options. Too many parents have jobs, disabilities, or other situations that mean their kids need strong neighborhood schools. Moreover, those issues the governor is arguing about can be separately settled, later. NOW, your duty is to swiftly approve this \$1000 increase in the BSA for this year, with increases of \$400 in each of the following 2 years to get our schools back to where they should be.

Please support this significant and sustained funding for K-12 education! Our children are our future!!

Thank you for your attention to these concerns which are echoed by the vast majority of our state's residents!

Sincerely,

Ann Rappoport

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99516

From: [Mary Ellen Anderson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: BSA
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 10:21:23 AM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

It has been well over 10 years since the BSA has been raised, and every year our school district struggles to cover expenses. We in Petersburg have been fiscally extremely conservative and so have squeaked by over the years, but we are now officially down to the bone. What other industry/entity has to budget with no idea what they will have to spend each year? And why do we keep denying our schools the necessary funds to keep up with inflation while we still offer tax credits to oil and gas companies and we refuse to look for other, perfectly reasonable funding sources, such as a state income tax?

We are aging grandparents with an orphaned teen granddaughter living with us. She arrived as a failing student with a horrifying upbringing, and has blossomed into an honor student with good friends and finally a stable mind-set due to the hard work of our teachers, our coaches, our counselor (whom she meets with daily) and all the resources the extra-curricular programs have to offer. As we look at having to lay off yet more teachers and possibly end our extra-curriculars, I am just getting fed up with our state NOT valuing our children.

There are thousands of out-of-state workers here in Alaska who fly home and take their money with them, paying taxes in their own states since we have no income tax here. While I've never been strongly pro-tax, I think this is a shame. They fly up with suitcases & totes full of stuff so they don't have to buy anything in Alaska, earn their big bucks, then fly home to wherever. Our little community already has a 6% sales tax, property taxes and we are generous to our school. It is time to step up at a statewide level for education. Thank you for listening.

Mary Ellen Anderson
Retired teacher and school librarian
Petersburg, AK

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Chelsea Tremblay](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Increase BSA!
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 10:28:23 AM

Hello, I'm a resident of Petersburg and a proud graduate of our school system. I hope the state takes its responsibility to the next generation seriously by raising the BSA to what we actually need, not what is politically easier to accomplish. Cutting programs and needed positions because we were unwilling to stop prioritizing oil subsidies does us all a long term disservice. Thank you for doing what's right.

Chelsea Tremblay


Petersburg, AK

From: [Kathy Bracken](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 11:11:40 AM

To the Senate Finance Committee
Regarding Education Funding, BSA

My name is Kathleen Bracken. I've been a resident of Petersburg for 50 years, and was a teacher in the Petersburg city school system for 25 years. My two children attended kindergarten through grade 12 in that system.

When they were in school there was ample funding for small classes, adequate school supplies, and many important activities. I know what it takes to keep a classroom running. Since that time, everything has become more and more expensive, and expenses will continue to rise. Alaska will not be able to recruit fantastic teachers, class size will increase, there will be fewer activities because anything extra will be too expensive. This will make living in Alaska very unattractive to young people.

For our children and Alaska's future, keep the funding at a base student allocation of \$1000, as the House has passed. The \$640 you are proposing is less than 3/4 that, and is unacceptable, and leaves districts with deficit spending. They'll have to make more cuts.

Vote for \$1,000 BSA,

Thank you!

Respectfully,
Kathleen Bracken

When the Power of Love overcomes the Love of Power, there will be PEACE.

From: [Courtney Moore](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Raise the BSA
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 11:19:13 AM

For the love of god and all that is holy. Please raise the BSA and stop messing with our children and educators lives. I have 3 children that attend ASD, 2 of which are in the Ignite program, 1 of which will be going to middle school next year, and 1 that needs tutoring or summer school but can't be accepted because there are no funds available so he will continue to struggle for yet another year.

Their school is shutting down and they are having to move to Turnagain, my sporty brilliant daughter that is going to middle school next year will no longer have ignite program to enrich her mind and further her education, or sports to participate in. My children have 2 working class parents that can't afford camps, camp sports fees for 3 children, or child care- are going to be forced into more debt to make sure our kids are engaged on every level to ensure they are having a healthy life and education environment that will hopefully set them up to be successful adults that stay in Alaska- or let them go without because we are drowning.

Rent hikes, expensive groceries, outrageous health insurance premiums, despite trying and working so hard for 25 years each, has left us with nothing but regret and remorse for having children in a state that clearly doesn't give a shit about children and no way to escape, or a solution to look forward to.

I am so sick of this shit. Literal years we've been going back and forth with the budgets, ASD has been in crisis, cutting away at the bones, with no solution in sight. How on earth do you expect these children to be healthy, educated, and supported when you all refuse to do right by these children?? Our governor is a piece of shit hell bent on ruining everything he touches that was elected on a bed of lies. Deena flipping bishop was gleefully in attendance for the dismantling of the Department of Education. This is shameful how our teachers, administrators, and students are being treated at the hands of liars and maga bootlickers.

TAX THE OIL COMPANIES IN FULL AND FUND OUR SCHOOLS. Do not lower the BSA please, I'm literally begging you to give a shit about our children and their futures.

Courtney Moore

Mother of Emily Moore- 5th grade
Charlotte Moore- 4th grade
Henry Moore- 2nd grade
[REDACTED]

From: [Sonja Paul](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 69
Date: Wednesday, April 02, 2025 4:52:44 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 69 with a \$1,000 BSA increase. As a parent of two children—one in kindergarten and one who will soon join the school district—I feel deeply invested in the future of our education system. I want to raise my boys in Alaska, where they can grow up as Alaskans, learning in a community that supports them, and experiencing the subsistence lifestyle that makes our state unique. But in order for that to happen, we must ensure that our schools have the necessary funding to support their education.

Both my husband and I are dedicated to our community. I work at a local hospital, and my husband works as a mechanic in the fisheries industry. We are committed to staying in our community and supporting it, but the reality is that our school systems need more support from the state. Without sufficient funding, we risk losing the very fabric of our communities as families, like ours, might have to look elsewhere for better educational opportunities.

My kindergartener is just starting his educational journey, and soon my younger child will follow. As a parent, I want to ensure that both of my children have access to high-quality education, which means schools need the resources to hire and retain great teachers and provide the individualized support that every child deserves. If we don't prioritize education funding now, we will continue to see a decline in population across rural communities, as families like mine will be forced to leave to find better opportunities for their children.

House Bill 69 is a critical it's not just an investment in our children but in the future of Alaska. We need to support our schools, our teachers, and our children, so they can become the leaders of tomorrow.

I urge you to support House Bill 69 to ensure that my children, and all children across Alaska, have access to the education they deserve. By investing in education now, we are investing in the strength of our communities and the long-term prosperity of Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your support of this vital piece of legislation.

Sincerely,
Sonja Paul

Senate Finance Committee - Base Student Allocation

Investing in public education is critical to Alaska. Students who receive consistent, quality education in reasonably maintained facilities with access to appropriate technology, standard programs, and favorable pupil to teacher ratios have greater tools for involvement, innovation and investment in Alaska's future. Living in a huge state with a largely rural population presents challenges, but adequate public school funding should not be one of them. A yes vote on funding for public education at the \$1,000 BSA level demonstrates our understanding that Alaska is, indeed, a land of promise and opportunity.

As I have previously testified under past introduced education legislation, I have in the past filled in as substitute staff at our local elementary school, despite having other employment at the time. Because I knew of the tight financial and staff situation in my own community's schools, I agreed to take time from one job to fill in at the school. However, educational institutions should not be in the position of begging people to fill in for staff who need to attend training or deal with family health issues, or address other emergency situations beyond their control because schools don't have adequate resources to cover these situations. HB 69 is not the perfect solution, but it is one that does get us closer to where we need to be across the state.

Schools are not just places of learning. Staff must be skilled multitaskers. They also deal with physical and behavioral health, student citizenship, food insecurity, homelessness and more. Staff deserve adequate compensation for the key roles played in our kids' learning, health, and socialization. They also shouldn't have to work in buildings with leaking ceilings and other structural issues.

Education is a constitutional obligation in Alaska; and while the president may not think education is important, we Alaskans do. The base student allocation hasn't been raised significantly in over a decade. Please fund this important and overdue bill at the proposed \$1,000 per student allocation to maintain reasonable class sizes, and to provide more overall security and stability in our education system. We all will benefit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cynthia Lagoudakis
Petersburg, Alaska