



HAINES BOROUGH SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 1289

Haines, Alaska 99827

December 13, 2011

Dear Honorable Governor Parnell,

In the FY2013 budget you just released, you call for "full funding" of education at \$1.1 billion and for forward funding for FY2014 at \$1.1 billion. Thank you for acknowledging the need for forward funding. That would be a tremendous assistance.

However, since the recommendation you made for the current fiscal year was also at \$1.1 billion, if I'm not mistaken that would make three years of flat funding within the funding formula. Currently inflation is running around 3% as computed by the Anchorage CPI. For different rural communities that number might be somewhat higher. For Haines, with a budget of around \$5.7 million, 3% would represent about a \$170,000 increase in costs of goods and services. We are currently projecting just about that kind of increase in order to keep the student programs and staff in place for FY2013.

Haines was one of 12 districts in the state to make AYP this year. We were one of three districts where our students with special needs made AYP. We have been working hard to continually improve how we educate our students. We've instituted more vocational education classes, we are stressing more school to work connections, we are instituting more early elementary reading interventions, we are making sure our high school students have access to the classes they need to qualify for the Performance Scholarship (thank you for that) and we are giving more attention to helping our special education students do better. All this has resulted in an over all increase in our graduation rate of over 15% over the last four years. For 2010/11 our graduation rate was 88%.

The Haines Borough School District runs pretty lean. If we experience reductions in the amount of services our funding can cover we will immediately be cutting into the muscle that delivers services to our students. Our programs will immediately suffer and will be driven backwards. We need your support to make sure we will be able to continue the good work we have in place.

Governor, it is respectfully requested you add an amount to the funding formula that will cover the inflationary pressures on the costs of goods and services. Along with forward funding, that would mean volumes in our ability to: 1) retain our staff and not have to keep them on pins and needles about their next year's employment until June; 2) better plan and schedule for the next year; and 3) keep morale up, which helps our entire organization.

Thank you,

Carol Kelly, President
Haines Borough School Board