

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 10:03 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: BSA legislation letter in support from parent

From: D Leigh [mailto:nda3dragonfly4fish@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 9:21 AM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Subject: BSA legislation letter in support from parent

Hello fellow Alaskans,

I am writing in concern of the budget proposals before the 2012 legislature regarding the Base Student Allocation.

As the parent of high school student in Juneau and the state of Alaska I am becoming increasingly alarmed at the de-emphasis placed on the education of our students.

Our 10th grade student has three classes this semester that are over crowded, at one time a geometry class had 40 students!. I highly respect the teachers who are trying to raise the bar of education in our schools as they struggle with overload and over crowding with limited support and resources.

In Juneau the School District is proposing to cut 66 teachers which equates to increased class sizes. They are also proposing to cut custodial services, class room aides, library assistants, assistant high school principals and activities and optional subjects. These may at first glimpse seem like overall broad based cuts, but they will each specifically and deeply cut my student and his educational experience.

Our student's learning environment is impacted by dirty hallways and wear and tear on facilities that need maintenance

and custodial services to maintain a wholesome physical atmosphere. Our high school student attends school willingly each day looking forward

to the "optional classes" such as band that keep him motivated and make him a more rounded student and community member. Without classes such as band he would quickly lose his enthusiasm for school. He is currently enrolled in an "study hall" class that allows students to go to the library to work on independent study classes not

offered at the high school. Without a library assistant this learning opportunity could be eliminated. Our student supports the basketball program as a member of the Pep band.

He also attends events such Music Fest. As a parent I have come to highly value and rely on the assistant principals to help assure safety at these activities.

It is like a circle domino effect that just keeps compounding and circling with no particular starting point..... larger class sizes lead to more discipline problems, more discipline problems lead to sorely needed staff support which leads to overloaded teachers, which leads to a poor attitude and decreased motivation, which leads to frustrated students and teachers which leads to poor learning which leads to a seriously jeopardized educational experience which leads to a sad future for our precious next generation.

Break the circ!, Help to stop the domino effect! Support education and consider raising the BSA for students and our future.

Thank you for listening,
Donna Leigh
1223 Fritz Cove Road
Juneau, AK 99801
907-321-3475

Murray Richmond

From: andimike@ak.net
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 9:56 AM
To: Murray Richmond; nda3dragonfly4fish@gmail.com
Subject: FW: BSA before the legislature and school board

Hi Murray,

Here is a letter from a parent asking me to forward this to you for the Senate Education Committee's attention. Please let me know that you got her letter. Her name is Donna Leigh. I will copy her on this letter so you can hit reply all. Thank you, Andi Story, Juneau School Board member

----- Begin forwarded message -----
Subject: BSA before the legislature and school board
Date: 1/24/12 9:20:04 AM
From: "D Leigh"
To: "Story Andi"

Andi,

I got a letter from Jetta from the parent group at JDHS about writing our concerns about the budget and BSA.

The link to send e-mails didn't go through with the message. I am hoping you can send my message on to those who are involved with this issue.

I am also sending this letter on to the school board and district.

Donna Leigh

Hello fellow Alaskans,

I am writing in concern of the budget proposals before the 2012 legislature regarding the Base Student Allocation.

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library assistants, assistant high school principals and activities and optional subjects. These may at first glimpse seem like overall broad based cuts, but they will each specifically and deeply cut my student and his educational experience.

Our student's learning environment is impacted by dirty hallways and wear and tear on facilities that need maintenance and custodial services to maintain a wholesome physical atmosphere. Our high school student attends school willingly each day looking forward to the "optional classes" such as band that keep him motivated and make him a more rounded student and community member. Without classes such as band he would quickly lose his enthusiasm for school. He is currently enrolled in an "study hall" class that allows students to go to the library to work on independent study classes not offered at the high school. Without a library assistant this learning opportunity could be eliminated. Our student supports the basketball program as a member of the Pep band. He also attends events such Music Fest. As a parent I have come to highly value and rely on the assistant principals to help assure safety at these activities.

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Thank you for listening,
Donna Leigh
1223 Fritz Cove Road
Juneau, AK 99801
907-321-3475

Murray Richmond

From: dbwally <dbwally@cvinternet.net>
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2012 12:47 PM
To: Murray Richmond; wally
Subject: school funding

Thank you for the opportunity to give my opinion on increasing the basic foundation formula for schools. I have lived in Alaska for over 30 years and have been happy with the school funding until now. It is important to know that I spent much of the previous 30 years residing in Valdez. They have adequate funding to run their schools and in the rare instances that they require addition funds they can request it from the city. To my knowledge every time they requested it they received needed funds from the city. As evidenced by their funding level I believe Valdez loves and supports their schools.

Two years ago our family moved to Kenny Lake, a rural community of 110 students who travel from 20+ miles in all directions to attend. Several families who attend Kenny Lake Schools drive 12 miles on an unmaintained road to get to Chitna where the school bus picks them up for an hour trip to school. I asked one of the mothers "why not home school them?" and she said Kenny Lake was such a good school that it was worth her effort to make sure her kids got to school.

In Kenny Lake there is no budget reserve or waste to cut to absorb a lack of school funding from the State. Kenny Lake has no "city" from which we can request additional funds to help run our schools. My wife is currently a teacher at Kenny Lake Schools (Copper River School District) and because I am retired I have spent many hours observing and volunteering at the school. I know how much money she spends on supplies, food, prizes and equipment for her students; most of this is not reimbursed by the school. My wife recently told me that she has never worked so hard or loved a job so much as the one she currently has. After 25 years of teaching I believe the reason she loves her job so much is she sees how hard everyone in this community works to provide quality experiences for their children and she likes being on that team. While at school I have observed a vast volunteer network that cooks meals for extra-curricular activities, sells concessions, fund raises, drives hockey players to games, volunteers in classrooms and conducts school activities such as spelling bees, music concerts and other special events. There is a level of "supporting the schools" like I have never observed, and I have been observing for 65 years. I guess what I am saying is our community is giving all they can to help provide a quality education to our students. At this time there is no waste in our school. The parents have no more money or time to give. We need help from the only funding source that we currently have....the State. Kenny Lake loves and supports their schools but like other cities within Alaska we need the necessary funds to adequately operate them.

thank you,

Denny Wallace
Kenny Lake
822-3428

Murray Richmond

From: Kathy Gearhart <kgearhart@crsd.us>
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2012 11:10 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: RE: Increase in School Funding

Dear Senator Thomas,

Thank you Senator Thomas for your commitment to the children of Alaska!

My name is Kathy Gearhart and I am the Superintendent/Board Secretary at Copper River School District (CRSD). As you know, there has been a significant increase in energy costs, and up to a 20% increase in health insurance. That, along with pay increases required by negotiations with teachers and classified staff, has put a huge strain on the budget for CRSD next year.

Being on the Senate Education Committee, I'm sure that you are aware of the predicament that school districts are in across the State. Unlike private sector companies that have control over wages and benefits, school districts must negotiate with teachers and classified staff and are bound by State law to do so. I personally think that it would be in the State's best interest to take a good look at the laws concerning teacher's in the State. Being from Wisconsin, I have respect for Governor Scott Walker tackling this difficult issue to address the budget in Wisconsin. In the meantime, there is a crisis that needs immediate attention for school district budgets. If CRSD receives the same budget as this year, the district will be forced to cut 4 of our 35 teachers. In a rural REAA community with six schools, that will be a devastating blow to students. Another area the CRSD has suffered greatly is transportation. The funding for transportation each year always sees a shortfall and the district was forced to cut a route this year. Requiring some of our students to be on the bus for 3 – 4 hours per day. Then there are fuel costs, and we all know the hardships they have brought on everyone.

I ask that the Senate Education Committee please consider school funding as a top priority this year. Alaska's and our Countries future depends on it!

Sincerely,

Kathy Gearhart

From: Murray Richmond [mailto:Murray_Richmond@legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2012 4:04 PM
To: chris.pastro@k12northstar.org; brpietila@yahoo.com; jenclarke11@gmail.com; akbarnhills@gmail.com; hutton99829@yahoo.com; kjanssen@ptialaska.net; landrew@swrsd.org; bill.watkins@kodiakschools.org; clark.putt@gmail.com; ehhilts@gmail.com; Kris Benson; Tom Conley; Robert Thomason; Cindy Reilly; Eddie Campbell; Lon Garrison; Watkins, Bill; scrawfor@alaska.net; Sally McLaughlin; Kathy Gearhart; Kathy Gearhart; dldmevenden@hotmail.com; dihles@gci.net; wmcleod@dlgasd.org; sbutterfield@chathamsd.org; mdavis@cordovasd.org; Ex_Steve@asdk12.org; shelaghands@gmail.com; darsie@live.com; Dave Rees; sitkakids@yahoo.com; amy_kesten@jsd.k12.ak.us; andimike@ak.net; alweinberg@hydaburg.k12.ak.us; jbirdreed@gmail.com; jane.eisemann@kodiakschools.org; mbyer@hbsd.net; kcleary@aptalaska.net; Janet_capito@jsd.k12.ak.us; rdm@gci.net; jnygaard@cordovasd.org; erin_mitchell@jsd.k12.ak.us; Kennedy_Crystal@asdk12.org; Slyon@KPBSD.k12.ak.us; Lindsey.Cassidy@kodiakschools.org; jayamylloyd@earthlink.net; timitullis@yahoo.com; kristie@alaskaglacierseafoods.com; brianna.pannell@gmail.com; jrellis@gci.net; schwartz.jp.lf@gmail.com; 'annekilkenny@hotmail.com'; Neel_julye@asdk12.org; shelaghands@gmail.com; wjacobsen@cordovasd.org; Ty Mase; Liebner_Sue; Mary DeSpain; Nancy lehnhart; Roach_Wade; friedman_jeff@asdk12.org; mpcollins@acsalaska.net; jnygaard@cordovasd.org; dcollins@cordovasd.org; dcaposey@skagwayschool.org; lucas_frances@asdk12.org; sgoudreau@valdez.cc; ballen@kuspuk.org; alweinberg@hydaburg.k12.ak.us; Ellen Pavitt; schoolboard@thurstons.us;

scrawfor@alaska.net; Klawock School; wmcleod@dlgsd.org; Olson_Robin@asdk12.org

Subject: Increase in School Funding

Dear Parents, Teachers, Administrators and others who care about our children,

You are receiving this letter because you wrote us last year concerning an increase in school funding through raising the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As you probably know, the measure passed the Senate, but was stripped out of the House bill. There was a one-time \$20 million put in, but that did not affect the overall BSA.

Senator Thomas and the Senate Education Committee will be introducing another BSA bill this year, and we welcome your support. Currently the bill is being introduced, and does not have a number at this time. (There is a funding increase bill from Senator Davis's office, but we are going to ask for more than the amounts in her bill.)

The bill is currently scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee on January 27 at 8:00 am. We will be looking for some people to testify on that morning, but more important, we can use emails from supporters of school funding. You can send them to me at this email address, and they will be included in the Senate packet for the bill. We are **ESPECIALLY** looking for letters from parents. It is very effective to present a package of emails to the committee, and to say that a large percentage are from parents. But if you are a teacher, school board member or administrator, please go ahead and send us an email of support. Just try to get a parent to send one as well!

We appreciate your support and time. I will keep you posted on the status of the bill. If you do NOT want to receive emails from me regarding this issue, please let me know and I will take you off the distribution list. If you know of someone who should be getting these emails, then forward their address to me.

Again, thank you for your time and efforts.

Murray Richmond

Legislative Aide

Senator Joe Thomas

(907) 465-6443

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2012 8:12 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for education funding bill

From: Janice Sheufelt [mailto:sheufelt@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, January 21, 2012 5:02 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Subject: Support for education funding bill

Dear Senator Thomas,

This is an email of support for a bill to raise the Base Student Allocation. I have two daughters in the Juneau School District; it is imperative to raise the BSA in order to maintain quality education in our public schools here in Alaska.

Sincerely,
Janice Sheufelt

Murray Richmond

From: Kris Benson <kbenson722@gci.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2012 3:22 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: For Senate Education Committee

Dear Senator Thomas:

I am a parent of a middle school student. I have worked at the high school as a long-term science substitute. I have volunteered at my child's elementary and middle schools. I have volunteered to assist the school district develop a five-year plan in concert with various funding scenarios. With my exposure to public schools and the school district budgeting process, I want to urge you to propose an increase in the Base Student Allocation for public school funding.

It is heartbreaking to see the need for basic services, supplies, and staff in our public schools. For example, at the elementary school one year, the administration asked the PTA for funding to replace a worn entry rug because the school couldn't afford it. At the middle school, needed teaching positions have been deleted due to the lack of funds. At our high school, a counselor position was cut, leaving the remaining two counselors frazzled and unable to keep up with the demands of their jobs. Last year, our district cut about \$4 million dollars and is proposing a similar level of cuts again this year.

In addition to more funding for Alaskan schools please work to change the funding process from the current year-to-year system. The uncertainty of not knowing the next year's funding is really difficult. The district starts to develop a budget long before the legislative session ends. I believe an increase in the BSA will accomplish this goal as well.

Sincerely,
Kristine Benson
145 Behrends Avenue
Juneau, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Shelagh Sands <shelaghsands@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 21, 2012 5:53 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Re: Increase in School Funding

Dear Senators,

Once again you are asked to increase the SBA for education in this state. Why are you being asked again? Because the state has never kept up with the rate of inflation alone for the SBA. I have lobbied for years for the state to keep education at a high priority and keep the SBA inflation proof. This has not happened.

I read that the Governor wants to put a one time add on in funds for education, but not change the SBA foundation formula as that would mean the money would be present every year. What a novel idea, a school would actually be able to count on money for the upcoming year and not look at cuts.

I have raised three children in the Haines and Juneau school districts. My first child made it through and went on to Dartmouth. My middle child is going to graduate this year and I am thankful for that as I see that 4 more million will be cut from our schools again next year. I fought tirelessly in so many ways for the public system. Well, it has finally worn me down. I am presently looking at a private school for my third child if the cuts happen. He already can't get four years of a language in this town. Art, theatre and EL have been cut in the last year.

I am a parent that helps more with children that aren't mine in this district, but I am getting totally dismayed with the public system.

It makes no sense to me why the legislature does not make an education endowment program like the permanent fund. The money could be put in every year and maybe in 30 years from now this fund would support the best education in the country.

We really have no excuses why schools are failing families. We are a rich state, have oil money and have forward thinkers in the past. Think ahead and raise the SBA this year and start an education endowment program where money is being invested for the future. Our schools rate dismally nation wide. Yet, we have amazing people in this state. Rise up and fight for the ones who will be caring for you when you are old.

Shelagh Sands

mother of three, volunteer for 15 years.

On Wed, Jan 18, 2012 at 4:03 PM, Murray Richmond <Murray_Richmond@legis.state.ak.us> wrote:

Dear Parents, Teachers, Administrators and others who care about our children,

You are receiving this letter because you wrote us last year concerning an increase in school funding through raising the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As you probably know, the measure passed the Senate, but was stripped out of the House bill. There was a one-time \$20 million put in, but that did not affect the overall BSA.

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We appreciate your support and time. I will keep you posted on the status of the bill. If you do NOT want to receive emails from me regarding this issue, please let me know and I will take you off the distribution list. If you know of someone who should be getting these emails, then forward their address to me.

Again, thank you for your time and efforts.

Murray Richmond

Legislative Aide

Senator Joe Thomas

(907) 465-6443

Murray Richmond

From: Jen and Pat Malecha <jenandpat@gci.net>
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2012 3:34 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Letter of Support for BSA Increase

To: Senate Education Committee
From: Jennifer Malecha (Juneau Resident)

My five year old son will be starting kindergarten in the Juneau School District this fall. I'm writing in support of increasing school funding. Like many school districts throughout the state Juneau is facing big budget cuts for FY2013. These cuts are deep and wide and will directly impact students and families. I'm particularly concerned about cutting school nurses in Juneau. My son has type 1 diabetes and will require testing, monitoring, and treatment throughout the school day when he starts kindergarten. In a matter of a few days I've gone from being confident and excited about my son starting kindergarten to feeling very concerned and unsure about his health and safety at school.

An increase the Base Student Allocation for FY2013 would help solve some of these budget shortfalls and hopefully keep nurses in Alaska's schools. If we truly consider children Alaska's most valuable resource we need to fund our schools adequately.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Malecha

Juneau, AK 98801
907-523-9301

Murray Richmond

From: Ellen Pavitt <ellen@gopavitt.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 9:36 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: I am a parent and support education funding!

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am a parent of a student at Thunder Mountain High School , and have put two now-grown children through the Juneau school system as well. I write to implore you to advocate for a large increase to the BSA. The proposed budget cuts are horrific and just plain **wrong**, given that our state has plenty of money.

I have spoken with many teachers and school staff over the last several years about education. They all say the same thing - that the kids coming to school today are often not as ready to learn as in years gone by. The behavior problems are more common and more severe. Our society has many forces, including toxic, overwhelming media, rampant substance abuse and overstretched parents that are creating this problem of kids not being as prepared to learn these days. Too many kids are spending way too much of their free time on electronic media instead of getting outdoors, being active, or even - studying. Is it any wonder that the drop out rate is high, and continues to be so, **in spite of much good work our schools do?**

Our drop out rate is too high. But I am certain the schools themselves are not to blame. They are filled with wonderful, dedicated staff who do the best they can with often inadequate resources. And now, it's going to get much worse, courtesy of a legislature that does not support children.

Let's stop blaming the schools for what we are all responsible for - a toxic society that is damaging our children. Let's fund the schools so that they can adequately meet the needs of all students. Don't punish the schools by not increasing the BSA **again**. And most importantly , don't punish our kids, our future, by not giving the schools the money they need to educate our kids well.

Sincerely,
Ellen Pavitt
parent and small business owner in Juneau

Murray Richmond

From: Klawock City School District <klawockd@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 8:12 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: RE: Increase in School Funding

Senator Thomas: I am writing regarding the Base Student Allocation. I support raising the BSA at this crucial time when funding is rapidly eroding from the federal level. It is critical to our schools, particularly in Southeast Alaska, that the State step in to alleviate the tremendous pressure that will be applied to our districts as the funds from Forestry Receipts disappears. Our district simply cannot continue providing the same high quality of education to the students of our community with such a huge chunk of our budget ripped out. My daughters graduated from the Klawock City School District in the last few years and are finishing their college degrees at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Alaska Southeast Juneau. Coming from a village into a larger setting academically is extremely difficult for Alaska students, but thanks to the competitive, well-rounded education provided by our school district, my girls are being successful in post-secondary education. To see the ability of our school district to provide a high quality education for the next round of students drastically diminish because the State would not step up to the plate with this much needed funding would be a disservice to the youth of our State. I would urge our legislators to raise the BSA as an investment in our kids. Valerie Steward, P.O. Box 181, Klawock, AK 99925.

From: Murray Richmond [mailto:Murray_Richmond@legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2012 4:04 PM
To: chris.pastro@k12northstar.org; brpietila@yahoo.com; jenclarke11@gmail.com; akbarnhills@gmail.com; hutton99829@yahoo.com; kjanssen@ptialaska.net; landrew@swrsd.org; bill.watkins@kodiakschools.org; clark.putt@gmail.com; ehhilts@gmail.com; Kris Benson; Tom Conley; Robert Thomason; Cindy Reilly; Eddie Campbell; Lon Garrison; Watkins, Bill; scrawfor@alaska.net; Sally McLaughlin; kgearhart@crsd.k12.ak.us; Kathy Gearhart; dldmevenden@hotmail.com; dihles@gci.net; wmcleod@dlg.org; sbutterfield@chathamsd.org; mdavis@cordovasd.org; Ex_Steve@asdk12.org; shelaghsands@gmail.com; darsie@live.com; Dave Rees; sitkakids@yahoo.com; amy_kesten@jsd.k12.ak.us; andimike@ak.net; alweinberg@hydaburg.k12.ak.us; jbirdreed@gmail.com; jane.eisemann@kodiakschools.org; mbyer@hbsd.net; kcleary@aptalaska.net; Janet_capito@jsd.k12.ak.us; rdm@gci.net; jnygaard@cordovasd.org; erin_mitchell@jsd.k12.ak.us; Kennedy_Crystal@asdk12.org; Slyon@KPBSD.k12.ak.us; Lindsey.Cassidy@kodiakschools.org; jayamylloyd@earthlink.net; timitullis@yahoo.com; kristie@alaskaglacierseafoods.com; brianna.pannell@gmail.com; jrellis@gci.net; schwartz.jp.lf@gmail.com; 'annekilkenny@hotmail.com'; Neel_julye@asdk12.org; shelaghsands@gmail.com; wjacobsen@cordovasd.org; Ty Mase; Liebner_Sue; Mary DeSpain; Nancy lehnhart; Roach_Wade; friedman_jeff@asdk12.org; mpcollins@acsalaska.net; jnygaard@cordovasd.org; dcollins@cordovasd.org; dcaposey@skagwayschool.org; lucas_frances@asdk12.org; sgoudreau@valdez.cc; ballen@kuspuk.org; alweinberg@hydaburg.k12.ak.us; Ellen Pavitt; schoolboard@thurstons.us; scrawfor@alaska.net; Klawock School; wmcleod@dlg.org; Olson_Robin@asdk12.org
Subject: Increase in School Funding

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Again, thank you for your time and efforts.

Murray Richmond
Legislative Aide
Senator Joe Thomas
(907) 465-6443

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Version: 2012.0.1901 / Virus Database: 2109/4751 - Release Date: 01/18/12

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 2:53 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Please support SB171

From: Terry Snyder [mailto:terry@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 1:57 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Linda Menard
Subject: Please support SB171

I am encouraging you to fully support the most important resource in our state-Education.

A great start would be to support **SB 171** which increases the yearly BSA formula in our public school districts.

Without that financial support the Mat-Su School District will face even more instructional and operational cutbacks to an already drastically trimmed budget. Our district eliminated 200 jobs last year through efficiencies, attrition, careful planning and stewardship of the public money. At the same time the district has improved reading and math skills, increased graduation rates and made impressive strides in resolving the dropout rate. They have built a vocational program which they continue to foster that districts all over the state and country are envious of. These were all tasks leaders have asked them to do better. Our district is keeping its part of the educational bargain in a big way.

Raising the BSA to \$125.00 per student as SB 171 allows for particularly after flat funding last year is a very reasonable request. I would like to see even more monetary support from the state for public education. I do think most agree a commitment from our legislature in a more stable long ranged expectation of increases would be a better solution. While that is a goal we should all work towards I am insisting upon your support of SB 171 this session to meet the current needs and challenges in districts.

Last October the voters of Mat-Su approved a five year bond for investment in our borough schools. I worked hard with a group of volunteers to educate the public about the importance of that investment and the return to communities about the issue. The message was received loud and clear! They voted to reach in their own pockets and raise their mill rate for their portion of the bond which reflects their overwhelming confidence in the job our district is doing to educate our children. Now it is your turn to vote to do the same by **supporting SB 171**.

Thank you for your service and consideration in advance,

Terry Snyder

Murray Richmond

From: Grier Hopkins
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 1:14 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: New Pom:SB 171 Increase Base Student Allocation

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

From: Poms@legis.state.ak.us [mailto:Poms@legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 1:10 PM
To: Grier Hopkins
Subject: New Pom:SB 171 Increase Base Student Allocation

Charles Berray
17015 Nickleen St

Anchorage 99516, EyeOnAlaska
chuckberray@gmail.com
9076026576

Joe, I support your effort to increase the per student base rate allocation. Education is the most important investment that the State can make.

Copied to Cathy Giesel.

Chuck Berray
Anchorage, AK.

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 11:57 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 171

From: Jeremy Maxie [mailto:jam97@hotmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 6:49 AM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Cc: Sen. Lesil McGuire

Subject: SB 171

Hi Senator Thomas,

I wanted to give a word of support for raising the Base Student Allocation for education funding. My wife is an attorney and I'm an electrical engineer, so we both know how important a role education plays in having a strong, prosperous future for our communities. We don't have kids yet, but we would like to know that when we do, our education system will be one we are proud to support and send our kids through. Thank you for your time.

Jeremy Maxie and Kirsten Kinegak-Friday
9100 Honeysuckle St
Anchorage, AK 99502
907-929-2765

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:58 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 171

From: Mike Kenny [<mailto:mkenny@attalascom.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 8:04 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Cc: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Subject: SB 171

TO: The Honorable Joe Thomas, The Alaska State Senate

Dear Senator Thomas,

Our understanding is that you are working to move SB 171 which will increase this year's Base Student Allocation by \$125 with another increase next year.

Good on you and you sure have our full support in your efforts. There are many citizens around here who understand that Alaska's future prosperity will be determined by investing in the education of her children.

Our Founding Fathers understood the importance of public education and our Country has prospered in large measure because we invested in "little school houses on the prairie". Let us make certain the same opportunities are available to Alaskans on the Tundra and elsewhere in our Great State.

Stinginess to our children by refusing to fund our public education system in times of plenty is foolish ideology trumping the common good.

We know your support for training and educating Alaskans is strong and has been throughout your career.

Thank you for leading the charge once again.

Best Regards,

Michael & Valerie Kenny
17016 Aries Ct.
Anchorage, AK. 99516

907.227.3993

No virus found in this message.

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Version: 2012.0.1901 / Virus Database: 2109/4764 - Release Date: 01/24/12

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Version: 2012.0.1901 / Virus Database: 2109/4764 - Release Date: 01/24/12

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:58 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: per student allocation

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

From: Susan Pagenkopf [mailto:queue@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 8:32 PM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Sen. Dennis Egan
Subject: Re: per student allocation

I want to express my support of SB171 in favor of increasing allocation of \$125. per student. We cannot afford NOT to do this. Thank you for submitting and supporting it.

Susan (Williams) Pagenkopf
retired teacher (1959-1977)

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:49 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 171

From: Jeremy Maxie [<mailto:jam97@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 6:49 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Cc: Sen. Lesil McGuire
Subject: SB 171

Hi Senator Thomas,

I wanted to give a word of support for raising the Base Student Allocation for education funding. My wife is an attorney and I'm an electrical engineer, so we both know how important a role education plays in having a strong, prosperous future for our communities. We don't have kids yet, but we would like to know that when we do, our education system will be one we are proud to support and send our kids through. Thank you for your time.

Jeremy Maxie and Kirsten Kinegak-Friday
9100 Honeysuckle St
Anchorage, AK 99502
907-929-2765

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:25 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB 171

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

From: turner [mailto:turner@alaska.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 9:08 AM
To: Sen. Joe Thomas
Subject: Support for SB 171

Senator Thomas;
Just a note to let you know that I support raising the base student allocation. With the wealth this state has, it should be willing to invest in the future of all of its citizens especially its children.
Thank you for your efforts.
Steve Turner, Anchorage, Alaska

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:25 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Support for SB171

From: anji gallanos [mailto:anji.gallanos@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 9:41 AM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Subject: Support for SB171

Dear Sen Thomas

I wanted to write to you to show my support for increasing the base student allocation. I have two school age children ages 11 & 9. We are a working family in Juneau and spend 2-3 hours per week volunteering with in our children's school. We live in the greatest state in the nation and I would like to see our state invest in not only my children but all Alaskan children and their future. Please continue support for SB171.

Anji Gallanos

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:13 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Thank you

From: AKMuckraker . [mailto:akmuckraker@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 6:53 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Subject: Thank you

Dear Senator Thomas,

Thank you for your work on SB171, and for prioritizing children and their education. I believe that increasing the base student allocation is a sound investment in a prosperous future for all Alaskans. Keep doing what you do.

All the best,

Jeanne Devon

AKMuckraker

Managing Editor, The Mudflats

Facebook - Jeanne Devon, and The Mudflats

Twitter - Mudflats

The NY Times Best-Seller, Blind Allegiance to Sarah Palin, is available at Amazon.com

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 7:46 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: Base Student Allocation - SB 171

From: Mim McConnell [<mailto:sheltercovepublishing@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 4:31 PM

To: Sen. Joe Thomas

Cc: Sen. Bert Stedman

Subject: Base Student Allocation - SB 171

Dear Sen. Thomas,

I'm writing in support of increasing the base student allocation. The need for this dollar amount to keep pace with inflation and district and student needs has been an issue for a very long time. I remember this from my time on the Southeast Islands School District School Board days in the late 80s. Thank you for promoting this increase.

Best wishes,

Mim

-

Mim McConnell, Owner

Shelter Cove Publishing

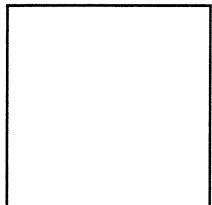
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204 Observatory St., Sitka, AK 99835



Murray Richmond

From: shawk1919@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 9:22 PM
To: Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Cc: Murray Richmond
Subject: School funding

Representative Kawasaki

I am the mother of a wonderful second grader at Watershed Elementary in Fairbanks. My child excels socially, but has a harder time in reading and math. I would say that he has ADHD, and I am sure his Teachers and Principal would agree. He is in a class with twenty-two other students with their own strengths and weaknesses. There are children that are reading and writing two grades higher than my son and there are children who are behind him. I watch some of the students sit still and listen to the teacher; and I see how hard it is for others to focus. Mrs. Barnes, Mrs. Chavez, and Mrs. McDermott have been great teachers and my son can read, add, subtract, and write. He loves science and wants to study sharks when he gets older. I however, think he will be a politician. His highest grades are in social studies. I have been very impressed with the education that he has received so far.

I am worried that because education is currently flat funded in Alaska (SEA), the quality of education is going to decrease. The Fairbanks North Star Borough is asking teachers to add two students to their classrooms. That can add up to an additional 40 students per day. They are also being asked to add fifty more minutes into their school day. In the North Slope Borough, they are still using a science book from 1996. We have come too far in the last 16 years to be using the same book. Teacher's salaries are not keeping up with the cost of living. I'm worried that we will not be able to retain our quality teachers or replace those who leave. There is an easy solution to the problems our schools in Alaska are facing. They should be at the top of list for funding, not at the bottom. Please increase the funding that they receive. Our children's education depends on it.

Shannon Vargas

Murray Richmond

From: barb jewell <jewell@ctcak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 8:46 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: BSA funding
Attachments: To the Senate Education Committee.docx

Attached please find my letter in support of increasing the BSA for Alaskan students. Thank you for your work on this vital issue!

Barb Jewell
P.O. Box 2173
Cordova, Alaska 99574
907-424-8695

Murray Richmond

From: Kate Hudson <hudsonhouse@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 8:22 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: SB 171

As parents of a 2nd grader and soon to be Kindergartner, we are writing to express our support for SB 171. The Governor's budget proposal makes no increase in the base student allocation for the next 3 years. Flat funding for schools essentially means cutting education, as costs continue to rise. The Juneau School District had to make painful cuts last year, and is again looking at making significant cuts in its budget for 2013, cuts that will directly impact our children in their classrooms. Extended learning is on the chopping block. Class sizes will rise. Essential Para-educator support will be cut. The Governor says that without tangible improvements in school results, funding should not be increased. This makes no sense to us. How is cutting teaching staff going to help? And in fact, achievements have been increasing. Reading and math results have climbed steadily for 4 years.

A one-time injection of funds like the energy funds last year is welcome, but is not consistent with building a long term systematic approach to education. Nor is it conducive to morale for school districts to lurch from year to year in uncertainty as we have been doing. Increasing the BSA will restore some consistency and certainty to the budget process and help our educators plan for the future.

Investment in schools is an investment in our community and our state's future. We support this bill and urge the Legislature to pass it.

Jim and Kate Hudson

Murray Richmond

From: Lisa Mattson <lisamattson13@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 4:17 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Children MATTER, DON'T TAKE AWAY OUR NURSES!!!!

Children MATTER, so who WILL CARE!

I will be attending the meeting this coming Tuesday (Attend the budget meeting Tuesday, January 24, at 6:00 pm in the Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School Library).

Sacrificing our children's safety to save money does not sit well with my family!

As many of you know our son, Lucas has severe nut allergies; we are required to have an Epi-Pen and other medicines with us at ALL TIMES in case he goes into anaphylactic shock! When Lucas started kindergarten this year, I was concerned enough since he attends a non nut- free school. This was only compounded when I went to hand the teacher an Epi-Pen, additional medication, and an instructional letter, and was met with a reply of, "Oh, all medicine is kept with the nurse". After many meetings with the nurse and many months of staring at my cell phone expecting it to ring at snack and lunch time...I began to relax as much as one can, when dealing with the health of a child.

When budget cuts were mentioned, and the possibility of nurses being cut I said, "They would never risk our kids like that"! But they are indeed looking at replacing our nurses with "Health Assistants".

This poses the following questions.

What qualifications and training do non-licensed personnel who are assigned to the school health office in the absence of a school nurse have? At this time there is no definition given to "Health Assistant/Aid" by the Superintendant. Will they be able to give injections?

We take for granted the role nurses have in our schools: In addition to assessing student health status, making referrals, administering injections, and delivering emergency care, nurses also manage insulin pumps, check blood sugar levels, identify vision and hearing problems, insert tubes, suction children on ventilators, administer medication (in some cases vaccines), counsel pregnant teens, notice cases of abuse/neglect, to name just a few. We have a diverse population of students that the school nurse is the only health care professional that many can afford to see. By allowing these nurses to be cut out of the school budget the message we are allowing to be sent to these families is that their children's health is of no concern to us!

To make sure children's health care needs are met so they can achieve what they need to do in the classrooms, we MUST keep repeating the message that, **HEALTH AND LEARNING GO TOGETHER!!!**

Thanks,

Lisa KS Mattson

Murray Richmond

From: Susan Loseby <susan_loseby@jsd.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 11:51 AM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Letter to support BSA bill
Attachments: Letter to representatives

Murray Richmond

From: Edra Morledge
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 3:41 PM
To: Murray Richmond; Tim Lamkin; Lila Hobbs; Thomas Obermeyer
Cc: Lindsay Williams; Jonathon Taylor
Subject: FW: SB 139 and SB 171

SB 171 Support

From: Comeau_Carol [mailto:Comeau_Carol@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 2:16 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: Comeau_Carol; Laule_Marie; Stiteler_Chad; Level I; School Board; Bruce Johnson (bjohnson@alaskaacs.org); Karen.Rehfeld@alaska.gov; mike.hanley@alaska.gov
Subject: SB 139 and SB 171

Dear Senators:

I am not able to testify on Senate Bills 139 or 171 tomorrow morning due to another commitment so I hope these comments can be entered into the record for your consideration.

First of all, I want to thank **all** of you for being such outstanding advocates for our public schools in Anchorage, and in the state. We sincerely appreciate your support, both financial and in so many other ways! We applaud your service by being on the Senate Education committee.

As you probably know, I have just released my preliminary budget to the public and to the School Board for their consideration. This budget will have two more public hearings on February 1 and February 9; the School Board will probably make some changes to my preliminary budget. After they complete their work, our budget is transmitted to the Municipality and the Assembly by March 5 which is required by our municipal charter. Our Assembly public hearing is scheduled for March 27 where they will set the upper limit of spending and the level of local contribution to the Anchorage School District. After that time, we have to wait until the legislature and the governor complete your work to determine the level of funding we will have access to. If an increase occurs, we revise our budget again, and reinstate what we can, and then we have to go back to the Assembly for permission to spend the funds if they exceed the already approved upper limit.

As you can imagine. This budget cycle undermines our credibility, and takes a great deal of time and energy to continually revise our budgets. The emotional turmoil on potentially impacted employees is destructive to their morale and ability to focus on their important work of educating our students, and doing their jobs.

We are making excellent use of the additional C and TE funds from SB 84 last year and encourage you to visit some of our high schools to see how these funds are being used to expand our career pathway programs. We would ask that you give serious consideration to expanding the flexibility for the use of these funds for at least middle schools and high schools (grades 6-12) so that we can support our career planning in the middle schools. We have had to recommend the deletion of our career guides in the middle schools for next year, and having the flexibility to use the C and TE funds for the middle grades would allow more expansion of our construction, health and pre-engineering academies.

I urge you to support the funding for the next three years as proposed by the Education Committee in SB 171. The years that we had advance notice of our funding increases as a result of the Education Funding Task Force which was co-chaired by Rep. Mike Hawker and Sen. Bert Stedman allowed us to plan and avoid our annual "guessing as to our funding" as I described above. All districts in the state benefitted from this funding and would urge you to reinstate a three year BSA increase that allowed us to compensate, at a minimum, for inflation and increased costs of doing our work.

Additionally, we are urging you to consider reinstating the COLA to the Pupil Transportation funding for all districts which provide pupil transportation. All districts are having to use their instructional revenue to pay the costs of their transportation contracts. Costs are going up for fuel, tires, repairs, and bus purchases.

Again, my sincere thank you for your long-standing support for education. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about these statements, or if you have a need for more information.

Sincerely,
Carol Comeau
Superintendent
Anchorage School District

Murray Richmond

From: Sen. Joe Thomas
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 3:35 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: FW: SB 139 and SB 171

From: Comeau_Carol [mailto:Comeau_Carol@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 2:16 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: Comeau_Carol; Laule_Marie; Stiteler_Chad; Level I; School Board; Bruce Johnson (bjohnson@alaskaacs.org); Karen.Rehfeld@alaska.gov; mike.hanley@alaska.gov
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Sincerely,
Carol Comeau
Superintendent
Anchorage School District

Murray Richmond

From: Edra Morledge
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 3:31 PM
To: Murray Richmond; Tim Lamkin; Lila Hobbs; Thomas Obermeyer
Cc: Lindsay Williams; Jonathon Taylor
Subject: FW: SB 139 and SB 171

From: Bob Pawlowski
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 3:28 PM
To: Edra Morledge
Subject: FW: SB 139 and SB 171

From: Comeau_Carol [mailto:Comeau_Carol@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 2:16 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: Comeau_Carol; Laule_Marie; Stiteler_Chad; Level I; School Board; Bruce Johnson (bjohnson@alaskaacs.org); Karen.Rehfeld@alaska.gov; mike.hanley@alaska.gov
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Sincerely,
Carol Comeau
Superintendent
Anchorage School District

Murray Richmond

From: Jeff Hoover <juneaufour@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 1:49 PM
To: Murray Richmond
Subject: Re: Support of BSA increase

Just to clarify. I don't work for the Juneau school system, but I volunteered my time on review of school budgets. Thanks Jeff

From: Jeff Hoover <juneaufour@yahoo.com>
To: "murray_richmond@legis.state.ak.us" <murray_richmond@legis.state.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 11:17 AM
Subject: Support of BSA increase

I understand Senator Thomas is introducing legislation to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for K-12 Education. I am a parent of two boys (elementary and high school) in the Juneau school system and I support the increase.

I have worked with school budgets at the elementary school site council level and Juneau district level and I know the school system is not perfect. However, the JSD is facing a large budget deficit due to increasing costs and flat revenues. The JSD budget gets about 63 percent of revenue from the state (includes PERS) and the rest from the city, feds and other grants. The JSD budget is about 90 percent personal services and most of that is invested in the actual schools, including teachers, principals, counselors, librarians, janitors, etc. Even with all this state and federal funding, parents and teachers are constantly doing fund raisers to pay for activities and school supplies. JSD is trying to make changes to improve their programs but it takes monies funded from the BSA. It seems like more funds are needed each year due to federal requirements and to replace lost grant monies (federal and other types). Increasing the BSA is very important to keep the school system stable.

Keeping students engage in the classroom in the 21st century takes more technology (and monies) than in the past - pens and paper are far cheaper than computers. It is also important to have a low pupil to teacher ratio as kids get more exposure to the teacher and can learn much more. Both of my kids are good students and I can personally say it was due to good and committed teachers leading small classrooms. It is amazing to think teachers are trying to teach our kids when the odds are 26 (or more) to 1. I have a hard enough time teaching my 2 boys at the same time let alone 24 other kids. I don't think we appreciate teachers enough and I don't think they are overpaid for the work they are doing with our kids. They may not work all year, but the time they spend in the classroom is well worth the investment in education.

Thank-you for your support of education.

Jeff Hoover
4416 Ichabod Lane
Juneau AK 99801