

From: Task Force on Education Funding
To: Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: RE: Education task force

On Oct 23, 2025, at 8:04 AM, Denis Gardella wrote:

Hello Representatives and Senators,
Unless something has changed, I'm reading that this task force to brainstorm ways to "fix" Alaska's poor education performance is restricted to input from education professionals only without any parent input, parents being the recipients of any proposed changes. Really? How can you not consider input from parents? I really think you all should go to your districts and have a few townhall meetings open to the public on this matter. Advertise it well in advance and make it a prominent affair. This issue is of the utmost importance! Alaska's poor educational performance has been like this for some years now and the people you are inviting to brainstorm fresh ideas are the very ones that have brought disaster to our current state of education! Have you thought about that? How many "great ideas" have they tried over the years? What has it cost in dollars? What has it cost in quality of life and the health of our society? At what point do you say "enough"! I currently know of 16 states that have instituted some form of school choice. I also know that Alaska is , per capita, the largest homeschooling state. Why do you think that is? When I pose that question to our local school board they are very good "artful dodgers" and refuse to believe that parents do not want their kids indoctrinated into gender ideology so they choose to keep them home. They also come out of homeschool actually knowing something other than social justice talking points.

This current state of failure is directly on the hands of the unions and these other education "professionals" that you have exclusively invited. Do not make this mistake!

I've heard it said that if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out! Better to enter the kingdom of heaven with one eye than to be cast into hell. This mess that we are currently in and have been in for a few years now is causing us great harm as a society. It's time to "pluck it out" and institute some form of school choice rather than ride this same horse all the way to disaster.

Loudly advertise (radio, tv ads) a townhall mtg or two at a prominent place , then travel back to your districts and LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE! I would like a response before October 30. Thank you

[REDACTED]

From: Task Force on Education Funding
To: Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: RE: educational funding task force

On Oct 20, 2025, at 2:34 PM, Fritz Wozniak [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Senator parents must have a seat at the Alaska Education Funding Task Force.
Parents must have a seat at the table.
Sincerely, Cynthia Wozniak FBKS. AK.
Parent/Concerned Alaskan

[REDACTED]

From: Peter Hoepfner [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2025 3:14 PM
To: Task Force on Education Funding
Cc: Sen. Löki Tobin; Michael Mason; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: Re: Maintenance of school buildings comes out of education dollars, a solution to losing classroom funding for deferred maintenance

Dear Education Task Force Members,
As a follow-up to my prior email:

I write to address the **Fundamental Issue** underlying Alaska's education crisis: **the urgent need for stable, adequate state revenue.**

THE REVENUE CRISIS

Eleven years ago, SB 21 cut \$2 billion annually from state revenues through oil corporation tax reductions. At the time, oil companies could not—and did not—promise increased development in exchange for these cuts. That gamble failed to deliver. Since 2014, Alaska has not added any new revenue sources. Instead, we have been depleting reserves built up during Governor Sarah Palin's ACES tax structure. These reserves are running out, and we are now seeing the consequences across all state services, particularly education.

THE CASCADING CONSEQUENCES

The effects of this revenue crisis extend far beyond crumbling school buildings:

- Alaska's teacher retirement system is now ranked the worst in the United States
- Districts cannot recruit teachers domestically and are resorting to recruiting from the Philippines to meet basic educational needs
- The federal government is now proposing \$100,000 fines per visa for foreign teacher recruitment
- We are literally outsourcing the education of Alaska's children because we've made teaching here financially untenable

These are not isolated problems—they are direct results of chronic underfunding stemming from our broken revenue structure.

LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES

We cannot continue managing state government by draining savings accounts. The ten-year moratorium on school construction, inadequate education funding, deteriorating infrastructure, and the teacher recruitment crisis are all symptoms of this fundamental revenue problem.

Alaska needs predictable, sustainable revenue streams—not continued reliance on depleting reserves or wishful thinking about oil development. Other resource-rich states have diversified their revenue sources while Alaska has chosen austerity and depletion.

THE PATH FORWARD

I urge the legislature to:

- Develop new, stable revenue sources to properly fund education and essential services

- Stop kicking problems down the road through moratoriums and budget cuts
- Learn from this eleven-year experiment and chart a fiscally responsible course

Our children's education and safety cannot wait for another decade of depleting reserves. Alaska needs real solutions, not more delays.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pete Hoepfner

20 year local School Board member, Cordova

On Oct 13, 2025, at 2:03 PM, Peter Hoepfner [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Education Task Force Members,

Thank you for soliciting comments on the critical issues facing Alaska's schools. I appreciate that the legislature recognizes education has been chronically underfunded over the past 17 years, with only a 5% funding increase during that time.

I write to address the serious consequences this lack of funding has created, particularly regarding school infrastructure.

SCHOOL BUILDING CRISIS

Communities consistently prioritize teachers, educational materials, and student services over buildings. When forced to "tighten their belts," districts face impossible choices: defer maintenance in hopes of future funding, or cut student services to fix leaky roofs?

Every district now has significant deferred maintenance. According to the National Council on School Facilities, states should spend 4% of total school building value annually on capital projects. With Alaska's 500 K-12 schools valued at \$9.4 billion, we should be investing \$374 million per year.

Instead:

- Capital spending dropped sharply after 2014 (following SB 21's \$2 billion oil tax cuts)
- A TEN YEAR moratorium on school construction began in 2015
- Last legislative session approved \$38 million, but Governor Dunleavy cut \$25 million, leaving just \$13 million—a mere 3.5% of recommended funding.

COMMUNITY AND SAFETY IMPACT

Schools serve as community hubs and emergency evacuation centers. Allowing buildings to deteriorate puts lives at risk and eliminates safe gathering spaces during crises. (Noting LKSD currently, with typhoon remnants hitting Kipnuk and how the school has more people in the building as an evacuation center than lives in Kipnuk)

THE COST OF DELAY

The ten-year construction moratorium has been counterproductive. Construction costs have escalated dramatically, making deferred projects far more expensive. Bans and

moratoriums don't solve problems—they amplify costs and create greater financial burden for the state.

A PATH FORWARD!! A SOLUTION!!

I urge the legislature to establish a dedicated School Facilities Maintenance Fund with consistent, protected annual appropriations. This would ensure predictable funding for districts to **plan** capital projects, prevent small problems from becoming expensive emergencies, and ultimately saving state money by addressing maintenance proactively rather than reactively. Such a fund would demonstrate Alaska's commitment to safe learning environments and fiscally responsible governance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pete Hoepfner

From: Task Force on Education Funding
To: Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: RE: Parents' and Grandparents' Rights

On Oct 26, 2025, at 9:51 PM, Jon and Ruth Ewig [REDACTED] wrote:

October 24, 2025

We demand parent and student seats on the "Education Funding Task Force." Currently, parents and students have no voice on the panel. This panel was formed without us, by legislators who stole our PFD and gave most of the state money to the far left unions. What a dirty trick. We should have earned \$3,892 this year from earnings but \$1,000 is what we were sent. One honest legislator predicts a continuing drop in the PFD each year said it will drop by half more and following that it will be gone.

The rogue legislators forming this "Task Force" are: Loki Tobin, Jesse Kiehl, Mike Cronk, Rebecca Himshoot, Andy Story, and Justin Ruffridge.

****Questions for these legislators and assistants who overrode the Governor's Veto of the bloated funding bill.**

1) What qualifies you to create a left-wing, committee that will make decisions for parents, grandparents and community members with the help of left-wing unions? . Your worldview clashes with "We the People." Your "woke" (Marxist) worldview destroys and does not follow the Constitutions, or the criminal code, or the Bill of Rights..

You have been trained that there is no right-no wrong which is against good values and good character and the free market. Are you legislators worried about the indoctrination of children into pornography at all ages being bought by school districts?.

3) How much experience do you have with strong families that will pass along good citizens? Are you aware of or do you care that the students in Alaska are at the bottom of the academic assessments compared to the rest of the states?

4) Are any of the six of you aware of Western Civilization with traditional family values, free market, good work ethic? When you robbed us of our PFD, you proved that you have no integrity or good character.

Listed here are those who do have a voice on this panel: ACSA (Alaska Council of School Administrators), AASB, (Alaska Association of School Boards), AML (Alaska Municipal League), and NEA-Alaska. These organizations (unions) are administrative and system-driven. They have actively opposed our Governor's recommendations concerning financial matters, etc.

The last few legislative sessions have produced the worst, most incompetent legislators in the history of Alaska.

Jon and Ruth Ewig 

50 years in Fairbanks, Alaska

cc Governor Mike Dunleavy

From: Task Force on Education Funding
To: Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: RE: Parents Must Have a Seat on the Alaska Education Funding Task Force

On Oct 19, 2025, at 6:58 PM, Gail McBride [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Loki Tobin, Representative Rebecca Himschoot and members,

The Alaska Task Force on Education Funding will make recommendations that could reshape K-12 education across our state for years to come. Yet, despite the profound impact of these decisions on families, the task force includes no parent or student representation.

The October 30 meeting agenda features institutional stakeholders - ACSA, AASB, AML, and NEA - Alaska - but no one speaking directly for the families and children most affected by these policies. These organizations bring valuable expertise, but their focus remains administrative and system-driven. Parents, however, live the outcomes of these systems every day - through absenteeism, learning gaps, and inequitable access to quality education.

If the task force is serious about accountability and student success, it must include parent and student voices as equal participants, not silent observers. Alaska families deserve more than a livestream link - they deserve representation and respect in the process determining their children's future.

We respectfully urge the task force to formally appoint parent and student representatives before proceeding with further meetings or recommendations. Decisions about Alaska's children should never be made without those who know their needs best - their parents.

Parents must have a seat at the table. Alaska's kids deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,
Gail McBride
Fairbanks, AK
Parent/Concerned Alaskan