

Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE
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During Session:
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House of Representatives

Sponsor Statement – HB 313

“An Act relating to student counts and estimates for public school funding; and providing for an effective date.”

Our school districts need effective tools to plan and budget for the education of our children.

Under HB 313 -- subject to the hold harmless provisions, changes in the Base Student Allocation, or other legislative changes -- districts will be able to complete the budget process and determine staffing levels earlier, eliminate unnecessary layoff notices, and execute employment contracts to improve the stability of the education climate in the state.

The purpose of the bill is to base the funding for each school district in the state on the count under A.S. 14.17.600 for the preceding fiscal year. For example, the count conducted in October 2012 will establish the funding level for the district for the 2014 Fiscal Year.

The new funding formula will not change the "hold harmless" clause currently in existence. If a decrease in enrollment of five percent or more occurs, the district will continue to receive funding based upon the Average Daily Membership plus the 75/50/25 percent addition over the next three years. Other provisions of the foundation formula will remain as well.

If a district has an actual increase in student count of greater than five percent, this legislation will require the Department of Education to provide supplemental funding to the district for the current fiscal year equal to Average Daily Membership for the current year. For example, if the October 2013 count is five percent larger than the October 2012 count, the Department will provide supplemental funding to the district for Fiscal Year 2014 equal to the increase in the Average Daily Membership between the October 2012 count and the October 2013 count.

The new funding method will implement with the FY 2014 year. Thus, the count conducted in the fall of 2012 will provide the funding level for both FY 2013 and FY 2014, subject to the hold harmless provisions.

An important consideration in this legislation is, except for Fiscal Year 2014, the actual funding given a district will not change, only the timing of the funding.