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## Alaska Council of School Administrators

September 15, 2014

Chairman Anna Fairclough  
Vice-Chairman Mike Hawker  
Members, Legislative Budget and Audit Committee  
12641 Old Glenn Hwy, Suite 201  
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Dear Chairman Fairclough, Vice-Chairman Hawker, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the invitation to submit a letter. The Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA) is our state's professional organization committed to providing leadership for and contributing a collective professional voice to the educational agenda for Alaska. We support the studies authorized in HB278 and anticipate providing meaningful input to them. We are writing today to initiate a dialogue regarding those for which your committee is currently developing requests for proposals, as follows:

1. We support a transparent process that is observable and provides multiple opportunities for stakeholder input.
2. Relevant data from all parts of our diverse state needs to be used to support the outcomes of each study.
3. Funding proposals generated from these studies should be data-driven, promote educational best practice and benefit all students in an equitable manner, providing an excellent education for all.

One note is that the RFP process itself would be strengthened by stakeholder input. We are concerned that the development of the RFP appears to be occurring entirely within an executive session format. While recognizing that contracts themselves are legitimate subject matter for executive session, the structure of the study would be enhanced by transparency and the insights from our members with their collective expertise in the delivery of K-12 education across Alaska.

We want to close by noting that we strongly support the Legislature in adequately funding operations and infrastructure for schools. Adequate, multi-year foundation funding enables districts to effectively deliver quality education needed by Alaska's students, and required by our citizens and the State Constitution. A long-term, comprehensive approach to increasing funding is vital to quality education for all students and the economic success of our state over the long term. The studies being undertaken by the committee are vital to achieving this goal.


ACSA's definition of adequate funding includes the following key elements:

- Funding of capital projects provides safe, high quality schools statewide.
- Full funding of new initiatives requiring districts to provide additional services.
- Reducing the hold-harmless funding formula trigger 5% of Average Daily Membership (ADM) to 2.5% to mitigate the impact of sudden drops in enrollment

- Reliable, long-term funding of early childhood education programs is essential to schools and families.
- Career Technical Education (CTE) for both rural and urban schools is integral to high standards and Alaska's economic growth and stability. Involvement and management is needed by DEED and DOL, while collaborating with educators.
- CTE professional development is critical to ensure teachers can meet the full range of industry needs, which require both content mastery and industry-based credentials and ongoing training.
- Revising the provisions of AS39.35.255 regarding PERS payments is necessary for reasons of equity and fairness.

Thank you for your service and thank you in advance for your consideration of these issues in your deliberations. We look forward to constructive dialogue and vigorous debate as we work forward to strengthen K-12 education for the future of Alaska.

Cordially,



Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady  
Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Anna Fairclough, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Hawker, Vice-Chair  
Members, Legislative Budget and Audit Committee  
Commissioner Mike Hanley