

## Marie Murray

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**From:** Jennifer McNichol <mcnocco@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2015 5:41 PM  
**To:** Marie Murray  
**Subject:** Senate Finance Committee testimony - education funding

I am writing in strong support of the restoration of \$32.4 million in funding to the State's support of education for FY 2016. I write as a parent of 2 public school-attending children, and as a pediatrician who sees daily the challenges that students and educators face. Providing a high-quality education is the single most important responsibility of any government, bar none. While providing quality education is significantly more difficult (and costly) without infrastructure, access to healthcare, and a host of other services, without an educated populace a state is doomed to failure.

Alaska is consistently low-ranking in nation-wide surveys, with the 2014 Kids Count Data Book, published last year by the highly respected Annie E. Casey Foundation, listing Alaska 42nd in the educational domain. This is unacceptable and portends huge long-term issues for our great state. Businesses look at educational performance closely when relocation or new development is considered as they require an educated workforce. Existing businesses struggle to recruit qualified workers (who in turn help sustain and build healthy communities) when school districts are weak. While providing great education is a complicated challenge that requires more than just dollars, financial support is crucial, now more than ever.

Your responsibility as elected officials is to ensure the future of Alaska. Our kids personify our future, and educating them is our most important task. Please do what you can to provide high-quality education to all of Alaska's children.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer McNichol, M.D.  
Sitka, Alaska

March 30, 2015

I'm writing because I'm unable to attend tonight's meeting b/c I'm sick. We were told to e-mail you so here it goes...

As a K/1 teacher I see first hand the challenges that many students face as they enter into our district. As educators we are always trying to do our best to help all students succeed. Classroom teachers do an amazing job of scaffolding lessons to meet the wide range of students needs, but still sometimes the range is too wide. Many students still need extra support, outside of the general classroom setting. Students are seen outside of their classrooms by counselors, reading specialist, and math tutors, just to name a few. The schools currently need more support in these areas. If we do not receive funding these extra positions may be eliminated from the district, leaving the classroom teachers responsible to provide their students with the extra support they need. Often times it is a small group setting away from distractions in a classroom that helps these students. There is not enough time in the school day for a classroom teacher to offer the extra support that our students currently have. Let's help our students succeed, by funding the school district so we can provide the support our kids need. Thank you for your time.

Jacquette Carroll

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