

JOINT SENATE & HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
ANCHORAGE LIO
November 13, 2018
9:00am-4:00pm

Good Afternoon,

My name is Norm Wooten and I serve as the Executive Director of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Let me begin by saying that my colleague, Dr. Lisa Parady, Executive Director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators, is unable to be here today because of a prior commitment. However, as we consistently collaborate on legislative positions, I am speaking for the both of us today. We believe it critical for both our organizations to speak with a common voice as we advocate on issues that have the potential for increasing student achievement within our memberships.

We will always support new concepts that support students within our member districts. We also support the Middle College Concept to provide post-secondary opportunities for students. As you will hear later in this hearing, there are districts that are already engaged in this work.

First, let me encourage you to be cautionary as you begin this discussion. The educational trend across the United States and even in Alaska is about personalized learning. So, what exactly do we mean by personalized learning? What is involved? While trying to understand personalized learning I've broken it down into understandable terms:

1. It is learning delivered in a competency-based progression where each student learns and advances toward clearly defined goals. Assessment is continual and it is about the acquisition of learning rather than "seat time." Students advance and earn credit when they are able to demonstrate mastery of the material.
2. It is about a flexible learning environment where student needs are the driver. Every element of the learning environment responds individually to each student.
3. It is about each student taking charge of, and being responsible for, their own learning. Each student is expected to excel and help

We simply cannot continue to ask districts to add “just one more thing” without additional investments into education.

And so, I implore you if it is your intent to encourage or even require a middle college program is to:

- 1. Leave that decision up to local school districts who know what is best for their students; and**
- 2. Invest in the program so that districts do not have to drop something already in place in order to take on this initiative.**