

Hello Committee Chairs, members, and all Legislators,

My name is Danyelle D. Kimp. I am the Chair of the Anchorage NAACP's Education Committee and a resident of Eagle River, AK. I would like to thank the members of the Alaska Senate Education Committee for their efforts and let you know that the Anchorage NAACP and its Education Committee strongly support SB08. We therefore urge you to pass this bill with funding.

SB08 is a bold offering to the people of Alaska and its students. Among its many advantages is its reduction of class sizes. I teach at a Title 1 school in Anchorage and can personally and professionally attest to the fact that when class sizes are reduced to less than 15 students per teacher, academic and opportunity gaps are reduced to negligible levels. This means that traditionally marginalized students would now be able to reach the same academic outcomes as their white or wealthy counterparts. Unfortunately too many classes have 15-30 students per teacher. SB08 will help change that though. One of its many benefits is the mandatory collection of metrics on class size, as this data is not consistently tracked on a statewide level. This data will help the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, as well as local school districts know where to direct funding to keep our classes small. Just imagine how wonderful it would be for all our children to achieve high academic outcomes and not just the privileged few.

Pre-K education is another statewide shortfall which SB08 addresses. This bill focuses on the importance of school readiness through Parents as Teachers and high quality early education program (pre-K) reading. We can no longer leave this to chance, especially not in a pandemic. Rather than the "prescriptive" based instruction we have done for the past we should instead focus on evidence-based strategies.

Evidence-based reading instruction empowers our teachers with the flexibility to meet the needs of their students. It provides them with an arsenal of strategies that have a proven record of objective, valid, reliable, and systematic success in the classroom. It especially benefits those who may struggle with reading and writing such as students with dyslexia, autism, or our English Language Learners (ELL).

Once again, we urge all Committee Chairs, members, and Legislators to support SB08 and thank you for your efforts towards improving reading outcomes for Alaskan students.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Danyelle D. Kimp
Chair, Anchorage NAACP Education Committee