
From: Kirk & Jenn DesErnia [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 10:00 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Ben Carpenter; Sen. Peter Micciche
Subject: In support of SB 272 and SB 273

I am writing to express my support of SB 272 and SB 273. Our schools are in dire need of resources and these bills can increase the Base Student Allocation, which is greatly needed. There has not been an increase to the BSA since 2017, and even then it was only \$50. This falls very short of keeping up with the rate of inflation and we can address this problem now!

I have 2 students in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, specifically the Seward area schools. I have volunteered in schools and been a substitute teacher for the past 9 years, so I am more than a casual observer. I have witnessed the systematic dismantling of programs and decimation of staffing at our schools. What was once an enriching, wholesome education is now strained to the point of barely being able to offer the basic standards. We've lost art, music, librarians, combined classrooms to stretch the limited number of classroom teachers further, all while requiring them to pick up the extra work that has been created through the loss of these vital positions.

Here are some examples from my personal experience:

- One year, my fifth grader had 30 students in her combined 4th-5th classroom (the "formula" mandates 24).
- For two years, I volunteered in my student's 1st-2nd grade classrooms and taught her and another student's math curriculum because they were working at a different level than the rest of the class. Their teacher was so taxed with her other requirements that she couldn't provide that for them, so the only way for them to get their math instruction was through a parent volunteering to do it.
- Our Elementary School had no Art or Music programs.
- We do not have a certified librarian in any of our 3 schools.
- I have had friends who have relocated out of state to get a better education for their children. -- Next school year, due to a freeze on hiring into vacant positions, our middle school is slated to not have certified math or social studies teachers and our high school won't have a science teacher. This is beyond unacceptable.

We all have a promise to fulfill with our children - to give them the best possible start in life, so they can be successful on their own as adults. It is in our best interest to educate children to a high standard today, so they can join our society as highly functioning members tomorrow. If we do not provide more for our students and schools now, we will continue to lose good families to other states or systems of education. We will continue to see a poorly educated work force and experience a brain drain to other states. Please support our students and schools through your support of SB 272 and SB 273!

Thank you,
Jennifer DesErnia

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: Rebekah Ivy [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 9:08 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Ben Carpenter
Subject: Support for HB 272 and HB 273

Dear members of the House,

I am writing this email in support of House Bill [HB 272](#) and [HB 273](#). Our schools and our teachers need your support. Our teachers and schools desperately need a BSA that at the very least keeps up with inflation. Please vote to pass these bills.

Rebekah Ivy

[REDACTED]

Seward, AK 99664

From: Rebekah Ivy <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 9:08 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Ben Carpenter
Subject: Support for HB 272 and HB 273

Dear members of the House,

I am writing this email in support of House Bill [HB 272](#) and [HB 273](#). Our schools and our teachers need your support. Our teachers and schools desperately need a BSA that at the very least keeps up with inflation. Please vote to pass these bills.

Rebekah Ivy

[REDACTED]

Seward, AK 99664

From: Lisa X'unyéil Worl [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 7:11 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Andi Story
Subject: Support for HB 272 and HB 273

House Finance committee members,

I'm writing in support of HB 272 and HB 273 to increase the BSA funding for our public schools.

Through my work, I work with educators across Alaska. The Affordable Cares Act funding supports the much-needed health and wellness of elementary and secondary students which has provided our schools additional funding for related pandemic impacts.

Alaska state BSA funding, however, is needed for the ongoing and everyday operation of our schools. What I'm seeing throughout Alaska is our districts do not have adequate funding for staffing classrooms and programs which support at-risk students. We continue to hear of stories of our principals and even superintendents working in the classrooms due to districts struggling to find substitute teachers and fill teacher vacancies. School districts are having to make decisions on providing competitive pay for teachers, reducing the number of elective high school science, language, and social studies classes, and limiting activities for student sports, arts, and academic after-school programs to balance their budgets.

We have all read and know about the increases in inflation on household living. These same cost increases have impacted our schools including the cost of bus transportation, supplies, curriculum updates and replacement, energy (oil and electricity), and health care.

For these reasons and more, I respectfully request that you please support HB 272 and HB 273.

Thank you,

Lisa

Lillian "Lisa" Worl
Juneau, Alaska

From: Virginia Morgan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 10:34 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Ben Carpenter
Subject: support for HB 272 and HB 273

Good morning,

Education is not an expense – it’s an investment. The Base Student Allocation needs to be increased and adjusted for inflation in the future. Educating ALL of the children in our state is the best investment we will ever make. Our children’s education should never depend on the current price of oil!

I am writing in support of House Bills 272 and 273. I have lived on the Kenai Peninsula my entire life, and am a graduate of our public school system, as is my mother. I’ve been devastated at the gutting of the public school system that I’ve witnessed in my lifetime. My children are continually faced with fewer opportunities. The loss of librarians and art and music teachers has especially saddened me. Those areas are where many students find haven in an unpredictable world and learn to process difficult emotions. We’ve also lost teaching specialists in important areas, such as reading, who were able to provide much needed support to teachers and their students dealing with learning challenges.

I’m frustrated with the tired argument that our state spends the most money on education and gets the lowest results. This is a misleading statement and is not a true picture of the state as a whole. Multiple choice tests are not an accurate measure of a good education. (It is worth noting that our students continue to perform better on the ACT and SAT tests than the national average.) Regardless, the cost of education versus student achievement, compared nationwide, is a false argument. It is an extremely complicated thing to measure, influenced by many factors, including the high cost of living in Alaska and our Alaska Native population, further complicated by the use of one test to measure something it was not designed to do.

The Base Student Allocation has not been adjusted since 2017. Since that time we’ve experienced incredible inflation and large increases in health care costs. About 80% of every education dollar is being spent on staffing for schools in our district. To manage the cuts the stagnant BSA has necessitated, we make class sizes larger and keep asking teachers to do more with less. According to this [research summary](#), Alaska’s per-pupil spending (adjusted) is comparable with the national average. Small schools are one of the unique expenses of education in our state, but these small, rural communities are part of what makes Alaska unique and special, and they will decline and stagnate without quality teachers and schools for these young families and children.

Ray Kurzweil, an American inventor, said, “We won’t experience 100 years of progress in the 21st century — it will be more like 20,000 years of progress (at today’s rate).” Now, more than ever, we need to be investing in education and attracting the highest quality teachers for our children.

Thank you for working for all Alaskans and for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
Virginia Morgan

From: Mary Ann Fathauer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:57 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Concerning funding for Music in Our Schools

Dear House Members,

Please save music in our schools. It is a lifetime gift that is given to the children in our state. It is NOT a luxury, but a necessity in keeping the "human" in humanity. It is a universal language which unites people of all cultures around the world. I found a poem which more clearly may express the importance for providing music in our schools. Please take a moment to read it, feel it, and imagine the emptiness in not having it for our Alaskan students.

I Am Music

Moat ancient of the arts.
I am more than ancient.
I am eternal.
I am music.

Even before life commenced upon this earth, I was here in the winds and the waves.
When the first trees and flowers and grasses appeared, I was among them.
And when man came, I became the most delicate, most subtle, and most powerful
medium for the expression of his/her emotions.

In all ages, I have inspired men and women with hope, kindled their love, given voice to
their joys, cheered them on to valorous deeds, and soothed them in times of despair.
Through my influence, human nature has been uplifted, sweetened, and refined.

I have myriads of voices and instruments. I am at the hearts of all men and women and
on their tongues, in all lands and among all peoples. The ignorant and the unlettered
know me no less than the rich and learned, for I speak a language that all understand.

I have taught men and women gentleness and peace, and I have led them on heroic
deeds. I comfort the lonely, and I harmonize the discord of crowds. I am a necessary luxury.

I am music.

Oftentimes children who have difficulty with expression or making friends, do so more easily with music, in
choirs or with an instrument. It is a healthy outlet for them which they will appreciate throughout their lives.
Do not compromise that for them. Find the money. Keep music in our schools.

Mary Ann Fathauer

From: Jen Gunderson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 9:52 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Robert Myers; Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: Letter in support of HB 272

Please vote to increase the Base Student Allocation.

Our schools' funding has been cut year after year and we are truly at a crisis point. Class sizes are unreasonably large, we have a teacher shortage because our system doesn't support teachers, and next year we may not even have band and orchestra for elementary students. The schools have declined so much in the past several years that I'm considering leaving the state in order to ensure that my children receive a good education (and I've lived here for 17 years and have otherwise been committed to raising our family here in Alaska).

It is your constitutional duty to provide adequate funding for our schools. Please do it.

Thanks,

Jen Gunderson
Fairbanks

From: Linda Boyle David Boyle [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 10:18 AM
To: Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Andi Story
Cc: House Finance
Subject: Fw: I oppose HB 272

Representatives Drummond and Story,

I sent the below testimony to the HED committee on March 1, 2022. I checked the documents tab on HB272 and noted my testimony was NOT included in the documents. I request that my testimony below be included now. I would hope that this was not an oversight. I can be reached at 907-444-4970. Thank you.

David Boyle

-----Forwarded Message-----

From: Linda Boyle David Boyle
Sent: Mar 1, 2022 10:09 AM
To:
Subject: I oppose HB 272

Chairs Drummond and Story, I am David Boyle and I am speaking for myself.

I do not support HB 272 because it will not improve K12 education.

Once again, we hear the red herring chant of "Flat funding for the BSA". As you well know, the BSA is just one of the funding factors of K12 education. Let's look at the facts.

Here is the per student funding for 4 of the 5 largest Alaska school districts per the latest audited CAFRs:

Anchorage: \$19,277
Fairbanks: \$21,108
Kenai: \$18,293
MatSu: \$17,395

And Pelican School District costs \$50,000 per student.

As you know, the funding formula multiplies the ADM to get an Adjusted ADM. For example, in Anchorage the ADM of 42,000 students input to the formula results in 72,000 students (AADM).

In effect, that \$5,930 BSA ends up as a real \$7,792. And your suggested bill BSA increase of \$233 goes up to \$306. This is not difficult math.

As Superintendent Bishop of ASD said recently, "We have enough funding". Funding is not the problem.

To fix Alaska's K12 education, we need an effective teacher in every classroom. We need a relevant curriculum in basic subjects as math and reading. We need teachers that can motivate students to achieve their

maximum (effective classroom teachers do just that). And we need involved parents helping their children to learn.

You have the responsibility to ensure we have 3 of the above needs. The Legislature is responsible for improving K12 education and money is not the answer. Education reform is the answer. You and the Department of Education & Early Development need to identify the causes of failed practices and identify those best practices to fix our education problems.

Continuing to throw money at K12 will only incentivize the current practices. You need to incentivize success and reward it. Stop rewarding failure because you will just get more of it.

Continuing to increase K12 funding with no accountability for results will ensure that Alaska remains dead last in 4th grade reading (NAEP) as it has for decades.

Finally, school districts negotiate labor contracts with the various bargaining units without much need for cost control. These districts then go to the Legislature to pay for the districts' failure to control costs. The Legislature then increases K12 funding, such as increasing the BSA, to pay for these newly negotiated labor contracts. That is like someone buying a house they cannot possibly afford and asking their neighbors to pay for it.

For at least 20 years the Legislature has been very generous with its K12 funding. This generosity has not improved Alaska's K12 system. Nor does it change the behavior of the various school districts. You are the districts' heroes because you bail them out.

But you are not the heroes to Alaska's students, especially the lower income kids. We graduate students who cannot even read or do basic math problems. That is stealing those children's futures. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Now do what's right for Alaska's kids.

I request that my testimony be made a part of the official record.

David Boyle

From: Kerry Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 11:45 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: tom.begich@akleg.gov; zack.fields@akleg.gov
Subject: Restore BSA Funding, Please

I went to school in Anchorage in the 1970s, long before oil took over, and we were able to fund schools to support our students. I clearly remember our class sizes being capped at 30 children—or at least that was the goal: I certainly never sat in a class throughout my 12 years in the Anchorage School District with more than 30 students.

My mother was a Colony kid in Palmer and was able to perform theatre and study Spanish thanks to appropriate BSA funding, and even her entire graduating class was a few dozen, barely 40.

Our children's and grandchildren's education should not be inferior to ours. Please support proper BSA funding and help your colleagues to do so for the future of Alaska. It is time to stop cheating the children of Alaska out of what they deserve.

Thank you,

Kerry Brown
Anchorage, Alaska
[REDACTED]

From: Mark Van Arsdale <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 11:51 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Kelly Merrick
Subject: base student allocation

I am writing to you to encourage your review of HB 272 and HB 273.

It's time to increase the BSA. With oil prices on the rise, it's time to spend some of that money on our future, our children.

Increased costs and inflation without comparable increases in funding are slowly but surely bringing great harm to our public schools.

It has been a number of years since the BSA has been increased. Since that time the Anchorage School District has seen annual cuts, slowed only by federal COVID relief funds. Those funds will all be spent by the fall of 2024.

I have two children in the district, one at ERHS, and one at Gruening Middle School. It's clear that once federal funds run out, the Anchorage School District is looking at a massive budget shortfall. The kind of shortfall that can only be fixed by massive cuts to programs.

It's time to increase the BSA.

Thank you for your time.

Mark Van Arsdale

From: [REDACTED] net
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 12:45 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Testimony supporting HB 272-273
Attachments: ASNA testimony on HB 272-273.pdf

Testimony from the Alaska School Nurses Association is attached.
Nancy Bale

<https://alaskasna.nursingnetwork.com/>

From: Mary Geddes [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 1:02 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Zack Fields
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273 -State of Support

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing today to respectfully request that you pass both HB 272 and HB 273, and end the flat funding for our K-12 schools.

I have lived in Alaska for 35 years, and have had children and grandchildren in the public schools. Having lived in both urban and rural Alaska, I know the critical importance of providing a sufficient level of funding for our schools in all communities, and the very real challenges school systems confront given our high cost of living and salaries needed to attract and keep quality educators.

As the parent of young to middle-aged adults, we now that they young adults make decisions about where to live and what jobs to take based on the quality of public education for their children . If we don't build in sufficient long-term stability for our school systems, they won't come and they won't stay.

For the past several years, under state flat funding, our schools have struggled with inflation, increased fixed costs and most recently devastating developments related to COVID and the important work of keeping all children safe while providing them with sufficient tools, time and efforts related to their educational progress. While federal aid may have provide some short-term assistance, its was only a bandaid and we need sufficient long-term guarantees of financial stability.

HB 272 provides long-term adjustment to the Base Student Allocation for FY 2023 of \$223 per student (first increase since FY17) and in FY24 an increase of \$55 per student.

HB 273 is also needed, to ensure that schools can get out of this cycle of begging for funding simply to keep up with inflation.. If passed, this law would directly link the Base Student Allocation to the Consumer Price Index (calculated for urban Alaska for a three year period).

Let's support and stabilize our public school infrastructure! We need to guarantee funding to keep and attract younger people to our wonderful state.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Geddes

[REDACTED] 99501

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2022 9:48 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Dear Alaska House of Finance Committee,

I am writing as a parent of a teenager in Sitka in support of HB 272 and HB 273 to increase Base School Allocations to keep up with inflation.

Base school allocations have not kept up with inflation and this has caused a tremendous strain on our school the last several years. Specifically in supporting quality teachers and funding our school programs both in and outside the classroom.

I am very pleased to see these two bills to inflation-proof the BSA and would like to offer total support for both and encourage the State legislators to please pass them.

Thank you,

Patrick Heuer

Sitka

Sent from my iPhone

From: Emily Demmert <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 12:27 PM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on these bills. I have taught for 20 years and am an 11-year veteran of the Sitka School District, and this is a taste of what we have lost due to a lack of funding:

1. A librarian at Blatchley Middle School. As an English teacher, I know firsthand that losing our library position was an immeasurable detriment to my students. It became my job, on top of a full-time job teaching English, to help students find books that they might like to read, to guide them in finding resources for research, to open the library and be present there (usually voluntarily during my lunch or prep), to take time out of my curriculum to take students to the library, to curate books for the library. I have since moved to Sitka High where we do have a librarian. It still baffles me how a school whose prime objective is to teach literacy, which is the basis of all learning, can perform adequately without a librarian. Basically, it can't.
2. The art program at Blatchley Middle School. What was once a thriving art program has been deconstructed and now consists of a teacher whose responsibilities include teaching reading and art.
3. A full-time reading teacher at Blatchley Middle School. When we had a full-time reading teacher at BMS, she helped my emerging readers keep up with and comprehend their reading assignments. Now, those same students are left to flail as a half-time reading teacher whose schedule is conflated with art cannot possibly schedule students effectively to meet their needs.
4. Principals' school budgets, year after year. This means activities' budgets are cut which means only students with means can participate, creating a lack of equity. Or, and what often happens, principals will help cover the cost of low-income students so that they can have the opportunity to participate in their activities. Either way, this creates an inequity and an impossible to navigate hierarchy of priorities for administrators. And hopefully, I don't need to mention all the research showing how after-school activities keep students engaged in school and help to bridge the educational gap between low-income students and those with adequate funds. Also, it is difficult to find pecuniary sources for classroom materials. Currently, I must share textbooks with another Freshman English instructor which means that textbooks can't go home with students. Every year, I apply for funding opportunities either through local scholarships or [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org) to find monies for needed classroom materials. When I first began teaching in Alaska, I didn't need to do this, but now that principals are so strapped for funds, I rarely bother to ask them for materials if I can help it.
5. Most importantly, cutting positions due to lack of adequate funding equates to a heavier burden on teachers already strapped for time. This results in less time planning lessons and focusing on what their students need. Right now, I am taking time to advocate for my own students instead of planning lessons for tomorrow. It's an impossible dilemma.

Having corresponded with lawmakers before, I understand that teachers who advocate are not always looked upon favorably. I don't fully comprehend why this is since we only advocate, essentially, for our most precious resource - Alaska's children! So, I humbly request that you look kindly on what I have said, though it may be passionate, and understand that there is not a greater cause into which you can channel your efforts.

Sincerely,
Emily Demmert
English Instructor
Sitka High School



From: Eric Knudtson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 3:54 PM
To: Rep. Sarah Vance; House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

To whom it may concern:

I want to voice my support for House Bills 272 and 273. Alaska's base student allocation has been flat-funded since 2017 while district operational expenses for our schools have increased with rising inflation. These bills would provide reliable stable funding need key to improve our students' educational outcomes. My kids are grown, but I know how important quality education is to Alaska's kids and our future. Schools desperately need a BSA that at the very least keeps up with inflation. Let's do the right thing for Alaska's kids and our state.

Eric Knudtson

[REDACTED]
Homer, AK

From: Heidi Ahlgren <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 7:23 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Dear Committee Members-

I am writing to urge you to strongly support both of the bills increasing the BSA for school districts. Alaska's BSA hasn't been adjusted in over 10 years, with only one-time allocations serving to increase educational funding. Alaska needs to increase it's BSA and inflation-proof it in order to save Alaska's education system. Alaska will see a flood of teachers leaving the state and an inability to attract quality educators.

Here in Sitka, at our middle school, we've seen numerous positions cut in the last 6-7 years. Our librarian position was eliminated, leaving only 1 period a day and lunch periods for our library to be staffed. The Home Ec and Spanish program has been eliminated. Our technology, art, and reading specialist position have all been reduced to half-time positions. Our school system is making it work with teachers doubling up on positions, but teachers are stretched thin and burning out.

Please, please support these bills. Send them before the Legislature for a vote. Save our education system before it's too late. Our children are our future.

Sincerely,

Heidi Lihou
Sitka, Alaska

From: Jennifer Reid [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 7:45 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Good morning House Finance Committee,

I am writing to share my support of HB272 & HB273. Alaska schools desperately need an increase to the BSA. We no longer live in the same economical times as 2017, when the BSA was last increased, we live in a time unrecognizably expensive in comparison. Please support schools, teachers, and our students by increasing the BSA.

Jen Reid

5th Grade Teacher
Keet Gooshi Heen
Room 10
[REDACTED]

From: Claire Holland LeClair <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 8:31 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Rep. Harriet Drummond
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Members of the House Finance Committee-

Please support an increase to the base student allocation.

After five years of flat funding our public education system is in great need of an increase to the BSA to keep up with inflation and other cost increases out of the control of school administrators. As a parent of two ASD students, I have witnessed the decrease in capacity as funding remains flat. For instance, our high school daughter's school counselor has over 300 students assigned to her. I fear further cuts to staffing are ahead when heating and utilities costs for our schools increase due to the rising cost of oil.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments and for your service to Alaska.

Respectfully,

Claire Holland LeClair
Anchorage, Alaska

From: Leah Maltbie [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 11:16 AM
To: Rep. Thomas McKay; House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Good morning,

I will keep this quick and simple. I urge you to support and pass both education bills HB 272 and HB 273 regarding BSA and BSA inflation.

Our schools are desperate in Alaska. It has been years since our BSA has been updated. Our schools, staff, administration, and most of all our students need the financial support from the state to be able to provide the proper education, services, and programs that they so deserve.

I, myself, work for the largest school district in the state, the Anchorage School District, and we have a dark looming cloud over our head in relation to the budget. The Covid relief funds were able to offset some of the deficits we face in the 2022/2023 school year but this is not something we can rely on in the future.

Already, in the 2022/2023 school year my department, The Fine Arts Department is having to advocate to save positions. Including a position that would eliminate visual art entirely in one of our local middle schools. I cannot even imagine the hit programs, services, and education will take when these Covid funds run out in 2023/2024. We need a permanent solution, such as HB 272 and HB 273.

Please, as your constituent who works in education and as a parent of two children who attend school here in Alaska, I urge you to support and pass both HB 272 and HB 273.

Thank you

--

Wakaga & Niyan

From: Norman & Toby Campbell <a [REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 11:38 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Hello House Finance Committee Members:

We're writing to you today to weigh in on restoring increased funding for our schools. We desperately need a BSA that, at the very least, keeps up with inflation. **Children** in our K-12 schools **are our future**. We need skilled teachers and a low student-teacher ratio, especially in grades K-3, in order for children to receive the one-on-one attention and focus from their teachers. In order for that to happen we need an increase in the base student allocation and providing for an effective date.

Thank you very much for all of your hard work for our children and all Alaskans.

Best wishes,
Toby and Norman Campbell

From: Norman & Toby Campbell [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 11:38 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and HB 273

Hello House Finance Committee Members:

We're writing to you today to weigh in on restoring increased funding for our schools. We desperately need a BSA that, at the very least, keeps up with inflation. **Children** in our K-12 schools **are our future**. We need skilled teachers and a low student-teacher ratio, especially in grades K-3, in order for children to receive the one-on-one attention and focus from their teachers. In order for that to happen we need an increase in the base student allocation and providing for an effective date.

Thank you very much for all of your hard work for our children and all Alaskans.

Best wishes,
Toby and Norman Campbell

From: Tara Craytor [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 11:10 PM
To: Rep. Ben Carpenter; House Finance
Subject: Please support HB 272 and HB 273

Greetings,

I am writing urging you to support HB 272 and HB 273. Our schools need an increase in base student allocation and the ability to attract and retain quality teaching staff.

I am the mother of four children, three of whom attend Seward schools. We're so fortunate to have amazing teachers, but they are overworked and being asked to do more and more with less and less, and many veteran teachers are resigning because of it. In the 7 years we've had children in school we've seen our music program get cut, our librarian get cut and my special needs 6th grader has had a different special education teacher every single year he has been in school, including two years without. Quite disruptive for an intensive needs student with 100 percent special education minutes and I can guarantee the legal obligations to him as outlined in his IEP are not being met. At his middle school this year they started the school year with zero of two special education teaching positions open and one of two paraprofessional positions open. A teacher was brought out of retirement in October to fill one position, the other has been empty all year. Both paraprofessional positions are open again, three having been hired and resigning over the school year due to not being paid a livable wage and being asked to do more than they were qualified due to the teacher shortage.

Our children and our educators deserve better than this. Fund education, fund our future!

Thank you.

Tara Craytor
[REDACTED]

From: Tara Craytor [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 11:10 PM
To: Rep. Ben Carpenter; House Finance
Subject: Please support HB 272 and HB 273

Greetings,

I am writing urging you to support HB 272 and HB 273. Our schools need an increase in base student allocation and the ability to attract and retain quality teaching staff.

I am the mother of four children, three of whom attend Seward schools. We're so fortunate to have amazing teachers, but they are overworked and being asked to do more and more with less and less, and many veteran teachers are resigning because of it. In the 7 years we've had children in school we've seen our music program get cut, our librarian get cut and my special needs 6th grader has had a different special education teacher every single year he has been in school, including two years without. Quite disruptive for an intensive needs student with 100 percent special education minutes and I can guarantee the legal obligations to him as outlined in his IEP are not being met. At his middle school this year they started the school year with zero of two special education teaching positions open and one of two paraprofessional positions open. A teacher was brought out of retirement in October to fill one position, the other has been empty all year. Both paraprofessional positions are open again, three having been hired and resigning over the school year due to not being paid a livable wage and being asked to do more than they were qualified due to the teacher shortage.

Our children and our educators deserve better than this. Fund education, fund our future!

Thank you.

Tara Craytor
[REDACTED]

From: Dawn Morse <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:35 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Matt Claman
Subject: Please support HB 272 and HB 273

Good morning,

Please support these two bills. One must get through. We need to fund all kinds of education. Children are our future.

The choice of schools in Anchorage is amazing and has been life-changing for our family.

Because of past, adequate, funding my four children were able to attend

- **Winterberry Charter School**, which provides the closest thing to a Renaissance education in Alaska
- **Alaska Middle College**, which facilitated my daughter receiving a full-ride scholarship to law school before she even graduated from high school,
- **King Tech**, which offered high-quality skills building courses with opportunity for high placement in national completions,
- **Paideia Cooperative School**, which supports alternative passion-based learning where kids can earn credit for engaging in activities they deeply care about, and
- **Benny Benson**, which helps kids bootstrap up when they have slipped through the normal system supports.

The above does not even address the extracurricular offerings such as sports and DDF, which are critical to children building a healthy future physically and in competent discourse. Our country desperately needs people capable in both of these areas.

Incredible offerings in Anchorage School District. And these are only a sampling of the ones I have direct insight into. Three are many others. We need every one.

The results speak for themselves.

I am so grateful for this amazing school system and want every child in ASD and across Alaska to have the options they need - when they need them.

Invest in our children and the people who support their learning.

Thank you.

Dawn Morse
[REDACTED]

From: Cami Dalton [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:28 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Matthew Claman
Subject: HB 272 and 273

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

I can not believe that again, we are in the position of having to beg the legislature to fund our schools! A Base Student Allocation is and should always be indexed with inflation so that it automatically increases as the cost of living increases. How can our schools provide a quality education for all of our children when funding is limited.

I began teaching in the Anchorage School District in 1982. There were many years when our wages were frozen and teachers did not receive a pay increase. It seemed like every year we were faced with a shortage of something.....supplies or programs. There was always a struggle or a shortage. Each year, the PTA felt the need to raise more and more money to cover the things that the district was no longer providing for students or teachers.

Our state does not have the revenue we once did, and we have had to be more selective in where we choose to spend our limited resources. But as someone who spent 32 years in the classroom, and raising 3 children, nothing is more important to me that ensuring that every child is able to access a quality education,(pre-K - 12) in safe and beautiful surroundings with caring, well compensated and qualified teachers regardless of where they live in Alaska.

Children are the future. We say that as though the future is far away. It comes faster than one expects. The students I first taught in 1982 are now in their 40's with children of their own. They are the citizens we rely on.. nurses, doctors, accountants, engineers, builders, leaders. It all begins with education.

Please fund education fully!!! Raise the BSA and pass HB 272 and 273! Give educators and education what is needed.

Thank you for having a vision for our state that includes raising the BSA without a fight!!

Cami Dalton

From: Cami Dalton [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:28 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Matthew Claman
Subject: HB 272 and 273

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

I can not believe that again, we are in the position of having to beg the legislature to fund our schools! A Base Student Allocation is and should always be indexed with inflation so that it automatically increases as the cost of living increases. How can our schools provide a quality education for all of our children when funding is limited.

I began teaching in the Anchorage School District in 1982. There were many years when our wages were frozen and teachers did not receive a pay increase. It seemed like every year we were faced with a shortage of something.....supplies or programs. There was always a struggle or a shortage. Each year, the PTA felt the need to raise more and more money to cover the things that the district was no longer providing for students or teachers.

Our state does not have the revenue we once did, and we have had to be more selective in where we choose to spend our limited resources. But as someone who spent 32 years in the classroom, and raising 3 children, nothing is more important to me that ensuring that every child is able to access a quality education,(pre-K - 12) in safe and beautiful surroundings with caring, well compensated and qualified teachers regardless of where they live in Alaska.

Children are the future. We say that as though the future is far away. It comes faster than one expects. The students I first taught in 1982 are now in their 40's with children of their own. They are the citizens we rely on.. nurses, doctors, accountants, engineers, builders, leaders. It all begins with education.

Please fund education fully!!! Raise the BSA and pass HB 272 and 273! Give educators and education what is needed.

Thank you for having a vision for our state that includes raising the BSA without a fight!!

Cami Dalton

From: Larri Spengler [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:11 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: HB 272 and 273

Greetings:

I urge you to raise the Base Student Allocation. With half a decade of flat funding, this is a sorely needed increase.

Thank you.

Larri Irene Spengler

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Joclyn Reilly <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 4:28 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Laddie Shaw
Subject: HB 272 and 273

Please raise the BSA! I have three kids, in K, 4th, and 7th grades. We love our teachers and schools, but they can't keep operating with budgets from 5 years ago. Our students are our most valuable asset, let's show it.

Thank you,
Joclyn Reilly
[REDACTED]

From: Jim Bailey [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 1:46 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sara Rasmussen
Subject: Hb 272 and 273

Please support these 2 bills. The failure To inadequately fund education of Alaskas future is not acceptable especially as we have funding.

I spent 39 years in anchorage schools,

As a teacher and administrator. Investing in our kids is an investment in the future of our state.

Jim bailey

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Mary-Claire Bernstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:35 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support Hb 272 and 273

Please support HB272 and HB273. Schools affect not only the economic well being of our citizens but their social and emotional well being as well. Also attracting good teachers with competitive salaries is crucial. This should be s no-brained. Our schools need your support.

Sent from Mary-Claire's iPhone

From: Emily Youcha [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:16 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Grier Hopkins; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: Support HB 272 and 273

I am writing in support of HB 272 and 273 and would like to see an increase in education funding in this state. Please raise the base student allocation, which has had flat funding for many years. Our schools are now in serious financial trouble with numerous teachers and academic programs proposed to be cut. In Fairbanks, three elementary schools are closing. Band and orchestra at the elementary level are being cut. Most families cannot afford private instrument lessons at \$30 for a 30 minute lesson. Art education at the elementary level was already cut in recent years. Class sizes are growing, but teachers are being cut. In my child's grade level at school, the number of students per class exceeds the school district targets due to lack of funding to hire more teachers.

After the pandemic we need to improve education and provide additional help so Alaskan kids do not fall further behind. Class sizes need to be kept small but districts are unable to fund additional teachers. The public education in this state is becoming a disappointment and quality of education is about to rapidly decline if something is not done.

Sincerely,
Emily Youcha, parent.
Fairbanks, AK 99712

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Emily Youcha [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:16 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Grier Hopkins; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: Support HB 272 and 273

I am writing in support of HB 272 and 273 and would like to see an increase in education funding in this state. Please raise the base student allocation, which has had flat funding for many years. Our schools are now in serious financial trouble with numerous teachers and academic programs proposed to be cut. In Fairbanks, three elementary schools are closing. Band and orchestra at the elementary level are being cut. Most families cannot afford private instrument lessons at \$30 for a 30 minute lesson. Art education at the elementary level was already cut in recent years. Class sizes are growing, but teachers are being cut. In my child's grade level at school, the number of students per class exceeds the school district targets due to lack of funding to hire more teachers.

After the pandemic we need to improve education and provide additional help so Alaskan kids do not fall further behind. Class sizes need to be kept small but districts are unable to fund additional teachers. The public education in this state is becoming a disappointment and quality of education is about to rapidly decline if something is not done.

Sincerely,
Emily Youcha, parent.
Fairbanks, AK 99712

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Katherine Prussian [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:04 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB272 and HB273

To Representatives and members of the House Finance Committee,

I encourage you to enact the Base Student Allocation and include increases to account for inflation. As an Alaska resident and parent of two students in Alaska schools, I support full funding for students and encourage you to find ways to further increase funding for schools and education in Alaska. I have watched school libraries close, academic opportunities decrease, extra-curricular opportunities go away, and excellent educators leave Alaska due to reduced budgets and decreasing support to education. Supporting increases to account for inflation will reduce the stress on these programs and provide some stability to our education system. Please invest in our future by supporting the base student allocation and the proposed rate of inflation needed to budget for schools and education.

Thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,
Katherine Prussian

From: Paula Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:30 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Tom Begich; Rep. Zack Fields; Paula Williams
Subject: HB272 and HB273

Dear Governor Mike Dunleavy,

I AM writing to request passing legislation this session that increases the BSA. The ASD is facing severe budget shortages that as a result caused numerous educators to not only leave the profession of teaching but in fact many have left the state in pursuit of higher wages and better benefits. When we don't have aduquent teaching staff our students suffer high student teacher ratio, poor performance scores and higher dropout rates. Our state priority must be investing more funding in quality education. In turn this workforce will want to remain in Alaska where the state prioritizes funding support to our schools.

Thank you for putting education first in this great state of Alaska.

Dr Paula Williams, Lh.D
Set-Apart-of-GOD

This email is for the intended receiver only. It possibly contains CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION and is protected by 42 CFR and HIPAA REGULATIONS. "This information may contain information which is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under State and Federal law, and is intended only for the use of the individual or facility to which it is addressed. If this communication is transmitted to you in error, notify us as soon as possible by telephone, and return the original document to Partners for Progress by mail. Except by the intended recipient, any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited".

From: Luke Boles [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:02 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: HB272 and HB273

House Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation.

Please consider increasing the funding for our children's schools.

Thank you for your service to Alaskans.

Luke Boles

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Luke Boles [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:02 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: HB272 and HB273

House Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation.

Please consider increasing the funding for our children's schools.

Thank you for your service to Alaskans.

Luke Boles

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Kelly Buxton [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 5:30 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Support HB 272 and HB 273

Hello,

I am writing to ask you to support HB 272 and HB 273. The increases to the BSA (Base Student Allocation) for next year will be the single largest variable that will help the Sitka School district solve the budget shortfall and find a path to include a raise for staff in next year's budget.

I have taught in Sitks schools since 2008. I am a Tier 3 employee, the thing that keeps me from moving to a more affordable state is this beautiful caring community. The increase of the SBA will be an investment in our students, staff, community, and state.

Please support HB 272 and HB 273 for the future of education in this great state.

Thank You,

Kelly Buxton M.Ed.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: LUPITA ALVAREZ <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:46 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support HB 272 and HB 273

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of the bills HB272 and HB273. Funding for education is greatly needed. I am a preschool and kindergarten teacher and have been working in the Early Childhood education field for over 20 years. I understand the importance of early education as: setting the foundation for future learning and success not only in school, but also in life. To ensure that such a foundation is strong, we need enough resources to meet the needs of our learning community.

In the last five years, we have been asked over and over what else we can cut from our budget. Our school does not have a full time principal or a nurse, and when children need one-on-one attention due to health or behavior issues, they don't have the support they need and our entire learning community suffers. The low wages offered to substitute teachers has made it impossible for the Juneau school district to hire qualified individuals that can cover in case of teacher absences. Many books and materials we have in my classroom, I've purchased out of my own pocket. We have been operating on a shoestring budget far too long and it is impossible to keep up with the rising costs.

Families of children ages three and four who are part of our program, are required to pay a tuition of over \$1,100 per month. Many of them have a difficult time paying such fees, however, they make a tremendous effort because they believe it is an investment for their children. We need more funding for preschool education to make it more accessible for all.

Please support bills HB272 and HB273.

Thank you for your consideration,
Lupita Alvarez

Lupita Alvarez
Montessori Borealis
Children's House Teacher/Administrator
Ph: (907) 523-1746
Fx: (907) 523-1819

From: LUPITA ALVAREZ <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:46 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support HB 272 and HB 273

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of the bills HB272 and HB273. Funding for education is greatly needed. I am a preschool and kindergarten teacher and have been working in the Early Childhood education field for over 20 years. I understand the importance of early education as: setting the foundation for future learning and success not only in school, but also in life. To ensure that such a foundation is strong, we need enough resources to meet the needs of our learning community.

In the last five years, we have been asked over and over what else we can cut from our budget. Our school does not have a full time principal or a nurse, and when children need one-on-one attention due to health or behavior issues, they don't have the support they need and our entire learning community suffers. The low wages offered to substitute teachers has made it impossible for the Juneau school district to hire qualified individuals that can cover in case of teacher absences. Many books and materials we have in my classroom, I've purchased out of my own pocket. We have been operating on a shoestring budget far too long and it is impossible to keep up with the rising costs.

Families of children ages three and four who are part of our program, are required to pay a tuition of over \$1,100 per month. Many of them have a difficult time paying such fees, however, they make a tremendous effort because they believe it is an investment for their children. We need more funding for preschool education to make it more accessible for all.

Please support bills HB272 and HB273.

Thank you for your consideration,
Lupita Alvarez

Lupita Alvarez
Montessori Borealis
Children's House Teacher/Administrator
Ph: (907) 523-1746
Fx: (907) 523-1819

From: Trisha [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2022 4:10 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: BSA

Please approve the \$50 million increase in the BSA. There has been flat funding for seven years and it has taken a toll on our students and schools. Strong schools affect the entire community and are part of the economic engine of Fairbanks. The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is trimming its budget, however, it cannot give our students the education they need and deserve without the state stepping up to do its part. Please approve this increase.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Stark

[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 999708

From: Cindy Ecklund [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 2:55 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: BSA

Hello,

Please increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As you all know it hasn't been increased since 2017. But during that time inflation has, quite a bit in fact, 7.5 last year.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) is quite large and our school district services the entire peninsula, the native villages of Tyonek across Cook Inlet, Nanwalek and Port Graham across Kachemak Bay, Seldovia also across Kachemak Bay and the Russian Community schools on the peninsula. The costs of flights, housing, supplies, food, and gasoline to provide for this large area has caused other areas to dwindle or be lost altogether. It's difficult to meet mandatory educational requirements at this stagnant BSA level.

We are losing teachers because we can no longer compete with wages paid in the lower 48. We have to be able to teach core subjects.

Please increase the BSA!

Thank you,
Cindy L. Ecklund
KPB Assembly Member
[REDACTED]

--
Cindy

From: Cindy Ecklund [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 2:55 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: BSA

Hello,

Please increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As you all know it hasn't been increased since 2017. But during that time inflation has, quite a bit in fact, 7.5 last year.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) is quite large and our school district services the entire peninsula, the native villages of Tyonek across Cook Inlet, Nanwalek and Port Graham across Kachemak Bay, Seldovia also across Kachemak Bay and the Russian Community schools on the peninsula. The costs of flights, housing, supplies, food, and gasoline to provide for this large area has caused other areas to dwindle or be lost altogether. It's difficult to meet mandatory educational requirements at this stagnant BSA level.

We are losing teachers because we can no longer compete with wages paid in the lower 48. We have to be able to teach core subjects.

Please increase the BSA!

Thank you,
Cindy L. Ecklund
KPB Assembly Member
[REDACTED]

--
Cindy

From: Freya Lhotka [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 5:40 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Louise Stutes
Subject: BSA

Hello Alaskan Legislators,

I am a fourth-generation Alaskan, a new mom, and a teacher at Kodiak Middle School. I have been teaching for eleven years, and I'm also a product of the public school system here in Kodiak.

At the middle school, we need smaller class sizes, more education support staff, more safety monitors, updated facilities & equipment, and a slew of other additions.

When I first began teaching at KMS, we had two teachers for each content area per grade level. We were able to collaborate to reach our full teaching potential, give timely feedback to students, maintain regular parent contact, and we had smaller classes so that we had the time and energy to really bond with our students. Now, we have one general education teacher per grade level and that teacher sees roughly 140 kids in a single day. We as a profession are exhausted and Covid-19 has only exacerbated the challenges we already faced.

I hope that my daughter can one day attend Kodiak public schools and will be able to receive the same high quality education that I enjoyed.

Please vote in support of raising the Base Student Allocation.

Thank you for your service,

Freya Holm Lhotka
Kodiak resident

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 02, 2022 2:31 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support for HB 272 & 273

I am a retired educator and an Alaskan for over 40 years, and I support both HB 272 and HB 273 wholeheartedly. Passing HB 272 is the first step, but not adequate to keep up with inflation, so passing both 272 and 273 will give school districts the ability to plan; implement quality programs, instruction, and delivery; and support both schools and communities. There hasn't been an increase to the BSA for 6 years, yet costs continue to rise. Inflation proofing the BSA is critical and basic to our children's success. We wouldn't ask a business to move from year to year with no planning; so why would we ask our school districts to operate in crisis mode year after year, offering no stability for students and staff and low morality due to staff lay-off notices. Instead, we should be attracting and keeping quality educators. The well-being of our educators and children is critical; this should be a priority. After all, our children will be the ones making these difficult decisions in the future. I ask you to please pass these very important bills. Investing in education is a wise investment for our great State of Alaska.

I also want to thank you for your tireless work and commitment; you do and can make a difference.

Barbara Pastorino

[REDACTED]

Juneau, AK 99801

907-[REDACTED]

From: jeff budd [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2022 3:34 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Funding For Education,in suport of the BSA

To House Finance Committee and Rep. Kreiss-Tompkins

I am in support of increasing our school funding. I spent a good deal of my career working with students and in schools. Nothing is more important for the future of our society and democracy than students who are educated. They are our future and deserve the best education available. Thank you. Sincerely, Jeff Budd

From: Joseph Rueter [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2022 7:30 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Public education

Flat funding must stop. As we see the increasing prices around us as a result of inflation. It stresses the importance and need for increasing our funding for education. Teachers are currently in demand. They will seek other avenues of employment if they are not compensated for the same monetary pressures inflicted on the rest of society. The idea that we be able to provide a high level of education in our public schools with flat funding needs to be addressed. Please fully fund our public schools keeping Alaska academically competitive!
Thanks for you time!

From: Bridget Hitchcock [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 8:08 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: HBs 272 and 273

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

I have 2 school aged children, ages 11 and 15 in the Sitka School district. I'm writing to encourage you to vote yes on HBs 272 and 273. Flat education funding over the last few years has caused the loss of so many important school programs in our state, and students have suffered as a result. Just one example is our middle school in Sitka closed its library in 2018. Every student feels the loss of a library.

Using emergency funds in our city to cover short falls is not a good long term solution. Please take action so that funding Alaska's schools isn't an emergency situation every year. All Alaskans benefit when schools can focus on preparing our students for the future instead of agonizing over what to cut next. Please inflation-proof the BSA.

Thank you for your service,

Bridget Hitchcock
Sitka

From: Robert Love <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:44 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 272 and273

We wish to support HB 272 and 273. As the expenses to provide public education have steadily inflated, state support has remained flat. Please increase the SBA.

Sincerely, Jan and Bob Love Sitka

Sent from my iPad

From: Gary Miller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 9:48 AM
To: Rep. Ben Carpenter; Rep. Matt Claman; Rep. Mike Cronk; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. David Eastman; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Zack Fields; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Ronald Gillham; Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Grier Hopkins; Rep. DeLena Johnson; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. James Kaufman; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Christopher Kurka; Rep. Bart LeBon; Rep. Kevin McCabe; Rep. Ken McCarty; Rep. Thomas McKay; Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. David Nelson; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Josiah Patkotak; Rep. Mike Prax; Rep. Sara Rasmussen; Rep. George Rauscher; Rep. Calvin Schrage; Rep. Laddie Shaw; Rep. Liz Snyder; Rep. Ivy Spohnholz; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Tiffany Zulkosky; Sen. Tom Begich; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Senator.Roger.Holland@akleg.gov; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Robert Myers; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Joshua Revak; Sen. Mike Shower; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. David Wilson
Subject: HB 272 & HB 273

What is more important in Alaska to you than our children?

Please vote yes on HB 272 (Increase Base Student Allocation) and HB 273 (Increase Base Student Allocation Inflation).

Gary Miller
[REDACTED]
Juneau, AK 99801-8211
(907) 7 [REDACTED]

From: Luann McVey [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 11:07 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: Please pass HB 272 & HB 273

Dear members of the House Finance committee,

I'm a retired Alaskan teacher, writing to urge you to increase the Base Student Allocation this year. After 5 years of flat funding and with rising inflation costs, schools are in dire need of a major financial boost.

During my 29-year teaching career, the hardest part of flat or decreased funding was that, even when student numbers in our school went up, the administration had to cut teaching positions in order to afford our programs. The result was higher Pupil:Teacher Ratios and less time for individualized interactions with students.

Those moments when a teacher can sit next to a student and reinforce or prompt for critical thinking are the keys to learning development. Every student in our state schools deserves this kind of teaching-learning process, on a regular basis.

We have a lot of ground to cover in Alaska, to catch up on the learning students missed during two years of pandemic zoom schooling. Help our teachers to close the learning gap for our students by passing HB 272 and HB 273.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Luann McVey

[REDACTED]
Douglas, Alaska. 99834

From: Mike Vieira <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 11:55 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Education Funding Support

Members of House Finance –

I am writing to urge you to support finding a means to inflation proof the ability for districts to fund education in Alaska. As you are all aware the last decade of budgets in Alaska has been extremely challenging – and public education has felt the result of this. There are so many paths that we could go down to discuss the affects this flat (or regressive if you factor in inflation) funding has had, but I will keep my comments brief and encourage you to find a mechanism that public education can keep up with its costs as inflation takes its toll. Unlike other industries Public Education has no ability to raise its rates, and is even limited by statutes to find local solutions. Alaska is in the midst of a recruitment and retention crisis that is combining with the aging of the most veteran of it's teaching workforce. At Sitka High School in the next three years we have the potential to lose 8 of 23 staff to retirement with a combined 230+ years of teaching experience. Several of these are in specialized areas such as CTE (IT, Automotives, Welding, Diesels), Music, Art, and physical sciences. Trying to continue to fund these positions without an adjustment to the BSA will be extremely challenging for the Sitka School District, and this will have a huge affect on the experience of students in Sitka.

Please consider supporting both HB272 and HB273 so that they may be heard on the house floor.

Thanks for your consideration, your time and your service to Alaskans.

Mike Vieira
Sitka High School
CTE Instructor
Sitka Education Association President
FabLab: 907.966.1949
Shop: 907.966.1920

From: Richard Steele <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 12:41 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: pass HB 272 & HB 273

Dear members of the house finance committee,

I asked that you raise the base student allocation this year. We have two grandchildren headed for school and we want the level of excellence to be maintained. Costs have gone up, so the allocation needs to go up.

The pandemic hasn't helped. We've got a lot of catch-up to do, Especially on infrastructure, buildings and staffing.

Please pass HB 272 and HB 273.

Richard Steele

[REDACTED]
Douglas, Alaska 99824

From: Lisa Admin [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 1:10 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: Base Student Allocation - HB 272 nad HB 273

Dear Finance Committee,

Please increase the BAS. I have an 8th grader and a 6th grader in Juneau public schools. Their schools are good, but they could be better. Their teachers are good, but deserve more pay and more support. My 6th grader has an IEP that says he should get help from a para 1hour a day. When I ask about what he does with the para, he says he never see's the para. My guess is there is one para that's supposedly serving lots of students and there's just not enough of him to go around. I've repeatedly asked about this and only received vague replies about it will be looked into. My son is smart and a hard worker, but needs some modifications. He didn't recieve these and earned an F in Science. That's not right.

I would like smaller class sizes, more resources for special needs kids and more arts and music in school. To make this possible, please increase the BSA. Please have it continue to increase each year with inflation. If it doesn't increase with inflation, we are really decreasing it.

I believe it's different funding, but I would also like the reimbursement for school building projects reinstated. In our district there are schools with 30-year-old carpet and wall coverings and many elementary schools with buckets hanging from the ceilings to catch drips. This is disgusting in a first world country that says it's so worried about kids, that we don't fund public schools at a higher rate.

Let's really make kids a priority and increase BAS and reinstate the State reimbursement for school building projects.

From: Mary Forbes <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 1:49 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Louise Stutes
Subject: Student base allocation increase

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge you to pass an increase to the student base allocation for Alaska schools. Though my children have graduated and are no longer in public schools, this was a battle we were fighting when they were still in a school. Adequate public school funding continues to be one of the most important issues facing our state.

Thank you for your hard work and service to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Mary Forbes
Kodiak

From: Patricia Dick [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 4:35 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; House Education
Subject: HP 272 HB 273

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing about HB 272 and HB 273 to encourage you to try and build back the education that our Alaska children deserve. The present administration has put a wrecking ball to the education for our Alaskan children with the legislature's help! Add two years of covid to the mix and now we have school districts suffering across the state with teachers and administrators leaving the state in droves! This forces Alaskans to wonder how we are going to make it through climate change, problems like rising seas, fish depletion, ocean pollution, wildlife management without educational skills to deal with these problems? **What happened to the base student allocation?** Why is it not increasing with inflation?

In Sitka, we have been suffering from low educational funding from the state as each of our school buildings cut personnel, cut personnel and our kids are crammed into larger classrooms while missing vital instruction. For example our Blatchley Middle School Library used to be the reading center of the school. There were book fairs, book clubs, reading supports, weekly library visits by each class, author visits, new book orders, reading grants, loads of motivating reading activities then, **BOOM** the librarian was CUT! All that gone in one swoop. You might think that we could compensate by teachers taking on some of that work, but after those cuts, more followed. Cuts in the teaching staff, plus teachers leaving because apparently THERE IS NO ALASKA TEACHER RETIREMENT ANY MORE has shaken us to our core!

In the past, we were able to hire teachers who had experience teaching in the Alaskan bush but now we are lucky to find first year teachers from anywhere in the United States. This year a whole grade level teaching team at our middle school are **all** new teachers, many of them first year teachers plus many new ones in other grade levels. How can you run a school like that? Usually at the most a few teachers retire a year so then there is continuity within the grade levels and whole school. Alaska in the past was known for recruiting teachers with good pay and benefits and we built our state education system to the point where students were no longer having to leave the state to get a college degree. Both my daughters got biology degrees and masters degrees in Alaska. But degree programs have been severely cut.

We are living with a static Base Student Allocation that does not even keep up with inflation, why? What good is a state that cannot educate its children? Who is going to move here? The Base Student Allocation needs to be **INCREASED EVERY YEAR AT THE VERY LEAST AT THE RATE OF INFLATION. Also the Base Student Allocation should not be dependent on whatever governor is in office! Politics when it comes to educating the children in this state needs to be bipartisan. Please help us with this and fix this sinking ship before it goes down!**

Gunalcheesh for all you do every day for the education of Alaska children!!!

Sincerely,
Patricia L. Dick
[REDACTED]

From: Caitlin Woolsey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 5:08 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support House Bills 272 and 273

Thank you for your work on school funding. I urge you to support these bills that would increase the funding schools receive based on the number of students. This amount should increase in lock step with inflation to ensure that schools have the resources they need every year to at least maintain their performance level, if not improve. Our district has done an amazing job at trying to hold everything together in the face of Covid and devastating budget cuts. However, we are in survival mode, with every staff member being stretched thin by increased responsibilities and decreased resources. We are losing staff all the time, and have struggled to recruit replacements. Existing staff cover for each other daily due to a lack of willing substitutes. Our students are missing out on potential after school activities, elective courses, and positive relationships with adults. Please support the increase in BSA. Thank you!

Caitlin Woolsey
STEAM Teacher
Blatchley Middle School

From: Brian Holst [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 5:49 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: Support for HB272 and HB273

Dear Members of the Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am Brian Holst, Director of the Juneau Economic Development Council and member of the Juneau Board of Education since 2014. **Please adopt HB272 and HB273.**

The top Legislative Priority of the Juneau Board of Education is: Early, adequate, equitable, and predictable funding of public education (AASB 2.2)

- From 2011 to 2021, the CPI-U for Alaska rose 17.8%.
- National inflation rose 20.5% (cumulatively), according to the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- The Statewide BSA increased only 4.4% in that same period, from \$5,680 in 2011 to \$5,930 in 2021.
- And since 2011, Juneau schools have reduced 100 positions and experienced well over \$10 million in cuts.
- Yes, we have experienced some reductions in enrollment, but not near the rate of losing staff.

As we develop our budget this year at the School District, we continue to look to CUT, Raise class sizes, let equipment degrade. Flat funding means CUTTING. **Throughout Alaska, schools struggle to recruit and retain teachers.**

We all know that the education outcomes across Alaska are generally disappointing. Despite cuts because of funding that does not keep up with inflation, we have seen **improvements in graduation rates** in Juneau over the last ten years, primarily by being more successful in supporting minority and low-income students. At the same time, we continue to see too many kids struggle to read and do well in Math and Science.

Our state does not have enough workers with college degrees or workforce credentials to meet the demands of the Alaska economy. **And employers struggle to find the talent they need for the workplace.** So often, better-paying jobs are not taken by Alaskans, or Alaskan companies cannot find workers!

If we want a different outcome, if you want to be **accountable** to the expectations of our Alaskan families and the business community, we need the State of Alaska to make a much more substantial investment in education:

- The proposed increases in HB272 are steps in the right direction and should be adopted. However, please note that the amounts proposed do not adequately compensate for inflation since 2011 or even 2017. Next year, we would need a BSA between \$6,400 and \$6,900 to get us back on par.
- HB 273 will allow the BSA to keep up with inflation in the future. It will give school districts and communities the ability to build and deliver the education Alaskan families and businesses need, and our kids deserve.

Thank you for your service and for being accountable to Alaskans who expect more from our schools.

Brian Holst

From: Emily Kane <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 5:57 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: educating our children

Dear Legislators

I am strongly in favor of [HB 272](#) and [HB 273](#).

Please pass these bills so that our next generation of Alaskans can compete in an increasingly complex world.

If you believe in helping every Alaskan achieve their full potential, the very best first step is a good education. My daughter had an excellent education in Juneau but many of her teachers have retired and the school district has not been able to find top quality replacements because the pay has not kept up with inflation. Teachers work SO HARD. Please pass these bills to invest in our teachers, our children and the future of our great state.

Thank you!

Dr. Emily Kane

www.DrEmilyKane.com

www.lifewavex39.com/dremilykane

www.naturopathic.org

From: Anne Fuller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:22 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: Please increase funding for public schools.

To the House Finance Committee

I am writing in support of House Bills 272 and 273. The citizens of Alaska are not well-served by inadequate funding of our schools.

No prices I watch are as low as they were five years ago. Expenses have increased, but not the base allocation (per student).

More money is needed for staffing our schools. Please invest in children and teachers.

Thank you.

Anne Fuller, Juneau

-- Memorable words of Elizabeth Peratrovich, Ƙaagtal:

assert to the world that you recognize the evil of the present situation and speak your intent to help us overcome discrimination

From: Marnie Hartill <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 6:35 PM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Liz Snyder; House Finance
Subject: Support HB272 and HB 273

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee, Representative Liz Snyder, and Representative Kelly Merrick,

I am writing you in support of HB 272 and HB 273. It is absolutely critical that Alaska's legislature increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for public schools in order to keep up with inflation. I live in East Anchorage and teach at Gruening Middle School in Eagle River.

Although the governor, our local school board, as well as many senators and representatives in our state legislature have touted specific support for career and technical education, I learned recently that the career and technical education computer technology program at Gruening Middle School will be dropped next year due to cuts in funding. As a certified CTE Education Technology teacher, I have spent the last 4 years developing the best middle school program in computer technology in Anchorage. Next year, the students in Eagle River will lose out on opportunities to prepare early for careers in information technology.

Many local schools lost funding for three or four staff. One middle school in midtown Anchorage cut their behavior support teacher. I guess we don't need behavior support in middle school? I suppose you'll tell me that the decisions are up to my local school board, but currently Anchorage School District has the worst formula for the BSA in the state. It does not make sense that an area such as Matsu has a higher BSA calculation and yet lower cost of housing than Anchorage, so this inequity needs to be fixed. Students in Anchorage deserve a quality education.

I moved to Alaska from Washington state in 2009 because I learned that Alaska actually funds their schools appropriately, but all that stopped in 2017. Now I'm wondering if this is the right choice for me and if I need to move to a state that actually supports public education.

Based on the Governor's TRR (Teacher Retention and Recruitment) taskforce study and results, we know that Alaska has a teacher retention problem like no other state. This is what educators are asking themselves, if they should stay in a state where school funding is unpredictable and unreliable.

Please pass HB 272 and HB 273.

Sincerely,

Marnie Hartill

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Linda Hulen [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 10:08 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Chris Tuck
Subject: HB 272 & 273
Attachments: Letter re increase in Base Student Allocation.docx

Please see the attached letter urging passage of these House Bills out of the House Finance committee.

Thank you, Linda Hulen

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 7:35 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Please vote for HB 272 and HB 273 to improve school budgets and academic performance

From: Kristen Olive <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 10:48 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: BSA HB 272 and HB 273

To the Legislature,

I am a teacher and parent in the Fairbanks Borough School District. I support an increase in Base Student Allocation through HB 272 and 273.

I love Alaska and want our community to prosper. That happens by providing excellent education to our children. Our constitution indicates that it is your responsibility to "maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state".

Part of maintaining the schools is funding the schools across our state.

Please do the right thing and increase the BSA to keep a high quality of education across our state!

Please don't force districts to cut arts, music, support staff, teachers and increase already huge class sizes. As a middle school teacher, I have seen our class sizes grow, which means less teachers. We have lost positions that are amazing supports for our students, such as Alaska Native Education Tutor to name just one.

My two kids have 10 years left in the public schools until our youngest graduates. I want them and the other children of ALaska to have a rich and fulfilling experience in our schools and be independent as they transition to adulthood! Thank you for your time and attention to the important issue of educating the future leaders and citizens of our awesome state!

Let's fully fund education for the future of our state.

Sincerely,
Kristen Olive
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Sent from my iPhone

From: jamie shearer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2022 10:56 PM
To: House Finance; Rep. Andy Josephson
Subject: Raising Base Student Allocation

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing today to support raising the base student allocation addressed in HB 272 and HB 273. Schools have been doing more with less for many years and after five years of flat education funding it is time to help. Schools desperately need a BSA that at the very least keeps up with inflation. Hopefully you can do even better than that though. In Anchorage over the past few years we have had to fight to keep programs ranging from Elementary Health to IGNITE to School Resource Officers. Please raise the BSA and help schools do more with more.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jamie Shearer

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK
99508

From: Beth Short-Rhoads [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 5:20 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Please vote yes on HBs 272 and 273

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

I'm writing to encourage you to vote yes on HBs 272 and 273. Flat education funding over the last few years has been incredibly hard on districts in our state, and students are bearing the brunt. Unthinkably, our middle school here in Sitka even closed its library in 2018 and never reopened it. That is just one of many crucial programs proven to promote student success that we've lost.

Every year, municipalities scramble to come up with funding to cover district shortfalls. In Sitka, we were "lucky" last year that we were able to take funds out of emergency reserves, but that is not a long term solution. Other districts are simply forced to make more cuts to school programs and staff.

Funding Alaska's schools shouldn't be an emergency situation every year. All Alaskans benefit when schools can focus on preparing our students for the future instead of spending weeks and months on rearranging numbers before finally making gut-wrenching cuts. Please inflation-proof the BSA.

Thank you for your service,

Beth Short-Rhoads
Sitka

From: Susan Brandt-Ferguson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 6:31 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: support our kids

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

Thank you for your service to this great state. I have attended over 25 years of Sitka School District budget meetings. Why? Because every year there is a deficit due to flat funding, or worse, and we must be vigilant so that the most important programs are maintained. Pass HB 272 and HB 273. Raise the BSA to at least keep up with inflation! Our kids deserve this support.

Sincerely,

Susan Brandt-Ferguson

[REDACTED]

Sitka, AK 99835

[REDACTED]

From: Laurie Hueffer [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 7:49 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: Support of HB 272 and HB 273

I am writing in support of two bills (HB 272 and HB 273) that would inflation proof the BSA. The BSA is so essential to our public schools and yet has essentially been flat-funded year after year as costs continue to rise.

My effectiveness as an elementary school teacher is directly impacted by school funding and resulting numbers of students in my classroom. In order to effectively serve students, we need reliable funding of schools. These bills help towards that effort.

Our public schools are a vital component that powers all Alaskan communities and we need predictable funding that keeps up with the costs of doing business in Alaska. HB 272 and 273 are part of the solution.

Thank you for your support.

--
Laurie Hueffer
[REDACTED]

From: Nicole Eiseman [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2022 8:54 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Grier Hopkins
Subject: Support HR 272 and 273

I'm writing today in support of an immediate increase to the Base Student Allocation, as well as a long term commitment to match the BSA with inflation which, as you know, has been flat -funded for the past 7 years, all the while fixed-costs have increased. Flat funding of the BSA has effectively resulted in 7 years of state cuts to education. Flat funding runs counter to the department of educations and early developments mission statement: An excellent education for every student every day. Flat funding has made it impossible for the DEED to meet its goals regarding teacher retention and recruitment.

My now-adult children received an excellent education here in Fairbanks. Passing HR 272 and 273 will go a long way to ensure that my three grandchildren receive a quality education as well.

Thank you,
Nicky Eiseman