

Doniece Gott

From: Claire Holland LeClair <northsister@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:25 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding and 25/75 split on the POMV

Members of the Senate Finance Committee-

Please raise the BSA, ideally by the \$1,250 per student necessary to get Alaska's public education system back on track.

I am also advocating for a 25/75 split of the Permanent Fund's POMV. That would be 25% for dividends and 75% to go towards funding the services necessary for our state to thrive: education, transportation, health and social service, public safety and more.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Respectfully,

Claire Holland LeClair

Doniece Gott

From: Carrie Nash <nash.carrie@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:27 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: I urge you to raise the BSA

Hello to Senate Finance Committee members,

I am writing to simply urge you to RAISE THE BSA right now, during this session. There needs to be stability and increased funding for Alaskan schools. Please put political differences aside and support students, families, teachers and communities with this necessary funding increase. The BSA cannot wait and needs to be much higher than it currently is in order to make schools work. Our state is losing population and businesses because people do not want to risk a school system that is teetering on collapse. Schools first. Kids first. Raise the BSA!

Thank you for the work that you do.

Carrie Nash, Fairbanks

--

Carrie Nash
nash.carrie@gmail.com

907 388 5018 cell

740 Pelican Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Peter Hoepfner <phoepfner@cordovasd.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:30 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

Greetings to the senate finance committee. I am sorry that I may not have the availability to testify telephonically on this issue, this sending an email.

With education funding being held flat since 2017, the crisis of the lack of funding has hit home. We do not have any Librarians, no nurses, no reading specialist... and we are having a hard time in finding teachers and aides... the grocery store pays more than we can for our aides. Last year we were unable to find a counselor and a 6th grade teacher... and fortunately two retired teachers in cordova filled these positions. And I fortunately we were unable to find a second Special Education teacher, putting an undue burden on our one Special Education teacher... pushing her to the point of wanting to resign. It is a VERY sad state of affairs to come to this point...

In Cordova we are facing an unprecedented deficit of \$926,000... which would be covered, well, within \$10,000 anyway of this deficit if the BSA increase was the \$1250 that Rep Otiz bill originally stated.

We have an approximate budget of \$7M... and have a VERY limited (almost non-existent) reserve budget from the last 6 years of flat funding... To cover this deficit, would require eliminating 8 of our 28 teachers, doubling class sizes to 30 plus students, an environment where learning cannot happen due to distractions and an impossible management goal for teachers.

Do we here in Cordova eliminate our food service, eliminate ALLL sports, in an attempt to keep teachers in classrooms?? We are in the worst case scenario that I have seen in the 18 years that I have sat on the Cordova School Board of education.

I don't want to use the word "plead" for funding, but that is where we are at this point. Inflation has eaten EVERYTHING... rising costs, which continue, and the prices of food, rent are at a pace that I cannot believe, and I even worry about our young families here in cordova... will they stay??

We have seen an increase in our K-4 grades with student count going up to 40 per class, while the HS has 15-18 per class, due to the fact that many families have come back to cordova, realizing how good the school system is, and wanting to raise their children, like I did mine in an exceptional education environment, where the teacher care about each child.

An increase of \$1250 would enable our district to maintain what we have been doing... it accounts for a minimal \$200 year increase in BSA that has been bypassed the last six years because the state lacks a stable fiscal budget...

PLEASE think of Alaskans children... and the necessary education for our children. Do NOT fail our children, and cause our district to RIF nearly 30% of our teaching staff, or cancel our food service, or cancel opportunities for our students.

Let's STOP the past 4-6 years of people leaving the state of Alaska, let's STOP the fact that Alaska is at the BOTTOM of the US economically!!

A FULLY funded education system is a start, quickly followed by a stable fiscal budget, as the state has been deficit spending SINCE 2014, NINE YEARS!!!

Peter Hoepfner
Cordova School Board VP
AASB Immediate Past Pres
NSBA Board of Director member

Thumbed in from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Marka Anne Brooks <brooks.markaanne@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:37 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Marka Anne Brooks
Subject: Senate Bill 52 -- Invest in our greatest resource

Senate Finance Committee members

Thank you for all the work you do during the session on behalf of Alaskans. I've been an Alaska resident since June 1974. I earned an engineering degree from the University of Alaska Anchorage and my two children were educated in Alaska public schools. My daughter-in-law is a 6th grade teacher in Anchorage.

I believe there is nothing as important to our society and democracy than public education. Our children are our most important resource. We have been short funding public education for years and it is very important that we take this opportunity to raise the Base Student Allocation and provide inflation adjustments. Approving the \$1000 BSA increase and inflation adjustments will begin to reverse the trend where we cannot attract teachers to Alaska. Strong education facilities are also an important to attract new residents and new investment in Alaska and this investment will extend to our children and to the broader needs in Alaska.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration.

Anne Brooks
brooks.markaanne@gmail.com
1704 Rogers Park Court
Anchorage, AK 99508
907-242-6405

Doniece Gott

From: Natasha Price <nataliaprice@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public testimony for SB 52

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of SB 52 to raise the base student allocation by \$1,000 and provide for inflation adjustments. We need this increase to better educate Alaska youth.

Thank you,
Natalia Price of Anchorage
907-317-1201

Doniece Gott

From: Karma Hibbetts <thekarma7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:42 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support of the Increase to the BSA for Seward

Hello, I am a lifelong Seward resident and a mother to a 14 year old child in our school system. I would like to voice my support of the increase in the BSA in order to keep vital programs available for our children and our community.

Our pool, our arts programs, our drama and our music is the life of our students. We went several years without music or art and it's not something I want any of our children to go through again.

I grew up right here in Seward, graduating in 2003, and we had all these programs and more. There should be an increase in the budget to keep these programs here for the sake of our children and our community.

We have no rec center, we have no outside ways to expose our children to music and few if any programs to cultivate their love of arts in the ways of acting or in other mediums. It's very important to consider the growth that Seward is going to see in the coming years and how the additional families and children moving here will also benefit from these activities remaining in our community.

Please, do what is best for our town and increase the funding needed to keep these very important programs alive for our future generations. We need the programs, we need the people to teach the programs and we need these activities for our families in Seward.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Karma Hibbetts
PO Box 3393
Seward, Alaska, 99664
907-362-0550

Doniece Gott

From: Sharon Davies <sod@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:44 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52

YOU ABSOLUTELY NEED TO INCREASE THE BSA TO MAKE UP FOR INFLATION SINCE THE LAST TIME IT WAS SET.

K-12 EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THNGS GOVERNMENT DOES

NOT JUST FOR THE CHILDREN OF TODAY AND THE FUTURE BUT FOR ALL OF US WHO DEPEND ON A BASICALLY
EDUCATED WORKFORCE AND SOCIETY.

SHARON DAVIES 1510 P ST, 99501 SOD@GCI.NET

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH
AND
KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL BOARD**

**ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION NO. 2982-AMENDED-SUBSTITUTE
SCHOOL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 23-01-SUBSTITUTE-AMENDED**

A Resolution of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Board Calling on the Governor and Legislature of the State of Alaska to Increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA)

RECITALS

- A. WHEREAS**, Article VII, §1 of the Alaska Constitution commands that the Legislature "shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state", a provision that obligates the legislature in equal measure to provide for all 53 school districts in the State of Alaska; and
- B. WHEREAS**, in support of this mandate of the Constitution, the Legislature enacted AS 14.17.410 which provides the formula based on a base student allocation ("BSA") by which the adequate funding for each school district is calculated; and
- C. WHEREAS**, while funding for school districts in organized boroughs has only nominally increased during the last decade, the legislature has routinely increased the funding to Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAAs;) and
- D. WHEREAS**, established data show that years of flat funding of the BSA has resulted in Alaska school districts losing \$1,433 per enrollment since 2012 due to inflation, equaling a total loss of \$7,313,101 in State funding during FY2023 for Ketchikan schools and reduced spending power at pre-2012 levels; and
- E. WHEREAS**, Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District has experienced record increases in property and liability insurance costs of double-digit percentages; and
- F. WHEREAS**, district health insurance costs have more than doubled, exacerbated by the COVID pandemic, and current year health care claims are now close to 20% of the total District budget; and
- G. WHEREAS**, Alaska is facing a teacher shortage and hiring crisis, and Alaska school districts' wages and benefits are no longer competitive compared to prevailing wages provided in other neighboring states; and
- H. WHEREAS**, continued flat funding will require the Ketchikan Gateway Borough

School District to cut approximately 57 various positions, and/or elimination of entire programs in FY2024; and

- I. **WHEREAS**, given the maximum local contribution limit of \$12,465,729 which the Borough currently funds, even if the Borough's mill rate or other funding sources were increased, there are no more options for the Borough to provide additional funding to the District; and
- J. **WHEREAS**, in recent years, supplemental appropriations by the Legislature to public education have often been provided and later vetoed, a phenomenon that frustrates district needs for timely, reliable and predictable funding that enables districts to ability to conduct necessary long-term educational planning; and
- K. **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Association of School Boards notes that from 2012 to 2022, the BSA has only increased by \$250 per student, which is a 4.2% increase, while inflation has increased by at least 24%; and
- L. **WHEREAS**, in order for the State to meet its constitutional obligation of maintaining its public schools, the BSA should be increased by an amount such as the \$1,000 recommended by Alaska Senate Bill 52 (SB 52), that provides adequate funding for each school district, that makes up for past erosion, and offsets historically high current inflation.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS JOINTLY RESOLVED BY THE KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH AND THE KETCHIKAN SCHOOL DISTRICT, as follows:

Section 1. The Assembly and the School Board find that the multi-year failure to appropriately adjust the Base Student Allocation undermines the ability of districts statewide to provide the level of funding required to operate a comprehensive K-12 educational system; and

Section 2. The Assembly and the School Board strongly urge the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to significantly and appropriately increase the Base Student Allocation to adequately fund education for all Alaska students, and to support districts with long term stable and predictable funding.

Section 3. The Assembly and School Board further urge the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to implement a mechanism to provide increased funding to the school districts in organized boroughs in amounts no less than funding increases provided to the Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAAAs).

Section 4. **Effective Date.** This resolution shall be effective upon adoption by the Assembly and the School Board, whichever occurs later.

ADOPTED by the Assembly this 27th day of February, 2023.


ADOPTED by the School Board this 8th day of February, 2023.



Stephen Bradford, Board President



Nicole Anderson, Board Clerk-Treasurer



Rodney Dial, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:



Kacie Paxton, Borough Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Glenn Brown, Borough Attorney

Doniece Gott

From: Elizabeth Serrano <elizabethnoelserrano@live.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52 testimony from Elizabeth Serrano

Hello,

I am writing in support of increasing the student allocation by \$1000.00 as proposed in Senate Bill 52. As a third generation Alaskan and parent of a child in the Anchorage School District this is a major priority for me. If you want to keep hard working families in Alaska and have an educated population able to participate in the democratic process, then making sure we are appropriately funding education should be a top priority for all members of the Alaska Senate.

I am in a privileged position in that I am a well-paid professional and am able to ensure my son has every opportunity to thrive possible. However, if we continue to under fund schools, increase class sizes, and lose talented educators I will be leaving Alaska specifically due to this issue. I can find a good paying job anywhere but my son only has one chance at getting his foundational education and I will not gamble with that. I know for a fact that this is a concern for many parents and that there are many who are contemplating having to leave Alaska if the situation is not adequately resolved. This is more than just an education issue (though that should be reason enough for you to act appropriately), this is an economic issue. If Anchorage is going to be able to thrive and keep its professional class, then increasing the base student allocation and ensuring that our children have the education they deserve needs to be a priority.

I hope that the correct decision is made and that SB52 passes because I love Alaska and this is the best thing for Alaska.

Please feel free to reach out to me if any further questions or comments are needed.

Kind Regards,

Elizabeth Serrano
(907) 717-6367

Doniece Gott

From: Christina Salmon <admin@igiugig.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:51 AM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Senate Finance Committee; Rep. Bryce Edgmon
Subject: Increase to the BSA

Dear Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of the Igiugig Tribal Council we are requesting an increase to education needs, and the increase needs to be secured inside of the BSA.

If funding is put outside the formula, it is not protected and can disappear in the coming year(s).

* Education has essentially flat funded. No permanent increase has been applied in 6 years. This needs to change.

- We need to retain staff. Turnover in staffing is harmful to student outcomes.
- The READS Act has required much work from school staff and districts. All of this work comes with an additional cost of time and money. We need the state to support their initiative.
- School staff deserve to earn good salaries. Without an increase, districts have to cut staff/programs to increase salaries.
- School staff are required to do more these days with less.

Failure to fund our education system adequately has caused a lot of instability in staffing. This instability and related turnover mean our children's education performance suffers.

We hope you understand the importance our students and schools are to the future of our communities and make sure you go to bat for them at the legislative level.

Quyana, Thank you,

--

Christina Y. Salmon
Village Administrator
Igiugig Village Council
Sovereign Native Village of Igiugig
PO Box 4008, Igiugig, AK 99613
907.533.3211 w
907.533.6002 c

Doniece Gott

From: Karl Hill <karl.hill@igiugig.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:52 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Rep. Bryce Edgmon
Subject: SB 52 - Increase the BSA Inside the Funding Formula

Dear Finance Committee, Senator Hoffman, and Representative Edgmon,

I understand that the Senate will be meeting to discuss SB 52 today and will be considering increasing education funding. I would like to encourage all involved to support a substantial increase in education funding inside of the BSA funding formula, not outside of it. Alaska educational staffing is severely lacking, and we have witnessed the impact to educator continuity in our villages. Failure to increase this funding is continuing instability in education staffing, and trickles down to a decrease in the quality of education for our children. I strongly recommend that education receive a substantial increase in funding inside of the BSA.

Chin'an for your consideration in this matter,

Karl Hill
Vice President
Igiugig Village Council
(907) 533-3211

Doniece Gott

From: Mark Kansteiner <buddy@ak.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:16 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52

Dear Committee Members,

Please support Senate Bill 52 to strengthen our schools. Education has been underfunded for many years. The BSA needs to be increased to prevent cutting teachers, classes and school activities. Please give our students & teachers the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mark Kansteiner

Seward, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Jordana Grant <jgrant@kakeschools.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:19 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for SB 52

Dear members of the senate,

I have been an Alaskan educator for 9 years, and in that time I have taught in two rural districts. I love what I do and work hard to provide the best education possible to the students of Kake, Alaska. To help improve the education of Alaskan students and support educators in the classrooms, I encourage you to support senate bill 52. The flat funding of the BSA is an issue that needs to be addressed.

We are lucky enough that as a small rural school we do not have increased class sizes the way that schools in Anchorage, Juneau or Fairbanks might. However, we do have to reduce what we can offer to our students as funding gets tighter. Cultural programs, improved curriculum, staff training, music programs, libraries, art programs, non-sports clubs, health classes, building maintenance and improvements, sex-ed, science fairs and more are all cut, run by temporary grants--such as my program, or run off of donations of time and money by teachers or other community members. That is not sustainable.

I acknowledge that the PFD is invaluable to many families in Alaska and that a reduction of any kind would impact many families who use it for bills, car/home repairs, or yearly clothing purchases. However, if the money is moved to education that money is still benefiting the future of all Alaskans. All Alaskans need a well educated youth, because they will grow up to be the nurses and doctors that treat people, the bankers and business people who grow or shrink our economy, or the lawmakers who help determine the direction our state takes. I have also heard people complain that increasing the BSA is not needed because we need to improve our scores first. Increasing the BSA and making sure that money is used for better curriculum, warm and well built schools, and increased educational offerings (so students have science classes before 8th grade) will help increase those scores. How much effort can we expect our students to put into their education if they see that the adults of Alaska don't value education? Educating our youth and making sure they're well rounded and not scraping by benefits all of us.

--

Jori Grant

Kake City School District
21st Century Grant Coordinator
jgrant@kakeschools.com

Doniece Gott

From: Jenna Hamm <jenna@campdenali.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:21 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

My name is Jenna Hamm and I live in Denali Park with my family and have served on the school board of the District for 10 years. I am writing you today to urge you to pass SB 52 out of Finance Committee, the bill to increase the Base Student Allocation by \$1000 for FY 2024, by \$348 for FY 2025 and that would tie future BSA increases to the Consumer Price Index to inflation-proof annual education funding.

As you deliberate SB 52, I urge you to follow through with nothing less.

Last month I wrote about our board's recent decision to continue to fund and staff, however minimally possible, our two smaller schools in the communities of Cantwell and Anderson. Because a school is better than no school, however meager the offerings, or how few the teachers, or how stretched-thin the maintenance staff.

I described how closing down two of our smaller schools would be a death knell for these communities. Schools are the lifeblood of Alaska's small communities-- the public libraries, the community gathering spots, the emergency shelters (yes, this happened this summer during the Clear Fire), the gymnasiums in the middle of winter, the ball fields and playgrounds in the summertime. Schools are critical to Alaska's communities, and Alaska's communities are the lifeblood of the state's economy.

We cannot continue to serve our children well by continually underfunding public education. Some among you have advocated for a slow deliberation during this session and the next in order to fully evaluate the merits of any education funding increase. I would challenge you, just as we school board members ask ourselves at each and every school board meeting: "what is best for students?"

Flat or minimal funding another year will indisputably shortchange our students' learning opportunities. Year after year districts have been faced with doing less with less. Teachers are already seeking work elsewhere, knowing that their jobs are on the chopping block. Families are already moving out of state for better educational opportunities for their children. Communities are losing the strength and vitality of young, working families who contribute to the state's economy. Teachers, families and our state's communities need the security of knowing our state is fully committed to funding public education.

Passing SB 52 out of Finance Committee is what is best for Alaska's students. Please fulfill your obligation to invest in Alaska's future. Thank you for your service to Alaskans.

Respectfully,
Jenna Hamm

Jenna Hamm
she/her
Co-owner
[Camp Denali and Parkside Guest House](#)
PO Box 67, Denali Park, AK 99755
907-683-2290-office
907-505-0534-mobile
[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Blog](#)

Providing active learning experiences and fostering stewardship of the natural world through a tradition of community, excellence and place.

Doniece Gott

From: Jared Garlick <jgarlick@swrsd.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:22 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Testimony for SB 52

Good afternoon,

Maintaining school environments where students can succeed and experience growth has been impacted greatly due to the rising costs of services and goods that we provide our students. Increasing the B.S.A. as outlined in SB 52 would help offset these expenses. Some examples of rising costs for our district are as follows:

OVERALL BUDGET

- We began the budget process with an assumption of status quo budgeting because we knew what we are facing in increased costs.
- We are currently working to find ways to contain or absorb well over a \$500,000 shortfall in a status quo budget from last year.

FUEL COST

- Our cost of overall purchase, even with a variance of twenty to thirty thousand gallons per year (due to varying weather), has risen from \$571,800 in 2019 to this year's quote of \$988,450.
- At our largest site, Togiak the cost per gallon has risen from \$2.85/gallon to \$4.86/gallon in just the past two years.
- At some of our smallest sites the increase is even greater with one site seeing a rise from \$2.99 to \$5.78 in the same period.
- NOTE: if you would like to use numbers specific to your site, contact me and I will give you the numbers for your site for fuel cost.

FOOD SERVICE

- Since 2018 the cost of a case of #10 cans of corn has risen by over 38% from \$57.36 to \$81.75
- Since 2019 the cost of a case of #10 cans of unsweetened applesauce has risen by over 66% from 56.23 to 93.69

AIR TRANSPORTATION - Passenger and Freight

- Charter (round trip) from a site to Dillingham has risen since 2017 from \$600 to \$1,000.
- Charter (round trip) from a site to Dillingham has risen from \$900 to \$1,000 in just the past six months.

RECRUITMENT

- We are still looking to fill many open positions and the hiring pool statewide is very small at this time.
- Job fairs lack the interest they have had in the past for the teaching profession.

Combatting the effects of the cost increases and retaining our ability to hire and retain qualified staff is only possible with stable adequate funding INSIDE the Base Student Allocation (BSA). Temporary funding sources could lead to a fallout that the state, and especially our district, would not easily recover from.



Jared Garlick
Principal
Manokotak Nunaniq School
PO Box 130
Manokotak, AK 99628
907-289-1013 Office
jgarlick@swrsd.org

Doniece Gott

From: Paige Petr <cppetr@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:27 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Raise the BSA!

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge you to raise the base student allocation by \$1000.

I have been an educator for 25 years - 20 in Anchorage School District as a teacher, family liaison and school counselor. I am a parent of high school aged twins, a homeowner, and the wife of a small business owner. Alaska is our home...my kids (the ones I parent and the ones I work for) are Alaska's future. This is a deeply personal issue, and I am worried. I have watched as the supports and opportunities for our students have been slimmed while costs have increased and family wages have stagnated over these last several years. Valuable colleagues are leaving the profession and even the state. Open positions are going unfilled because professionals can't see the value in taking a job that doesn't compete financially in a state that lacks services.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Paige Petr

9011 Jupiter Dr

99507

(School Counselor at King Tech High School in Anchorage)

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Christy Everett <christyeverett.personal@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:31 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Raise the Base Student Allocation!

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As a 35 year resident and voter in North Pole, Alaska, as well as a mother of five (three still in Alaska) and grandmother of six (all in Alaska), I urge you to increase the Base Student Allocation by at least \$1000 permanently. Our children are our most important resource, and providing them with a high quality education is the best investment we can make in Alaska's future.

Without good schools, Alaska will be unable to retain and attract residents, especially the high quality professionals we need to grow our economy. We must ensure that schools are safe, welcoming and technologically up to date, that class sizes are low, and that teachers are adequately paid and supported. Please vote yes to the BSA increase to make this happen!

Sincerely,

Christine Everett
2308 Robinson Circle
North Pole, AK 99705

Doniece Gott

From: R J Potter <mitupela@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 4:39 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Support for SB 52

To the Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Joel Potter. I am a resident of Anchorage, an associate professor at UAA, and the father of three children in the Anchorage School District.

I am writing to express my support for SB 52 and, specifically for a \$1000 increase to the BSA.

What is being proposed in SB 52 is not a funding increase. It is a restoration of most (but not all) of the state financial support lost due to inflation. The impacts of inflation are particularly dire for the Anchorage School District because of the way that the state's funding formula works. While other districts receive adjustments for changes in cost of living, ASD does not, because it is used as the benchmark for calculating the district cost factor.

It is essential to the proper functioning of our K-12 schools that this increase happens this year and that it consists of a BSA increase and not a one-time increase.

One-time increases do not lend stability to our schools. Instead, they perpetuate chaos, stress, and a damaging fire and rehire cycle. One-time funding will mean that districts like mine--the Anchorage School District--will have to move forward with large increases to the teacher student ratio and school closures next year.

Families in my school district cannot weather perpetual uncertainty and diminishing educational offerings. Many will simply leave the state. Our state leadership must look to the future and prioritize our children and families.

Thank you for your time,
Joel Potter

Doniece Gott

From: Susan Brandt-Ferguson <srfjferguson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 7:33 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am heartened to hear that the Alaska State Senate is considering a much-needed permanent increase to the BSA. As a teacher who has taught in the Sitka School District for 27 years, I have seen first-hand the strain and stress that inadequate and insecure state funding has placed on our teachers. When teachers lack job security, they look for other occupations. When districts cannot hire until late in the year because they are unsure of funding, they lose the chance to attract the brightest and the best. It is no secret that flat funding education, even in a climate of average inflation, means budget cuts. But considering the inflation our country has experienced of recent, it is imperative that the BSA increase so that we can offer our children the education they deserve. Please support SB52!

Sincerely,
Susan Brandt-Ferguson
1603 Sawmill Creek Road
Sitka, AK 99835

Doniece Gott

From: Danielle Smith <dsmithz_70@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 8:11 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Löki Tobin
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 52

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

As a long-time Alaskan, I'm writing to wholeheartedly support Senate Bill 52 and a permanent increase to the Base Student Allocation.

Over the past several years we have been bearing witness to the rapid and systematic erosion of our public schools and I don't understand why.

I believe strong support for Alaska's public education system is fundamental to ensuring students become productive members of our society, economy and democracy.

I believe all students should have access to high-quality, neighborhood-based public schools which are critical to building strong families and great communities.

Shouldn't this be among our highest priorities?

I urge you to support Senate Bill 52.

Thank you for your service to Alaska.

Danielle Williams
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Farrell <mrfarrell777@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 9:25 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Raise the AK Base Student Allocation

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 52.

Alaska used to have one of the best education systems in the country. Not anymore. We are asking teachers to do their jobs without enough funding. Not only is this unfair to teachers, it is extremely stressful for them and many are leaving the profession. Our children deserve better. Please support SB 52. It's critically important for Alaska's future.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mary Farrell
1940 RJ Loop
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Krista Marvin <kmarvin35@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 9:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Testimony SB52

Dear members of the Senate Finance committee,

My name is Krista Marvin, and I am a lifelong Alaskan and teacher of 25 years writing from Nome, Alaska in support of SB52.

I am writing to express my deep concern about the current state of education funding in our state.

This past year, our district was unable to fill open positions. As a result, my grade level had to combine well-balanced classrooms into overcrowded rooms. This left the remaining teachers with inadequate personnel and material resources to meet all the diverse needs of their students.

As one of the affected teachers, I can attest to the difficulties of trying to provide a quality education in such challenging circumstances. With larger class sizes and limited resources, it is extremely challenging to provide individualized attention to each student, resulting in students falling behind. After our covid education years, the need for individualized instruction is more important than ever.

The lack of funding makes it difficult to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. In my experience, many teachers in our state (including myself) have to work multiple jobs just to make ends meet. This results in teacher burnout and a high turnover rate, which is not in the best interest of our students.

With our current funding, it is almost impossible to provide our students with the resources and experiences they need to be successful beyond the classroom. Music education was an integral part of Nome's education program but we have recently lost our elementary music program and high school music teachers due to staffing shortages and funding. This has had a negative impact on our students and community as a whole.

By increasing the BSA, we can reduce class sizes, attract and retain highly qualified teachers, provide resources and support for diverse learning needs, and invest in extracurricular programs and experiences. This would greatly benefit our students and provide them with the quality education they deserve.

In conclusion, I urge you to increase Alaska's BSA and to ensure the funding directly addresses student needs, not administrative personnel. The future success of our students and state depends on it. Thank you for your consideration.

Krista Marvin

Doniece Gott

From: Ann Rappoport <agrappoport@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 9:54 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. David Wilson; Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: Please pass SB52 to provide a \$1000 increase in the Base Student Allocation!

Dear Senate Finance Committee members:

I am writing in support of SB52 which would increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for education \$1000/student. As you know, education funding has been flat for many years, while inflation has increased basic costs for everything. The tiny increase in education funding last year barely counts toward funding our schools as we should. Education costs have increased due to inflation, and increased costs for health care and security at schools (due to lax gun controls and need for more mental health services), among other factors, yet funding has not kept pace. In fact analyses show that a \$1300 increase in the BSA would more realistically count for inflation over the last decade or so. Do not provide a one-time chunk of funding as the House did - that just kicks this can down the road once again.

The \$1000 increase in the BSA provided in SB52 would do much to ensure that class sizes do not have to increase. We all know that increased class size leads to decreases in test scores and creates problems for teachers managing their classes. Increased class sizes mean teachers cannot provide the individual attention that students who may be struggling need. After a few years of pandemic schooling which has left far too many kids struggling with where they should be, this increase is needed even more than ever. Without this increase, school districts around the state will have to drop more of the special programs that inspire kids, that ensure those who need it receive specialized attention.

Thank you for your attention to my comments and the similar comments of so many other parents, teachers, and Alaska residents. Our children are the future of our state; they deserve a quality education so we will have capable, qualified individuals to build and lead our state for a healthy future for all.

Thank you,
Ann Rappoport
Anchorage, AK 99516

COLD CLIMATE ENGINEERING, LLC

April 12, 2023

Senate Finance Committee, Senate.Finance@akleg.gov
Senator Loki Tobin, Senator.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov

RE: Support for SB52, An Increase in the Base Student Allocation

This letter in support of SB52 is intended to provide a new perspective on why it is important to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) in the State; that by doing so will actually lower School District operational costs and potentially State operating budgets. Let me explain.

I am a Professional Mechanical Engineer who has been designing schools and other projects in Alaska for over 26 years. I have been an Alaskan since 1976 and attended the Anchorage School District. I currently live in Midtown Anchorage with my two boys who also attended the Anchorage School District.

As the School Districts have been faced with what amounts to a continuous budget cut by flat funding the BSA for a decade, the Districts have cut budgets in a way they thought best minimized the impacts on the classroom (teachers and student ratios). They have instead cut Facilities and Maintenance, sometimes referred to Operation and Maintenance. This was thought to be a 'temporary' solution understanding they could cut maintenance for a while which would "kick the can" of the consequences of a lack of maintenance for a couple of years.

The cuts forced by a decade of flat funding and high inflation have resulted in chronic school system infrastructure failure across the State due to these "kick the can" policies that the diminished school funding has created. The State and Municipal tax payers pay a significant amount of money to the resulting repair and replacement projects that have come due prematurely due to the lack of maintenance funding.

Every \$1 of preventive maintenance (i.e. fully funded school Facilities' budgets) saves \$3 of replacement costs (i.e. repair and replacement projects and bonds).

When schools receive proper maintenance, their buildings operate more energy efficiently which lowers their utility costs. This is exceptionally important with our high energy costs, particularly in Rural Alaska.

New, higher energy efficient equipment requires more and higher quality maintenance. These systems have not been applied to Alaska schools because we, as a Design Community, know that the maintenance budget is not there to properly maintain the systems which will lead to catastrophic system failures and ultimately school closures.

P.O. Box 240866
Anchorage, AK 99524
T: (907) 441-1567

Letter of Support, SB52
April 12, 2023

Like teachers, qualified Facilities Staff are difficult to find and it takes time to train them on the unique requirements of each school. One-time funding bills do not provide the stability that both Facilities Administrators and potential hires have needed to fill these much needed positions.

Finally, a fully funded Facilities team ensures that classrooms are kept at the optimal indoor environment for student learning. Because no matter how good the teacher is, it is hard for students to learn in 50 degree classrooms. Staff also appreciate a warm and fully functioning school and teacher housing which enhances teacher recruitment.

Many have submitted support for this Bill as a way to improve what happens inside the classroom, but increasing the BSA also makes fiscal sense in extending the life of the capital infrastructure that the Districts already have to maintain.

If you have any questions or if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me!

Respectfully Submitted,



Craig Fredeen, PE
President

Doniece Gott

From: Alexandra McGuan <alexandra.mcguan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 10:28 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Alexandra McGuan, and I am both a parent and teacher of students in the Anchorage School District. I am writing in support of SB 52. Stable and predictable funding is necessary to ensure districts can attract and retain high quality educators. The base student allocation (BSA) has only been increased by \$30 since 2016, and the impact of inflation during that time has created a significant loss of purchasing power for school districts.

The Anchorage School District has been significantly impacted by insufficient funding and inflation most notably by a lack of staffing.

The Anchorage School District continues to have dozens and dozens of full time teaching positions that have remained unfilled all school year. At our elementary school we have been short one special education resource teacher and one special education teacher all school year. This negatively impacts student learning, teacher effectiveness, and creates undue burden on the rest of the staff that leads to burn out and teachers leaving the profession. We are also constantly struggling to find substitute teachers to fill in when staff have to be out of the classroom. When we do not have substitutes to cover teachers and TAs who are out sick, students do not have services resulting in safety concerns and the skipping of planned learning activities because there are literally not enough people available to make it possible.

Reliable funding is key to improving student outcomes by stabilizing schools and reducing educator turnover. With an increase to the BSA our district will use the additional funds to reduce student teacher ratios as well as offer more competitive salaries to attract and retain staff which will result in better student learning outcomes.

Please consider increasing, as well as inflation proofing the BSA to ensure Alaska schools can continue to serve students with the quality education they deserve.

Thank you,

Alexandra McGuan

Doniece Gott

From: Lance Westing <lwesting@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 11:01 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: I am writing in support of: SB 52

Lance Westing
798 Chase Avenue
Cordova, AK 99574

12th April 2023

Dear Mr. Co-Chair and members of the Senate Finance committee,

I am writing in support of: SB 52

I have taught science in four different school districts over the past 22 years with the past 10 years at Cordova Jr/Sr High school. Plus, I was lucky enough to attend public school in Kodiak from grades 6 through 12. My own kids currently attend public school here in Cordova.

Due to the decreasing value of the funding for Alaska public schools, our current students are not allowed the opportunities that I and my peers benefited from as students here in Alaska.

Here in Cordova our administration and school board have been trying hard to absorb decreased buying power without having a direct impact on students. Following are some ways that this is manifesting:

1. Our district does not have competitive enough pay and benefits to consistently fill general classroom aide positions. This leads to teachers not having the support they need to meet the needs of diverse students. Elementary teachers have told me that this is especially difficult post COVID-19 since kids came back to the building with even bigger differences between the highest and lowest skilled students. It is our students who are the best behaved that are most deprived of one-on-one instruction attention in situations like this.
2. Our district is not attracting a sufficient number of substitute teachers for similar reasons. This leads to the aides and other support staff serving as substitute teachers instead of performing their normal duties.
3. Our district had to fill one teaching position and a counselor position by rehiring retired teachers! While we are glad to have them, teaching jobs in Alaska are no longer highly sought after by people entering the position. Just last year we had a dynamic long term substitute (due to maternity leave) who had recently earned his teaching credentials who decided law school was a better option.
4. Cordova does not have a district funded spring sport for Junior High and High School.

I hope that as you read this it becomes clear that the support system of our district's ability to provide a quality education has become destabilized as a result of the decreasing buying power of our school district.

Sincerely,

Lance Westing

Doniece Gott

From: Alice Adams <aadams@nwarctic.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 7:05 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA 52

I'm writing to support SB 52. We cannot afford to see our kids with so much lack in their own Alaska home state education. With tremendous inflation, especially off the road system - in rural alaska, where flying in everything is the only way to bring foods, supplies, heating fuel and everything we need to live.

If the bill don't pass, our kids will not have school meals, (try go without your lunch or have a small amount of snack for lunch - and see how you will feel by early noon) this is exactly what will happen to our students if the bill don't pass. Our kids need healthy food during the day, to help them learn better. They are our future leaders, but with peeling off funding that is needed to develop a quality education for them and making them feel left out or not cared for. They want to strive, but with so many students per teacher, cold classrooms (because of inadequate buildings), teachers that won't stay long enough to learn their students, our teachers without good living quarters, and so on, they will not be able access their full potential in education. So, consider to support SB 52.

Thank you for looking out for the best of all your Alaska constituents.

Alice Adams,
Parent of a home grown teacher and grandparent of 3 in the Alaska public schools.

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Doniece Gott

From: Arctic Circle Photo <arcticcirclephoto@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 6:11 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: support raising BSA by \$1000

Dear AK Legislature,

I am a product of the Fairbanks K-12 public school system. I also received 2 grad degrees from UAF, and now I work at UAF and bring in millions of federal dollars for research working with local communities off the road system. I also have 2 kids in the Fairbanks public school system, but class sizes and funding are noticeably bleaker than they were when I was a kid here. My kids do not have the same opportunities that I did, and why? So we can give away more money and pander to industry?

I strongly support raising the BSA by \$1000.

Thanks for your service.

Ken Tape
Greta Myerchin-Tape
907-687-1997
1684 Wolverine Lane
Fairbanks AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Luann McVey <luannmcvey@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 7:17 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Raise the BSA

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I'm a retired Alaskan teacher, a resident of our beautiful state since 1957. I strongly urge you to include an increase to the BSA in our budget. We need adequate funding for our schools to operate effectively and efficiently. Without it we harm the future of our state.

Students, teachers, and administrators are counting on you to save our public schools by increasing funding. This will help keep our teachers in Alaska and will prevent the continuing increase of class size, which makes teaching impossible.

Cap the PFD, implement statewide income tax, increase the taxes on the oil companies - find the money. There is no excuse for starving our schools by withholding needed funds from schools. Please do the right thing and increase the BSA.

Thanks.

Sincerely,
Luann McVey
1507 Second Street
Douglas, Alaska.99824

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: dp <dylfoot@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 7:30 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for SB 52 - BSA increase

To whom it may concern,

I am voicing my support for the SB 52, increased student base allocation. I am a coast guard civilian living and working in Alaska and I am a long term community member that sees the enlisted blue-suiters of the Coast Guard cycle through on a bi or tri annual basis. Consistently, I hear about how challenging it is to live in Alaska and, consistently, I hear education as a major factor contributing to those challenges. I understand the worry and concern, as a new father-to-be, of what shape the education system will be in another 5+ years of flat funding. Education is my top priority as a voter and is a constant discussion among my friends and colleagues. Supporting this bill supports the voice of Alaska, the legislature has an opportunity to make an impact on this generation and many to come.

Sincerely,
Dylan Proudfoot

Doniece Gott

From: Jimmy Love <JLove@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 7:46 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52

Good morning Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Jimmy Love, and I am an employee of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and a resident of the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

I am writing in support of SB 52 Increase Base Student Allocation.

Stable, predictable funding is necessary to ensure districts can attract and retain high quality educators. The base student allocation (BSA) has not been increased since 2106, and the impact of inflation during that time has created a significant loss of purchasing power for school districts.

In the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, the impact of flat funding continues to restrict us in multiple areas. Our costs have increased consistently over this period and yet our funding remains the same. The everyday instructional supplies cost more, utilities have increased, transportation costs have increased, salaries and benefits cost more, basically the cost of providing a quality education on the Kenai Peninsula Has increased and yet we are funded as though everything has stayed status quo. All of these items impact our delivery of education to our student population, but I feel the biggest factor/concern is the retention of our younger teaching staff. Without forward funding and with a BSA that has not kept up with inflation, we are not able to retain these new recruits because we cannot offer contracts. There is a lot of talk about recruitment/retention of staff statewide and part of the solution is to provide adequate funding through the BSA allowing us to offer contracts to all of our teaching staff.

Our board has made a difficult decision this past month to close our theaters and pools, increase our FTE at the high/middle schools, cut Athletic Directors, cut Student Success Liaisons, reduce our schools supply budget, reallocated funds for co-curricular travel and safety equipment. This was all done so that we could offer contracts to the certified staff for FY24. They did not have the luxury to sit back and wait the results from Juneau. This is the type of event we, as well as many other districts across our great state, would love to avoid in the future. The path to help us achieve this goal is through an adequate increase in the BSA and forward funding.

Reliable and adequate funding is key to improving student outcomes by stabilizing schools and reducing educator turnover.

Please consider increasing, as well as inflation proofing the BSA to ensure Alaska schools can continue to serve students with the quality education they deserve.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify in favor of SB 52.

Jimmy Love
Chief Accountant
KPBSD
907-714-8850

Doniece Gott

From: Bridget Smith <bridgetannsmith49@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 7:58 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52

Dear members of Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to urge you to raise the BSA for Alaska schools. More than ever, we need good public education to prepare our children for the increasing onslaught of disinformation, misinformation, propaganda, false facts, and conspiracy theories that come from our mass communication systems. Learning critical thinking skills and using them is crucial in a democracy.

Bridget Smith
137 Sixth Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801
bridgetannsmith49@gmail.com
Cell (907) 209-0025

Doniece Gott

From: Milli Martin <millimom37@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 8:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52 BSA

I urge strong support for this bill, it is long overdue to get proper financing to our schools. It has been too many years since they were adequately funded, and this bill will do what they desperately need.

If we ever hope to see increased test results of our students, then we have to give the districts what they need to provide a good education. And in light of the current funding they are struggling to do that.

Please Support SB 52 BSA.

Thank you,

Milli Martin
PO Box 2652
Homer, Ak 99603
<millimom37@gmail.com>

Doniece Gott

From: Jennifer Booz <JBooz@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 8:13 AM
To: House Education; Senate Labor and Commerce; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Raise the BSA for Alaska schools

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jen Booz. I am a teacher, parent, and community member in Homer, AK. Whether you are directly connected to a school or not, we are all impacted by funding decisions for our schools. I encourage you to consider and try to understand what school funding decisions mean in our lives. The following should be considered priorities while making funding decisions for schools:

- * Support and encourage an increase in the Base Student Allocation that, at a minimum, maintains the status quo for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD). I understand from the District that this would require a \$700 increase once federal covid money is gone next year.
 - * Support and encourage the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly funding KPBSD to the cap.
 - * Please do not increase classroom sizes for elementary grades.
 - * Our teachers are the most valuable asset in our schools. I strongly support timely signing of contracts and whatever other tools the District has to not only attract but *retain* teachers. Consistent teacher turnover is costly on just about every level.
 - * Schools do not just teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. In school, our kids learn to work with others and solve complex problems - including social and emotional ones! In an ideal world, all of our students would have full support and resources at home and in the broader community to help navigate growing up in a social world. Unfortunately, that just isn't reality and whether we want it or not our schools and our classrooms are the common denominator where all of our kids come together - regardless of their resources at home, traumatic experiences, anxieties, etc. Providing school counselors, sports and extracurriculars, swimming pools, theater, and other outlets for learning and supporting our kids in multiple ways creates a stronger community and a better overall school environment for learning and success.
- Finally, please remember that we parents are the working families that help fuel the local economy. We work at grocery stores and restaurants, in the marine trades and fishing industries, we are your doctors and lawyers, we are building houses and fixing your plumbing. Supporting quality schools supports quality towns by supporting families and showing dedication to helping Alaska be a place where we not only want to raise our children, but where we feasibly CAN raise our children for a bright future.

Thank you for considering increasing the BSA, funding schools to the cap, and making hard decisions to prioritize spending with our voices in mind.

Sincerely,
Jen Booz

Doniece Gott

From: Stephanie and Kalen Meek <stephandkalen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 8:21 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Testimony for SB 52

Senate Finance Committee:

Just like the housing bubble burst in 2008, the public education bubble is on the verge of bursting. Public schools are in crisis. As a result, students and school staff are suffering. Schools are closing, resources are being stretched thinner than ever, Alaska students are losing educational opportunities, and amazing teachers are being forced to leave the profession. I urge you to take bold and immediate action to provide relief to Alaska's school districts through a significant Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase and develop long-term education funding solutions.

You know the statistics. Funding for education has not kept pace with inflation. Since 2017, inflation has risen by 15%, and the BSA has not risen to match it. School districts are being asked to provide the same services with the same amount of money they were receiving 6 years ago. The cost of everything, from the fuel in the school buses to the need for security in buildings, has increased beyond the current budget's reach. Teachers continue to dig into their own pocketbooks to supply their classrooms with basic school supplies, all the while school districts cannot afford to pay their teachers as the highly educated professionals they are.

It should be noted that the COVID relief funds masked and punted the inflation/BSA problem for another day. Well, that day has come.

I urge you to do everything in your power to set aside political differences and focus on providing impactful relief to our public schools. Governor Dunleavy and legislators of all political persuasions have indicated their openness to increasing the BSA. I hope I can count on you to pass this significant and meaningful budget increase for public education and the children of Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Stephanie Meek
20 year Alaska resident
Eagle River, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Volmert <lauravolmert@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 8:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52

I am writing in support of SB 52, raising the BSA. Our schools are suffering, and we as Alaskans need to make an investment in our future. If we want the children of this state to become thriving members of our community, we need to provide them the best education possible. I currently have one child in high school in Fairbanks, AK, and have another in college who is a graduate from the FNSBSD. I have watched the class sizes increase and available offerings decrease as my second child has moved through high school. I implore all of you to increase the BSA so that we can get our Alaska schools the funding they need to thrive.

Laura Volmert
Fairbanks, AK 99701

--

Laura Volmert
she/her/hers

"You can either practice being right or practice being kind." -Anne Lamott

Doniece Gott

From: Emily Vockeroth <emilyvockeroth@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:00 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

I'm writing to express my support for an increase to the BSA. I grew up in Fairbanks during the 90s and receiving an outstanding education through our local school system. It greatly saddens me to see my own children have their school funding cut year after year and lose learning opportunities like foreign language and music while their class sizes grow. I hope that this is the year that the Alaska Legislature recognizes their role in educating the youth of Alaska and prioritizes a fair and sustainable budget to support students and teachers in this critical time of learning and growing.

Thank you for your time,

Emily Vockeroth
607 Rayburn Drive
Fairbanks

Doniece Gott

From: Sherry Stead <sdstead@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:06 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB52

I am asking you to raise the BSA \$1000 per student.

Quality education for our children is money well spent. If we want to have thriving adults, we must have a good education for our children

Please invest in our future.

We are losing teachers at an alarming rate. This will help retain teachers.

Sherry Stead

Homer

Doniece Gott

From: Angela Head <angela.a.head@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:07 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public testimoney for SB 52

Hello,

My name is Angela Head and I am a parent and community member in Homer, AK. I have three children, one who is a Paul Banks Peanut and two pre-schoolers that will be starting next year in Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. My husband and I are business owners who live here year round. We own two residences here and love our community.

Our schools need all the financial support they can get. Operating at a 44.4 million deficit for next school year will impel many negative cuts to our resources. I value our educators not only for the job they do 8-5 with my kids but for the community members they make. Please keep their jobs here in the District.

The increase in BSA is critical AND fair. Taking into account the inflation rate over the past 7 years (date of last increase), all of our schools have LOST money. The overhead costs remain the same, but the BSA hasn't changed. The pandemic was so harmful to our schools and our students; the only saving grace was the Federal money that bailed out our district over the past 2 budget cycles.

Please show that you value education at the state level by voting for this increase. My family is depending on quality public schools for the next 18 years as well as all the wonderful resources we enjoy by having a healthy and robust educational system.

Thank you for your time and service,

Angela

Doniece Gott

From: Anne Kettle <anne.s.kettle@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:09 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee

Greetings esteemed members of the Alaska Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing both as a mother and educator. This is my 16th year teaching in Alaska, with 6 in Anchorage and in the midst of year 10 in Fairbanks.

During my time teaching in Anchorage and Fairbanks I have been subjected to annual "budget roulette". Each spring I hold my breath, waiting for pink slips, or notifications of reassignment, or cutting of my program. As a professional this is exhausting, and there is nothing left to cut that will not directly impact student learning. The BSA has had two increases during my time in Alaska, and while that has been helpful in the short term, education funding has not kept pace with inflation and cost increases across all sectors, particularly healthcare and gas/oil for transportation and heating. It is heartbreaking to watch the schools where I have poured my heart and soul contract and move into survival mode.

My colleagues are retiring, resigning to move to jobs at UAF with better retirement, taking leaves of absence with the hope to homeschool their children and wait out the chaos and cuts that appear around each corner, while still others are choosing to leave the state.

As a mother of a kindergartener and 2nd grader, my deepest fear right now is who will be left to teach my children? Who will be present to teach 1st grade and 3rd grade in my building next year? Who will be left when they reach middle school? What electives will be offered? The skilled teachers are leaving. Many of my music colleagues feel so unsupported they are looking at early retirement, grad school or career changes. Who will be left for ALL of our students? The future of our state depends on the nurturance and care given to our children. I love Alaska and hope to remain here to finish my career, but I worry whether that will be possible.

As an early enrollee of the TRS Tier 3, I have not much in the way accrued for retirement (the managed account early enrollees were placed in regularly traded with significant fees and commissions, yet little growth or return).

My own children are 5 and 8. They attend my school where I teach in Fairbanks, and I teach their classes. I have been in this field long enough to know that the cuts that are happening right now will impact their education at each level of schooling (elementary, middle and high school). I have always been a proponent of public schools and I find myself sincerely asking whether I wish my children to continue in school with me, or do I need to look at alternative options. You have the opportunity to help stabilize the education funding freefall. Help us find solid ground so we can look forward towards building opportunities for students rather than investing ENORMOUS amounts of time, energy and money into crafting various plans that attempt to anticipate funding and opportunities from moment to moment.

Please increase the BSA and help stabilize education across our state before we lose all of the experienced and committed educators and are left with vacancy upon unfilled vacancy.

Sincerely,
Anne Kettle, M.Ed.
General Music Specialist
University Park Elementary School, Fairbanks
Mother of two (5 and 8)

Doniece Gott

From: Sue Rennolds <shipsue91@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:29 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: In support of SB 52

Hello Senators of our beautiful state of Alaska,

I'm writing to you today in regard to Senate Bill 52 which proposes an increase to the BSA. As a school district employee in Alaska and a parent, I'm relieved to see this proposition to increase funding for education. With rising costs in so many areas, it's shocking that the BSA has not been increased in 7 years. Furthermore, the needs of our children and community members would be grossly neglected if this bill does not pass. So many critical pieces of our school system and community are at stake. Please do the right thing and support the future for children and all of us in this amazing state.

Please vote to pass SB 52 and increase the BSA by \$1250!

Thank you for your time and commitment to Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Susan Rennolds
Itinerant School Counselor, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Parent of Avery Rennolds, age 5

Doniece Gott

From: Sue Rennolds <shipsue91@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:29 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: In support of SB 52

Hello Senators of our beautiful state of Alaska,

I'm writing to you today in regard to Senate Bill 52 which proposes an increase to the BSA. As a school district employee in Alaska and a parent, I'm relieved to see this proposition to increase funding for education. With rising costs in so many areas, it's shocking that the BSA has not been increased in 7 years. Furthermore, the needs of our children and community members would be grossly neglected if this bill does not pass. So many critical pieces of our school system and community are at stake. Please do the right thing and support the future for children and all of us in this amazing state.

Please vote to pass SB 52 and increase the BSA by \$1250!

Thank you for your time and commitment to Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Susan Rennolds
Itinerant School Counselor, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Parent of Avery Rennolds, age 5

Doniece Gott

From: Joan Clover <joniclover@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: school funding

Legislators: I can't think of anything more important than good schools to attract and keep the people we want in Alaska. To have good schools, we must have good teachers and good facilities. I personally know of one teacher, an excellent one, who will be leaving Alaska unless they see a "future" here for them, which means a retirement system that will sustain them after their career is done. Class sizes, opportunities for art, music, language immersion, sports--all these are important to concerned parents, which again, are people we want in Alaska. Please support our schools. My children are long graduated, and unfortunately, gone from Alaska. UAA, with its lack of funding was not even a consideration for them, distressingly. Thank you for considering my views. Joan Clover

Doniece Gott

From: Bruce Parham <bparham@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:00 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 52 - Increase Base Student Allocation

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I strongly urge you to pass Senate Bill 52, Increase Base Student Allocation, by raising the BSA allocation by \$1,000 and providing for inflation adjustments.

As a 37-year resident of Alaska, and retired federal employee, I am alarmed that the Alaska State Legislature has allowed the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to erode over the past five years or so, due to lack of inflation adjustments, by more than 20%. This has led to a dire situation in Alaska's 55 school districts of prospective layoffs of teachers, cutting of programs, larger classroom sizes, etc., that affects the future of thousands of students and the long-term future of the State of Alaska.

For years, I have been an advocate for public education. I am a retired federal employee. Formerly, I was director of the National Archives at Anchorage, part of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

I worked for 22 years to support of educational programs in the Anchorage School District, and the other school districts throughout the state. My office worked closely with middle and high school students and teachers involved with National History Day and We the People as part of educational outreach and to promote American history. These two programs promote civic literacy, build research skills, critical thinking and presentation skills, and increase knowledge of American history on topics that students care about.

I strongly urge you to support the passage of Senate Bill 52.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Parham
(Robert Bruce Parham)
4310 Seeley Circle
Anchorage, AK 99502-1957
Tel. (907) 248-6867
Email: bparham@gci.net

Doniece Gott

From: Therese Lewandowski <thereselew@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:18 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 52, Increase SBA

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I urge you to support SB 52, An Act relating to increasing the student base allocation.

There seems to be state-wide agreement the SBA needs to be increased to better serve our public schools. It won't fix everything but it will directly positively affect our students!

In reading through some of the opposing letters it seems they feel this is throwing money away at failing school systems. If that is true, and every school has its issues some great some not so great, then withdrawing funding is akin to a punishment. The way to address schools that need help is to better fund them!

Teacher salaries and pension packages! The many wonderful teachers of the previous 2 decades have retired and took with them marvelous pensions. They would not have served as public school teachers as long as they did without that pension.

It is imperative that Alaska attract and hold onto public school teachers who would have that same long term commitment. But they cannot afford to raise families or live long term in this state without better pay and a future retirement commitment.

Please pass SB 52 and start to work on bills to adequately compensate public school teachers.

Thank you so much,
Therese Lewandowski

Doniece Gott

From: Debbie Lowenthal <debbielowenthal12@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:21 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Raise the BSA

Good morning,

I fully support SB 52. I know this might be late to be on the record but just in case I thought I would send a short message.

I have two children who went through the JSD, Gastineau Community School, then Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School and finally Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé. They had fantastic teachers and a great education. But one of the things that was noticeable was the larger the class, the larger the strain it was on the teachers and students. I saw the teachers being counselors, working from 6am until late in the evening and on weekends. And of course, I can speak from experience because my husband taught in the district for twenty years.

Even though I do not have children in the school district at the moment, I would gladly give up money that would come to me for my PFD, to help pay to raise the BSA. It is getting more and more difficult in schools with all the behavioral health issues, impacts from the pandemic and related learning gaps. The bottom line is teachers need smaller classes.

I hope my kids return to Alaska and their children are educated in Alaska public schools. Schools need this BSA increase so they can be successful for all students and bring the most qualified teachers to Alaska. Education is something we should invest in. It is the future of Alaska.

Thank you,
Debbie Lowenthal
North Douglas, Juneau

Doniece Gott

From: Glenn Cravez <Glenn@cravezlawak.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:41 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support SB52

I am writing in support of SB52 to increase the BSA, a long overdue step. Alaska has been falling behind for years, and it's time for us to start investing in our future. Thank you.

Glenn Cravez. 2810 Kingfisher Drive, Anchorage 99502.

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Doniece Gott

From: Idamarie Piccard <idie@pobox.alaska.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:47 AM
To: Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Educational funding

Educational funding is a constitutional obligation of the Alaskan government. It is my fervent hope, the BSA will be increased by \$1000. The BSA has not been increased for at least 8 years and school districts are falling behind keeping up with rising costs of almost everything connected with education. Our children and our educational professionals are deserving of the \$1000 increase without a doubt. Our children are Alaska's hope for our future and our educational professionals 'make it happen'; let's do what is the right thing to do.

Designation of funding can always be directed to the classrooms, its teachers and the students by reduction of class size and student/teacher ratios.

Thank you from a former educational specialist

Idamarie Piccard
3323 Peace Court
Anchorage, AK
907-337-4185

Doniece Gott

From: Rebecca Gaguine <rebecca.gaguine@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:50 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: RAISE THE BSA

Hello,

I am writing to ask you raise the BSA by as much as possible. I am an elementary school teacher in the Juneau school district and things are really bad. We have been steadily losing teachers for years, but this year already 30+ teachers have put in their resignations. In a recent survey over 35% of teachers said they are considering leaving next year. We have been working without a contract since the beginning of the school year.

The school district just simply does not have enough money right now to be able to pay teachers what we deserve without having to make major cuts. We need more money. Alaska rates 49th in the country for testing. This is largely due to the lack of pre-k education and the overworked and underappreciated staff.

We are struggling and we need help. I love my students so much, and there are so many, especially after the pandemic, that are in need of extra help and attention, but I don't have the time or support to truly be able to serve them. Raising the BSA would be a great help in both of these areas.

Please, PLEASE, help our crumbling education systems. The future of Alaska is sitting in my classroom and they deserve so much better.

Rebecca Gaguine, Montessori Borealis Juneau, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Megan Peltier <mkpeltier@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:51 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. James Kaufman
Subject: Increase the BSA

Hello Senators,

I am a resident of Senator Kaufman's district in Anchorage.

I am writing to ask you to support increasing funding to Alaska's public schools in order to better support our children. I have lived in Alaska since I was 3 years old and attended and graduated from Anchorage School District schools. I have 3 children - the older two are currently in ASD's French Immersion program and the youngest will enter Kindergarten next year.

Due to the flat funding ASD has received from the State (no increase to account for inflation really means it was a cut in funding) the language immersion programs, as well as many other programs which make our schools special and provide important opportunities for our children, were facing elimination and major cutbacks. Thankfully the language immersion programs received a reprieve - at least for now.

Our consumer price index has risen by more than 15% in the last five years while the Base Student Allocation was raised by only 0.5% which is unacceptable. Increasing the BSA by \$1000 to help offset that inflation. "Inflation proofing" the BSA for the future are key steps to providing our children with quality education. A small one-time increase will not fix the problem.

I know some legislators became hesitant to increase funding after the Department of Revenue decreased the expected oil prices in their Spring forecast. They provided that update during the banking crisis but since then markets have stabilized and commodity prices have come back up.

Additionally, I would support implementing a state sales tax as I think it is important to diversify the State's income.

Your constituents and all Alaskans are relying on you and your colleagues to make the right decision and increase funding for our schools.

Children are our future, please invest in our future.

Sincerely,
Megan Peltier

Doniece Gott

From: Gregory Haas <gregory.m.haas@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 11:02 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Janice Haas
Subject: BSA - loud support

Hello,

My name is Greg Haas, I am retired Coast Guard and own a small business in Seward.

The data doesn't lie and I hate "the sky is falling" cliché, but we desperately need the BSA to raised by the thousands - families are leaving Seward every year. Our schools are contracting to the point it won't be if we don't have students, but when.

We need the state funding. Retroactively. Without it - everything is a competition and becoming cannibalism for activities, programs, and education that we count on.

Please raise the BSA to record levels - give us a reason to cheer our legislature.

Please contact me at 907-422-7502 if you have any questions,

Respectfully,
Greg