
From: Cindy Webb <cindy.webb@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2023 9:17 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: House Bill 65

House Bill 65 proposes to increase the Base Student Allocation

I am an employee of the FNSBSD and I am also a tax payer and property owner. I do not agree with the increase in the BSA because I see boxes and boxes of brand new, huge flat screen TV's (just as one example) and lots of waste happening. Though we are woefully understaffed we are being creative in covering everyone.

When the proposed FNSBSD budget of just under 23 Million is divided by the amount per student served it's over \$18,500 per student. I'm sorry but if we cannot educate students for less than that we have got a serious problem and need to come up with creative and innovative ways to get the basics met.

Sincerely, Cindy Webb

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Choose your words to inspire...hope will spring like rain when you choose life with the words you say....

Cindy Webb

Denali Elementary Kitchen Manager

7:30-1:30

452-2456 ext 32556

From: Anna Brackney <anna.brackney@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2023 3:39 PM
To: Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; Rep. Mike Cronk
Cc: House Finance
Subject: House Bill 65

Dear Legislators,

I'm writing to ask you to support increasing the base student allocation. In my three years of working as an SLP at an elementary school I continuously hear tales from staff who have worked for the school district much longer and what it was like when there was funding to provide RTI for students who were struggling. There were once 5 to 6 tutors in our building that were providing support for students that just needed a smaller group setting and additional time to practice skills. What we have now is one tutor for 1st grade and one tutor for 2nd-5th grade. Additionally, these tutors are often needed to fill in for teachers because substitutes are few and far between. What that means is there is very little support for students who are struggling with reading and math and when we meet as a Student Support Team there is very little we can do unless we feel they have a learning disability. There are many students falling through the cracks because their deficits are not so low to qualify for special education but there is nothing else available to support them. I believe you can pay for as many "special" computer programs as you want but to provide the support to students that will help them make gains we need more staff. A computer program could never replace actual instruction from another human being. As we look at the coming year and the new expectations with the READS ACT I don't believe this legislation can be successfully carried out without the addition of more funding.

Best Regards,
Anna Brackney

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Anna Brackney, M.S. CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Woodriver Elementary School
(907)479-4211 ext. 47001

Procedural Safeguards:

<https://www.k12northstar.org/cms/lib/AK01901510/Centricity/Domain/1722/ProSafeguards%20%202016.pdf>

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From: Elizabeth Sprankle <beth.sprankle@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2023 7:26 AM
To: Rep. Mike Cronk
Cc: House Finance
Subject: Increase BSA

Dear Representative Cronk,

This current cohort of students is coming to school with wide gaps in their academic knowledge and in their readiness for school. The reality is that some students did not engage with content when they were isolated at home. Many students are coming to school impacted by anxiety, a low tolerance for distractions, and addicted to their phones. I have more students than ever who are in foster care or who transition back-and-forth between homes.

On Monday of this week, I had student number 29 added to my 9th grade class. She is transferring in from a village and has not yet attended school this semester. In her class is another student who is waiting to transfer to a new foster home in Anchorage. This transfer was intended to happen during Spring Break which was at the end of 3rd Quarter. We are now two weeks into 4th Quarter and the student still does not know when she will be moving. She is in a state of flux and has become even more needy of attention and constantly needs assurance from me that she is doing well on assignments so that she can transfer with decent grades.

She is one of seven students in that class who have difficulty regulating their behaviors and delaying gratification. Three of those students have proven so impulsive that they require a safety monitor to escort them to the restroom to ensure either that they will return to class or that they will not engage in illegal behaviors. Requesting a safety monitor requires me to email or call the front office. These students have stormed out of class when their requests were not granted right away. Flagrant disrespect such as this requires either a meeting between me and the student or in-school suspension. When students are in in-school suspension, I must provide them with individual work and tailored written instructions. I have had to do this five times this semester.

This same class also includes three students and families who are learning to manage the students' depression or ADHD. I have spent at least five hours in meetings or filling out paperwork for doctors since January for these three students.

I have five other students in this class who have accelerated skills and a learning mindset. I strive to provide them with opportunities within the class so that they are challenged and so that school for them is a vibrant and rewarding experience.

I have four students, different from the ones I've already described, with fourteen or more absences. These students constantly cycle back into the classroom at random times unprepared for the current work we are doing. It takes expertise and patience to reintegrate students back into class in ways that legitimately keep them engaged with current material. As you can imagine, these students disrupt the flow of the classroom community, are tired from their absences, are anxious about being behind, and frustrated by their own lack of ability to understand classwork. They often require one-on-one attention in the class or at times outside of class. Of course that impacts the amount of time I have outside of direct instruction to assess student work, enter grades, plan lessons, make copies, email families, etc.

I have three students who have difficulty processing information and who need me to re-explain directions to them one-on-one during class time. I have several students with IEPs which indicate that they need preferred seating at the front of the room or near the teacher.

In this one class alone, twenty-one of these twenty-nine students had a different English teacher in the first semester and were new to me in January. As we know, learning from and working well with others requires trust and a level of comfort. I invest time and energy into building relationships with students because I know these trusting relationships are essential for a productive learning environment and for my students to be successful.

These anecdotes pertain to the students in only one of my English classes. As these descriptions show, these are times when students need expert professionals who can quickly identify each child's personal gaps and needs. Increasing the PTR in classrooms, cutting teachers, counselors, safety monitors, and other staff members occurs when the BSA remains stagnant.

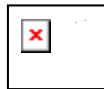
Increasing the BSA would translate into tangible, documentatal benefits for all students. A legitimate public education needs to be the foundation of our democracy. It is a primary civic duty of our society to provide skills and develop dispositions in young people so that they can contribute to communities in productive ways. Public education cannot legitimately serve all students when schools do not have the resources to meet the needs of the students before them.

Thank you for your time and work.

Beth Sprankle
English Teacher
West Valley High School

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Beth Sprankle



English Teacher

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Restorative Justice Discipline Coordinator

From: Tam Agosti-Gisler [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 10:52 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Alyse Galvin
Subject: HB65

March 28, 2023

Dear House Finance Committee members:

It's time for HB 65 to pass. Let's play catch up on adjusting the BSA and add \$1250 per student. \$800 doesn't even catch up with inflation.

I don't want Alaska to be tagged "The LAST Frontier" in regard to education.

Sincerely,

Tam Agosti-Gisler
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99508

From: cah Gci [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 3:15 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB65

OPPOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

NO EVIDENCE OF MORE \$\$\$ improving results; No mention of reduced “members” in their program; No mention that reduced “members” equal schools prime for closure and reduced maintenance; No factoring that more tax funding requested when quality vs statistics of service is disintegrating; No mention that many school districts continue to harbor Covid millions; No Mention of viable efforts to consolidate insurance; No mention that school districts likely are holding funding for infilled positions

Am sure you all are aware of these short coming in the representative’s presentation !

Please vote DNP on this bill HB 65

Christine Hutchison
Kenai, AK
[REDACTED]

From: Maureen Knutsen [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 11:10 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: BSA increase

As a retired PERS employee who worked 31 years at my local public school, I am writing today to voice my support for HB 65. Especially in rural communities like mine, our public school is the center of our community.

Maureen Knutsen
Naknek, Alaska

From: Michael Still [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 8:41 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: BSA Increase

Dear Governor Dunleavy and the Alaska House Finance Committee,

It comes to my attention that you are voting on an issue very important to me this week. I am in support of increasing the base student allocation for Alaskan students. Our kids need every advantage they can get to learn and grow so that our state can compete with the rest of the country and the world. Costs have gone up for everyone these past few years and schools will be forced to close, fire teachers and cancel programs if we don't provide them with the necessary budget. A \$1250 increase per student is the minimum we should be looking at!

Increasing the BSA will allow student-to-teacher ratios to stay low. Increasing the BSA will allow extracurricular sports and arts programs to thrive helping our kids find passions and grow into healthy, well-rounded adults. Increasing the BSA will help today's Alaskan students be productive members of Alaskan society. The benefits of an educated citizenry cannot be understated! To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, "an educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people. Self-government is not possible unless the citizens are educated sufficiently..." Increasing our BSA sends a clear message that we as a state are ready to provide opportunities for all Alaskan kids.

In addition to the immediate benefits of educated students, studies have shown that an educated citizenry is in fact an investment that would help our government save and even make money in the future! Educated citizens will earn more money translating to more tax revenue for municipalities and educated citizens are less likely to end up in jail or be financially dependent on the state through welfare programs.

To summarize, please vote to increase Alaskan Base Student Allocation!

Regards,
Mike Still
Teacher, Photographer, Writer
LiveTravelTeach.com

From: Kearney Newman [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 06, 2023 4:06 PM
To: House Finance; Senate Finance Committee; House Education
Subject: HB 65

Please support HB 65. As an educator who works in nonprofits with students, teachers deserve more and so do students! Please support HB 65 to make class sizes manageable and education possible!

Sincerely,

Kearney Newman
Anchorage
9079824070

From: Hannibal Grubis [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2023 8:47 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65

House I'm a teacher in the FNSBSD. I love my job and I have a wonderful career. I'm a math teacher and a xc running and track coach. We are losing teachers and we are having a hard time attracting teacher-coaches. I'm also a parent and I want Fairbanks to attract the best teachers. We are starting to lose our wonderful AP programs. HB 65 will make a long term positive impact on our schools.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Lessens_Kelly [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 12:05 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Bellamy_Margo; Bryantt_Jharrett; foster_amanda; Lon Garrison
Subject: HB 65
Attachments: Alaska EB Report 2023 Final.pdf

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

It is my understanding that you will discuss HB 65 tomorrow afternoon in Committee. I'm writing to you today as an individual member of the Anchorage School Board, but not on behalf of the Board.

As I've noted in prior testimony (sharing from a [administrative projections published on page 13](#) of ASD's FY 24 budget book), ASD's projected deficits for FY 25-27 (should the BSA remain unchanged) are \$78-\$85 million for FY 25, \$91-\$105 million for FY 26, and \$104-\$125 million for FY 27.

My personal calculations suggest that the proposed BSA increase of \$680 in FY24 and \$800 in FY25 and beyond, c/o HB 65 as amended by House Education Committee, would translate to an additional \$49.8m from the State for ASD in FY24 and an additional \$58.5m from the State for ASD in FY25 and each year thereafter. It is unlikely that additional local revenue would be collected on ASD's behalf for FY 24, but FY 25 and future years would likely involve additional local revenue, though what is produced would be subject to the tax cap and I do not have precise figures there yet.

My personal sense is that **if** ASD saved every dollar from the possible \$49.8 m that the amended version of HB 65 would produce in FY 24 (*which would mean NOT walking back the approved K-12 pupil-to-teacher ratio increase for next year, which "saves" ASD more than \$7m) and applied those funds to ASD's projected FY 25 deficit (again, without walking back next year's PTR increases in future years), the district could probably make it through FY 25 without additional class size increases or programmatic/extracurricular cuts. If ASD were also to save every additional dollar from the additional local tax revenue that HB 65 would likely mean for FY 25 and FY 26, ASD might even be able to produce a balanced budget *through* FY 26. However, the current projected FY 27 deficit of \$104-\$125m would still be significant--in the tens of millions of dollars.

Moreover—and more worryingly—in the intervening years--years in which students will still be recovering from pandemic-era learning losses--ASD would not be able to apply the evidence-based staffing metrics that our most recent study has indicated our students need to attain the high growth that I believe all stakeholders expect. (This was shared with all legislators and the Governor roughly one week ago; I'm attaching it here, again, as a reminder of what adequate funding would look like.)

To that end, please proactively amend HB 65 in House Finance to account for the very real needs that our students have for evidence-based class sizes and wraparound supports, so that ASD and districts across Alaska can effectively serve our students.

Sincerely,
Kelly Lessens
Anchorage School Board Treasurer

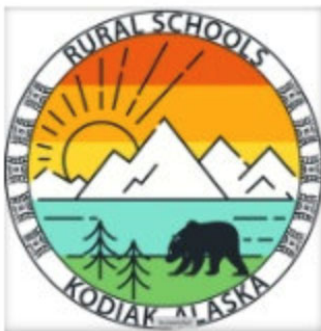
From: Rochelle Andrews <dandrews01@kibsd.org>
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 1:09 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65

I am an employee of the Kodiak Island Borough School District, and I am writing to ask you to do all in your power to make sure HB65 is passed into law.

The increase to the Base Student Allocation is not only a long time in coming, it is at a critical point right now. Due to the 6 ½% - 7% inflation hike we are all experiencing, if our district doesn't receive more funding soon, they will begin to not rehire for teacher positions (for teachers who leave the district), which will increase class sizes, and the district will cut valuable programs just to make ends meet. From what I learned this morning the KIBSD has a \$4,000,000 deficit right now, and something will have to go. I know we are a small district, but recent news of Anchorage closing schools should further encourage you to increase the BSA.

Please preserve our children's educations and our teachers' jobs. Your actions will directly affect the health and welfare of Alaskan families – your constituents.

Kind Regards,
Rochelle Andrews
Paraprofessional/Aide
Chiniak School/KIBSD
(907)486-8323



From: Morgan Turner [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 11:54 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65

Hello Finance Committee Members,

I am writing today to ask for your support for HB 65. Our schools and students are depending on you to prioritize spending on education. Putting money towards our youth and education is always a good idea.

Thank you for your time,

Morgan Turner
Eagle River, Alaska

From: Carrie Dershin [REDACTED] >
Sent: Sunday, March 26, 2023 11:38 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65

Dear Esteemed Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Carrie Dershin and I live in Fairbanks. I am writing to express my strongest support of House Bill 65. My two children have had the benefit of our school district's exceptional teachers from kindergarten through graduation. I am grateful for the education they experienced and it has prepared them well for adulthood. My daughter is now a 5th grade teacher and my son is studying engineering in college. I have served in the FNSBSD as a school counselor for over 10 years in both elementary and secondary schools. As a current elementary school counselor, I see firsthand the importance of increasing funding to our schools. Continued flat funding and also the impact of Covid has had a ripple effect on our children that we will likely see for years to come. These are truly unprecedented times. The learning loss from Covid disruptions and remote learning manifests in significant academic deficits in both reading and math. Packed classrooms (27 kindergarteners per class, 30 4th graders per class), limited staffing, and new unfunded mandates will not solve the problem. If anything, the gaps will only get larger and school achievement will only get lower. Without adequate funding for our schools, we will continue with the slow blood letting of public education. Our children deserve better. As an educator that supports the mental health of our school community, I can unequivocally state that our teachers are tired. And stressed. They have worked their tails off through a pandemic and now are contending with tremendous academic skills gaps, continued student absenteeism, and fewer supports. They work tirelessly, many working six days a week in school and at home preparing lessons and doing all that they can to give our children the best education possible. They continue to do more and more with less and less. They are innovative, compassionate and incredibly hard-working. Our teachers show up everyday, loving and teaching our children. I urge you to increase the BSA by supporting HB 65. Our students deserve to have skilled, fully supported teachers. They deserve well-trained support staff to tutor, provide behavioral interventions and foster social emotional development. They deserve reasonable class size to help with small group and individualized instruction. They deserve a healthy, safe environment and consistent transportation to get to school. In short, Alaskan students deserve all that this amazing state has to offer. They deserve a quality education, without shortfall or compromise.

Sincerely,
Carrie Dershin
Fairbanks, AK
[REDACTED]

From: Allison Brooking [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, April 06, 2023 5:18 PM
To: House Education; House Finance; Senate Education; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Vital BSA increase

Hello.

A BSA increase is absolutely vital to the future of our state. Alaska already faces a massive teacher shortage that will only get worse without intervention. When being a teacher comes with no benefits at all, people will be pushed out of a career that they would otherwise love and students will lose vital opportunities for education. Education is one of the most vital areas of government spending and we cannot afford to let schools fall victim to inflation. The less funding schools are given, the less of a future our young people will have.

Thank you,
Allison Brooking

From: Stefan Johnson <f367590@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 06, 2023 11:27 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee; House Finance; House Education; Senate Education
Subject: In Support of the BSA

My name is Stefan Johnson and I am a US History teacher in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

I am writing to you in support of House Bill 65. We are in desperate need of an increase in the BSA.

Yesterday at our staff meeting we discussed scheduling. Because of the district's funding issues, we may lose 2 full-time teachers. This directly impacts the classroom numbers for every teacher at the school. My colleague faces the potential of class sizes of up to 40. Teachers in other buildings face class sizes of over 40. This is an issue that hinders both students and teachers.

Education in Alaska has not had a significant increase in funding for several years and the inflation rate has increased. Schools in Alaska are currently surviving, rather than thriving. For example, I work at Hutchinson High, a career and technical education school. Both CTE and general ed teachers struggle to afford materials for their classroom, which reduces the effectiveness of instruction.

Funding is crucial for Alaskan students moving forward. Teachers will not stay in education and students will not receive quality education if this is not addressed soon.

Thank you for your time,

Stefan

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Stefan Johnson
Social Studies Teacher
Hutchinson High School
Fairbanks, Alaska

From: Peter Daley <f355262@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 06, 2023 11:03 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65 BSA Funding

My name is Pete Daley and I am a welding instructor representing the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

I am writing in support of House Bill 65 to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

Stable, predictable funding is necessary to ensure districts can attract and retain high quality educators. The 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.

At Hutchison High School where I teach welding, we have seen the impact of insufficient funding to purchase the basics like steel, welding electrodes, and basic tools to run the welding program.

Alaska is a blue collar state with many excellent high wage, high skill, in demand construction jobs. If we cannot adequately fund training programs like welding and grow our own workers, we will have to continue to hire people from outside of Alaska to fill these jobs.

Reliable 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.

Sincerely,
Pete

Peter C. Daley M.Ed./CWI
Welding & Drafting Instructor
Hutchison High School
3750 Geist Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
(907)479-2261 Ext.35139
peter.daley@k12northstar.org

From: Zachary Jackson <zachary.jackson@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2023 8:52 AM
To: Rep. Frank Tomaszewski
Cc: House Finance
Subject: BSA Allocation

To whomever it may concern,

My name is Zach Jackson and I am currently a paraeducator with the FNSBSD at Weller Elementary School and going to be a full-time special education teacher starting in the fall of this year at that same school.

I am writing to you today regarding the need for increased funding in our schools in order to support our students in the best way possible. With the closing of multiple schools in the district in the last year, it has put increased strain on our schools as teachers are pushed to manage more students in their classes (both general and special education) than ever before.

Furthermore, the increase in class sizes has been met with an overall deterioration of supplemental support options such as RTI services that might be able to identify and support students in need before they require complete special education services. This has led to a ballooning of the number of students on our caseload and a dilution of the amount of time we as special education staff can spend with each individual student.

I am fortunate to work with a wonderful staff of talented, experienced, hardworking, and caring peers who work to do their best at supporting our students everyday. But with the current number of students we have and the increasing number of those requiring individualized services, we need additional staff members to help us better reach this goal. This will be additionally prudent as the state moves to increase reading standards heading into next year.

In conclusion, I believe it is a pressing need to increase the BSA in order to better and more competitively staff our schools in order to ensure our students are receiving the most prolific support possible in their education. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Zach Jackson

From: Forrest Andresen <flandresen@alaska.edu>
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2023 2:22 PM
To: Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; Rep. Mike Cronk
Cc: House Finance
Subject: HB65 and Base Student Allocation

Representatives,

My name is Forrest Andresen. I am currently a paraprofessional (special education aide) with the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. In addition to having served in this capacity since 2018, I am a born and raised Alaskan and a product of Alaska public schools, having graduated from Kodiak High School in 2005. I am writing to express my deep concern for the resources currently available to support Alaskan students, and to voice my support for increasing the BSA to better meet the needs of our students.

Even just in the time I have been an employee of the FNSBSD, there has been a marked decline in available support staff. In addition to the fact that no district positions offer wages that reflect the realities of inflation, which creates an obvious barrier from step one, understaffing in this area creates a feedback loop where current employees must do more with less, leading to more burnout and even worse staffing shortages. As with all shortcomings in the school system, it is the students who ultimately suffer the most for this. My position takes me to various schools throughout the district, and I have seen firsthand the state in which lack of support staff has left so many students' personal growth and education.

In special education specifically, most of the students I serve thrive on routine, and in turn flounder when the day-to-day is chaos. Staffing shortages and the resultant revolving door of subs and itinerant school district staff make establishment of a routine in many environments simply impossible. This lack of routine makes it more difficult to help students learn appropriate coping skills, which in turn further harms their ability to achieve academically, not to mention their ability to self-actualize and relate to their peers. This also harms the students' abilities to form lasting relationships with trusted adults, which is a critical component to being able to help a student struggling with behaviors. It has likewise become commonplace for students not to receive services their IEPs dictate they should, simply because there are not enough staff to both provide those services and also provide adequate classroom oversight.

This also creates situations in GenEd classrooms where students who have IEPs and need extra staff support may not have it. While a student who simply needs extra support should never be written off as a mere disruption, we likewise cannot expect one teacher to both deliver curriculum to an entire classroom and simultaneously provide individualized support.

These circumstances are deeply unfair to all involved. It is unfair to teachers who already are famously overworked, it is unfair to support staff who are constantly being called on to do more with less, it is unfair to parents who trust and rely on schools to care for and educate their children, and it is most unfair to Alaskan students. We have already irrevocably failed hundreds of Alaskan students who have graduated in recent years from a school system in absolute shambles. They deserve better. We can do better. Increasing the BSA is not the panacea to this massive and complex issue, but it is a big step in the right direction.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts,

Forrest Andresen

From: Nicole Moore <nicole.moore@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2023 1:14 PM
To: Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Mike Cronk; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski
Cc: House Finance
Subject: School budget concerns

Greetings Representatives and House Finance committee,

My name is Nicole Moore, and I am an employee of the FNSBSD.

I am writing to you out of great concern for our Alaska schools proposed budget that you are currently reviewing and voting on.

I have recently moved back to my hometown of Fairbanks, after having lived and worked in California for a number of years, so my comparisons are between what I observed in California, versus what I have observed after applying for employment with the FNSBSD, and working for them for the last 6 months.

Firstly, I did not expect to have to take a significant pay cut when accepting employment with the FNSBSD. When they hire a new employee that has never worked at the FNSBSD before, you are started at the bottom rung of the pay ladder. There is no consideration for any prior years of work experience, in the same position as you are being hired for, in another state or district. No other employment opportunity anywhere does this. In the real world, If you have prior training and experience, those facts are always considered when hiring a new employee, and their starting wage. As a result of this hiring practice, I have employment with the school district, but at a pay rate that qualifies me to rely on public assistance to make ends meet, including food, and heating oil. Basic necessities for survival.

Secondly, I have observed considerable lapses in overall care and maintenance of the facilities. While Custodians, and Maintenance personnel do their best, there are a great many lapses in hiring an adequate amount of people to maintain the buildings in a safe and sanitary manner on a weekly basis. This problem could partially be solved by eliminating the 10 month only custodial positions in favor of all being 12 month positions. Many who are hired, or have been employed for some time are currently leaving for much better paying jobs elsewhere. (Please refer to final 2 sentences in paragraph above) Having a larger crew for summer maintenance of buildings would help eliminate much of the dilapidated appearance of some of those buildings. Another way to retain good employees, would be to pay them based on their experience level from the beginning, and making sure that all of the school district employees receive a wage that does not require them to rely on public assistance to meet their basic survival needs every month.

I strongly encourage all of you to vote for the highest amounts possible for Alaska school funding. The current amounts that schools are having to get by with are grossly inadequate, and I strongly encourage you to research and confirm the facts that i have laid out for you above. Please do what is right for our schools.

Sincerely, Nicole Moore
Employee of FNSBSD

From: Lauren Attanas [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2023 11:17 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65 Letter of Support...

To the Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 65, which would increase the base student allocation by \$1,250 or ~21% over current funding levels. If we are to pull up from the financial nosedive that Alaskan school districts are currently in, you, dear legislators, have no other choice. You must pass this bill this legislative session.

I'd like to start with a little context. It was recently announced in the [Anchorage Daily News](#) that the governor has worked his veto magic to give you and your colleagues a 67% raise, a move that does not seem to be generating enthusiasm for a legislative override. *Sixty-seven percent*. Let that sink in. Furthermore, the governor wants to give himself and his cabinet (which has grown notably larger and more expensive since he took office in 2018) a 20% raise. Can you, in good conscience, be the beneficiary of such a gargantuan pay raise when the largest school districts in the state are closing multiple schools, student class size is ballooning, and educational staffing shortages are at crisis levels?

I am proud to be the mother of 2 kids who attend public school in Fairbanks. Every time I visit their school, I marvel at the energy, care, and dedication that staff members pour into their work, into making sure that each kid there feels like they matter. But with every passing year, I see the toll that decreasing resources is taking. Quality education is unraveling in our district. This year, the Fairbanks-Northstar Borough School District will eliminate over 35 full-time school district staff, increase middle school class size to 30-32 students, and cut special education and student support funding. Staff positions are going unfilled because of poor compensation and year-to-year job insecurity. Classes that were once 20-25 students now have 25-30+ students. There's no money for teacher aides except in kindergarten classes, and retaining experienced staff who are close to retirement is incredibly difficult. Forget about elementary school band and orchestra. All of this is coming on the heels of a pandemic which was a huge setback to many of our kids' learning. And yet, year after year, I hear from this legislature and the governor that it's just not the right time to increase the BSA. We can tackle this next year.

Representative Tomaszewski and other members of this committee, I am here to tell you that there is no 'next year' for some of our schools. The Fairbanks-Northstar Borough School District closed 3 elementary schools in 2022 and packed some of our middle schools to 95% capacity, far above recommended levels. Furthermore, it seems like school closures also may be a grim reality during the next couple of budget cycles, not only in Anchorage, but again in Fairbanks. My kids attend University Park Elementary, one of the smaller elementary schools in the district. If the district closes another school, there are rumors that it could be our school. Legislative inaction this year could become a very real and heartbreaking problem for my family in the very near future.

Do something now. Vote to advance HB 65 out of this committee, and vote 'yes' on HB 65 when it comes to a floor vote. Please encourage your colleagues in the Senate to pass SB 52. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Lauren Attanas
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99709

From: Juanita Garvin <juanita.garvin@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2023 9:54 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increase the BSA

Good Morning,

Flat funding and cuts have impacted students and classrooms in our district.

Increases in class size, fewer electives, fewer supplies, less support, and delayed maintenance.

Increasing the BSA would address years of stagnant education funding that has not kept up with inflation.

Research suggests that increased spending on education can improve student outcomes, especially among low-income students.

Help fund our future!

~Juanita Garvin

Grant Budget Specialist, Federal Programs
Student Support Services
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
907.452.2000 x11231
[Federal Programs Website](#)

MISSION STATEMENT - *Our mission is to provide an excellent, equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students will succeed and contribute to a diverse and changing society.*

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From: Genevieve Pfisterer [REDACTED] >
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2023 12:54 PM
Subject: Struggling Schools

Dear Respected Representatives,

I want to thank you for passing a bill that increases the Base Student Allocation (BSA). With current funding as it is, the school I teach at in Fairbanks, Boreal Sun Charter School has spent this year in crisis. The BSA pays for everything for our school, including maintenance, all staff and school supplies. The current level of funding is not keeping pace with our bare bones expenses and we've had to cut our support staff. Our support staff fill vital functions in our school, like covering recess and helping with discipline issues. Not having enough staff means that our classroom teachers are severely over-taxed and at the cusp of burn-out. Thankfully we have some wonderful parent volunteers that step in to help, but sometimes those volunteers just aren't available (or don't show up). And some jobs (like resolving behavior issues) really require someone with skills, training and experience; which our volunteers, as well meaning as they are, just don't have.

Our ability to pay for janitorial services is also suffering, we've contracted with the lowest bidder and unfortunately the lowest bidder isn't really keeping our school very clean. There's an illness going around Fairbanks right now that causes children to vomit. Parent volunteers came in during the crisis and helped clean it up, and the janitorial staff cleaned it a little, but you can still see where it happened and it smells awful (which makes my whole classroom smell like vomit, even with the air purifier running next to it). I asked my principal if we could get it spot shampooed and she said that our school shampooer is broken and we don't have the funds to fix it right now. Some days before school I will spend my prep time vacuuming my room because our janitors just didn't get to it.

Leaking from the roof last year caused water damage in my classroom. We have concerns that the children in my room are being exposed to invisible mold, but we don't have funds to test for it and even if we found it, we don't have the funding to replace the carpet.

In truth our entire building is run down and shabby. The carpets are stained and we're in desperate need of a complete remodel. Our parent volunteers do what they can, and our building would be so much worse without all the help from our parents.

Our parents donate funds to our school supplies and volunteer whenever they can. But most schools aren't blessed with such a wonderful group of parents willing and able to help.

Our principal is also wonderful and supportive and steps filling necessary gaps providing advice, discipline support, acting as substitute teacher, counselor, janitor and maintenance. But how long before she burns out too, just not having adequate staff support?

All of these issues put so much strain on the teachers and principals. Teachers cannot leave their class unattended, we can't go to the bathroom as often as is healthy. We have to be the school nurse, school counselor, after-school providers and janitors. We use our own money to feed hungry students, and buy extra classroom supplies. In a run down environment without adequate staffing, teacher morale is at an all time low. Add that to the strain of job security, retirement security, and barely adequate healthcare and I see so many teachers decide to leave, retire early, move, change careers, etc... Teachers are underpaid and underappreciated, our environment is not welcoming and beautiful and too much is being asked of us routinely.

Please raise the BSA.

Thank you for reading.

Genevieve Pfisterer

From: Jon and Ruth Ewig [REDACTED] >
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2023 11:55 AM
To: House Finance Legislation; senfin@akleg.gov; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mike Shower; Sen. Robert Myers; Jon and Ruth Ewig
Subject: All State Legislators and Staff: RE: Budgeting: We want our full statutory PFD. Do not make plans to steal any of it. It should be untouchable.

April 1, 2023

According to Jim Crawford's study the state has 12 billion dollars [See *Alaska Watchman*, March 27th, 2023] illegally dedicated money that could cover any spending deficit, thus, you do not need to even think about taxing us. We know that you liberals love to spend other people's money rather than your own.. You liberals are not savers. True conservatives will work to cut back and balance the budget and even have savings. That is why we trust conservatives to help (We the Citizens.) The NEA and school districts are full of liberals crying for more money but they do not need it according to Sarah Montalbano, Alaska Policy Forum. [See *ALaska Watchman*, March 28th, 2023] The Alaska school districts have 242 million dollars in unspent COVID funds. That would cover any perceived deficits. We repeat we want our full PFD. No stealing.

Jon Ewig [REDACTED]
Ruth Ewig [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

From: Keith Nuss [REDACTED] >
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2023 12:44 PM
To: Rep. Will Stapp
Cc: House Finance
Subject: HB 65 Increasing Student Allotment

To the Honorable Will Stepp,

I am writing you to gain your support on passing HB 65 for Increasing Student Allotment. When it's time for the state to be considering budget cuts often education is at the top of the list. Teacher's salaries may not be affected, but their resources are the ones to take the hit. Many teachers spend time in the evening and on weekends not only grading papers and building class curriculum, but there is also administrative work they are required to do.

For example, the new "Alaska Reads" law requires teachers to fill out progress reports ten times in a year for some students, about 40%, and meet with families. There is, however, no additional resources for districts to give teachers time to do these newly required reports. The teachers will have to do them on the weekends or find shortcuts and potentially compromise the quality of education their students receive.

Why are we doing this? Impose additional requirements of time and energy on teachers and not provide monetary support for it? How many weekends are we going to ask from their families to sacrifice?

I urge you to support this bill and vote yes. I can only hope that some of this additional funding would go to support teachers in implementing the new law.

Best regards,

Keith Nuss

From: Dawn Fitzpatrick [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2023 3:17 PM
To: Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski; House Finance; Rep. Mike Cronk
Subject: Please increase the BSA- support our children

Hello-

I am writing as a resident of Fairbanks and the mother of two elementary aged children in the FNSBSD. I am begging you to increase funding for students and schools in Alaska. When I attended school as a child in Fairbanks and Anchorage, my mother told me I was getting one of the best educations in the country. That I could go anywhere and know I had a good foundation- as good as anywhere.

Now, as a mother, I've watched my elementary aged children lose that quality of education because of a lack of financial support from our state government. My young sons sit in classes of 28 students- the largest their teachers have ever had. I know their teachers are trying, but everything becomes harder with more kids in the room. They've lost access to music classes and art specialists. For my youngest, art is his greatest passion and I am so sad for him. For my oldest, with an IEP, school is such a struggle EXCEPT that he excels at mathematics and entered the extended learning program this year. School has always been tough for him and this new ELP class, just one hour a week, brought him such joy. I was so happy for him. But extended learning positions will be cut in FNSBSD next year, and I think he'll get at most half of the time he currently gets. Meanwhile, school building across Fairbanks sit in disrepair because no one can fund the fixes. If things don't improve, I face the reality of having to move from the community that I love to ensure my children can get a quality education.

Please support all of the children in Alaska by increasing funding to schools. I am so sad that our state shows how little it values children by not valuing their education. Please change that. Please create opportunity for my children and all children. Let the children of the North know they can go anywhere, do anything, and have just as good of a foundation as anyone else in our country. It will take your funding support,.

Respectfully,
Dawn Fitzpatrick
Fairbanks Parent 99709

From: Lyndsey Sanchez [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 4:46 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: My Public Comments on HB65

I'm opposed to HB65 for the following reasons:

I would rather there be no publicly funded schools in Alaska than be forced to pay taxes on a school system that my children were never enrolled in. I have been a responsible parent and have paid money and donated my time to ensure a good home school education, using no tax dollars, but rather, my own personal funds and time. Why should I pay for my own kids' schooling, and pay for my neighbors kids to have an education that is more expensive and not nearly as successful as what my kids got at home on my watch and dime? Today, my kids thank me for never putting them in schools that are publicly funded. They shake their heads, as I do, when they hear the news about what is going on, and the results people are complaining about, in Alaska's publicly funded schools.

I realize not every parent cares so much about their children to make such sacrifices, or has the ability, education, or finances to pay for their own child's education his/her self, but every parent has a parent, aunt or uncle, brother or sister, cousin, friend, neighbor, or nearby church that would be more than happy to help school children they know and can help, if only the government would get out of the way and stop oppressing its citizens with ever-increasing taxes, and ever-decreasing results, then we'd have the funds and time to voluntarily care for one another.

I want to see 80-90% proficiency levels in both math and reading before even discussing increasing BSA or any increased funding for education. With the results we've had by throwing money at the problem, I would rather be talking about decreasing funding, or completely de-funding education, and let parents and communities voluntarily take over education. I want to see school pools closed, unless parents are willing to voluntarily chip in to keep them open. I attended 10 public schools before 6th grade. I never attended a school that had less than 20 kids per teacher, and it never negatively impacted the kids in my classes, even in classes of 30 kids per teacher. We had teachers that actually cared about the kids more than \$ and benefits back then, before government policies started to purge them from the schools in recent years. It wasn't until I was enrolled in the 11th school as a kid that I even saw a school building with a pool. I never considered myself under privileged before attending that school because we didn't have a pool or a swim team. I never met a parent in my life that said he or she based his or her decision on where they would move by whether or not the school had a pool. People move due to a job change, marriage, divorce, tyrannical government with high taxes, etc...

The only teachers I know that quit their jobs teaching, did so because they were unwilling to pass kids on when they know they aren't ready for the next grade, unwilling to give them a grade better than the kids deserve, or were not being allowed to teach them in person during COVID because of lockdowns and mandates, not because they were not getting more money or benefits.

I don't want to pay for someone's kid to have an opportunity to become a professional or Olympic athlete, and I don't want to pay for someone else's crazy - teachers dreaming of posh salaries, extended time off, and cushioned retirements, while the kids they are supposed to be teaching are dreaming about abortions and sex changes, and not able to read or make change for a \$10 bill. Unacceptable! Please DO NOT PASS HB65!

Lyndsey Bertoldo
Nikiski, AK
[REDACTED]

From: Erin Janoso [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 12:17 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support HB 65 - MEANINGFULLY raise the BSA!

Greetings -

I am writing to you today as a parent, and as someone that cares deeply about the educational opportunities available to Alaska's students. This is why I implore you to please, please support HB 65. Over the past number of years, as a volunteer for the music education programs in Fairbanks, I have watched music in our schools be gutted. First we lost 4th grade band and orchestra. Then 5th grade, which removed it from Fairbanks elementary schools entirely. Now, our school district admin is saying they want to cut general music for elementary students next year, if increased state funding does not come through. Of course these are not the only cuts that are happening. PTR is ever-increasing, and students are being crammed into classrooms where there is sometimes not enough space for all of their desks, and not enough hooks for all of their coats. With so many children in a room, behavioral issues dominate instruction time and learning suffers. It's an appalling state of affairs t hat - thankfully - is correctable.

Our schools are currently being funded at the lowest level in 20 years, and it's literally breaking the system. A material increase to the BSA - base student allocation - is beyond overdue. The Fairbanks North Star borough School district is already shuttering schools and cutting beloved programs like band and orchestra. These grievous cuts will continue without increased educational funding.

Another reason this is important is because the parents of the students in these schools are our state's workforce. And, many - frustrated by such a dramatic decline in the educational opportunities available to their kids - are choosing to leave the state. Quality schools attract families. Terrible ones drive them-- Alaska's workforce-- away.

That is why I'm asking you to please, please support HB 65, and in so doing, support Alaska's workforce, its students, and our children's future. Thank you for your time and your service to our state.

Sincerely,
Erin Janoso
Fairbanks, AK

Erin Janoso
[REDACTED]

From: Jenna Hamm [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 12:15 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: In Support of K-12 Public Education Funding

Dear House 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 ten years. I wrote to some of you earlier this session urging you to take up HB 65, the bill to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA), and more recently when you took up the Operating Budget. As you deliberate once again HB 65, I urge you to be bolder than the current, whittled-down version of HB 65 of an \$800 increase over the next two years, and that you agree that today's students need a high quality education today, not next year or the year after.

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.

Continuing to operate schools this way is unconscionable. Continuing to not meet our communities' needs for high quality schools is unconscionable. Without a minimum of a \$1100 BSA increase, our district may be unable to support student transportation, will be unable to support CTE offerings at all sites, will be without critical support staff, and will somehow have to maintain the integrity of school infrastructure with only part-time maintenance and custodial staff. Our four Cantwell high schoolers are without a high school math and science teacher. The teacher at one of the larger sites must teach Cantwell students virtually and Healy students in-person simultaneously, or vice versa. While a creative solution, this is not what best serves students.

I described in earlier letters how closing down two of our smaller schools would be a death knell for these communities. Without a substantial BSA increase and taking measures to maintain the fiscal stability of our State, community declines all across the State of Alaska will be unavoidable.

Schools are the lifeblood of Alaska's small communities-- they are 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 fully funding public education in a sustainable way that keeps pace with inflation. What business doesn't raise their prices, and have to increase their wages, to keep pace with expenses and the cost of living?

Please fulfill your obligation to invest in Alaska's future by including additional funds in the Operating Budget to directly support a meaningful and sustained increase to the BSA for public K-12 education. Please reference the bipartisan fiscal

policy working group of prior sessions for pathways to achieving this critical state service. Thank you for your service to Alaskans.

Respectfully,
Jenna Hamm

Jenna Hamm

she/her

Co-owner

[Camp Denali and Parkside Guest House](#)



[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Blog](#)

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

From: peter elsner [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 9:29 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Funding Alaska's Schools

Please vote for House Bill 65 and help fund Alaska's schools. Thank you, Peter Elsner.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 6:14 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support HB65!

Dear members of the Finance Committee,

Right out of college, in 1959, I came to teach 3rd grade at Harborview Elementary in Juneau. My teaching career soon developed into subbing, then taking on "Grandma duties". I'm proud to say my 2 daughters are elementary school teachers. One married a H.S. teacher. All four of their children have been through the Juneau public [schools](#). One of their daughters has been teaching kindergarten in Juneau for 6 years, and hopes to continue. However, if funding of public education continues to shrink in comparison to the cost of living, my granddaughter, who is an excellent teacher, who loves her job, will have to find other work! Please support HB65 so we don't loose her and other talented young teachers. We know the children of this state deserve good teachers, it's what makes the biggest difference!

Linda Miller

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: zach porter [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 12:46 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Raising the BSA

Dear Sirs and Madams,

My name is Becky Porter, and I am a Nikiski resident, a 1996 graduate of Nikiski High School and a parent of a Class of 2023 senior, as well as a current 7th grader at Nikiski High School. I am reaching out, because as a current member of Nikiski High School site council, the discussion has taken place and we were just informed of some drastic cuts that will have to happen IF the BSA isn't increased. I cannot stand by and not at least try to explain how cuts like this would be detrimental to not only my children, but to so many more in our small community. In a town that doesn't always have a lot of things to do, our community school should be the heart of our town and we should take pride in doing everything we can to not only make it a successful space for students, but a place that the entire community can be proud of the way it is taken care of and how it thrives. Especially when you have a large portion of the community as fellow alumni of this school. We cannot sit by and let it become a worse version of what it used to be and what it could be.

I have been an involved community member and a volunteer at both the Nikiski area schools for the last 14 years, and the things I have witnessed by volunteering and working as a substitute teacher in both schools, as well as being a parent of students, who are very involved at these schools, makes the passing of this bill even more vital. We are a small community, that is true, but what we lack in size, we make up for in integrity and heart. My son has been an athlete his entire school career, ending this year as senior basketball and football captain, but he has also played lead roles in spring musicals the last two years as a musical theater student. My daughter is a theater kid all the way and I have watched her go from being too nervous to get up on stage to audition, to dancing and singing on stage, along with her best friends and many other new friends she has made along the way. She even landed her first lead role, last Christmas. I say all of this, because I am coming to this conversation from both sides of the social status at a school. I have an athlete and a theater kid, and to be able to see each of them blossom in their own way, in an atmosphere that allows them to bring their individual gifts to the surface has been not only a treasure to me but has brought a level of personal growth out in each of them, that without these opportunities, they just wouldn't have. I am speaking not only on behalf of my children, but on behalf of all the students I have had the honor of working with and witnessing their own personal growth in similar ways. It's an amazing thing to see a child find their element and then thrive there. The teachers and staff at our schools are truly the champions of this cause, without them and the passion they have to find ways to connect with these students, there would surely be kids falling through the cracks, and I see on a daily basis, students being seen, heard, found and then guided to a better way for them to thrive through the opportunities they have at our school.

Increasing the student-teacher ratio, means that our school would have to lose two valued and vital teachers. Teachers that literally hold the key to a whole new world for some students. When students aren't athletes, but they are art students or music students, and they lose the opportunity to grow their talents in their element, this is a disservice to those students in more ways than merely taking a class and getting a grade. This goes for students who aren't artists or musically inclined but have athletic strengths as well. When cuts like this are made, you literally eliminate their element and often a place where they feel safe and valued. Eliminating places like this for students delves into a whole other level of their social and emotional health and is something we should never take lightly. Every child deserves to find their gifts and talents while they are growing in their education as well as their character of who they will become as an adult. It really is all connected. Confidence in their element can pour out into other areas of their education and allows them to find the connection to their own growth and their futures.

We can't afford to lose athletic directors that manage the infinite details of creating programs, that keep our athletes safe, encouraged, and community minded. This position is not one that a school can do without, it really is a huge job

and it's the behind-the-scenes stuff that most of us never know about and just show up for. Without these details being managed well, events just don't take place and certainly not to the caliber that we can be proud of.

Don't even get me started on losing the theater tech positions, and although our school doesn't have a pool, I am not as familiar with that role, I am capable of understanding that it is a role that requires diligence and dedication to keep things running smoothly and safely. Both positions would drastically change the facilities and capabilities at our schools.

Cutting funds for extracurricular travel, is just another way that takes opportunities away from the students that broaden their views outside of just our little corner of the world. When students can work with and around other groups of people, and learn to navigate those challenges along the way, our world is becoming a better place one road-trip at a time. We want to broaden their minds and give them more opportunities to grow, not stifle them.

And finally, the cut that I can't even imagine is on the chopping block, the Student Success Liaison. Can we even say that title without realizing what that even means to cut this from our schools? Some students thrive all on their own, or with the support of a family that gives them what they need in the way of education support, and that is a wonderful thing. But the reality is, A LOT of students are going to need some support more than we realize and having this position in our schools, is vital to making sure that no student falls through the cracks of their education and the challenges they may face. Having a person in this position in our school is making huge differences in the lives of the students who are utilizing this service, as well as a HUGE asset to parents who are also trying to navigate the uncertain plans of a student getting ready to graduate. Our school currently has no counselor and as a parent of a senior, I have been in contact with our Student Success Liaison multiple times, and she has been a vital part of my son getting information regarding scholarships, finding out information regarding opportunities for his future and overall, a genuine desire to make sure that he is successful in whatever goals he pursues. This position should not be in question at all, and this would be a huge disservice to all the students at our school.

I am sure it is apparent by the "book" I have written regarding the damage these cuts would be to our school, that I am doing all that I can, to encourage you to do the best you can to vote for an increase to the BSA. I am not an expert on legislation and to be honest, I am still learning so much, just by getting involved, but I am a mom, and a community member who works with students of all ages and I can tell you, this stuff matters and should be considered when you are getting ready to vote. Thank you for your time, and I appreciate you taking the time to read this long email, I know you are all very busy, so this is not lost on me.

Sincerely,
Becky Porter

Porter's Alaskan Adventures



Porter's Alaskan Adventures



From: Michael Wald [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 8:52 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65 - Education Funding

Hello and thank you for your service.

I can imagine that the Finance Committee has some very hard decisions to make about the state's priorities for the upcoming year and years. I am writing to implore you to make education funding a priority this legislative session. This is a critically important issue not only for students but for our entire state. We desperately need to increase the BSA by a minimum of \$1250.

Education funding has not increased for years and the cost of nearly everything has increased dramatically. The state has slowly defunded our schools and many are now at a breaking point. Districts that have been solvent and responsible for decades are unable to pay utility bills. Our urban schools are moth-balling buildings. We have hundreds of unfilled job vacancies for teaching positions across the state. Our school districts need more money from the state. The funding is over-due and a \$1250 increase will barely keep up with the accumulated inflation since the last increase to the BSA.

I urge you to allocate funds for an increase to the BSA of at least \$1250. What is more important for the future of Alaska than our youth?

Thank you for serving the people of Alaska.

Michael Wald
Owner Arctic Wild
[REDACTED]

From: Shannon Metrokin [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 7:47 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Education Funding

Dear House Finance Committee,

My name is Shannon Metrokin and I am writing to you as a proud Alaskan. I am the product of the Alaska public school system in both Anchorage and Fairbanks, I am a special education teacher, I have worked for ASD for over 25 years and my husband and I have two sons in the public school system in Anchorage.

I am writing in support of increased education funding. More specifically, I am writing in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation. I know you are aware that the BSA hasn't changed since 2017 and the cost of educating our most precious resources has increased significantly.

In my position, I have been tasked with overwhelming caseloads, significant paperwork demands, increased expectations and a lack of support staff. I have also been faced with more students experiencing significant trauma than ever before. Our teachers spend so much time trying to meet students' basic needs in addition to teaching subject areas and social emotional lessons. Quite frankly, we are tired of doing more and more with less and less. We are losing quality teachers to other sectors as the lack of funding and support in education is evident.

Please consider increasing, as well as inflation proofing, the BSA so we can continue to serve Alaska's most precious resource. Don't the children of Alaska deserve our support?

Thank you,

Shannon Langland Metrokin

From: Linda Hagelin [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 6:39 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 65 support

Please vote to increase funding to schools! Nothing is more important than our children's future. A good education is foundational.

Linda Hagelin

From: Jen LaRoe [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 8:40 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Fwd: Support HB 65

Hello House Finance committee representatives,

My name is Jen LaRoe and I have lived in Juneau for 30 years, making my life here and raising my family. My daughter just turned 20 on Saturday and my son is finishing his Junior year at Juneau Douglas High School. I have been a parent advocate for 15 years, as well as a dedicated parent volunteer for the public schools in Juneau, serving on site councils, volunteering to fill a vacancy on the school board, and most importantly, weekly classroom hours as a volunteer helping to support emerging and struggling readers in 3rd grade, spearheading a school garden project funded with grant money.

I have now stepped into the role of certified teacher for a pre-K classroom. I am very fortunate to have a cap of 20 to the number of students in my classroom. I bring this up because in all my years advocating for and participating in classrooms, I know that the pupil to teacher ratio or PTR is of paramount importance to the success of students and the retaining of quality teachers. Overcrowded classes serve no one well.

The single most important factor in student achievement is access to a quality teacher. Ymj%mlmjw%ymj%uzum%vzfqnji% yjfhmjw%fyf%ymj% | jw%ymj%wjf%yn(j%fhjxx%tk%uzum%yt%vzfqnji%yjfhmjw%3

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On February 28, 2023 the Legislative Finance Division Director stated to the House Finance Committee that “today, the base student allocation is the lowest it’s been in 20 years, adjusted for inflation”

From 2011 to 2022, the Base Student Allocation has increased by less than 5%, while Alaska’s urban consumer price index has risen by 24.6%. (Source ADN 1/26/23)

The BSA would need to increase by **\$1,348** to match the buying power of peak year 2015. (Source January 30, 2023 memo from the Legislative Finance Division)

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Jen LaRoe



Juneau, AK 99801

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Jen

From: Spear Llc [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 3:06 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support HB65

It's time to raise the BSA. Please support HB65.

Thank you,
Shoshana Kun
District 31

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Yung Kwang Kiely [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 1:41 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Concerned teacher....

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

I am writing to urge you to substantially increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaska's schools, particularly in light of the current 5-7% inflation rate. As you are aware, this rate is significantly higher than the historical average, and it has had a profound impact on the financial stability of schools across the state.

In particular, I would like to emphasize the challenges facing Kodiak Island Borough's schools. Despite their best efforts, they simply do not have the funding necessary to provide the quality education that their students deserve. The lack of resources has been especially acute in recent years, and it is clear that more must be done to address this issue.

Increasing the BSA would be a critical step in the right direction. By doing so, you would be demonstrating your commitment to ensuring that all Alaskan students have access to the high-quality education they need to succeed. Moreover, it would be a wise investment in the future of our state, as better-educated students are more likely to become successful contributors to the economy and society.

I understand that increasing the BSA will require a significant financial commitment from the state. However, I believe that it is a worthwhile investment in the future of our state and our children. I urge you to take action on this issue and increase the BSA as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Yung Kwang Kiely

From: Monica Claridge [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 1:36 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: <no subject>

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an employee of the Kodiak Island Borough School District, and I am writing to ask you to do all in your power to make sure HB65 is passed into law.

The increase to the Base Student Allocation is not only a long time in coming, it is at a critical point right now. Due to the 6 ½% - 7% inflation hike we are all experiencing, if our district doesn't receive more funding soon, they will begin to not rehire for teacher positions (for teachers who leave the district), which will increase class sizes, and the district will cut valuable programs just to make ends meet. From what I learned this morning the KIBSD has a \$4,000,000 deficit right now, and something will have to go. I know we are a small district, but recent news of Anchorage closing schools should further encourage you to increase the BSA.

Please preserve our children's educations and our teachers' jobs. Your actions will directly affect the health and welfare of Alaskan families – your constituents.

Most Respectfully,

Monica Claridge
Special Education Teacher
East Elementary School

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From: Marna Sanford [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 12:04 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Maxine Dibert; Rep. Calvin Schrage; Rep. Mike Prax
Subject: Tanana Chiefs Conference support of Education Funding
Attachments: 2023-06 In Support of Advocacy at the State Level to Increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA).pdf;
2017-25 Sustainable Budget Plan.pdf

Members of House Finance Committee,

Thank you for your work to ensure a balanced budget and robust state services.

Tanana Chiefs Conference Full Board of Directors requests an increase to the Base Student Allocation as referenced in the attached Resolution. I have also attached our standing Resolution on a "Sustainable Budget Plan."?

Marna Sanford
Government Legal Affairs Director
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99701
[REDACTED]

From: Jessie Irwin [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 12:36 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB65 passing into law

Hello Representative Story,

I am an employee of the Kodiak Island Borough School District, and I am writing to ask you to do all in your power to make sure HB65 is passed into law.

The increase to the Base Student Allocation is not only a long time in coming, but also at a critical point right now. Due to the 6 ½% - 7% inflation hike we are all experiencing, if our district doesn't receive more funding soon, they will begin to not rehire for teacher positions (for teachers who leave the district), which will increase class sizes, and the district will cut valuable programs just to make ends meet. From what I learned this morning the KIBSD has a \$4,000,000 deficit right now, and something will have to go. I know we are a small district, but recent news of Anchorage closing schools should further encourage you to increase the BSA.

Please preserve our children's educations and our teachers' jobs. Your actions will directly affect the health and welfare of Alaskan families – your constituents.

Most Respectfully,

Jessie Irwin

**Fifth Grade Teacher
Main Elementary**

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CITY OF SOLDOTNA
RESOLUTION 2023-022

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE STATE OF ALASKA MAKE A MEANINGFUL
INCREASE TO THE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION (BSA) FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is constitutionally obligated to establish and maintain a system of public schools; and

WHEREAS, as per AS 29.35.160, the Kenai Peninsula Borough is required to constitute a borough school district and establish, maintain, and operate a system of public schools on an areawide basis; and

WHEREAS, AS 14.17.470 currently states that the base student allocation, provided by the State, is \$5,960; and

WHEREAS, at current funding levels the State will only provide 59.5% of fiscal year 2024 Kenai Peninsula Borough School District education funding and local government contributions will make up a majority of the balance; and

WHEREAS, education is the single largest budgetary item for the Kenai Peninsula Borough; and

WHEREAS, the base student allocation amount per student has slowly degraded due to an upward inflationary trend in the cost of student education; and

WHEREAS, requiring the Kenai Peninsula Borough to continually increase local contributions to keep pace with rising costs resulting in decreased spending on other essential programs; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is facing a \$13.1 million budget deficit for FY24 requiring an increase to class size and the elimination of programs important to our students and community members; and; and

WHEREAS, the State has not made meaningful base student allocation increases since fiscal years 2015 through 2017 totaling an additional amount per student of \$250; and

WHEREAS, Alaska State Senate members have proposed Senate Bill 52 which would increase the base student allocation by \$1,000 and Alaska State House members have proposed House Bill 65 which would increase the base student allocation per student by \$1,250; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2023, the Legislative Finance Division Director stated to the House Finance Committee that "today, the base student allocation is the lowest it's been in the last 20 years — adjusted for inflation";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOLDOTNA, ALASKA:

Section 1. That the Council requests a meaningful increase to the base student allocation for Alaskan students in an effort to bridge the fiscal gap created by a lack of inflationary increases to the BSA over the last several years.

Section 2. That copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Dunleavy and the Kenai Peninsula legislative delegation, the President of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education, the Education Committees of the Alaska House and Alaska Senate, the Finance Committees of the Alaska House and Alaska Senate, and other interested parties.

Section 3. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL THIS 22ND DAY OF MARCH, 2023.


Paul J. Whitney, Mayor

ATTEST:


John Blankenship, MMC, City Clerk

SEWARD LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Seward.LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-224-5066

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: City of Seward Resolution 2023-0043
REPRESENTING: Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
BILL # or SUBJECT: HB 65 and SB52 Base Student Allocation
COMMITTEE: House Finance Committee DATE: April 13th, 2023

NOTE: This testimony is considered part of the official record and will be posted online with the hearing documents

Please see attached Resolution 2023-043

Sponsored by: Council Member Barnwell

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2023-043**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD,
ALASKA, REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA LEGISLATORS
MAKE A MEANINGFUL INCREASE TO THE BASE STUDENT
ALLOCATION (BSA) FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is constitutionally obligated to establish and maintain a system of public schools; and

WHEREAS, under AS 29.35.160, the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) is required to constitute a borough school district and to establish, maintain, and operate a system of public schools on an areawide basis; and

WHEREAS, AS 14.17.470 currently states that the Base Student Allocation (BSA) provided by the state is \$5,960; and

WHEREAS, at current funding levels, the state will only provide 59.5% of Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) education funding, and local government contributions will make up the majority of the remaining balance; and

WHEREAS, education is the single largest budgetary item for the borough; and

WHEREAS, the BSA amount per student has slowly degraded due to an upward inflationary trend in the cost of student education; and

WHEREAS, requiring the KPB to continually increase local contributions in order to keep pace with rising costs results in decreased spending on other essential programs; and

WHEREAS, the KPBSD is facing a \$13.1 million budget deficit for FY24, resulting in an increased class size and the elimination of programs important to our students and community members; and

WHEREAS, the state has not made meaningful BSA increases since Fiscal Years 2015-2017 totaling an additional amount of \$250 per student; and

WHEREAS, Alaska State Senate Members have proposed Senate Bill 52 (SB52) which would increase the BSA by \$1,000 per student, and Alaska State House Members have proposed House Bill 65 (HB65) which would increase the BSA by \$1,250 per student; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2023, the Legislative Finance Division Director stated to the House Finance Committee that, "Today, the Base Student Allocation is the lowest it's been in the last 20 years, adjusted for inflation."; and

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2023-043**

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2023, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly approved Resolution 2023-027 to request that the State of Alaska make a meaningful increase to the Base Student Allocation for public schools; and

WHEREAS, the Seward City Council joins the borough assembly in this request to the state in the interest of providing students with the most opportunities for education possible.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA that:

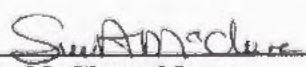
Section 1. The Seward City Council hereby requests that State of Alaska legislators make a meaningful increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for Alaskan students in order to bridge the fiscal gap created by a lack of inflationary increases imposed on the Base Student Allocation over the past several years.

Section 2. Copies of this resolution will be sent to Alaska Governor Dunleavy, all members of the legislative delegation for the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, the Alaska Education Committees in both the Senate and House, and other interested parties.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.


PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Seward, Alaska, this 10th day of April, 2023.

THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA


Sue McClure, Mayor

AYES: Osenga, Calhoon, Wells, Barnwell, DeMoss, Finch, McClure
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

ATTEST:


Brenda J. Ballou, MMC
City Clerk
(City Seal)

