
From: Jacqueline Muehlbauer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 28, 2024 1:21 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 392

Dear House Finance Committee,

Please remove the charter school language from HB 392 and forward the bill asap. Our public schools need this funding!

Thank you,

Jacqueline Muehlbauer

From: Jennifer Arseneau [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 10:43 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 392

Please support our kids and communities. Approve HB 392 with the \$680 increase to the BSA and move it forward quickly.

Thank you.

Jennifer Arseneau
Fairbanks, AK

From: Angela Head [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:23 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Written testimony in support of CSHB 392

Hello my name is Angela Head and I am a parent, business owner, and year round resident of Homer Alaska.

I currently have two children at the wonderful Paul Banks Elementary School here in Homer. The education they are receiving is top notch and the teachers and support staff are working so hard as is. If the BSA is not properly funded for next year, we are looking at cuts to paraprofessionals which are dearly needed in our school as we are the only Intensive Needs K-2 on the entire southern peninsula.

I am imploring you to pass the bill with the existing \$680.00 increase. This won't solve many district's problems as we actually need an increase of approximately \$1400.00 to account for inflation, but it is essential to providing the level of services our students deserve and have a constitutional right to. Please keep our schools places where teachers are valued and students are nurtured.

Another concern I have is the language in the bill concerning charter school fast-tracking. I was a founding member of Friends of Homer Forest School and a member of the "proto-APC" for Homer Forest School. Two years ago we completed an application and worked with our district to get this charter school up and running. It was an extremely intense and interactive process. KPBSD board members did a fantastic job giving us feedback, constructive criticism, and examples of other charter schools and where they had succeeded and failed. Our application underwent several revisions. Ultimately we withdrew it based on the lack of a suitable facility. However we had a working budget proposed and very academically rigorous curriculum. Not to mention huge community support!

I want to STRONGLY voice my opinion that the language of the bill that skips local control and approval of charter schools be modified. The local district as the first line of interaction is essential to know what the district can handle, the student population, district-specific concerns. There is already a process to appeal to DEED and the state if the district denies an application! Any school who feels the district did not provide a fair assessment ALREADY HAS A PROCESS TO APPEAL DIRECTLY TO THE STATE. Please don't skip the critical link of first presenting to the local school board.

Please do the right thing and pass this bill ASAP so our districts can approve their budgets.

Sincerely,

Angela Head
Homer, AK
[REDACTED]

From: Jacqueline Muehlbauer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 5:39 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB392

Dear House Finance Committee,

I am writing today to urge you to support HB392 by maintaining the \$680 BSA Increase. Please speed this process along as our school districts desperately need this funding.

Kindly,

Jacqueline Muehlbauer
[REDACTED]

From: Lili Misel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 6:02 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Maintain the \$680 BSA in HB 392

Dear House Finance Committee,

I am writing to ask that you schedule HB392 and maintain the \$680 BSA. Making sure that this bill advances in a timely manner is important as we near the end of the legislative session. Funding education is vital to the success of our state - now and in the future.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Alaska's children and the future of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Lili Misel
Fairbanks

From: Genevieve Barbour [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2024 5:20 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 392

House Finance Committee,

I am writing asking you to please schedule HB 392 and advance it in a timely manner. I am in support of the \$680 BSA increase and would like to see this bill move forward soon in order for school boards/school districts to have a better idea of what they can expect for next year's budgets.

Thank you,
Genevieve Barbour
Fairbanks North Star Borough Resident

From: Molly Proue [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2024 4:09 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support for HB392

Hello members of the committee:

I am writing to ask you to schedule HB 392, maintain the \$680 BSA, and advance it in a timely manner. Thank you for your work to support families in Alaska. Adequate public education funding is essential to attract and keep young people and families in our state.

Molly Proue, Fairbanks

From: Bridget Smith <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 12:16 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: CSHB 392

Dear House Finance members:

I oppose allowing the State Board of Education the authority to authorize charter schools rather than locally elected school boards who are much better situated to make such a decision in their communities. I am totally in agreement with Alaska Association of School Boards Executive Director who stated: "This reform would allow charter schools to bypass the approval of local school districts and instead go directly to the State Board of Education. It is the first and most significant step in a plan to reduce the power of local authorities and provide opportunities for private and religious schools to access public funds."

And of course, as you are well aware, that would be unconstitutional.

Thank you,
Bridget Smith
1 [REDACTED]
Juneau, AK 99801
[REDACTED]

From: Amanda Triplett [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 7:45 AM
To: House Finance; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: Support for CSHB 392 - Education Funding

Hello,

My name is Amanda Triplett. I live in Juneau and have two children in the public school system. I have a kindergartner at Mendenhall River Community School and an eighth grader at Floyd Dryden Middle School.

Our family is a strong supporter of Alaskan education.

I **strongly support** increasing the BSA by at least \$680. This is critical for all Alaskan school districts. My son, who is in kindergarten, needs additional reading support. Increasing the BSA will directly help support his school by providing additional reading interventions and support.

I **strongly oppose** the Governor-appointed State Board of Education to authorize charter schools rather than locally-elected school boards. Simply put, this is a ridiculous idea. It pisses me off that this is even a discussion point. I feel this topic is a waste of valuable resources and energy.

Please continue to support the BSA increase. Stand up to Dunleavy and don't be intimidated to challenge him. Alaskans need your united support.

Thank you for your service, truly.

Best,

Amanda

Amanda Triplett

From: jetta whittaker [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 2:20 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Sara Hannan; Sen. Jesse Kiehl
Subject: Support for CSHB 392 - Education Funding

I am writing to ask you to support increasing funding for Alaska's public schools via CSHB 392. It was very disheartening to have the Governor veto the previous increase and even worse to watch your august body not be able to rally to override the veto. Let's hope this bill will sail through the process, as a recent statewide poll found that the top education intervention favored by more than 75% of respondents is a BSA increase. People are watching!

CSHB 392 will also provide additional funding for students who need reading support in Kindergarten through third grade. I volunteer as a Reader Buddy in a grade 1-2 classroom at my neighborhood elementary school. The teacher has her hands full all day, keeping 28 very active students, each with different academic, social, and emotional needs, busy and motivated to learn. I am in awe of her.

Being a Reader Buddy is a wonderful way to help students to reach their reading goals and to learn to enjoy reading. I love to see the magic happen as they progress from sounding out each letter of a word to confidently reading the word. While satisfying to me personally, I know my efforts to assist four students twice a week is a tiny drop in the bucket compared to the great need for additional reading support across the state. The Alaska Reads Act is an under-funded mandate that simply will not reach its intended outcomes without more financial support. Alaska needs to raise confident readers so they become confident and successful adults who can contribute to and sustain the vitality of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration and support of CSHB 392. Your investment will pay off.

jetta whittaker

[REDACTED]

Juneau AK 99801

From: Wendy Burke [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 12:27 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: Fund Alaskan schools! Vote yes on CSHB 392

Hello

I am writing as a mother of 12 year old twins to ask for your help. Please vote YES on CSHB 392 to increase the BSA. Our state and our children NEED your help to increase the base student allocation and fund Alaska Public Schools. Just like the rest of us, schools cannot keep up with inflation and need you to do your constitutional duty to fully fund the public school system. Please vote yes on CSHB 392, and vote for our children— the are the future of our great state!

Sincerely
Wendy Burke
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Scott Hayden [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 10:45 AM
To: House Finance; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Rep. Craig Johnson
Subject: Increase BSA by \$680

Like most Alaskans, I support a \$680 increase to the BSA. Our schools and students are falling behind because there is not enough money for repairs to buildings, and we have a growing student:teacher ratio.

I oppose statewide intervention in education policy. The whole point of the school board system is to have effective local administration by people who know their schools and communities best. I have seen how Legislature-imposed mandates play out. It is bad. You - the legislature - are NOT education experts, and your mandates rarely work well.

Alaska's charter school system is working great. I am very happy with that. Why are so many of you in a hurry to overhaul that system? I was taught that when something works great you should NOT change it.

Please, for the sake of the kids in this state, increase the BSA. You have not kept up with inflation for 15 years. Guess what? It's messing up our schools.

Sincerely,
Scott Hayden
[REDACTED]
Anchorage AK 99515

From: Larri Spengler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:26 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andi Story
Subject: More money for Alaskan youth!

Greetings:

I urge you to do the following, with respect to funding education in Alaska:

- Raise the Base Student Allocation of at least \$680
- Fund pupil transportation (funding for buses is in addition to the BSA increase.)
- Provide additional funding for students who need reading support in Kindergarten through third grade.

I also urge you NOT to do this, with respect to education in Alaska:

- Please do NOT allow the Governor-appointed State Board of Education to authorize charter schools rather than locally-elected school boards. (This would take away local control and collaboration and could pave the way to further siphon-off public education funds for private interests.)

I also want to sincerely thank those of you who voted to override the Governor's education veto.

We have to take care of our youth; they are our future, and worth spending money on!

Sincerely,

Larri Spengler

Larri Irene Spengler
[REDACTED]
Juneau, Alaska 99801
[REDACTED]

From: Regan Brooks [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:26 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Please support an increase in the BSA

I am writing as a mother, an educator, and a community member to urge you to do all you can to raise the BSA.

Alaskas children need your support. Another year of inadequate funding is gutting schools that are already hurting.

As a parent of two children in high school, I am seriously considering moving out of state for them to complete their education. My son currently has a brand new (kind but not adequately prepared) teacher with zero teaching experience in one of his core subjects because the experienced teacher he would have otherwise had left Alaska to teach in a state with better compensation. As a result he is learning next to nothing in this subject and his friends are routinely facing disciplinary issues because the (understandably frustrated) teacher is unfortunately taking frustration out on the students.

And my daughter had 41 students in her English class last semester. 41! How can we possibly expect her teacher to read and provide meaningful feedback on 41 essays? We cannot. But our children deserve to have educators with the time and expertise to support them.

Please don't allow Alaska's education system to deteriorate further.

With best wishes and thanks for the hard work you do,
Regan

Regan Brooks

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK
99516

From: Janell Hafner [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:25 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support CSHB 392

I'm writing to support this increase. As a longtime Alaskan I, like fellow Alaskans, directly benefit in countless direct and indirect ways from enhancing school funding. This proposed increase will be a critical step towards managing class sizes better across districts- lowering class sizes so teachers have more time to focus individualized attention on each learner to grow their progress, advance their learning, help them feel more comfortable in the school environment, and indeed improve test scores. While I'm not a teacher I also see this funding as essential to boosting the professional outcomes of our educators and improving morale, resiliency, and retention of our school district employees. My child has benefitted from the strength of her educators and administrators, and has also directly suffered when years of legislative funding inaction, gubernatorial vetoes, and inadequate political will have left our schools fighting for funds they desperately deserve. With more focus on reading outcomes increased funds are also essential to support readers in school at their earliest years, particularly those who may not be able to access outside reading supports.

I strongly support additional a significant BSA boost and this is one small step towards improving outcomes for all Alaskans.
Thank you,
Janell Hafner
Juneau, Alaska

From: Jblaine [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:50 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: CSHB 392 -Education Bill

Please consider CSHB 392 carefully - students, teachers, parents and school administrators across Alaska need your support.

HB 392 is only a start. The governor has been starving public education since he was elected.

And please find out why the governor wants control of charter school development. As my grandmother might say: "He's probably up to no good."

Thank you,

John Blaine
Anchorage, AK
99517
Sent from my iPhone

From: Lisa EaganLagerquist [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:27 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Rebecca Himschoot; Rep. CJ McCormick; Rep. Justin Ruffridge;
Rep. Jamie Allard; Rep. Thomas McKay
Subject: CSHB 392 - Education Funding

Good Morning House Finance Committee,

I was discouraged and frustrated that I was not allowed to provide public testimony on Monday, April 8, at 8 pm on CSHB 392 at the House Education Committee meeting as was advertised. I took time to prepare my comments and an hour off work to be at the capital in person. As the chair, Representative Allard, took an ease to clear up the confusion over public testimony, I heard her say in regards to public testimony, "I don't care". This made me feel like a smushed bug on a dirty sidewalk.

This is what I wanted to share.

I'm a Mom of an 8th and 10th grader in Juneau Public schools.

I'm a former teacher at JDHS, CHOICE Program

I'm a member of the Juneau Community **Charter** School (JCCS) Academic Policy Committee (APC) however I'm speaking on my own behalf.

I'm a public citizen

I'm wearing red - Per Governor Dunlevy, I'm the face of the "Alaska's Education Industry Lobby"

I support a raise the BAS to at least \$680

I support providing additional pupil transportation funding.

I am curious about the need to change the way Charter Schools are approved.

I like to know who my audience is when I speak.

How many of you have been in a public school in the last year during student learning time? How about in the last Month?

How many of you have been in a Charter school in the last year? In the last Month? In the last week?

Why: I spend a lot of time in the Juneau Community Charter School.

Charter schools - As I see most of you have not been in a Charter school in the last week, I like to invite you to volunteer at Juneau Community Charter School. Our number is 907-523-1679. We desperately need volunteers. You may be thinking "Ha, I don't have time. I have my work." Well if schools/Charter schools are a priority, you, just like I am today, you could make volunteering a priority. You could take time off from work. I'm 100% serious. Please consider volunteering. Please call us.

I'd like you to spend time with us, because we need the help and I think you'd see how much, just like neighborhood schools (They are all public schools,) we need an increase to the BSA/funding. This year, just like the last several year JCCS has struggled to have funds to hire an art teacher or a music teacher. We choose to prioritize hiring a principal and a counselor with our tight budget. **Tough, sad choices**. Staff is choosing to have their spouse take health insurance so that they don't have to cost our school more. We are

no longer making copies to save funds. We rely on parent and community volunteers to monitor lunch, breakfast and recess. We are making it work, but we are struggling. For the up coming year was are struggling with the tough choice of paying more to rent space that supports our charter's mission verse pay less rent to be in a location that will make our mission challenging. **Tough, sad choices.**

Moreover running a Charter school is not easy. You need volunteers for the Academic Policy Committee. Ours is a 7 person committee. Many years we've struggled to fill all the seats. We officially meet once a month, but with required special meetings the time commitment is much more and still there is so much more we'd like to do. We support recruitment, recharting efforts, planning the budget, contracting with the school for space, fundraising, helping teachers plan trips, building community, and providing guidance for our the Charter school's Mission is a partial list.

In short, there is a place for Charter Schools in the Alaska Public School system, but running a thriving one is not easy.

I wonder, about the need for changing the way Charter Schools are approved. Please before you change the policy find out:

Are there lots of people applying to start Charter Schools that are being denied?

If yes, who are these groups? Is the denial reasonable?

Do the applicants know how much work it is to run a Charter School?

Do they have a location for the school?

Do they have a budget that works with the current BSA?

How are they planning to accommodate all types of Special Education Students?

Do they have a building the meets ADA?

Have they thought about the cost of insurance?

Do they have a solid curriculum?

Do they have a way to transport any student within their district to and from school?

My guess is the answer is, "No." No, there are not a lot of groups that have solid plans that are applying to form charter schools that are being denied. Why change a policy that gives local school districts control, when there is not a problem? It seems to me, like bigger government...

Transportation - My sons walked to their local elementary school, but have taken the school bus to middle school and high school. There's been many years, especially in the beginning of the school year where the bus has been unreliable. So much that I have the school bus phone number on speed dial. When the bus doesn't come, or is late, my husband or I take time off work, to get our sons to school. We are lucky to have this flexibly/luxury. Many families don't and that's not providing equitable education. The families who can take their students to work have the luxury to arrive on time whether or not the bus does. The bus sights lack of drivers for being late, or changing routes. More funding, would help retain drivers.

BSA. - Mostly you've heard it all, so I'll be brief. The lack of increased funding has cause there to be less counselors, fewer nurse/health aids with less training, bigger loads for special Education teachers, larger classes, fewer resources for books, paper, copies. Teachers and school staff feel undervalued (and are undervalued) which leads to them leaving teaching. An increase to BSA, would at least help teacher, students and school administrators feel valuded and start to help with the short comings listed above.

Finally, at a rally earlier this year, a reporter asked me why I supported an increase in the BSA. After I told him, he replied "Well, personally, I don't care, I don't have kids." I was speechless for a moment. Then said, "Whether or not you have kids, we all need to care. These "kids" my former students are now the intern at my Physical Therapy office, the bank tell at Wells Fargo, a Juneau School Board Member and a defendant when I was on Jury duty. How we treat, support, value the youth in Alaska, has a direct effect on all of us, and what it will be like to live here in the next 5, 10, 20 years.

Please, please, please don't think if you don't have kids, the status of Alaska education does not matter to you.

Vote to increase the BSA now.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Lisa EaganLagerquist

Douglas, AK 99824

From: Jennifer Wardas <JWardas@kpbsd.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:26 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: CSHB 392

House Finance Committee,

As an educator currently in the trenches facing the possibility of larger classes with multiple grades, I would like to urge you to please consider that our students are our future and deserve better. The number one indicator of student success is small class size. To ensure reasonable class sizes and effectively assist students who have fallen behind due to Covid19, we desperately need the BSA to be raised by at least \$680. We also struggle with a high poverty rate in our Title1 schools and must have necessary funding for pupil transportation. Our athletic programs are suffering as well as there is not transportation available for them to compete with other schools or districts. We are also in dire need of additional resources to support students learning to read in the early and intermediate elementary grades. I teach 6th grade and have students reading from a 2nd to a 12th grade level in my class alone. We must have the teachers necessary to focus on intervention for these students who are so far behind.

I would also like to encourage against allowing Governor-appointed State Board of Education to authorize charter schools. Our unique communities need to maintain control over public education. Not allow our funds to shift towards private interest groups. Private interest groups DO NOT support equal public education for all.

Sincerely, Jennifer Wardas – 6th Grade Teacher – Redoubt Elementary – Soldotna, AK

From: angie Jensen [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 7:48 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Underfunding Education

Dear House Finance Committee,

As a current educator, I'm concerned the ongoing decisions to underfund education will disable our communities.

Denying youth in families who already struggle to provide food, shelter and clothing, the opportunities for a positive future hurts our state.

It increases a divide between those who have and those who do not. In other words, it creates civil unrest.

You are welcome to contact me to discuss what I work with on a daily basis.

Angie

From: Christy Everett [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:51 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Mike Prax; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: Support for CSHB 392

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

As an Alaskan mother, grandmother and voter for over 36 years, I urge you to support CSHB 392, which replaces the bill SB 140 that Governor Dunleavy unfortunately vetoed. Although the increase to the BSA of \$680 does not come close to making up for the flat funding of our public schools over the past seven years, it is better than nothing, and is desperately needed by local school districts. Our constitution requires the state to support public education, please do the right thing. My sons were fortunate to attend North Pole schools in the 1990s and early 2000s, when class sizes were smaller and arts and music were available in elementary school. My grandchildren have been subjected to very large class sizes and the lack of many vital educational opportunities, due to the unconstitutional lack of state funding.

I also urge you to support the provisions of CSHB 392 which fund pupil transportation and provide additional funding for those in kindergarten through third grade who need extra help with reading.

I am opposed to the provision allowing the state Board of Education to authorize charter schools. I believe that local elected (not appointed) school boards have done an excellent job of overseeing charter schools. This approval should remain at the local level, where it is responsive to the needs and desires of the community, as well as the fiscal constraints.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Christine Everett

[REDACTED] North Pole, Alaska 99705

From: Loretta Cole [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:42 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Your Education Support is Critical

Please support raising the BSA to \$680, especially since this had a 75% approval already.

Also increase funding for student transportation.

Lastly, provide additional reading support for K-3 students.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Loretta Cole

Sent from my iPhone

From: Linda Sloan [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:21 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Mike Cronk
Subject: School funding

Please support our schools by passing bill 392.

- Raise the Base Student Allocation by at least \$680 (the latest statewide poll found that the top education intervention favored by more than 75% of respondents is a BSA increase!)
- Fund pupil transportation (funding for buses is in addition to the BSA increase.)
- Provide additional funding for students who need reading support in Kindergarten through third grade.
-
- I oppose the part of the bill that allows the Governor-appointed State Board of Education to authorize charter schools rather than locally-elected school boards. This would take away local control and collaboration and could pave the way to further siphon-off public education funds for private interests.

IT IS VITAL THAT OUR SCHOOLS ARE PROPERLY FUNDED AND I LOOK TO YOU TO SEE THAT IT IS.

Thank you for your support on this matter of utmost importance.

From: Erin Janoso [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 3:04 AM
To: House Finance; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Robert Myers; senator.ashley.carrick@akleg.gov; Sen. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Raise the BSA / Oppose State Board of Education authorizing charter schools

Greetings House Finance Committe & Senators,

I am writing to you today regarding CSHB392, and to ask you to raise the base student allocation (BSA) by a minimum of \$680 per student. Our schools are not failing, they are starving, thanks to years of flat funding by our state.

In addition to this BSA increase, please also separately fund student transportation/ bussing, and provide funding for K-3rd grade students who need reading support. There was much said about the Reads Act, but without the funding to support it, that effort becomes just empty words.

I would also like to express my strong opposition to allowing the State Board of Education to authorize charter schools instead of locally elected school boards. The charter school system in place now works, and does not need "fixing." Control for these decisions belongs at the local level.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Erin Janoso
Fairbanks, AK
[REDACTED]

From: Jerry Smetzer [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:07 AM
To: House Finance; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: School funding. Pass the original bill passed by the Alaska Senate

That is the one that had 3 dissenting votes.

Failing the restoration of the original bill passed by the Senate, here are the details I am most interested in supporting no matter which bill passes.

- Raise the Base Student Allocation by at least \$680 (the latest statewide poll found that the top education intervention favored by more than 75% of respondents is a BSA increase!)
- Fund pupil transportation (funding for buses is in addition to the BSA increase.)
- Provide additional funding for students who need reading support in Kindergarten through third grade.

Finally, I cannot believe that the Legislature seems ready to further cripple Alaska's public schools in favor of things like a really fat PFD. The problem with really fat PFDs is that most PFDs go to people who have enough personal wealth or annual income in the form of a permanent place to live and enough money to feed themselves that they do not need the extra money; ... as nice as it "might" be to receive a really fat PFD from the state of Alaska with no strings attached, and no Alaska taxes deducted.

However, worst of all, a big chunk of the PFD payments that actually go to currently qualified Alaska residents will go to the IRS via the Federal income tax. Has somebody suggested that this kind of an export out of the Alaska Treasury and into the Federal Treasury in Washington, DC, is a good idea? It is not. It is a bad idea for no other reason than it creates a really bad public relation's image when individual Alaskans take unearned PFD money with no strings attached from the state of Alaska and the money to pay the really fat PFD is taken from the funds to be used for the education of Alaska's children.

Vote **YES** to give Alaska children a better shot at a good education in Alaska's public schools. Vote **NO** to giving really fat PFD payments to all currently qualified Alaskans.

Thanks for your consideration.

Jerry Smetzer, Alaska resident since 1958.



Available Locally In Juneau and Skagway, Alaska, and, Globally, on Amazon as a Kindle eBook or Paperback, Spring, 2023.

Best contact: [REDACTED]

Or mobile: [REDACTED]

Website: www.jerrysmetzer.net

From: Bette Seaman [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2024 10:31 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Sarah Vance; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: CSHB 392

To the House Finance Committee,

I am in favor of increasing school budgets and doing it quickly so that districts can plan next year's budget. I would like to see a larger increase in the BSA. Alaska has the most unique school districts. Some are way above the Arctic Circle, with small villages where the first language is not English. Some are in rainy Southeast, and some are mostly on the road system. It does not seem appropriate that a State employee in Juneau should decide on what charter schools are appropriate for local school districts with this diversity! The total percentage of children that even apply to go to charter schools is quite small. It requires a family that has adequate resources and time to apply to their child's education. Not all families have that, unfortunately. For instance, prior to retirement, I was a hospital employee. Hospital schedules are unforgivably inflexible. A charter school would not have worked for our family I do agree that a more robust appeal mechanism for charter schools that are refused is appropriate.

However, I am in favor of this bill if the only way to fund school districts early.

I am happy about the rural internet funding bill, It would have been awful to leave that 9:1 money on the table. I worked many years as a traveler in the Bush. The internet was awful!

Bette Seaman
Homer

From: Tyson Cox [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2024 5:21 PM
To: House Education; House Finance; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Invitation to View KPB Work Session on Education
Attachments: KPBJointWorkSession Apr9.pdf

Honorable Alaska Legislators:

Thank you all for spending so much of your time on Alaska's public education system this year. Public education is one of the most important services our state and boroughs provide. Education funding has been in the forefront of this legislative session, and I am thankful for that. I want to especially thank those who voted yes on SB 140 and on the corresponding veto override. (Shout-out to KPB yes votes: Sen. Stevens, Sen. Bjorkman, and Rep. Ruffridge)

At 1:30 PM on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) administration and Board of Education presented three budget scenarios and answered many questions the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Assembly had in joint work session. Each of our KPB representatives was invited before the 2nd. Thank you Rep. Ruffridge for attending.

At this meeting, we discussed a vast array of cuts that will be required to balance the FY25 KPDSB budget if no BSA increase or one-time funding is approved for the fiscal year. These cuts include raising class size (cutting teachers), cutting non-essential programs & sports, and closing pools & theaters. Cut will be minimized with any additional funding given from the state through a BSA increase or one-time funding. Additional topics discussed included state approved charter schools, inflationary increases for maintenance services, and one-time funding (although appreciated) not being conducive to longterm planning.

I invite all of you, especially those representing the Kenai Peninsula, to watch the video of this public work session so you can see firsthand how decisions made by Governor Dunleavy and the 33rd Legislature are affecting the people of the Kenai Peninsula, and how our school district must try to guess the amount of funding they will get for the fiscal year. Watching will allow you the opportunity to see, from a local level, how dire the need for a BSA increase is. If you already believe an increase is needed, I am thankful.

We need a more stabilized way to fund public education. At this time a BSA increase is the mechanism the state has to help districts with the rising inflationary burden we have seen over the last several years. An adequately funded BSA will create predictable yearly funding that can be counted on for school district budgeting. One-time funding will be appreciated. It will get us through this year, just as it did last year and the year before and the year before that; but it will not stop the education budgeting yo-yo our community experiences every single year.

Thank you in advance for considering this request, and taking time to view this meeting. Link is listed below. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

ASSEMBLY WORK SESSION

TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024 - 1:30 PM

Joint Budget Work Session with KPBSD Administration and Board of Education (1 hour) 

https://kpb.granicus.com/player/clip/1537?view_id=1&redirect=true

Sincerely,

Tyson Cox
Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly, Vice President
District 4 - Soldotna


tysoncox@kpb.us

April 9, 2024

Honorable Alaska Legislators:

Thank you all for spending so much of your time on Alaska's public education system this year. Public education is one of the most important services our state and boroughs provide. Education funding has been in the forefront of this legislative session, and I am thankful for that. I want to especially thank those who voted yes on SB 140 and on the corresponding veto override. (Shout-out to KPB yes votes: Sen. Stevens, Sen. Bjorkman, and Rep. Ruffridge)

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Sincerely,



Tyson Cox

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly, Vice President
District 4 - Soldotna



Dear Representative Bryce Edgmon; Representative Neal Foster; Representative DeLena Johnson; Representative Julie Coulombe; Representative Mike Cronk; Representative Will Stapp; Representative Frank Tomaszewski; Representative Alyse Galvin; Representative Sara Hannan; Representative Andy Josephson; and Representative Dan Ortiz,

My name is Marcos Lopez and I have the honor to serve as Legislative Director in the Western United States for ExcelinEd in Action.

ExcelinEd in Action strives to champion bold, proven reforms that will ensure the next generation is equipped to face the challenges of the future and retain America's competitive edge by supporting policies that among other priorities: embrace higher standards, prioritize early literacy and numeracy, empower parents and families with public and private school choice, close the digital divide, and ensure we are strengthening the teacher pipeline and teacher retention across the country.

We write to support additional support for charter schools in Alaska including but not limited to the addition of a second authorizer for chart schools. Many states with successful charter school programs have multiple authorizers. Adopting this practice aligns Alaska with national best practices in charter school authorization, positioning the state as a leader in educational innovation and choice.

Additionally, by expanding the number of authorizers, Alaska can ensure its educational system is more responsive to community needs and demands, ensuring that new charter schools align with local educational goals and priorities. This responsiveness can lead to stronger community support and engagement with charter schools.

In a groundbreaking study by Paul E. Peterson and M. Danish Shakeel of Harvard University, published in Education Next, Alaska's charter schools have been highlighted for their exceptional performance. The study, which analyzed National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test scores, found that Alaska's charter schools lead the nation, with students learning the equivalent of about a year's more material compared to their peers in other states' charter schools.

Sincerely,

Marcos Lopez

Marcos Lopez Legislative Director, West
ExcelinEd in Action

From: Jennifer Arseneau [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 10:43 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 392

Please support our kids and communities. Approve HB 392 with the \$680 increase to the BSA and move it forward quickly.

Thank you.

Jennifer Arseneau
Fairbanks, AK