

SB

11

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/8/01

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 02/05/01
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 04/27/01

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 11

"An Act relating to the legal age for attending school; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:

- same title
- new title

House Bill:

- same title
- technical title
- new: SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#
DEED	2/5/01		x	1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>George Sawyer</i>	✓			
<i>John Ward</i>			✓	
CHAIR: <i>Lyle Allen</i>			✓	

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2001 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB11
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Education & Early Dev.
 Title: An act relating to the legal age for BRU: k-12 Support
attending school... Component: Foundation Program
 Sponsor: Senator Therriault
 Requester: Senate HESS Component Number: 141

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims	*	*	*	*	*	*
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	*	*	*	*	*	*

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	*	*	*	*	*	*
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	*	*	*	*	*	*

Estimate of any current year (FY2001) cost: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

AS 14.30.010 amends the compulsory age of a child entering school from age seven to age six.

* There maybe children six years old that are not attending public school. The Department of Education & Early Development has no data to project the potential cost to the foundation program.

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans, School Finance Manager Phone 8679
 Division: Education and Support Services Date/Time 2/5/01 12:00 AM
 Approved by: Bruce Johnson, Deputy Commissioner of Education Date 2/5/01
 Agency: Education & Early Development

For distribution information, call the Governor's Legislative Office

Table 155.—Ages for compulsory school attendance, special education services for students, policies for year-round schools and kindergarten programs, by state: 1997 and 1995

State	Compulsory attendance, 1997	Compulsory special education services, 1997 ¹	Year-round schools, 1995		Provision of kindergarten education, 1995			
			Has policy on year-round schools	Has districts with year-round schools	School districts required to offer		Attendance required	
					Half day	Full day	Half day	Full day
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Alabama	7 to 16	3 to 21		X		X		
Alaska	² 7 to 16	3 to 21		X				
Arizona	³ 6 to 16	3 to 21	X	X	X		X	
Arkansas	5 to 17	3 to 21	X	X		X		X
California	6 to 18	3 to 21	X	X	X			
Colorado	7 to 16	⁴ 3 to 20		X				
Connecticut	7 to 16	3 to 20			X			
Delaware	5 to 16	3 to 20			X			
District of Columbia	5 to 18	⁵ 3 to 21				X		X
Florida	6 to 16	3 to 20	X	X		X		X
Georgia	7 to 16	3 to 21		X		X		
Hawaii	⁶ 6 to 18	3 to 20		X				
Idaho	7 to 16	3 to 20	X	X				
Illinois	7 to 16	3 to 20	X	X	X			
Indiana	⁷ 7 to 18	3 to 21		X	X			
Iowa	6 to 16	Birth to 20						
Kansas	7 to 16	3 to 20		X	X			
Kentucky	⁸ 6 to 16	3 to 20						
Louisiana	7 to 17	3 to 21						
Maine	7 to 17	3 to 19						
Maryland	5 to 16	Birth to 20			X			
Massachusetts	6 to 16	3 to 21			X			
Michigan	6 to 16	Birth to 25						
Minnesota	⁹ 7 to 16	Birth to 20	X	X	X			
Mississippi	6 to 17	3 to 20		X		X		
Missouri	7 to 16	3 to 20		X	X		X	
Montana	¹⁰ 7 to 16	3 to 18			X			
Nebraska	7 to 16	Birth to 20	X					
Nevada	7 to 17	3 to 21		X	X			
New Hampshire	6 to 16	3 to 20						
New Jersey	6 to 16	3 to 21					X	
New Mexico	5 to 18	3 to 21		X	X			
New York	¹¹ 6 to 16	3 to 21	X	X				
North Carolina	7 to 16	3 to 20	X	X				
North Dakota	7 to 16	3 to 20			X	X	X	X
Ohio	6 to 18	3 to 21		X	X		X	
Oklahoma	5 to 18	3 to 21	X	X	X			
Oregon	7 to 18	3 to 21		X	X			
Pennsylvania	8 to 17	3 to 20			X		X	
Rhode Island	6 to 16	3 to 20			X			
South Carolina	¹² 5 to 17	⁴ 3 to 21		X	X		X	
South Dakota	¹⁰ 6 to 16	3 to 21	X		X	X	X	
Tennessee	7 to 17	3 to 21			X	X		
Texas	6 to 17	3 to 21	X	X	X	X		
Utah	6 to 18	3 to 21	X	X	X		X	
Vermont	7 to 16	3 to 21				X		X
Virginia	5 to 18	2 to 21		X	X	X	X	X
Washington	¹³ 8 to 18	3 to 20		X				
West Virginia	6 to 16	3 to 20	X		X			
Wisconsin	¹⁴ 6 to 18	⁴ 3 to 20			X			
Wyoming	7 to 16	⁴ 3 to 20				X		

¹ Most states have an upper age limit whereby education is provided up to a certain age or completion of secondary school, whichever comes first.

² Ages 7 to 16 or high school graduation.

³ Ages 6 to 16 or tenth grade completion.

⁴ Upper age limit for eligibility has been updated for 1997.

⁵ State has established two points in the program year by which children must be 3 years of age to be eligible for services.

⁶ Students over the age of 16 may withdraw with the approval of a principal and student's guardians, and if an alternative education program exists.

⁷ From age 7 until student (1) graduates; (2) between age 16 to 18 and meets requirements for exit interview before graduation; or (3) reaches 18. Withdrawal before 18 requires parent/guardian and principal written permission.

⁸ Must have parental signature for leaving school between ages 16 to 18.

⁹ Age 18 takes effect in 2000.

¹⁰ Age 16 or completion of eighth grade.

¹¹ Ages 6 to 17 for New York City and Buffalo.

¹² Permits parental waiver of kindergarten at age 5.

¹³ Or can exit if age 18 or older, has a useful occupation, has met graduation requirements or has a certificate of educational competency.

¹⁴ Ages 6 to 18 or high school graduation.

—Data not available.

NOTE.—The Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA) Amendments of 1986 make it mandatory for all states receiving EHA funds to serve all 3- to 18-year-old disabled children.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, *The Eighteenth Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1996*; National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., unpublished data; Education Commission of the States, "Cleaninghouse Notes," March 1997; and Council of Chief State School Officers, *State Education Policies on Student Attendance and Use of Time: 1995*. (This table was prepared May 1997.)



NEA-ALASKA

Affiliated with the National Education Association

NEA-Alaska Position Paper Senate Bill 11

We appreciated Senator Gene Therriault and Senator Bettye Davis introducing SB 11 to lower the compulsory attendance age from seven to age 6. The earlier children are expected to attend school the sooner children will be exposed to opportunities from socialization to learning.

As schools work to implement new learning standards, exposing children to the opportunity to learn at an earlier age will strengthen the foundation upon which a child's learning career is built. The sooner children are exposed to opportunities to learn the sooner children can overcome obstacles to learning.

Most six-year old children, we believe, are enrolled in first grade, so SB 11's impact on facilities and personnel is not clear. Facilities in some school districts are already overcrowded, so additional enrollment may tax those systems even more. It is important that all children have access and are taught in facilities that contribute to learning and child development. Teachers and teaching supplies for children should be provided so students can take full advantage of the opportunity to learn at age 6.

NEA-Alaska supports mandatory kindergarten attendance at age five. Alaska schools are required to offer kindergarten but attendance is not required. Even though SB 11 does not establish mandatory kindergarten enrollment, requiring children to attend first grade at age 6 is a step in the right direction. Expecting children to attend one year sooner than is currently required offers a six-year-old student a greater opportunity to learn.

We commend the sponsors for introducing SB 11.

The Digest of Education Statistics 1996 / Table 7

Table 7.--Percent of the population 3 to 34 years old enrolled in school, by race/ethnicity, sex, and age: October 1975 to October 1995

Year and age	Total				Male		
	All races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic origin	All races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1975							
Total, 3 to 34 years	53.7	53.0	57.7	54.8	56.1	55.2	60.4
3 and 4 years	31.5	31.0	34.4	27.3	30.9	31.1	31.4
5 and 6 years	94.7	95.1	94.4	92.1	94.4	94.8	94.8
7 to 9 years	99.3	99.4	99.3	99.6	99.2	99.2	99.4
10 to 13 years	99.3	99.3	99.1	99.7	98.9	99.0	98.9
14 and 15 years	98.2	98.5	97.4	95.0	98.4	98.6	97.6
16 and 17 years	89.0	89.5	86.8	86.2	90.7	91.2	88.1
18 and 19 years	46.9	46.8	46.9	44.0	49.9	49.4	49.6
20 and 21 years	31.2	32.1	26.7	27.5	35.3	36.7	28.4
22 to 24 years	16.2	16.4	13.9	14.1	20.0	20.8	14.5
25 to 29 years	10.1	10.1	9.4	8.3	13.1	13.2	11.6
30 to 34 years	6.6	6.6	7.1	5.5	7.7	7.5	8.7
1980							
Total, 3 to 34 years	49.7	48.8	54.0	49.8	50.9	50.0	56.2
3 and 4 years	36.7	37.4	38.2	28.5	37.8	39.2	36.4
5 and 6 years	95.7	95.9	95.5	94.5	95.0	95.4	94.1
7 to 9 years	99.1	99.1	99.4	98.4	99.0	99.0	99.5
10 to 13 years	99.4	99.4	99.4	99.7	99.4	99.4	99.4
14 and 15 years	98.2	98.7	97.9	94.3	98.7	98.9	98.4
16 and 17 years	89.0	89.2	90.7	81.8	89.1	89.4	90.7
18 and 19 years	46.4	47.0	45.8	37.8	47.0	48.5	42.9
20 and 21 years	31.0	33.0	23.3	19.5	32.6	34.8	22.8
22 to 24 years	16.3	16.8	13.6	11.7	17.8	18.7	13.4
25 to 29 years	9.3	9.4	8.8	6.9	9.8	9.8	10.6
30 to 34 years	6.4	6.4	6.9	5.1	5.9	5.6	7.2
1985							
Total, 3 to 34 years	48.3	47.8	50.8	47.7	49.2	48.7	52.6
3 and 4 years	38.9	40.3	42.8	27.0	36.7	39.1	34.6
5 and 6 years	96.1	96.6	95.7	94.5	95.3	95.6	94.5
7 to 9 years	99.1	99.4	98.6	98.4	99.0	99.3	98.4
10 to 13 years	99.3	99.3	99.5	99.4	99.2	99.2	99.1
14 and 15 years	98.1	98.3	98.1	96.1	98.3	98.4	98.5
16 and 17 years	91.7	92.5	91.8	84.5	92.4	92.9	92.0
18 and 19 years	51.6	53.7	43.5	41.8	52.2	53.4	49.4
20 and 21 years	35.3	37.2	27.7	24.0	36.5	38.8	29.9
22 to 24 years	16.9	17.5	13.8	11.6	18.8	19.8	13.5
25 to 29 years	9.2	9.6	7.4	6.6	9.4	9.7	5.8
30 to 34 years	6.1	6.2	5.2	5.7	5.4	5.6	3.9
1990							
Total, 3 to 34 years	50.2	49.8	52.2	47.2	50.9	50.4	54.3
3 and 4 years	44.4	47.2	41.8	30.7	43.9	47.9	38.1
5 and 6 years	96.5	96.7	96.5	94.9	96.5	96.8	96.2
7 to 9 years	99.7	99.7	99.8	99.5	99.7	99.7	99.9
10 to 13 years	99.6	99.7	99.9	99.1	99.6	99.6	99.9

14 and 15 years	99.0	99.0	99.4	99.0	99.1	99.2	99.7
16 and 17 years	92.5	93.5	91.7	85.4	92.6	93.4	93.0
18 and 19 years	57.2	59.1	55.0	44.0	58.2	59.7	60.4
20 and 21 years	39.7	43.1	28.3	27.2	40.3	44.2	31.0
22 to 24 years	21.0	21.9	19.7	9.9	22.3	23.7	19.3
25 to 29 years	9.7	10.4	6.1	6.3	9.2	10.0	4.7
30 to 34 years	5.8	6.2	4.5	3.6	4.8	5.0	2.3
1995							
Total, 3 to 34 years . .	53.7	53.8	56.3	49.7	54.3	54.2	58.6
3 and 4 years\2\	48.7	52.2	47.8	36.9	49.4	51.1	52.4
5 and 6 years	96.0	96.6	95.4	93.9	95.3	95.9	94.6
7 to 9 years	98.7	98.9	97.7	98.5	98.9	99.0	98.1
10 to 13 years	99.1	99.0	99.2	99.7	99.1	99.0	99.5
14 and 15 years	98.9	98.8	99.0	98.9	99.0	98.9	99.6
16 and 17 years	93.6	94.4	93.0	88.2	94.5	95.0	95.6
18 and 19 years	59.4	61.8	57.5	46.1	59.5	61.9	59.2
20 and 21 years	44.9	49.7	37.8	27.1	44.7	50.0	36.7
22 to 24 years	23.2	24.4	20.0	15.6	22.8	24.1	20.6
25 to 29 years	11.6	12.3	10.0	7.1	11.0	12.2	6.3
30 to 34 years	5.9	5.7	7.7	4.7	5.4	5.0	6.9

\1\Includes enrollment in any type of graded public, parochial, or other private schools. Includes nursery schools, kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools, colleges, universities, and professional schools. Attendance may be on either a full-time or part-time basis and during the day or night. Enrollments in "special" schools, such as trade schools, business colleges, or correspondence schools, are not included.

\2\Preprimary enrollment collected using new procedures. May not be comparable to figures for earlier years.

NOTE.--Data are based upon sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutional population.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, unpublished data. (This table was prepared August 1996.)

[Download this table as a Lotus WK1 file.](#)



Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR
GENE THERRIAULT

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Senate

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Senate District Q

Senate Bill 11: "An act relating to the legal age for attending school; and providing for an effective date."

Sponsor: Senator Gene Therriault 

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 11 lowers the mandatory age for school attendance from 7 years old to 6 years of age.

Encouraging a parent's commitment to a child's education, SB 11 requires students to become involved in a formal educational setting at the age of 6. The option of choosing public, private or home schooling for children will not be impacted by this legislation. In addition, the option to enroll a child in Kindergarten at age 5 or 6 is also unaffected.

Research indicates that earlier education is beneficial, and in fact most children in Alaska are enrolled by the age of 6. However, a small percentage of students who are enrolled do not actually regularly attend because state law does not require it until age 7. In some cases, even though a six-year-old is enrolled in school, he or she might miss up to a third of the school year and still not be considered truant. This places a burden on teachers to keep the student up with the rest of the class, and increases the potential for the student to be "held back."

Alaska State Legislature

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Senate

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Senate District Q

REQUEST FOR HEARING

To: Senator Lyda Green, Chair
Senate Health, Education & Social Services Committee

Subject: SB 11

Sponsor: Senator Gene Therriault 

Date: January 17, 2001

I would like to respectfully request that SB 11 be scheduled for a hearing before the Senate Health, Education & Social Services Committee.

Senate Bill 11 lowers the mandatory age for school attendance from 7 years old to 6 years of age.

Encouraging a parent's commitment to a child's education, SB 11 requires students to become involved in a formal educational setting at the age of 6. The option of choosing public, private or home schooling for children will not be impacted by this legislation. In addition, the option to enroll a child in Kindergarten at age 5 or 6 is also unaffected.

Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR
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Senate

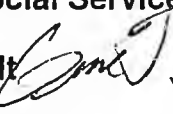
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Senate District Q

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 18, 2001

TO: Senator Green, Chair
Health, Education & Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator Gene Therriault 

SUBJECT: SB 11 Teleconference Request

I would like to respectfully request a teleconference be scheduled with the LIO in Fairbanks in conjunction with the hearing of Senate Bill 11.

Prospective witnesses are David Pfrimmer, Loyola McManus, and Susan Stitham.

Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR
GENE THERRIAULT

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Senate


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Senate District Q

REQUEST FOR SECOND HEARING

To: Senator Lyda Green, Chair
Senate Health, Education & Social Services Committee

Subject: SB 11

Sponsor: Senator Gene Therriault 

Date: April 18, 2001

I would like to respectfully request that SB 11 be scheduled for a second hearing before the Senate Health, Education & Social Services Committee.

As we discussed during the first hearing on this bill, the language would impact a very small number of students who currently enroll in school at the age of six, but then attend only sporadically. The list of exemptions that allow parents to choose schooling other than the public K-12 program is not modified by the bill. Parents retain the power to enroll their children in any of the alternatives listed under AS 14.30.010(b). In addition, the option to enroll a child in Kindergarten at age 5 or 6 is also unaffected.

I am willing to consider any amendments the committee members may propose that carry out the intent of this legislation. If there are no proposals, I would like a final vote on the bill.

Exemptions for enrollment per AS 14.30.010(b)

Section (b) exempts the compulsory attendance age when a child:

- (1) is provided an academic education comparable to that offered by the public schools in the area, either by
 - (A) attendance at a private school with certified teachers;
 - (B) tutoring by certified personnel; or
 - (C) religious or private school attendance operated in compliance with AS 14.45.100-14.45.200;
- (2) attends a school operated by the federal government;
- (3) has a physical or mental condition that a competent medical authority determines will make attendance impractical;
- (4) is in the custody of a court or law enforcement authorities;
- (5) is temporarily ill or injured;
- (6) has been suspended or expelled under AS 14.03.160 or suspended or denied admittance under AS 14.30.045;
- (7) resides more than two miles from either a public school or a route on which transportation is provided by the school authorities, except that this paragraph does not apply if the child resides within two miles of a federal or private school that the child is eligible and able to attend;
- (8) is excused by action of the school board of the district at a regular meeting or by the district superintendent subject to approval by the school board of the district at the next regular meeting;
- (9) has completed the 12th grade;
- (10) is enrolled in
 - (A) a state boarding school established under AS 14.16; or
 - (B) a full-time program of correspondence study approved by the department, whether it is the district or the centralized correspondence program;
- (11) is equally well served by an educational experience approved by the school board as serving the child's educational interests despite an absence from school, and the request for excuse is made in writing by the child's parents or guardian and approved by the principal or administrator of the school that the child attends;
- (12) is being educated in the child's home by a parent or legal guardian.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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SENATOR LYDA GREEN
SENATE DISTRICT N

Memo

To: Senator Lyda Green
From: Aurora Hauke
Date: 01/16/01
Re: SB11: Compulsory School Age

This bill was in response to a resolution passed by the Association of Elementary School Principals.

Since Kindergarden is not mandatory, when a child reaches mandatory age (7), the parent has the choice to enter them into kindergarden or first grade. Most first graders are 6, so lowering the compulsory school age would allow for a 6-year-old to enter school at either kindergarden or first grade.

As soon as the sponsor statement is prepared, they will send a copy over.

Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals

Resolution 98-9

Supporting early childhood education and mandatory kindergarten in the State of Alaska.

Submitted by: Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals

WHEREAS research dealing with brain growth and development, along with longitudinal studies on the benefits of Head Start and other early childhood programs correlate with success in school; and

WHEREAS meeting the needs of young children (ages 0-6) has been noted by the Alaska Adolescent Health Committee to be a critical means of preventing problem behaviors among adolescents; and

WHEREAS pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs provide an excellent opportunity for prevention of school failure; and

WHEREAS presently there is no Alaska State Statute requiring attendance in a kindergarten program by kindergarten-aged children; and

WHEREAS presently, not all five year olds in Alaska attend a kindergarten program;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals supports early childhood education and mandatory kindergarten in the state of Alaska.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals supports full funding of a mandatory kindergarten as well as full funding of transportation to and from school for kindergarten students.

passed Oct '98

>
> Here is one example of why the current statute is ineffective. Currently
> the Division of Youth and Family Services is supposed to pursue truancy
> in the state along with the School Districts and Boroughs. The
> Fairbanks North Star Borough pursues this as best they can given the
> limits they have. One of many cases this year is of a child who of five
> years old that missed 75 days of school last year due to the failure of
> the parent to get them to school. The child was five, Kindergarten was
> not mandatory so the parent felt no compulsion to meet the child's
> educational need. The only consequence was educational neglect and the
> there was nothing the Borough, D.F.Y.S. or School district could do to
> about it. Now at age six the child has missed 59 days of school. All
> pertinent information about parent contacts, absences and educational
> difficulties was turned over to the District Attorney by the School
> District only to be told that due to State law there was nothing that
> they could do until the law was amended/changed. Their hands are tied
> while this little girl's education and future is further neglected. We
> have discussed that at the State wide Principals conference and agreed
> that a change needs to happen a.s.a.p. The educational future of this
> young child and many like her depends on our ability to get these
> children into school and keep them there. Please do your part by
> changing this part of the state statute so we can better do our part for
> these children. Thank you.

>
> Sincerely Yours

>
> David Pfrimmer, Principal
> North Pole Elementary

Subject: Re: Compulsory School Age

Date: Fri, 12 Jan 2001 11:39:13 -0900

From: Loyola McManus <aesp@alaska.net>

To: Holly Morris <Holly_Morris@legis.state.ak.us>

Holly,

Sorry I did not get back to you earlier. That particular Resolution was passed in 1998 and is due to be reviewed at our annual conference next October. I do not recall any particular discussion at our last conference, but do know that many elementary principals feel strongly that Kindergarten be mandatory.

More and more children need that structured language development as a prerequisite for success in reading. With the majority of students attending part or full day Kindergarten, those who do not frequently fall behind unless the school is providing a rich language experience.

While the law currently states mandatory age of 7, I believe the reality is that most children start Kindergarten at age 5 and First Grade at age 6.

I am currently the Executive Director of The Alaska Association Of Elementary Principals (AAESP) and a retired principal. I will pass your request on to the active principals serving on our Board and encourage them to respond to the Senator's request for more information.

We really appreciate your contacting us on issues concerning elementary and middle school education. Don't hesitate to call upon us at any time.

Loyola McManus

At 09:29 AM 1/12/01 -0900, you wrote:

>Ms. McManus,

>

> As you may be aware, Senator Therriault introduced a bill, SB11, lowering the compulsory age for starting school from seven years old to six years of age. I have the resolution the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals passed (Resolution 98-9), and am wondering if there has been further discussion in your association. In your position as President of the Association, I would like to request any information you might pass along regarding this issue.

>

> My name is Holly Morris and as a member of Senator Therriault's staff,

>

>I will be carrying this legislation.

>

>Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Subject: SB 11 Support

Date: Tue, 16 Jan 2001 15:04:24 -0900

From: Loyola McManus <aaesp@alaska.net>

To: Holly Morris <Holly_Morris@legis.state.ak.us>

Holly,

The Alaska Association Of Elementary School Principals would be in strong support of lowerin the mandatory school age from 7 yrs. to 6 yrs. As you know, our Resolution 98-9 went even further by supporting "mandatory Kindergarten".

It is well know that strong reading skills are a tremendous asset in success in school. In fact much school failure can be traced to the lack of good reading skills. Students who start their formal education with their peers in Kindergarten (age 5) or at the latest First Grade (age 6) have a much better chance of developing the correct language and pre reading skills than those who do not arrive at school until age 7.

A student who first arrives at school at age 7 would be age appropriate for second graders. However academically s/he would most likely fit better with K or First graders. This can be a terrible dilemma for those involved in grade placement.

Do you place a child with others who are socially, physically, and emotionally at his/her level even though s/he will not be able to do the academic work, thus having the early experiences be those of failure? Do you place a child where s/he fits academically even though s/he would feel s/he were with "babies", fostering negative peer interactions? Both cases would be damaging to the child.

If the mandatory starting age were changed to 6 years, it would be easier socially, physically, and emotionally to place him/her in Kindergarten or if s/he had some language background, to place in First grade without being so far behind.

We at AAESP expressed by our Resolution 98-9 that the very best would be to have all children start at age 5 in Kindergarten to assure an even start and provide strong language and reading development support. With the State focus on "benchmark testing" and the "exit exam" it would seem logical to require attendance at the age when the majority of children first begin their formal schooling.

Another problem with the current requirement of "age 7" is that when a family has truancy problems, a school can pursue the issue in court but may have to exclude the first grader because s/he is not yet 7 and thus "not required" to be in school. This does not help that child or that family develop good educational habits.

We commend Senator Therriault for proposing the lowering of the mandatory age for school attendance and as mentioned above would be pleased to see it go to 5 years of age so that all students start together.

Subject: Legislative Action

Date: 17 Jan 2001 08:41:03 -0900

From: "Marman_Meg" <marman_meg@msmail.asd.k12.ak.us>

To: "Morris Holly" <Holly_Morris@legis.state.ak.us>

I received information about a bill being introduced reducing the mandatory school age from 7 to 6 which I want to fully support. I'm presently a principal in Anchorage, but previously taught kindergarten for a number of years. It is essential that we provide a literacy rich environment for our young children at the earliest age possible. This is even more important if the children are living in lower socio-economic environments. Thank you for relaying this information to the appropriate people. Thanks. Meg

mandaatory school agge

Subject: mandaatory school agge

Date: Tue, 16 Jan 2001 16:27:31 -0900

From: Kathie Cook <kathie@northstar.k12.ak.us>

To: Holly_Morris@legis.state.ak.us

I am in favor of lowering the mandatory school age to six. I would also support mandatory kindergarten. Kindergarten is becoming more and more important for getting our kids ready to learn. It would seem to me that having all students attend kindergarten would be a good start for benchmark one.

Kathie Cook
Ladd Elementary, principal

Subject:

Date: Thu, 9 Nov 2000 12:23:45 -0900

From: "pfrimm@northstar.k12.ak.us" <pfrimm@northstar.k12.ak.us>

To: Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_John_Davies@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Gene_Therriault@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Jcannette_James@legis.state.us, Senator_Mike_Miller@legis.state.ak.us,
Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Legislatures

Just a reminder of a letter I sent you all last year regarding a couple of educational issues. I thought since this is a new session that I would again encourage you to pursue proposal. here is a copy of my last correspondence.

Dear Representative,

>
> I would like to recommend a change to a specific Alaska Education Law.
> The Section is under Chapter 30 on Pupils and Educational Programs for
> Pupils, Article 1. Compulsory Education, Sec. 14.30.010.
>
> This outdated section currently states (a) Every child between seven and
> 16 years of age shall attend school at the public school in the district
> in which the child resides during each school term. Every parent,
> guardian or other person having the responsibility for or control of a
> child between seven and 16 years of age shall maintain the child in
> attendance at a public school in the district in which the child resides
> during the entire school term, except as provided in (b) of this
> section.
>
> The common practice statewide is to enroll children at five years of age
> in Kindergarten and first grade at six. Although some parent wish to
> wait until the child is six before entering kindergarten which is fine
> too. After being in Education for 21 years I believe that Kindergarten
> should be mandatory. Parents could have a choice of enrolling them at
> age five or by age six. Kindergarten has developed into an essential
> part of our educational program in the nation and state. The
> expectation for first graders are much different that today than they
> were when this Statute was written. My proposal is two part.
>
> One: Make Kindergarten mandatory. Enrollment may be at either age 5 or
> age 6 depending on the maturity of the student level and decision of the
> parent.
>
> Two: Change the compulsory age to attend school from 6 to 17,
> maintaining all the current exceptions provided in the current section.
>
> Here is one example of why the current statue in ineffective. Currently
> the Division of Youth and Family Services is supposed to pursue truancy
> in the state along with the School Districts and Boroughs. The
> Fairbanks North Star Borough pursues this as best they can given the
> limits they have. One of many cases this year is of a child who of five
> years old that missed 75 days of school last year due to the failure of
> the parent to get them to school. The child was five, Kindergarten was
> not mandatory so the parent felt no compulsion to meet the child's
> educational need. The only consequence was educational neglect and the
> there was nothing the Borough, D.F.Y.S. or School district could do to
> about it. Now at age six the child has missed 59 days of school. All
> pertinent information about parent contacts, absences and educational

> difficulties was turned over to the District Attorney by the School
> District only to be told that due to State law there was nothing that
> they could do until the law was amended/changed. Their hands are tied
> while this little girls education and future is further neglected. We
> have discussed that at the State wide Principals conference and agreed
> that a change needs to happen a.s.a.p. The educational future of this
> young child and many like her depends on our ability to get these
> children into school and keep them there. Please do your part by
> changing this part of the state statute so we can better do our part for
> these children. Thank you.

>
> Sincerely Yours

>
> David Pfrimmer, Principal
> North Pole Elementary

Subject: SB 11 School Age

Date: Mon, 05 Feb 2001 19:51:06 +0000

From: Rod McCoy <rodmc coy@alaska.com>

To: Senator_Lyda_Green <Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,
Senator_Loren_Leman <Senator_Loren_Leman@legis.state.ak.us>,
Senator_Jerry_Ward <Senator_Jerry_Ward@legis.state.ak.us>,
Senator_Gary_Wilken <Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us>,
Senator_Davis <Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us>

All educational research on age of instruction supports early attendance in school.

Parents can easily opt out in this state by simply saying they are home schooling.

But at least set the standard.

Send SB 11 out of committee

Rod McCoy
7749 Old Harbor Rd.
Anchorage, Ak 99504
337 6138

Eric R. McCoy / Mark R. McCoy
23-429/D 23-429/u
(same address)

POM for Senator Green



From: Ms. ~~Rose C Smith~~
1140 Gail Dr

VK: 28-025/N

Telephone: 376-2517

Wasilla, AK 99654

Constituent

Registered Voter: V

Email:

Bill: SB 11 Title: COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

Message:

Please pass SB 11.

Entered in MAT on 2/06/01 POMID:99119

Distribution: 5

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Message 1 out of 9.

Subject: Senate Bill 11

Date: Thu, 8 Feb 2001 13:32:07 -0900

From: Rachael Moreland <rachaelmoreland@att.net>

To: <Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us>

Rachael A. Moreland
PO Box 23013
Ketchikan, AK 99901-3013

VR: 01-025/R

Dear Senator Green,

Greetings from Ketchikan! Jack happened to mention Senate Bill 11 in a conversation this morning. Alaska has very strong statutes that allow parents to exercise their responsibility to educate their children. We have worked hard to preserve those rights. SB 11 strips parents of yet another choice. I hope that you will not support it.

A proposal which will lower the age of compulsory government school attendance from age 7 to 6 is not in the best interest of children. Families who choose to send their kids to government schools should also be able to choose when to begin that process. As you know as a parent and grandparent, some children are ready for school at earlier ages than others. Often the oldest & older children are not ready for school as early as their younger siblings. I know this was true in my family. Parents or guardians who know the child should make the decision regarding when their child should begin school - not a government employee. Circumstances in which children are not receiving any education whatsoever (i.e. not being taught at home, etc.) are extremely rare, and in those instances there are usually other areas of neglect and/or abuse for which there are government programs to assist (and enroll the child in a government school). What are the fiscal impacts of SB 11? What are the benefits? And do those benefits outweigh parental responsibility of doing what's best for their children (in their opinion, not the governments)? Who or what organizations strongly support this proposal?

Please consider SB 11 carefully and thoroughly in the Senate HESS Committee.

Thank you, keep up the great work

Sincerely,
Rachael

Rachael Moreland
PO Box 23013
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Subject: SB 11

Date: Wed, 7 Feb 2001 07:16:58 -0900

From: "Jack E. Phelps" <jephelps@worldnet.att.net>

To: "Lyda Green" <Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us>

*SB 11
Comm. File*

Jack E. Phelps
PO Box 23267
Ketchikan, AK 99901-3267
VR: 01-005/R

Lyda

No good can come of this idea to push the compulsory attendance age downward. There is no evidence that children are better off being institutionalized at an earlier age and plenty of evidence to the contrary. The only real motive behind such a bill is to get the school ADM increased so the districts can extort more money from the GF. The only other motivation I can think of originates with those who think educrats can take better care of kids than parents can. Please, for the sake of children and families, if not for fiscal reasons, do what you can to waylay this bill. Loren and Jerry have said they will help you hold it in committee. I will talk to Gene to try to find out what the heck he has in mind. Hopefully, he will listen to reason.

Let me know if you want me to do anything else.

Jack

Jack E. Phelps
jephelps@att.net

"Only those willing to risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."

-- T.S. Eliot

Bob
file
Barbara K. Kamrath
PO Box 201
Delta Junction, AK 99737
VR: 35-010/D

Subject: Agreement with SB 11

Date: Tue, 6 Feb 2001 15:45:24 -0900

From: "Barbara Kamrath" <debk@dgsdmail.dgsd.k12.ak.us>

Organization: DGSD

To: <Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator_Loren_Leman@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator_Pete_Kelly@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator_Jerry_Ward@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Senator:

As an elementary educator and primary principal I know first hand the importance of young children being in a caring and challenging environment to begin their educational journey. The first steps of this journey need to begin at the earliest possible age in order to maximize the positive effect of language development, numerical exploration and other readiness skills for future success in school.

As a community of learners and educators we have more input in our young children's education if they are enrolled in the public/private school setting. Truancy regulations would give teeth to this requirement of reducing the mandatory age for school attendance to 6 years of age.

We are now introducing high stakes assessments and evaluations to our students (as young as 3rd grade). It is only fair that we give them more than an adequate opportunity to meet the challenges of these benchmarks. By requiring them to be in school or receive schooling a year younger we have opened the window more widely for systematic learning.

I urge you to fully consider (SB 11), sponsored by Senator Therriault, and do what is best for the young children of Alaska.

Barbara K. Kamrath
Director
Safe Schools/Healthy Students
Delta/Greely School District
Delta Junction, AK 99737

POM for Senator Green

Anusora files



From: Ms. Anita J Byers
PO Box 865

YR: 08-197/u

Telephone: 262-6188

Soldotna, AK 99669

NON Constituent

Registered Voter: V

Email:

Bill: SB 11 Title: COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

Message:

I urge you to move this bill out of committee.

Entered in SOL on 2/19/01 POMID:99203 Stored

Distribution: 8

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THANK YOU for contacting our office. I appreciate hearing your ideas and opinions on the many concerns we are addressing in the Alaska State Legislature.

February 22, 2001

Dear Anita,

As I review the issues, I will keep your comments in mind and do my best to make thoughtful, informed decisions. I applaud and appreciate the time and effort you put forth to speak up for Alaska!

Thank you for your POM regarding SB 11. Currently, the committee is continuing to work on SB 11. After the work is completed, the bill will be scheduled for a new hearing.

Please stay in touch.

Sincerely,

ALASKA STATE CAPITOL, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1182
PHONE: 465-6600, FAX: 465-3805, Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us

**SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT,
First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 1/8/01

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 02/05/01
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 04/27/01

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered **SENATE BILL NO. 11**

"An Act relating to the legal age for attending school; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:

same title

new title

House Bill:

same title

technical title

new SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#
DEED	2/5/01		x	1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>Betty Davis</i>	✓			
<i>J. Howard</i>			✓	
<i>Lyda Green</i>			✓	
CHAIR: <i>Lyda Green</i>				