

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1991-1990 00/2

9150 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

Senate Finance Committee  
Room 532 Capitol  
Senate Finance Room, 5th Floor, Capitol

Co-Ch: Senator Drue Pearce  
Senator Bert Sharp

February 27, 1998

Scheduled hearing Saturday February 28, 1998 at 10:00 AM on CS SB 36 (FIN)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. In the beginning the Legislature created the Foundation Formula to fund Education, and REAA'S were formed. It has been said that there needs to be a more "Fair and Equitable" solution. Taxing REAA'S will not pay for Education in Rural Alaska. A school tax will. A retail tax will. An Educational Endowment will.

Are we inviting violence, crime, addiction, intolerance, and lost potential? Is the Legislature prepared to pay the cost of a 100% increase in supporting delinquent children and Families because of and increase of drug use, tobacco use, violent and anti-social behavior, depression, suicide attempts, teenage sexual activity, all because of REAA School Closures? We spend more to house and rehabilitate criminals than Education for children.

Why did we get a D+ grade on the Quality Counts 98 Report, Its not because of students, teachers, superintendents, school board members, or community leaders, the fault lies with the State Legislature. Funding has not been provided by the state to keep up with inflation. It has been pass the \$BUCK\$ for the last 10 years!

With CS SB 36 (FIN), We the REAA'S are being forced into Cultural Genocide. Are you the Elected lawmakers and leaders of this great state prepared to face the consequences of cutting off the hand that FEEDS YOU?

McLaren C. (Mac) Carter  
Secretary-Treasure  
Yukon Flats Regional School Board  
(H)PO BOX 30009  
Central Alaska, 99730  
(H) 907-520-5999  
e-mail mcarter897@aol.com  
fax 907-520-5151

*McLaren C. Carter*

Senator: Georgiana L. Lucala  
Rep: Izave Nivola

cc: Gov Tony Knowles  
Comm. Shirley Holloway  
LT Gov. Fran Ulmer  
Honorable: Frank Murkowski  
Honorable: Ted Stevens  
Honorable: Don Young  
Senator: Bert Sharp  
Senator: Randy Phillips  
Senator: Jim Duncan  
Rep: Reggie Joule  
Rep: Gene Kubicki



Superintendent's Office (907) 524-3033 Business Office (907) 524-3599  
Instructional Support (907) 524-3232 Buildings & Grounds (907) 524-3035

P.O. BOX 90 McGRATH, ALASKA 99627 FAX (907) 524-3217

IASD Principal/Teacher  
Time spent on Custodial/Maintenance Duties

Principal/teachers hired in the Iditarod Area School District do not have job descriptions that mandate they perform maintenance or custodial tasks. However, if the maintenance or custodial person is sick or out of town, and no one else in the village is available, these responsibilities ultimately fall to the principal/teacher. In larger schools with a full-time principal, this is not a major issue. However, with principal/teachers who have anywhere from 50%--100% of their time committed to classroom responsibilities--the time spent on these duties that often CANNOT be postponed until after school translates to time taken away from direct student/classroom instruction.

Children are losing out on time spent interacting with their teacher. It is impossible to rationalize this situation and its impact on student learning. We deal with it as best we can, with utilization of aide time, hiring an additional itinerant maintenance man to keep breakdowns to a minimum, and trying to hire the best people on-site as possible. With aging facilities, and no money specifically allocated from the state to adequately maintain our structures, emergency break-downs with furnaces and water heaters do and will continue to occur with ever-increasing frequency.

The following is a breakdown of the average number of hours spent on custodial/maintenance duties by principal/teachers in the IASD:

NIKOLAI:

Typical: one hour/per month Highest month: 20 hours (furnace problems)

LAKE MINCHUMINA:

Average: two hours per/month (Initially much more)

SHAGELUK:

Average: 32 hours per/month

LIME VILLAGE:

Average: 10-15 hours per/month

ANVIK:

Average: 10-15 hours per/month

**Iditarod Area School District  
Cost Comparisons from FY97  
and FY91**

|  |             |             |         |
|--|-------------|-------------|---------|
| <b>Number of Students</b>  | 416         | 353         | 17.85%  |
| <b>General Fund Revenues</b>   | 6,045,790   | 5,455,257   | 10.83%  |
| <b>General Fund Expenditures</b>   | \$5,943,792 | \$6,022,107 | -1.30%  |
| Expenditures per ADM   | \$14,533    | \$15,454    | -5.96%  |
| <b>Instructional Expenditures</b>  | \$3,908,345 | \$3,868,280 | 1.04%   |
| Administrative Expenditures (includes district<br>district administration, superintendent and board)   | \$611,405   | \$690,782   | -11.49% |
| Maintenance and Operation expenditures   | \$1,344,652 | \$1,366,138 | -1.57%  |
| <b>Percent of Expenditures on Instruction</b>  | 65.76%      | 64.23%      | 2.37%   |
| Percent of Expenditures on District Administration   | 10.29%      | 10.90%      | -5.61%  |
| Percent of Expenditures on Maintenance   | 22.62%      | 22.69%      | -0.28%  |
| <b>Personnel Expenditures (salaries &amp; fringe)</b>  | \$4,342,259 | \$4,470,145 | -2.86%  |
| Percent of Overall Expenditures  | 73.06%      | 74.23%      | -1.58%  |
| <b>Certified Staff including principals and teachers</b>   | 40.50       | 50.5        | -19.80% |
| Number of Teachers (multiple grade levels)   | 36.50       | 41.5        | -12.05% |
| Pupil/Teacher Ratio  | 11          | 10          | 12.08%  |
| <b>*Administrators included in certified &amp; classified #'s</b>  | 6.75        | 6.75        | 0.00%   |
| Administrators per ADM   | 62          | 52          | 17.85%  |
| <b>Classified Staff includes maintenance/custodial,<br/>office support, classroom aides/instructors and<br/>directors/coordinators (FTE)</b> | 34          | 25          | 38.29%  |
| Classified Staff per ADM   | 12.11       | 14.22       | -14.78% |
| <b>Total Staff (certified &amp; classified)</b>  | 74.84       | 75.33       | -0.65%  |

\*Administrators include Superintendent, Curriculum Director, Special Ed. Director, Supplemental Programs (Grant) Coordinator, Maintenance Director & Itinerant Technology Coordinator

Teleconference 2/26/1998 #80361  
 SB 36 Public School Funding  
 Senate Finance Public Hearing  
 To John Torgerson

Where's the  
 beef, John?

Your pal,  
 Ron Drathman

|                               |                |         |           |            |   |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------|-----------|------------|---|
| Post-it <sup>®</sup> Fax Note | 7671           | Date    | 2/26/98   | # of pages | 1 |
| To                            | John Torgerson | From    | Homer LIO |            |   |
| Co/Dept.                      |                | Co      |           |            |   |
| Phone #                       |                | Phone # | 235-7878  |            |   |
| Fax #                         | 465-2187       | Fax #   |           |            |   |

# CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)  
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO  
ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR PAGINATION



Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services  
Department of Education  
State of Alaska

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| Post-it® Fax Note | 7671           | Date    | 2/26/98  | # of pages | 1 |
| To                | John Torgerson | From    | 4724 LIO |            |   |
| Co/Dept           |                | Co      |          |            |   |
| Phone #           |                | Phone # | 235-7878 |            |   |
| Fax #             | 465-2187       | Fax #   |          |            |   |



# Alaska State Legislature

## Written Testimony Form

Please enter into the record my testimony to the FINANCE  
(committee name)

committee on SSB-36 dated 2/26/98  
(bill/subject)

I AM opposing SSB-36. I AM BORN AND RAISED IN Cordova, I AM A Commercial Fisherman, HAVE 4 CHILDREN 3 IN WHICH ARE IN THE School System here. I ALSO sit on the School BOARD here in Cordova. FOR THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS Cordova will receive, THE 4% TAX would be A Disaster for Cordova. We have A 14 mill tax ALSO A 6% Sales tax, FISHERMAN pay 3% already TO ASMI AND PWSAC 4% more is A terrible thing to swallow. These Funds are taking away FROM small schools and giving to the Big schools (Anchorage Fairbanks).

Signed: Robert E Maxwell  
Testifier Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing (Optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number





# Alaska State Legislature

## Written Testimony Form

Please enter into the record my testimony to the FINANCE  
(committee name)

committee on SB 36, dated 26 FEB 1998.  
(bill/subject)

Question: In section 9, would the REAA organizing as a municipality also be converting from an income tax to property tax? Last year, it was noted that many rural residents do not have the income to pay a property tax, and would rather pay an income tax. To avoid the constitutional question regarding rural preference, a statewide ~~income~~ tax on income generated in Alaska, with exemptions for local property taxes might be worth your consideration. Idaho and Montana have a similar income tax structure, based on Federal 1040 tax reporting. This would provide some revenue from non-resident workers and harvesters of Alaska's natural resources without placing ~~an~~ additional burden on those supporting schools through local property taxes.

I oppose the effort contained within SB36, to force the reorganization of the unorganized borough. Calling for a municipality appears to be an attempt to avoid the requirements for definition of a borough used by DCRA.

I echo the sentiment of Tom Church, Torie Baker, and others in Cordova; that we need to find new sources of revenue, and not place additional

Signed: Charles D. Branch  
Testifier Name

burden on those already supporting education.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 1692 Cordova AK 99574  
Address

907-424-1692  
Phone Number



# Nikiski Elementary PTA

"Children First"

President: Karla Smith  
 Vice President: Angela Lorenzo  
 Treasurer: Shelle Michaels  
 Secretary: Dawn Brower  
 Teacher Rep: Judy Shields

February 3, 1998

Senate Finance Committee  
 Alaska State Legislature  
 Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

VIA FACSIMILE 465-4714

*RE: School Funding Formula Testimony*

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

As a concerned parent of children attending school in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and the President of the Nikiski Elementary School PTA, I am extremely pleased to hear that during the legislative session you will be reviewing several bills directed at rewriting the Public School Foundation Formula.

I believe that current legislation does not take into account districts, such as ours, where the schools are spread out over a 25,600 square miles. If you compare our district with Anchorage's 1,884 square miles, you would surely understand the frustration of our parents.

As you are aware, current funding is allocated "per student" and across the board. In our district, there are extra costs associated with transportation, meal and supply deliveries, and freight. Our schools continue to pay additional costs associated with freight and mail delivery, which can range anywhere from ground to air transportation.

Our schools continue to struggle to hold on to text books, instructional materials, school nurses, and elective programs. Since 1986, Kenai Peninsula Schools have had to cut eight special education and 20 regular classroom teachers (causing increased pupil teacher ratios); foreign languages and vocational education classes; library aides; the breakfast program; driver's education; critical incident planning; supplemental book funding to buy replacement texts; travel funding for field trips, elementary schools, musical groups and most sports activities; as well as positions and hours cut for custodians, secretaries, and nurses; just to name the most critical.

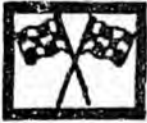
These struggles affect all of our children attending school (from elementary to high school). Our children are in need of additional support; building blocks, if you will, for real-life skills. Our children are the future of Alaska; they need these building blocks to receive a solid education so that they may either continue on with college or support the job industry in the state of Alaska.

I will continue to support your efforts in amending the Public School Foundation Formula.

Sincerely,

*Karla Smith*

Karla Smith, President  
 Nikiski Elementary School PTA



**SUBJECT: SCHOOL FUNDING**

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 2, 1998  
**TO:** SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
HEARING ON SCHOOL FUNDING.  
**AX:** 907-465-4714  
**FROM:** DR. BOB JOHNSON  
**PHONE/FAX:** 907-486-5171 H/9466-F  
**PAGES:** THIS ONLY

**COMMENT:**

TO DISCUSS METHODS OF SCHOOL FUNDING WHEN ADEQUATE FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CAPITAL RESERVE AND/OR FROM PERMANENT FUND PROFITS TO "CATCH UP" WITH COST OF LIVING (DELINQUENT FOR YEARS) SEEMS LIKE USELESS "BUSY WORK."

THE CURRENT FOUNDATION FORMULA WOULD WORK IF THE LEGISLATURE WOULD PROVIDE ANNUAL COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES. A NEW ONE WON'T WORK IF THEY CONTINUE TO CRY "WOLF" AND REFUSE TO PAY! QUIT PLAYING GAMES WITH US. IT IS NOT AT ALL APPRECIATED!

**CITY OF WHITTIER, ALASKA  
RESOLUTION 521-98**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITTIER, ALASKA, ENCOURAGING THE LEGISLATURE NOT TO SUPPORT CS SB 36 WHICH TAKES FUNDS FROM ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND GIVES THE FUNDS TO ANOTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT.**

**WHEREAS, CS SB 36 is pending in the legislature; and**

**WHEREAS, CS SB 36 takes funding from the rural school districts and gives the funds to the urban school districts; and**

**WHEREAS, all Alaska school children are entitled to equitable financial support from the State of Alaska; and**

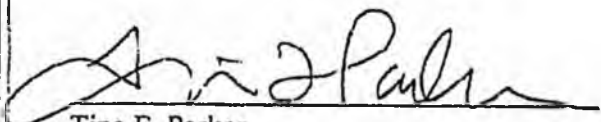
**WHEREAS, CS SB 36 would clearly have a negative impact on the native children of Alaska; and**

**WHEREAS, CS SB 36 would not allow small communities and schools to utilize consolidation and reap the benefits of economy of scale.**

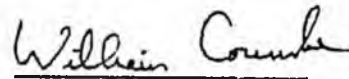
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:** The Whittier City Council encourages the legislature not to support CS SB 36 or any legislation which takes funds from one school district and gives the funds to another school district.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** by a duly constituted quorum of the Whittier City Council this 02nd day of March, 1998.

**ATTEST:**



Tina F. Parker  
City Clerk



William Coumbe  
Mayor

Ayes:  
Noes:  
Absent:  
Abstain:

Feb. 19, 1998



"Don't eat the flippers, Zeke,  
or they'll know we're tourists."

Dear Senator Sharp,

I know you will be voting on educational funding reforms. As a parent of an 11<sup>th</sup> grader in Chugach REAA, I know about the excellent education afforded our bush children.

I am in favor of a head tax that everyone pays with funds going toward education.

Our district maintains an excellent correspondence program with fine curriculum, a great staff, especially advisory teachers, who visit or we visit at least 2x a year. We know our school board and even have parent advisory boards.

Consolidation would mean we would be thrown in with bigger towns that don't relate to our village schools - would it save money? Would the state lose some federal education dollars by this move.

Please know we will pay towards education as long as we are recognized as being rural and not by Anchorage big city mentality. I gladly gave up sports, music and some other fun rural so please don't take it away from us.

Sincerely

Thomas A. Cranson

P.O. Box BSW Winchinduck Island via Cordova AK 99574

What about the children of Skagway and Chugach? Do you think that these children chose where to live? When you were children did you pick the school you wanted to attend? Did you choose the town or city? Of course not! You went where your family went.

It is appauling to me that this bill would ever even be considered! Maybe you should take a look at some state statistics and not just the dollar signs. The teenage suicide in many of these communities are the highest in the state. Why, why would these communities be the ones to lose what they have? Why these children? Why the children of Alaska Gateway, Alcutian Region, Aleutians East, Annette Islands, Bering Strait, Bristol Bay, Chatham, Chugach, Copper River, Galena, Hydaburg, Iditarod, Kake, Klawock, Kuspuk, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Nenana, North Slope, Pelican, Pribilof, Saint Mary's, Skagway, Southwest Region, Tanana, Unalaska, Valdez, Yakutat, Yukon Fiats, and Yukon/Koyoukuk? What did these children do?

As a mother, an educator, and a proud community member of Unalaska, I urge you, for the children's sake, I beg you to reconsider this bill. Please take the time and just ask the children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Shannon Thompson  
P.O. Box 921003  
Dutch Harbor, AK 99692  
(907) 581-2424

# **PTA COUNCIL OF KETCHIKAN**

**P. O. Box 7622, Ketchikan, Alaska**

- ◆ **SUPPORTS INCORPORATING THE MC DOWELL STUDY FINDINGS INTO LEGISLATION REVISING THE FUNDING FORMULA FOR PROVIDING EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR KETCHIKAN**
- ◆ **SUPPORTS TRANSITIONAL OR ADDITIONAL FUNDING SO AS NOT TO IMPACT DISTRICTS WHO STAND TO LOSE FUNDS BY THE NEW FORMULA**
- ◆ **REPRESENTS ALL PARENT/TEACHER GROUPS FROM SIX SCHOOLS**

**THESE PARENT/TEACHER GROUPS HAVE SUPPORTED THEIR SCHOOLS TO COMPENSATE FOR LACK OF FUNDS:**

- ⇒ **Point Higgins PTA donated \$3,000 to pay for all the instructional DVD Roms for this school year and \$300 for Read Aloud library books**
- ⇒ **Valley Park PTA donated funds to purchase computers**
- ⇒ **White Cliff PTA helped purchase \$5,000 worth of computer equipment to set up an inschool network**
- ⇒ **Houghtaling PTA donated \$1,000 for Accelerated Reading books**
- ⇒ **All four elementary PTAs contributed \$1,500 each to the Artist in Residence program for all students**
- ⇒ **Houghtaling and Point Higgins PTAs both contributed to the purchase of computers and wrestling mats**

*The community of Ketchikan:*

- The school district has cut 32 positions since 1993 while the student population remained the same.
- Ketchikan school district has one of the lowest administrative costs
- Ketchikan believes in high educational standards and is incorporating higher standards in curriculum revisions
- Ketchikan appreciates the Senate Finance committee' efforts to make funding more equitable
- The Borough Assembly passed a resolution supporting the McDowell study findings and incorporation of those findings in any funding formula revision
- Our community and Borough Assembly have funded to the cap for years, currently at a 6.8 mil level
- Our community is adjusting to the loss of the Ketchikan Pulp Mill and needs its fair share of school funding to maintain programs
- Ketchikan performs well academically based upon findings reported in the Alaska State Report Card

Thank you for your time  
and consideration

# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
(committee name)  
committee on SCHOOL FUNDING BILLS, dated 2/3/98  
bill/subject

COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA AND THE  
BOROUGH OF KETCHIKAN, PARTICULARLY, URGE  
YOU GOOD FOLK TO INCREASE FUNDING BY  
3% + PER STUDENT. DON'T HESITATE TO DIP  
INTO THE C.B.R. - THAT'S WHAT IT'S FOR. THE  
STATE IS NOT BROKE AND DON'T RE OVERLY  
CONCERNED ABOUT THE CURRENT PRICE OF  
OIL - SADDAM MAY TAKE CARE OF THAT!  
ALSO, PLEASE LET LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
GET INVOLVED TO ADDRESS THE FINDINGS  
OF THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE / CONFERENCE  
OF MAYORS / AASB / ASAA EDUCATION FUND-  
ING SURVEY; AND PLEASE, PLEASE, DO NOT  
REMOVE THE FUNDING CAP.

GRATEFULLY,

Signed: John Jack Shay Phone: 225-SHAY  
JOHN JACK SHAY (7429)  
Testifier  
MAYOR, KETCHIKAN BORO  
Representing (Optional)  
344 FRONT ST. KETCHIKAN, AK 99901  
Address

# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Finance Committee  
(committee name)  
committee on education dated Feb. 3, 1998  
bill/subject

My name is Carolyn Frye,  
and I BELIEVE IN EDUCATION!  
~~It~~ <sup>funding increase</sup> needs to come in NOW!

Although taxation isn't  
a popular subject, I'd like to  
encourage a 1% state sales tax  
on all commodities except food.  
That needs to be done in addition  
to a revision of the funding  
formula. Both parties need to get  
behind the 1% tax and not use it  
as a political football.

Our children deserve the best  
education possible. We aren't a  
business and can't be run as such.  
We're dependent upon you to fully fund school  
and kids! Carolyn Frye, teacher Phone: 225-2442

Signed:

Testifier

KIDS

Representing (Optional)

Box 8175, Kt. Kn.

Address

# Alaska State Legislature *Senate*

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Finance Committee  
(committee name)  
committee on Education funding, dated 2-3-98.  
bill/subject

What a stressful job you have - every  
district in the state is doing with less  
than they had 10 yrs ago & everyone  
feels the cuts deeply. I will not  
whine about those issues - you know  
them. I encourage you to forward  
fund education by one year so that  
we board members can form a budget  
which approaches reality for the coming  
year. We fund at the cap in Ketchikan  
& always have - please do not penalize  
us more by eliminating the cap - maybe  
reward those communities who help  
support themselves. I support any  
demands for accountability in educating  
students. We have fought many bloody battles

Signed: Hannah Ramiskey Phone: 225-5993  
Treasurer  
(School Board Pres - speak for myself) w/225-6648  
Representing (Optional)  
428 Tower Road, Ketchikan  
Address 99901

Fax transmitted from Ketchikan Legislative Information Office  
Phone: 225-9675 Fax: 225-8546

like over evaluation, accountability, testing  
etc. It is the right battle. Money doesn't  
reward solve those problems, but too little, harms.

# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Finance Committee  
(committee name)  
committee on Foundation Funding Formula, dated 2-3-98.  
bill/subject

- 1) Since you have commissioned the McDowell report I would ask that you use this report in finding an equitable solution for the students and the local property tax payer
- 2) The McDowell report does verify the inequities that Ketchikan has brought to your attention in the past. Ketchikan has cut it's middle school language arts program in 1/2 from 90 min to 45 min/day. This is the core of academics that has been cut while other districts have not had to cut this far.
- 3) The M. Dowell report <sup>leads us to</sup> ~~provides~~ a number of choices.
  - a) You can keep funding where it is at and redistribute it.
  - b) You can hold harmless districts that would be reduced & fund the others
  - c) You can raise everyone to the same % of funding above the equitable funding level.

"a" is the minimum of what should be done. "b" would cost 21 million in additional education funding without any academic improvement plan or guaranteed result. "c" would increase the costs even further but would be equitable as "a" if more money is to be spent on education it must be attached to an academic plan.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Testifier \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: 907-225-9090

Representing (Optional)  
2901 Baranof Ave, Ketchikan AK 99901  
Address

Fax transmitted from Ketchikan Legislative Information Office  
Phone: 225-9675 Fax: 225-8546

My preference is "a" until there is an academic plan associated with any increased funding so that it is not just absorbed by the system. I am calling for a joint DOE/Legislative "National Reading Summit" which I believe reading plan with additional funding to carry out the



TELECOPY COVER SHEET  
Ketchikan Legislative Information Office  
Office - (907) 225-9675 Fax - (907) 225-8546

TO: Senate Finance Committee

ATTN: Drue Pearce, Bert Sharp

FAX: 465-2070

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS: written testimony for teleconference 80190 (public school funding, etc).

SENT: Date 2-3-98

Time \_\_\_\_\_

DISPOSAL OF ORIGINAL: Discard \_\_\_\_\_

Hold for Pickup \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PAGES: 4 (NOT counting cover sheet)

TRANSMITTED BY: Richie Mc

## TESTIMONY RE: EDUCATION BILLS 2/3/98

Honorable members of the Alaska's Legislature:

My name is Robert McClory. I live at 162 Shoup Street in Ketchikan. I am testifying before you as a parent and school counselor. I understand that you are wrestling with that most difficult issue of school funding. This testimony may not provide you any easy answers, but I am not sure there are any easy answers out there. But the alternative is to do nothing and allow the state to perpetuate this system that penalizes us with inadequate pupil funding.

As a parent, I have seen my children do well in our local school. In addition to a good program in their very basic instruction, my children still get a little band instruction and a little PE from qualified professionals. They bring home good grades, good work habits, positive school attitudes and good test scores, but I have concerns about the few remaining "extras". I fear however that any additional cuts in vital services will be detrimental.

But continued cuts are all that seem destined for the future of Ketchikan. We are all aware of the huge impact of Ketchikan's mill shut-down. For one thing, it has been interpreted as more of a political problem than a business issue for LP. It calls to mind for local citizens the ill effects politics can potentially have on communities, people and our institutions.

I believe this issue, right or wrong, has created an avalanche of concerns snowballing through this community as people blame government for this economic loss and leaves us feeling powerless to improve our own local schools and maintain important education services. I must say, however, that I am impressed with the Legislature's willingness tonite to listen to constituents in an effort to right this problem.

All these reductions are demoralizing to anyone who has watched these trends evolve. The few remaining so called "frills" do little justice to the research that shows correlations between music and math performance or foreign language acquisition and improved language arts test scores in the later grades. And the minimal P.E. demonstrates the school's inability to pay for other things we value like good physical health.

While the high school's funding problems deprives students of adequate opportunity to study many areas in the vocational realm that will ultimately have to help provide jobs for the nearly 80% of adults in this country who will not be earning college degrees. Yet my wife and I are confident that our efforts to personally provide private lessons will compensate for those areas public schools are forced to overlook at this time. We are fortunate to have the ability to pay for opportunities in ballet, tap dance, piano lessons, and extracurricular activities ourselves. Not everyone can do so.

So it comes back to the question of funding. Obviously, I would like to see our local schools in Ketchikan receive adequate funding. By adequate, I mean comparable to all the other schools in Alaska: something simple yet fair.

I resent the fact that we pay so many local taxes and still struggle to allocate enough from local contributions while Anchorage is allowed to go without such a tax burden. I am jealous that Anchorage has the larger infrastructure to provide a more reasonably priced education than us yet we receive no cost-of-living adjustments to make a more comparable funding situation.

And it bothers me that remote sights are given such a funding priority. Meanwhile, kids from Ketchikan are missing out. I believe there must be a way to provide more equity. Ketchikan is no different from any other school district with respect to our desire to provide the best education possible. I didn't say the best education money can buy, because it takes more than money to improve the quality of education.

I ask that you consider developing an equitable foundation formula funding that recognizes the expense of communities lacking the economy of size of places like Anchorage yet encourages local responsibility instead of dependence upon the state coffers.

I understand the Governor is considering eliminating the constraints of this cumbersome formula that nobody seems to understand. I don't know if it is because it already too misunderstood to allow us to revise or because he wants to start all over in an effort to find some equitable way to fund education. Whether you must start from scratch or can revise the formula, I applaud any efforts our political leaders can invest to make such a plan real.

I wish I could speak intelligently about the formula, but I really do not understand it. I speak to colleagues who share this ignorance. The only ones I know who can really explain this monster are ones who make it their mission to learn its intricacies. I suspect it is the cumbersome nature of the formula that makes your job so difficult as you try to adjust it. I only hope you will not give up looking for a simple yet fair formula.

I don't know how it will turn out, but based upon the present structure of the plan, Ketchikan has little to lose. And if it is to be a simple per student guarantee with some conditions tied to test results, we suspect we could more adequately afford to maintain a quality school district for our children. Our average test scores are already above national averages, and we are continually striving to improve those scores.

Lastly, to insure we have a way to fund our schools in the future, please find a way to resolve your differences with the governor and find a way to make the Education Endowment Fund a reality. I have invested my children's Permanent Fund Dividends annually. As such even my 11 year old has a diversified portfolio that surpassed anything I'd heard of until I was far into my own adult working career.

I've learned that this investment is a powerful tool that will enable my children to go as far in college as they wish to go. And although we have only modest amounts in the way of emergency funds in our budget, we have found this fund to be a great vehicle to make college a reality---even at \$10-\$20,000 per year of school---per child.

I know I have seen fit to make the Permanent Fund work to make my children's educational needs a reality. I believe you, the Legislature, could do the same for this state's public schools. And if you can and do succeed, my children will be able to get into the schools that they only have dreams of attending at this time.

Statistics point to the importance of school and merit of adequate support of our schools. Labor statistics prove a strong correlation between earning capacity and educational background. Let's invest in our schools simply, equitably, but adequately to give our kids the chance to achieve those benefits that come with good and well-rounded curriculums

Please ask yourselves which level of earning capacity will provide the most promising future for our children. And remember that with better educational programs today, tomorrow's employees and residents may not be as severely threatened by these types of job and market changes. A well-educated citizen will also be more productive and offer more potential if we need to consider an income tax at some point in our future to pay for services

As future graduates from decent schools, they will have other skills learned in our greater Alaskan schools to adjust to employment shifts they will need to contend with even more so than we are dealing with today. Show them that just as politics can negatively impact our job markets, so too can our leaders positively shape our future. Please use your political mechanisms to orchestrate a fair formula that will allow all Alaskans the same advantages.

For my family, thank you for your consideration, time and regard for the thoughts you've heard during this opportunity to hear from Alaskans. I can be reached at the following phone or E-Mail. If there is anything I can do please feel free to contact me at (907) 225-1477 or E-Mail bobmoc@ptialaska.net.

**They say there is a big difference between a recession and a depression. The guy down the street loses his or her job in a recession. It's a depression when you've lost your own source of employment.**

**I don't know whether we are suffering from a recession or a depression. But I do know there has been just enough of a student loss to cut even more services. I am concerned additional losses would in the short term eliminate more of what educational services remain in place and force undue hardship on students here.**

**Unfortunately, the mill's sudden shut-down threatens to immediately wipe out and undercut programs and services already badly eroded by inflation. This uncertainty unfairly impacts Ketchikan's schools. As this community seeks to find a way to rebound from this economic catastrophe, we ask you to provide the kind of attention mill employees will seek.**

**After all, I suspect many of those impacted employees most immediate concerns will be for their children, and with limited incomes to depend upon, they will not want to be forced to choose from expense-laden charter schools or private schools to find educational programs not riddled by drastic cuts suddenly impacting our local educational programs.**

**Should you need proof of the inequity, ask any visitors from Ketchikan what highlights do they enjoy when traveling to Anchorage. Before they enjoy your ski resorts or glaciers, I suspect you'll find most enjoy Costco and other bargain filled areas not available around here. Please remove the barriers of this uneven playing field.**

**I hope this Legislature can help communities overcome adversity and pull people together and offer them hope when they most need it. Show them that Alaskans are at their best when chips are down. And consider taking on the challenge of offering our school-aged children the future the Permanent Fund promises our state.**

Ketchikan is on the cutting edge regarding recognizing that reading is the basic foundation of success in school. We have established that our students exiting 2nd grade will read at grade level with students at the 4th stinine and below slated for assistance as a result of the gates mcginnus 1st grade testing. We know bona fided research has proven that we can reduce our Special Ed program with eliminating non-functioning readers. Again this something that you, the legislature has asked for.

Ketchikan has gone to the voters and passed a 70/30 bonding issue to assist and show our commitment to building maintenance and construction. This is what the State and the legislature has asked for.

Ketchikan education is and has for several years done more with less. We are totally supported by our local government, The community has bleed in fund raising to offset shortfalls. We have so many fund raisers, you gotta take a number at the household doors.

We don't advocate taking funding from other districts, Lord we don't want them to be in our condition. We are going to loose teachers, we may contract out custodial and food services, we will have to look at athletic traveling events, In short we are going to bleed more each and every year to maintain an educational program. We will do it, it will not be pretty, there will be pain until we are bankrupt, we will not give up. I ask you to not give up. Ketchikan is doing everything we can to hold on. Like the Titanic, that great ship, our great district has hit the ice burg and we are sinking, our S.O.S is with you.

Thank you.

make little or no improvement in our K-12 academic improvement. Some other sector of our educational program will have to give big time to accomplish this goal.

During all of this shrinking funding situation Ketchikan has:

Had one heck of an educational debate, on the direction this district will go in educating our children. As a result of this community debate, we have established success with a discipline policy that is enviable and has been requested as a model by other Alaska districts. Our buildings are noticeable improved with student cooperation. Discipline allows attention to education. I invite you to visit our buildings to visit with teachers and witness the successful goal that the legislature has sought on this subject.

We have developed and had in place for three years of graduating classes, graduating exit competencies program that has all students graduating high school reading at a newspaper, periodical level., writing a 5 paragraph paper, scored by the certified consortium of teacher. and passing a basic math test rated at exit sixth grade. This is the minimum required to be a functional citizen in our work world. We have a 100 hours of community work or actual employment, where the supervisor has to make a report to the school on the students involvement. It is the basement, but never the less, it is what the legislature desired. We did it and it works. It should be the <sup>MINIMUM</sup> model for the State.- Come and see it, understand that these expectations are now accepted as part of life in school. we are remediating fewer and fewer each year. In the first year, we had approximately 20 students out of 200 exiting the 8th grade passing these competencies, we now have only a handful, more like 30-40 exiting 8th grade who will remediate during their highschool years, This last graduating class has only one student that received a certificate of completion rather than a diploma. In Ketchikan, our diploma means something.

Our Alternate highschool is doing what the legislature asked. We are keeping a higher number those children who would drop out, in school and meeting more rigorous requirements than those in the regular highschool. It is intolerable to lose our children from education. We have within the past two years, added a middle school section to this building and are extending out to those same students requiring one on one and stressing individual responsibility. Come see it, as a district we are proud of what we do with less. Now less is the bottom, we are about tapped out.

Schoenbar Middle School  
217 Schoenbar Road  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

March 2, 1998

Honorable Members of the Alaska State Legislature:

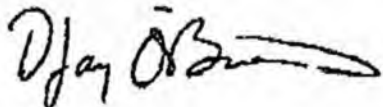
I am writing to ask your support of SB 36. As a public school teacher in Southeast Alaska, I believe it is an issue of critical importance.

Over the last 5 years in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District, I have witnessed tremendous reductions in the quality and diversity of educational opportunities we have been able to provide our students. Numerous class offerings and established programs have been discontinued due to inequities in education funding.

Deferred maintenance has also reached a break point. Buckets hang from the ceiling in at least two locations in my school to catch rainwater from a leaky roof.

The recent Education Report Card published by Education Week gave Alaska low marks in many categories. Equitable funding will level the playing field and give all schools an opportunity to improve their quality and performance.

Thank you for your time and service.



D. Jay O'Brien  
Grade 7 Science

Honorable members of the Alaska's Legislature:

My name is Robert McClory. I live at 162 Shoup Street in Ketchikan. I am testifying before you as a parent and school counselor. I would like to speak to you tonight about SB 36 as well as the principles driving this piece of legislation.

I wish I could speak intelligently about our existing formula, but I really don't claim to understand it well. Many of my colleagues share this ignorance. The only ones I know who can really explain this monster are ones who make it their mission to learn its intricacies. I suspect it is the cumbersome nature of the formula that makes your job so difficult as you try to adjust it.

It is difficult for me to compare this proposed formula to our existing one. I would like to share my hopes on the outcomes this will provide. After all, it is the outcomes that parents and employers will review when these students, our children, graduate from our Alaskan Public Schools.

With respect to the qualities of our local schools, I am very pleased as a parent. I have seen my children do well here. In addition to a good program in their very basic instruction, my children still get a little band instruction and a little P.E. from qualified professionals. They bring home good grades, good work habits, positive school attitudes and good test scores, but I have concerns about the few remaining "extras".

Not only are we faced with continual cuts in vital services, but the district is now planning the next set of cuts for next year. Ketchikan Schools are virtually being decimated by cuts forced by uneven cut-backs. Most discouraging of all is that no end appears in sight.

We are all aware of the huge impact of Ketchikan's mill shut-down. For one thing, it has been interpreted as more of a political problem than a business issue for LP. It calls to mind for local citizens the ill effects politics can potentially have on communities, people and our institutions.

I believe this issue, right or wrong, has created an avalanche of concerns snowballing through this community as people blame government for this economic loss and leaves us feeling powerless to improve our own local schools and maintain important education services. I must say, however, that I am impressed with the Legislature's willingness to draft legislation in an effort to right this problem.

All these reductions are demoralizing to anyone who has watched these trends evolve however. The few remaining so called "frills" do little justice to the research that shows correlations between music and math performance or foreign language acquisition and improved language arts test scores in the later grades. And the minimal P.E. demonstrates the school's inability to pay for other things we value like good physical health.

While the high school's funding problems deprives students of adequate opportunity to study many areas in the vocational realm that will ultimately have to help provide jobs for the nearly 80% of adults in this country who will not be earning college degrees.

Yet my wife and I are confident that our efforts to personally provide private lessons will compensate for those areas public schools are forced to overlook at this time. We are fortunate to have the ability to pay for opportunities in ballet, tap dance, piano lessons, and extracurricular activities ourselves. Not everyone can do so.

So it comes back to the question of funding. Obviously, I would like to see our local schools in Ketchikan receive adequate funding. By adequate, I mean comparable to all the other schools in Alaska: something simple yet fair. As you know, the McDowell Study highlights how neglected Ketchikan has been in the overall distribution of state funding for education.

I ask that you see to it that whatever legislative package you agree to offers an equitable foundation formula funding yet encourages local responsibility instead of dependence upon the state coffers.

Of course, we could do nothing. That would insure we would be able to provide a bare-bones programs that offers little to our students. And we would probably lose even more students. Class sizes here have been averaging about 200 students per grade level, while about 140-150 students have been graduating from our recent senior classes recently.

We have no way of knowing where or how we are losing students before their names are called for graduation, but if the new funding formula continues to promote the kind of inequities that are eliminating so many facets of our schools here, we should probably expect to see even fewer graduates walking down the aisles at graduation time, and I worry that my children will have a very austere school program to look forward to here.

I don't know how it will turn out, but based upon the present structure of the plan, Ketchikan should have little to lose. It seems that almost any criteria to determine how much each school generates should benefit us here. I, for one, almost wish you could look at test results and fund school accordingly. Our students are performing well on state mandated tests.

Perhaps that would reward Ketchikan Schools for their successes. But realistically, that won't happen. But if the legislation you finally decid upon fails to provide Ketchikan the equity it needs and deserves, I fear that the successes earned in our local schools will be fewer and further between.

Lastly, I know I have written and spoken to some of you about the education endowment fund. I know many of you continue to dismiss that as a big government waste. I see it differently. I see people as making up the government. And I believe people depend on that government to provide leadership. I would like to see the legislature be a leader in education.

Our government does a fine job with developing the finest military in the world. We also do a good job providing standards to food and drug and other industries to insure what is presented to the consumer is not dangerous. Now if only you can find the funding mechanism to insure our schools are not inferior products either.

I would like to thank you for your consideration, time and regard for the thoughts you've heard during this opportunity to hear from Alaskans. I can be reached at the following phone or E-Mail. If there is anything I can do please feel free to contact me at: (907) 225-1477 or E-Mail bobmcc@ptialaska.net.

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**FACTS FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- Since FY93 KGBSD has made the following reductions in personnel:

|                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9 teaching positions           | curriculum director            |
| last school nurse              | 4 elementary counselors        |
| 1 high school counselor        | 3 maintenance position         |
| 2 elementary music teachers    | 1 business office position     |
| 4 librarians                   | 1.5 elementary p.e. teachers   |
| 4 custodians + reduce benefits | 1 central office administrator |

TWENTY DAY COUNT IN FY93= 2 6 9 0

TWENTY DAY COUNT IN FY98= 2 7 1 3

- We have experienced a 7.15% drop in enrollment since Oct. 20, 1996
- Revenue has declined \$872,889 from FY97
- Ketchikan has consistently funded the school district to the maximum level permitted by law
- Ketchikan has approved \$19,862,815 in 70/30 bonds for school remodeling and replacement
- 1997 base teacher salary ranked 42 out of 53 Alaska districts
- 1997 Masters level salary ranked 39 out of 53 Alaska districts
- 1997 top teacher salary ranked 36 out of 53 Alaska districts
- 1997 base administrator salary ranked 32 out of 53 Alaska districts
- When adjusted for cost of living the average Alaska teacher salary ranked 24th in the United States in 1996
- Based on 1996/97 data our student/teacher ration (17.9) exceeded State averages for all regions
- The teacher base salary has increased only 4.67% since FY92



**THE COMMUNITY OF KETCHIKAN**

represented by  
The Ketchikan Legislative Liaison  
Geoff Bullock

**Chris Elliott, School Board Member**

C/O Borough Clerk  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough  
344 Front Street  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Finance  
 committee name  
 committee on CSSB 36 , dated 2/27/98  
 bill/subject


The Mat-Su Borough Assembly and School Board passed joint resolution No. 97-003 which called upon the legislature to meet the essential funding needs of public schools in Alaska by inflation proofing the value of the instructional unit. Our state's elected officials in Juneau need to support local officials and amend CSSB 36 to inflation proof the instructional unit.

The fact is the state has provided new money only for new students. Budgets grow for other reasons such as unfunded mandates for additional flood insurance, additional special education requirements, government regulated utilities, additional standards, additional assessments and inflation.

Inflation has eroded the value of the state's contribution to schools by over 30% in ten years. The lack of inflation proofing schools results in tough decisions such as: deferred maintenance of school buildings, increased level of risk and self insurance, textbooks not updated or provided to all students, increased class size, and inadequate access to new technology.

The permanent fund is an important investment and the state provides inflation proofing. Social security and veteran's benefits are important and the government provides inflation proofing. Why aren't public schools inflation proofed? In 1997, over 127,000 children, more than one fifth of the state's population attended public schools in Alaska.

**CSSB 36 should increase the instructional unit to \$62,550 with a 1% annual increase.**

Signed:  Robert Doyle  
 Testifier  
Mat Su School District and self  
 Representing (Optional)  
125 West Evergreen Palmer AK 99654  
 Address  
907 746 9249  
 Phone No.



TELEPHONE (907) 894-4702

FAX (907) 894-1206

## *Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce*

P.O. BOX 770363  
EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577

11401 OLD GLENN HIGHWAY, SUITE 110A  
EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577

*"Place of Many Places"*

**March 2, 1998**

**TO: Senate Finance Committee  
Senator Druce Pearce  
Senator Bert Sharp  
Senator Dave Donley  
Senator Sean Parnell  
Senator Randy Phillips  
Senator John Torgerson  
Senator Al Adams**

**FROM: Jim Young, President**

**RE: SB 36 Public School Funding Program - Foundation Formula**

The Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce legislative priorities for 1998 include support for the rewrite of the school foundation formula. We want to lend our support to SB 36. The legislation reduces the disparity in state school funding between urban versus rural areas - a goal which we believe is necessary to create equitable funding for education throughout Alaska.

Testimony of Jane Haigh 280 E. Birch Hill rd. Fairbanks, AK 99712 457-7834  
re: SB 36

I am here today on my own, and not as an official representative of The Fairbanks North Star School Board, of which I have been a member for 6 years. My testimony today is my own opinion.

Certainly difficult policy decisions must be made, in regard to schools and how we run them. Education throughout the state must be improved. The fundamental question is how to use state funding to effect these positive changes, while maintaining local control.

Right now, though we are one of the wealthiest states in the Union, we spend more on ourselves individually in the form of dividends than we spend on our school and our children. Something is wrong with this picture.

At a time when 44 other states are increasing support of public schools, Alaska leads the nation in de-funding schools. The percentage change in per pupil expenditure since 1986 was minus 25%- lowest of any state.

America as a rising technological economy will know no boundaries. We here in the North will finally have a chance to participate in industries like software and web commerce on an equal footing, not handicapped by distance. It is essential that we have young workers trained in the critical thinking skills demanded by new industries like software development and networking.

We must come up with a new formula that is truly fair to everyone, and puts everyone, rural and urban on the road to positive changes leading to success in school for all children in the state.

The current proposal before us does not pass that test.

If schools with low test scores and high percentages of children from low income and minority families were in our own districts we would not cut their funding and send the money to schools with high test scores and white children from wealthy families. that would be unconscionable.

If we do not come up with a formula that is truly fair to everyone, and that the governor will sign, then I am afraid we will end up with no new formula. Sen. Wilken has stated that if we do not reform the current formula, then there will be no new funds- and that total result is simply unacceptable.

I do agree with our School board position, that all residents of the state- in Urban districts, boroughs and REAAs need to contribute something to public education, for the reasons stated by fellow board member Henry- when we contribute, we feel ownership and responsibility. contributing is an important part of local control.

However, I feel that if the 4% wage tax is good for REAAs it is good for everyone. In fact, I feel that in the last ten year, too much of the burden of school funding in organized boroughs is on the backs of the property owners.

A statewide wage tax of 4% could be collected and rebated to local areas to replace some of the local contribution now made by the property tax.

This would relieve some of the current burden on property taxes and allow boroughs to support some other functions currently being cut in the state budget, thus increasing local control.



TELEPHONE (907) 694-4702

FAX (907) 694-1205

# Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce

P.O. BOX 770353  
EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577

11401 OLD GLENN HIGHWAY, SUITE 110A  
EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577

*"Place of Many Places"*

March 2, 1998

**TO: Senate Finance Committee**  
Senator Drue Pearce  
Senator Bert Sharp  
Senator Dave Donley  
Senator Sean Parnell  
Senator Randy Phillips  
Senator John Torgerson  
Senator Al Adams

**FROM: Jim Young, President**

**RE: SB 36 Public School Funding Program - Foundation Formula**

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The Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce legislative priorities for 1998 include support for the rewrite of the school foundation formula. We want to lend our support to SB 36. The legislation reduces the disparity in state school funding between urban versus rural areas – a goal which we believe is necessary to create equitable funding for education throughout Alaska.

**Citizens for the Educational Advancement of Alaska's Children**  
**PO Box 871610, Wasilla, Alaska 99687**  
**Phone/Fax: (907) 357-2210**

February 24, 1998

The Honorable Randy Phillips, Chair  
Legislative Budget and Audit Committee  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Phillips,

Despite an expedited time frame, my colleagues and I have been able to complete an initial review of the "Alaska School Operating Cost Study" prepared for the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee by the McDowell Group. Frankly, we find the conclusions and the basis from which they are derived to be deeply flawed. We are also disturbed by the underlying message of this study which will undoubtedly pit our urban and rural, and our Alaska Native and non-Native populations against each other in a battle for resources that are already compromised by years of inadequate funding.

The consultant's report suggests a complete shift of educational resources from some of our State's most rural and difficult to serve school populations, to those urban districts that already retain sufficient economic tax bases and economies of scale to support more comprehensive levels of instruction. The consultant's report raises important questions that must be answered before it can be given any serious consideration in the ongoing debate surrounding the distribution of educational resources in Alaska. Often this report seems to rely on misinterpretations of the law, the setting of financial targets regardless of educational need, and a questionable statistical approach with little comprehension of the reality of delivering education in Alaska. In addition, the consultant seems to have ignored accepted national practices for determining educational need.

Below we have outlined our chief concerns. We would appreciate your review and response to these concerns.

1. The discussion of class size appears to be wholly arbitrary. The report states on page 30 that the current size adjustment formula translates to class sizes of 5, 8, 12 and 15 students. Can the consultant cite where the present law states this as fact? Did the consultant find that class sizes are generally distributed in this manner in school districts across the state?
2. The consultant recommended shifting funds from basically rural small multi-grade schools in school districts scattered over sizeable geographic areas with little or no tax base -- and in many cases no taxing authority -- to larger compact districts with sizeable tax bases. Has the consultant actually visited schools in either group to determine if one group is over-

funded and another under-funded on the basis of (a) resources versus students; (b) student progress; and (c) scores on standard tests and student need?

3. The consultant recommends the "school" as a basis for funding. Does this mean that the consultant does not believe that several schools located in close proximity provide an opportunity for sharing personnel and other resources that allow efficiencies that schools located too far apart to share resources can not achieve? Is it possible that the consultant recommended schools as a basis for this study because it would result in more weighted students for the larger, more compact districts which they pre-suppose are under-funded in the current system?
4. Given three schools of 500 students each -- one elementary, one middle and one high school -- is it the consultant's belief that each school should receive and operate their respective programs on equal amounts of money? If all three of these schools were incorporated into one school of 1,500 students, would it be the consultant's contention that the school should be able to operate its K-12 program on less money than if the three schools were separate?
5. Is it the consultant's position that a 500 student K-12 school in a rural area should be able to offer its K-12 programs for the same amount of dollars as a 500 student grade 7-8 school in an urban area?
6. What theory of equity in school finance supports an equity determination on the basis of adjusted dollars versus percent of students, as opposed to the same ratio in unadjusted dollars? In fact, isn't it the purpose of equity funding systems to create just such variances in order to accommodate for needed adjustments based on identified difference factors? (*See Table 3.*)
7. By what methodology, statistical or otherwise, were the numbers in Table 3, Column 2 produced? What makes the consultant believe that Table 3, Column 2, represents an accurate interpretation of the law? Please duplicate the calculations that produced 40,447 adjusted students for Anchorage in Table 3, Column 2. Is it the position of the consultant that the lower standard deviation and spread in the statistical approach in Table 3 proves that it is more equitable than the current law (assuming the consultant's extrapolation of instructional units to weighted pupils is correct -- a questionable assumption at best)?
8. Does the consultant know that under either current law or the statistical approach in Table 3 the funding equity is the same (i.e., they are both completely equitable), with the max., min., avg. being \$5,985 and the StdDev and spread 0 for the consultant's extrapolation of the current law, and the max., min., avg. Being \$5,385 and StdDev and spread 0 when tested against unadjusted dollars?

The Honorable Randy Phillips  
February 24, 1998  
Page 3

9. Were "market baskets" developed by the consultant for the adjusted student base found in Tables 1.1 and 2.2, pages 34 and 43? If so, what were the dollar per pupil costs at each interval of actual student count -- 20, 30, 75, 150, etc. -- as a result of these market baskets, and what are the resource components in each basket? If not, what justification does the consultant have for the associated interval weights and the incremental multipliers for numbers of students between intervals?
10. Was the actual percent of each district's expenditures applied in arriving at the NPS, or was every district forced into the 16.5 percent stated on page 65? Likewise, was the actual percent of expenditures used for administrative costs, or was the 4.5 percent stated in the study used for each district?
11. Is it the intent of the legislature to set arbitrary educational budgets before truly assessing educational need? Given our state's recently publicized ratings in relation to other states, such an approach seems counterproductive to improving education. The consultant seems to think that school funding levels should be established by the legislature before applying a distribution formula, rather than first determining the funding levels needed to provide an adequate education for Alaska's children. Is this true? (*see Table #3, pp 23-24 in the consultant's report; also p. 65 Table #3, p. 77 Table #3, p. 85, and the general tenor of discussions throughout the report.*)

We urge you to seek answers to these questions before proceeding further with the development of legislation based on this report. We look forward to your response.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Edwin Gonion  
Executive Director  
Citizens for the Educational Advancement  
Of Alaska's Children

cc: The Alaska Legislature  
Governor Tony Knowles  
Commissioner of Education  
AASA  
AASB

EG/c/PHILLIPS.WPD

Gilbert F. Gutierrez  
P.O. Box 306  
Nome, Alaska 99762

March 2, 1998

Senate Finance Committee  
Bert Sharp, Chairman  
State Capitol Juneau, Ak. 99801-1182

Dear Mr. Sharp:

My name is Gil Gutierrez and I live in Nome, Alaska. I categorically oppose Senate Bill 36 sponsored by Senator Phillips, Taylor and Halford.

The Bill is flawed because it is attempting to override the constitutional right of people to vote for or against an organized Borough. The Committee is using the issue of educational funding to implement a political subdivision in order to impose more taxation. This is "double -speak" when members of the Committee yell they were elected on a "no more taxes" platform.

I oppose Senate Bill 36 because the committee is not being honest with the electorate. You want to impose a taxation on the rural areas and give your constituencies in Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau adequate funding. Unfortunately, these cities will still be playing catch-up with only "adequate funding" The minimum that they will be able to achieve will be defined as the maximum. The losers will be your children and grand children.

I oppose Senate Bill 36 because it takes money from the rural areas and you shift it to the urban areas. You rob from the poor and give to the rich and you do this without shame. You and your colleagues are short sighted and wearing large blinders if you limit your decision making to only the wants of your constituency. Your constitutional obligation is to provide funding for the education of all the citizens of the State.

I oppose Senate Bill 36 because it is based in part on the McDowell Study. In reading this study I found eleven (11) citations which disclaimed that this study was done with any factual data. The McDowell Study does not take into account personnel costs. The empiricism is based on second-hand hearsay. The only factual statements were that on average teachers salary are about the same across the State and that maintenance and operations of school systems in rural Alaska are significantly higher. People in rural Alaska have known this for years. I would recommend funding the maintenance and

operations separate from the direct educational funds. This would provide true equity funding.

I oppose Senate Bill 36 because it limits funding for Special Education and the Gifted Programs. This funding is for the weakest and for the brightest in our society. Committee members talk freely and constantly about "educational standards" This misguided section in SB 36 exacerbates the problems parents have in providing a fair and adequate education for their disabled or bright children. This is magnified in rural areas where presently inadequate funding does not provide trained professionals to implement the letter of the law.

On reflection Senate Bill 36 stinks worse than a road killed skunk in the Mat-Su Borough.

The Committee has asked "Where is the money coming from?" By asking this question you have accepted the fact that educational system funding has been eroding over the last ten years. Your Deferred Maintenance Committee can attest to that. The school systems you are responsible for are falling apart. Senate Bill 36 is a stop gap solution. Consolidating school systems will shift the responsibility and increase the educational needs to an entity further removed from local government. Schools will be closed.

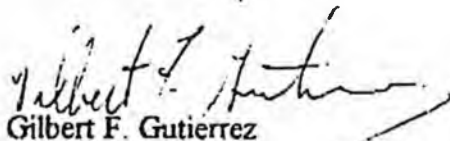
The money to fund these programs is from the oil flowing from rural Alaska to the urban centers. This is a resource that belongs to each Alaskan. The oil companies are being taxed by the State legislature. The Committee members and their staffs are being paid by these taxes. You may want to call them royalties but they are taxes just the same.

In order to have equitable longtime funding for our educational systems this committee would be well served when its members sponsor a bill to create an Educational Foundation. This Foundation will be funded from the Permanent Fund taxation program that is currently in place.

The legislature has already passed a cigarette tax. One of your colleagues supports a bill that will levy a \$50.00 tax per individual. There are huge amounts of money going out of state through transient workers that can be collected.

If all of the above is too painful for you, then you like the rest of us might want to consider a new line of work. Should you stubbornly refuse to accept this factual reality then comfort yourself in knowing that you have kissed our educational systems good bye and this being your legacy.

Sincerely,



Gilbert F. Gutierrez

**SB**

**36**

**File 3**



## Hames Corporation

February 26, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp, Co-Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

A recent Alaska school operating cost study has been completed by The McDowell Group. The study proves what Sitkans have been saying for 10 years now. When it comes to allocating moneys to Alaska communities for schools, Sitka is not getting the funding they deserve.

I am a lifelong Sitkan and business man, as well as a father of three children in the Sitka School District. One son attends Blatchley Middle School and I have two sons in at Sitka High. I am appalled at the condition of the high school. It is in severe disrepair. Every year our music programs at every level are in jeopardy of being discontinued. Other extracurricular activities are threatened also. Many school programs are surviving because of student and parent fundraising. Sitka businesses are being solicited daily for help with these important programs. Contrary to what is being reported by "economists," Sitka has not rebounded from our mill closure in 1994. The economy is at an all time low. Parents and businesses can not be expected to fund school sanctioned extracurricular activities. Being in an isolated community, it is vital to offer activities and programs to students that will help expose them to many varied experiences.

Other southeast communities enjoy beautiful schools and thriving extracurricular programs. There should be no excuse for Sitka to be slighted these same benefits. I urge you to allocate to the Sitka School District its fair share of the state funding it deserves.

Sincerely,

Roger L. Hames  
President/CEO

**Edward A. Stahla**  
Law Office  
124 Lincoln, Suite 204  
Sitka, Alaska 99835-7540

Edward A. Stahla  
Alaska Bar 1969  
Nebraska Bar 1968  
Wyoming Bar 1968-1973

Telephone No. 907-747-6681  
Fax No. 907-747-3966

February 18, 1998

Senate Finance Committee Members  
Att: Senator Drue Pearce - Co-Chairman  
Att: Senator Bert Sharp - Co-Chairman  
State Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: School Funding

Dear Senator Pearce and Senator Sharp:

I recently reviewed your McDowell Group Study as it relates to monies received by School Districts. The Study confirms what many of us thought for many years, that Sitka receives less money in comparison with many other districts. The impact of that tax shortfall may not have been as noticeable had we not lost a lot of high paying jobs when the pulp mill was forced to close. In addition, there has been a very lengthy environmental process which has tied up the pulp mill property, thus it is just sitting there - a tremendous waste! The decreased value is directly reflected in less tax revenues, let alone a 20 million per year payroll loss.

For over ten years now, a disproportionate tax burden has fallen on under funded municipalities, including Sitka. The school district and municipalities should be commended that they are attempting to resolve this equalization unfair burden tax issue through the political process rather than through the courts.

Please find the money to cover the shortfall and equalize Sitka's tax education funding to that of the rest of Alaska.

Your cooperation and assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

LAW OFFICE OF EDWARD A. STAHLA

By 

Edward A. Stahla  
A THIRTY YEAR ALASKAN

Senator Bert Sharp  
State Capitor  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

3/1/98

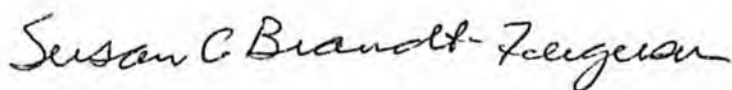
Dear Senator Sharp,

The McDowell study has shown that there are many districts, including the Sitka School District, that have been extremely under-funded for years. In the ten years that the McDowell group found Sitka to be under-funded by 13%, Sitka has seen numerous painful cuts to programs, salaries, and facilities. The following are only *some* of the cuts we have taken during this time: the K-5 and 9-12 swimming program was eliminated (Sitka is a coastal community located on an *island*), the school nurse program was eliminated, teaching supplies were reduced by 42%, Mt. Edgecumbe Kindergarten building was closed, teaching salaries were frozen twice, the Japanese language program was eliminated, a .5 music teacher at Baranof Elementary School was eliminated, the mid-day kindergarten bus was eliminated, a guidance counselor was eliminated, the custodial and food services were contracted, the Strategic Plan allocation was reduced by \$60,000, and the district administration spending was reduced by \$64,000.

I encourage you to bring equity to the funding situation and allocate at least \$21,000,000 to balance educational funding between the districts. *I do not support the notion of any districts taking funding cuts, but rather an increase in funding to the districts that have been shown to be under-funded.*

Although they are not yet voters, I trust that you will represent the children in Alaska well on this matter. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Susan C. Brandt-Ferguson

P.O. Box 1941  
Sitka, AK 99835

(907)747-3603

Feb - 98

Senator Bert Sharp  
State Capital  
Juneau Ak 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bert Sharp

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a significant shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools. This confirms what the people of Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study. Adjust the formula so that Sitka receives their fair share of state funding. This would mean an increase to Sitka by 13%.

As a parent I am tired of the continuous cutbacks in our children's education. Our children deserve a quality education. Cutbacks do not equal quality. Our district deserves a fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

I urge you to follow the findings

of the study and add \$21 million  
to state dollars to obtain balance  
in school funding. I'm counting  
on you.

Sincerely  
Mary Gordon

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

Fair  
IS  
Fair

Dear Bert Sharp Co-Chair,  
I have seen the study commissioned by your committee. It shows that Sitka schools are 13% underfunded. This is not news to us in Sitka where we have had to cut the budget every year. We taxpayers have added money to make up for inadequate State dollars but it hasn't been enough. We should treat each Alaska kid equally. Please do your part to restore fairness in State funding for schools.

Bruce Baker



Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

2-14-98

Dear Senate Finance Co-Chair  
Bert Sharp,

Please 1. read the Alaska School  
Operating Cost Study.

2. Act on their findings

3. Fund education more  
fully - like 21 million.

4. Fund Sitka and other  
districts that receive less than  
their fair share.

Thank you for your  
consideration - we're counting  
on your help.

Sincerely,

Molbe Koller

Because  
We  
Care



Sitka's for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

Senator Sharp -

Help the children in Sitka and  
in your district by Implementing  
the McDowell Group work and  
the Foundation Formula Study.

Thank you

Fred Reeder  
409 Mills St  
Sitka, AK

88835

Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

Fair  
is  
Fair

2-14-98

Bert:

Please Fund Public  
Education As A High  
Priority -

Sitka's Schools Are  
Facing Cutting Important  
Programs

Thanks

Roger & Ann Vallon  
1721 Edgcombe Dr.  
Sitka  
747-3782

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp Co-Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

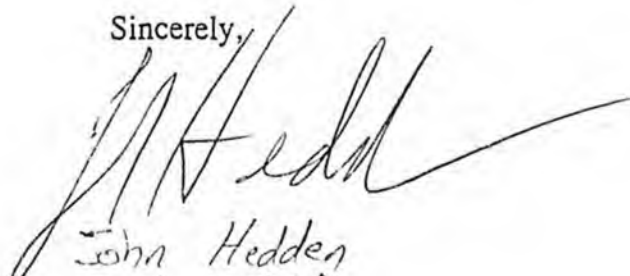
The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

  
John Hedden  
Teacher, SSD

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

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The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

*Mark Gorman*

*137 Riggs*

*Sitka, Alaska 99835*

*Dear Senator Sharp -  
This is a critical issue to our kids' future -  
I appreciate your leadership on this -  
me - Mark -*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

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The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

Nancy Knapp

137 Riggs Rd

Sitka AK

P.S. This is very  
important to us!

Because  
We  
Care



Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS**  
School Funding

Dear Senator Sharp,

Sitka district has provided  
community-sensitive,  
cost-effective programs  
with very low administrative  
cost and overhead. Yet  
we have had to cut the  
programs that make our  
kids competitive for college  
admission. Please give  
us a level playing field.  
We have supported our  
schools to the hilt. Please  
support us.

Jamie Churaker  
Box 6364  
Sitka Ak 99835

80's Charles St  
Sitka AK 99835  
12 Feb 1998

Senator Bert Sharp  
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp:

Sitka schools are underfunded and have been for years. I have 2 children in Sitka schools, and have watched as programs have been cut over the years. Music and art programs have been slashed. We have lost swimming instruction for elementary school kids, despite being an ocean-based town. We have lost para-professional help in the classrooms and have larger numbers of kids/class. We no longer have school nurses and have fewer school librarians. We have trimmed and trimmed and can trim no more.

The McDowell Study shows Sitka schools have been underfunded by 13%.

Please implement the recommendations of the McDowell study and increase funding for Sitka schools.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
C. Kreiss  
C. Kreiss M.D.

Dear Senator Shoup,

You should lose no time in implementing the recommendations of the McDowell group regarding school financing.

For eleven years I've helped in classes as my two children progress through Sitka schools. I attend budget meetings as well - the schools try to make these decisions democratically - and for eleven years it has been a question of what we can cut to make up the budget deficit. During the last five years we have been cutting essential and valuable programs: P.E., music, counseling, home economics, nurses, swimming. This was on the assumption that there simply wasn't state money available. Now your own study, the Alaska School Operating Cost Study, demonstrates that state aid has been seriously maldistributed, particularly to Sitka's disadvantage.

Without dwelling on how fast and in what form frustration turns to anger, I think you should equalize school spending by increasing school funding by \$21,000,000 or more, if necessary. We are hunking back, and need an increase put into effect without arguing over what districts get cut to make up for it.

Floyd Tomlin  
Sitka

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp Co-Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp Co-Chair

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

*Crystal Denkingen-Riley*

*P.S. We are long overdue for funding  
& in desperate need. A concerned parent  
of four.*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp Co-Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

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Sincerely,

  
Congresswoman Farlen of 3

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co-Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

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The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

*Charles E. Wilby*

*Please implement the  
Mc Dowell recommendations. Sitka's  
schools are seriously underfunded.*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Shap.  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Shap.,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

*R.W. Riklum*

*I was a recipient of oil Boom benefits. We need to support our children because they have no Boom and will be inheriting extreme state issues. They need preparation through exceptional education, not merely adequate. Think about that.*

*R.W. Riklum*  
Sitka Education Assoc. BAEA  
P.A.C.E

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Parrell  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Parrell.

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely, R. W. Rohlf

I'm a graduate of East Anch. High School and long time resident of East Anchorage. I currently reside in Sitka (not by choice). We are really hurting here in Sitka. I defend Anchorage all this time including east Anchorage. Support our students, it will pay off. Rick ROHLMAN  
President Sitka Ed. Assoc.

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Brit Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Brit Sharp

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

Jan Straley  
Box 273  
Sitka AK 99835

P.S. my son is in the third grade. Please implement this study so that by the time he graduates he has had a quality education

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bert Sharp,

February 5, 1998

I am writing to urge you to support an increase in the state funding of education. In recent years the Sitka School District has faced budget cuts that decrease the quality of education. At the current budget level we will need to cut teacher positions (beyond cuts due to declining enrollment) and school programs. I would like to see the following changes:

1. Make education funding include yearly inflation adjustments.
2. Change the area cost differential in the education funding formula so that high cost communities such as Sitka aren't grouped with Anchorage.
3. The total numbers of students in each school district and the size of the community need to be reflected in the formula. Educating one thousand students in Sitka costs significantly more than one thousand students in Anchorage.

Please help increase the money put in the education budget and change the inequities of the education funding formula. Support our most precious resource- our children.

Thank you for consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Melissa Hersen - Broschak  
and family

Feb. 20, 1998

Dear Senator Bert Sharp,

I have lived in Sitka with my family for 13 years. During that time we have always had a child in the Sitka School District. I have volunteered in my kids schools for most of these years and am currently on the School Board, as a means of continuing volunteering in the District.

Over the years, it has been increasingly hard to keep our programs intact, here in Sitka, because of the eroding dollars that have to manage all aspects of a school district.

I know that the Legislative Budget Committee has had concerns about school funding issues in Alaska and I was glad to hear a study had been requested.

I am asking you to please follow through with the findings of the Alaska School Operating Cost Study, done by the Mc Dowell Group. Please consider adding \$21,000,000. to education funding and not taking the money from other school districts.

Our students across the state are worth the expense.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Barbara Dr Long  
P.O. Box 1242  
Sitka, AK 99835

Leslie Gordon  
717 Lake Street  
Sitka, Alaska 99835

February 11, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

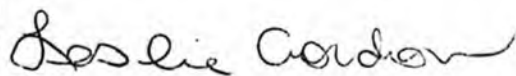
As a parent of 2 children in the Sitka School District and a 2 year old a few years away from entering school I am very concerned about school funding. I read with great interest the study done by the McDowell Group, Inc. and urge you to implement the recommendations of the McDowell Group's work.

The Sitka School system has had to cut programs like library services, school nurses, para professionals, music, PE and Home Economics within the last few years and next years budget is looking rather bleak.

Sitka Schools have been grossly under funded for the last several years and it is time to work for ALL Alaskans and provide equal opportunities for education.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,



Leslie Gordon

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bert Sharp,

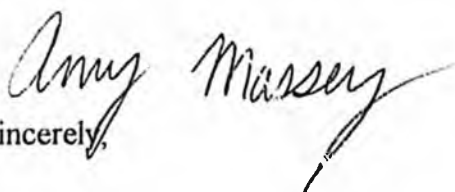
February 5, 1998

I am writing to urge you to support an increase in the state funding of education. In recent years the Sitka School District has faced budget cuts that decrease the quality of education. At the current budget level we will need to cut teacher positions (beyond cuts due to declining enrollment) and school programs. I would like to see the following changes:

1. Make education funding include yearly inflation adjustments.
2. Change the area cost differential in the education funding formula so that high cost communities such as Sitka aren't grouped with Anchorage.
3. The total numbers of students in each school district and the size of the community need to be reflected in the formula. Educating one thousand students in Sitka costs significantly more than one thousand students in Anchorage.

Please help increase the money put in the education budget and change the inequities of the education funding formula. Support our most precious resource- our children.

Thank you for consideration of this vital issue.

  
Sincerely,

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

*Paul Sirtler*

*Please Support our Kids*

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

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Please help increase the money put in the education budget and change the inequities of the education funding formula. Support our most precious resource- our children.

Thank you for consideration of this vital issue.

We are not living in a poor state,  
We are not living in a poor country,  
Sincerely, But I think our standards for  
education are, at present, poor.

Elisabeth Crane  
1619 Sawmill Creek Rd #5  
Sitka Ak 99835  
907 747-4764

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bert Sharp,

February 5, 1998

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Thank you for consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,

*Keely Mundiola*  
103 Kiksadi Ct.  
Sitka AK 99835

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

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Thank you for consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,

*Glenn and Carrie Jones  
120 Lifesaver Drive  
Sitka AK 99835*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

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Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

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The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely, *Paul Evans*

*please consider recommendations  
regarding McDowell Report*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Manisha Littlefull

Thank you for supporting  
Sitka Schools.

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp Co-Chair

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Sincerely,

*M. Catherine Clark*

*The need for this funding is great and long overdue!*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator BERT SHARP  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator SHARP,


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Sincerely,

  
DAVID E. KWAK  
718 LAKE ST.  
SITKA

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

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State Capitol  
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# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co-Chair Sen. Fin Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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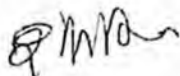
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February 14, 1998

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Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Please SUPPORT  
Funding



February 11, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp, Co-Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp:

I'm writing to encourage you and your colleagues to have the political will to address the profound inequities in the State funding formula for schools. As I'm sure you're aware, Sitka and Haines top the list of underfunded school districts, each calculated at 13 percent below parity, based on the recently released McDowell Group study commissioned by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee.

It would be incomprehensible for the State legislature to continue to penalize Sitka's children after reading the study's results.

Please act to resolve this inequity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary D. Gauthier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "D".

Gary D. Gauthier

Senator Bert Sharp  
Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)

Feb 20, 1998

~~State~~,  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bert Sharp:

The quality of education in Sitka has decreased over the past years. In addition to this the state Funding Formula for Education has not been fair to the community of Sitka and more important the children of Sitka. This is indicated by the Study that was done by the McDowell Group - January 1998. Please implement the recommendations that were made by the McDowell Group's work.

Education is more critical today than ever before. We need to provide our children not with just an adequate education, but a quality education. This is a very serious issue that warrants your thoughtful attention. Thank-you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joan Tergeson

Joann Tergeson  
4017 HPR  
Sitka, AK 99835

# Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Rest Sharp Co-Chair  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

*Donna Beneyekott*

# Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

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State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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