



Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska's Youth

Association of Alaska School Boards

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Legislative Bulletin

A WEEKLY DIGEST OF ACTIVITY BY THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE AND U.S. CONGRESS FOR ALASKA'S SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

This bulletin is distributed by email only. School districts should copy for board members not online.

Finance Subcommittee On Education Unveils Budget Cuts

Citing an "unprecedented downturn of revenues," the Senate Finance Budget Subcommittee has identified an additional \$3 million in proposed cuts to the Department of Education & Early Development, including \$2 million in grants for Pre-kindergarten programs. The subcommittee also recommends denying about \$800,000 in funding increases for education programs sought by Gov. Bill Walker. If adopted by the full Senate, the cuts would set the stage for budget negotiations with the House, which has voted to fund many of the education programs in question.

"The subcommittee recognizes and acknowledges that some very worthwhile programs may go unfunded or underfunded, but its choices are very limited given the financial circumstances the State of Alaska finds itself in," Sen. Mike Dunleavy, chair of the subcommittee, wrote.

The recommended cuts would add to the \$21.6 million in reductions at EED since 2015. The subcommittee was silent on funding levels for K-12 education through the foundation formula, a \$1.2 billion question that will be answered by the full committee, possibly next week.

Trump Administration Proposes Deep Cuts to Education

The Trump administration is seeking to cut \$9.2 billion—or 13.5 percent— from the Education Department's budget, a dramatic downsizing that would reduce or eliminate grants for teacher training, after-school programs and aid to low-income and first-generation college students.

Along with the cuts, among the steepest the agency has ever sustained, the administration is also proposing to shift \$1.4 billion toward on of President Trump's key priorities: Expanding charter schools, private-school vouchers and other alternatives to traditional public schools. His \$59 billion education budget for 2018 would include an unprecedented federal investment in such "school choice" initiatives, signaling a push to reshape K-12 education in America. See full story [here](#).

CTE Presentation Added to Spring Academy

After all the positive comments we received from Commissioner Drygas' CTE presentation at the February Fly-In, we're adding a special NO COST ½ day event to the Fly-In Spring Academy.

On Friday, March 31—the day before our Fly-In officially begins—we've teamed with the Dept. of Labor and DEED to roll out an entire afternoon focused on Career Technical Education (CTE) for discussions around:

- School to Apprentice Program
- Regional Education Centers focused on CTE
- Alaska Construction Program
- How to work with limited Resources
- Students highlighting their experiences
- District success stories

We're looking to assemble a group that wants to learn more about these and other CTE issues, and who are committed to keeping the CTE discussion alive. Interested? PLEASE encourage folks to [register](#).

June Nelson Scholarship Deadline Approaching

AASB's annual scholarship program, named in honor of dedicated education advocate June Nelson, is accepting applications for another week. Find a link to all the details and the 2017 application [here](#).

Upcoming Legislative Hearings

Monday, March 20

8:00 a.m. House Education Committee

[HB 135](#) School Construction Grant Program

–Public testimony

[HB 102](#) Limited Teacher Certificates: Languages

–Public testimony

Bills previously heard or scheduled

8:00 a.m. Senate Education Committee

Confirmation Hearings

–Mary Hughes, University of Alaska Board of Regents

–David Piazza, Professional Teaching Practices Commission

–Kent Runion, Professional Teaching Practices Commission

–Public testimony on appointees

Tuesday, March 21

9:00 a.m. Senate Finance Committee

[SB 22](#) Appropriations: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds

[SB 24](#) Appropriations: Mental Health Budget

Bills previously heard or scheduled

Wednesday, March 22

8:00 a.m. House Education Committee

[HB 146](#) School Tax; PFD Payment for School Tax

Testimony by invitation only

Bills previously heard or scheduled

8:00 a.m. Senate Education Committee

[SB 87](#) School Construction Energy Efficiency Standards

Testimony by invitation only

Senate bill relating to education and school districts (pending introduction and referral)

–Testimony by invitation only

Bills previously heard or scheduled

9:00 a.m. Senate Finance Committee

[SB 22](#) Appropriations: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds

[SB 24](#) Appropriations: Mental Health Budget

Bills previously heard or scheduled

Friday, March 24

8:00 a.m. House Education Committee

Broadband Presentation

–Testimony by invitation only

8:00 a.m. Senate Education Committee

[SB 78](#) Permanent Fund Dividend Contribution/Lottery

–Testimony by invitation only

Senate bill relating to education and school districts (pending introduction and referral)

–Testimony by invitation only

Bills previously heard or scheduled

Saturday, March 25

1:00 p.m. House Labor and Commerce Committee

[HB 83](#) Teacher and Public Employee Retirement Plans

–Public testimony

Bills previously heard or scheduled

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Our Mission

The mission of AASB is to advocate for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing quality public education, focused on student achievement, through effective local governance.

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