



# AASB's 2024 Legislative Priorities

On behalf of our member school districts statewide, the AASB Board of Directors has adopted three legislative priorities: **Funding, Educators and Students.**

*Our Mission: The Association of Alaska School Boards advocates for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing quality public education, focused on student achievement, through effective local governance.*

## Sufficient and Sustainable Public Education Funding

Sufficient, sustainable and stable funding is required to meet Alaska's obligation to provide quality, public education for every Alaska student. Educating Alaska's youth is the best strategy for successfully meeting and safeguarding Alaska's prosperity.

- ▶ **Increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA)** – AASB advocates for an increase to the BSA for FY2025 of not less than **\$1,413** to account for inflation (Alaska-Urban CPI) since the last major increase to the BSA in FY2017. From 2011 to 2024, the BSA has only increased by \$280 per student (4.9%), while inflation has increased by at least 30%, resulting in crippling staff shortages, school closures, and program eliminations.
- ▶ **Incorporate an annual increase in the BSA to account for inflation** – provide by statute, for an annual increase in the BSA that provides some accounting for annual inflation and drives a philosophy of long-term investment in public education.
- ▶ **Increase funding for student transportation** – Student transportation funding has remained flat since 2016. Transportation costs have dramatically increased due to inflation and labor shortages. Transportation funding must be increased to keep up with inflation and prevent shifting to the use of school district general funds.

## Retention and Recruitment of Teachers, Administrators & Staff

School districts face an unprecedented crisis of retaining and recruiting qualified, effective teachers, administrators, and support staff which seriously hinders providing Alaska students with a quality education.

- ▶ **Implement recommendations** - of the Teacher Recruitment & Retention Task Force.
- ▶ **Reinstitute a competitive retirement program** - including both defined benefits and defined contributions.
- ▶ **Invest in teacher housing** - required for most rural school districts.
- ▶ **Grow Alaska teachers and administrators** - work with partners and the University of Alaska to improve and expand teacher training programs, teacher-mentor programs, and alternative certification pathways.

## Student Wellness and School Safety

The pandemic has impacted student wellness for every demographic, especially students experiencing poverty or trauma. Violence, neglect, and sexual abuse have increased, resulting in reduced social-emotional well-being and academic achievement.

- ▶ **Address student mental health** - Support and fund mental health services for all Alaskan students, including trauma-engaged practices in Alaska schools.
- ▶ **Prevent student sexual abuse by school staff** - Support the implementation of policies and training regarding professional boundaries between staff and students.
- ▶ **Reduce school and student violence.** Support and fund the needed programs and services.





## Sufficient and Sustainable Public Education Funding

- ▶ B.7 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS TOP PRIORITY
- ▶ B.10 FUNDING FOR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS IN ALASKA
- ▶ 1.4 OPPOSE SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- ▶ 2.1 SUSTAINED, RELIABLE AND ADEQUATE STATE FISCAL PLAN AND EDUCATIONAL FUNDING FOR ALASKA'S STUDENTS THROUGH A NON-VOLATILE FUNDING SOURCE
- ▶ 2.2 URGING EARLY, ADEQUATE, EQUITABLE, AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
- ▶ 2.6 FUNDING FOR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS IN ALASKA
- ▶ 2.10 EDUCATION ENDOWMENT
- ▶ 2.14 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
- ▶ 2.31 URGING THE CONTINUATION OF FUNDING FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL (VOCATIONAL) EDUCATION
- ▶ 2.63 FUNDING FOR EDUCATION AND TRANSPORTATION
- ▶ 2.64 BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION INCREASE: MAKING UP FOR LOST GROUND DUE TO INFLATION

## Retention and Recruitment of Teachers, Administrators & Staff

- ▶ 4.3 ALASKA STATEWIDE EDUCATOR MENTORING
- ▶ 4.5 ADDRESSING THE TEACHER, SPECIALIST AND ADMINISTRATOR SHORTAGE
- ▶ 4.6 REPEAL THE SOCIAL SECURITY GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET AND WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATORS
- ▶ 4.7 RELATING TO DEFINED BENEFIT RETIREMENT
- ▶ 4.11 ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO CERTIFY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS
- ▶ 4.18 ESTABLISHING A NEW TEACHER INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR ALASKA

## Student Wellness and School Safety

- ▶ B.11 CHILD ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT
- ▶ B.14 SUPPORTING SOBRIETY AND SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION
- ▶ B.15 PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION
- ▶ B.17 DECLARING CHILDREN THE TOP PRIORITY OF ALASKA
- ▶ 3.1 DECLARING CHILDREN OF ALASKA OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE AND THEIR HEALTH, SAFETY, WELFARE, AND EDUCATION IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE
- ▶ 3.3 FETAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG EXPOSED STUDENTS
- ▶ 3.6 OPIATES, INHALANTS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, E-CIGARETTES/ELECTRONIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS, METHAMPHETAMINES, MARIJUANA, DESIGNER DRUGS AND ANY ILLICIT SUBSTANCE USE
- ▶ 3.8 SUICIDE PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND TREATMENT EFFORTS
- ▶ 3.9 SAFE, CARING AND CONNECTED SCHOOLS
- ▶ 3.10 SUPPORT OF STATE FUNDING FOR STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES IN ALASKA
- ▶ 3.11 HIV/AIDS AND OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI) EDUCATION
- ▶ 3.12 EDUCATION OF STUDENTS IN RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIORS RELATING TO HUMAN SEXUALITY
- ▶ 3.13 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST
- ▶ 3.15 SUPPORTING THE SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT
- ▶ 3.17 STUDENT WELLNESS
- ▶ 3.21 SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE TO SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
- ▶ 3.23 SUPPORT OF FULL STATE FUNDING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS
- ▶ 3.25 SUPPORTING SEX ABUSE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION
- ▶ 3.26 SUPPORTING THE ADOPTION OF TRAUMA-INFORMED AND CULTURALLY AFFIRMING PRACTICES
- ▶ 3.27 SUPPORT FOR THE TREATMENT OF ABUSE OF OPIATES
- ▶ 3.28 EDUCATION ON THE DANGERS OF TOBACCO, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, MARIJUANA USE AND SECONDHAND SMOKE