

AASB Legislative Priorities 2021



association of
ALASKA
school boards

The AASB Board of Directors has chosen the following priorities for its 2021 legislative advocacy focus. Supporting resolutions of the membership can be found in the document *Where We Stand 2021* on the AASB website.

Public Education Funding – adequate, reliable, predictable

- **Adequate** – Prevent the devastating impacts of the pandemic to school funding in 2021 and 2022 due to **temporary reductions** in adjusted ADM
- Funding must be **reliable, stable, and predictable**
- Uphold the **constitutional mandate** for public school funding
- Guard against the use of **public funding for private schools – no vouchers**
- **Prevent cost shifting** of items such as transportation, bond-debt reimbursement, major maintenance, and retirement to districts and local communities
- Prevent state **mandated school consolidation**, especially in rural Alaska

Student Wellness and Safe Schools – prioritize efforts and funding to support and promote student wellness and safety

- Address the **impacts** of the pandemic on student wellness (physical and mental)
- Support **student mental health** and the required services
- Support **safe, connected** schools
- Support **trauma informed practices** in Alaska schools
- Prevent sexual abuse by school staff through appropriate **professional boundaries** policy and training
- Reduce school and student **violence**

Internet Connectivity and Distance Delivery – provide an equitable opportunity for students across the state to access learning and content as a part of their educational experience

- Fully **fund E-rate** so that schools have the necessary connectivity
- Investing in Alaska **broadband infrastructure** for equitable access everywhere
- **Alaska relevant and appropriate** distance delivered curriculum and instruction
- **Locally adapted** and school board approved curriculum
- Provide appropriate **professional development** for distance delivered instruction
- Develop **equity** in providing distance delivered, **instructional opportunities**

Teacher & Administrator Training, Recruitment and Retention – through multiple approaches increase the retention, recruitment and training of highly effective teachers and administrators.

- Reduce the extremely high rates of **teacher and administrator turnover**
- Provide resources for a robust **teacher-mentor** program
- Provide and fund more competitive **retirement benefits**
- Invest in effective **professional development** of teachers and administrators
- Work with partners and the University of Alaska to **improve and develop a teacher training** program focused on growing teachers and administrators **from Alaska**

Culturally Responsive Education – provide a culturally responsive education that includes language, place, and relevance.

- Support creation of **culturally responsive learning environments** for all students
- Support and facilitate implementation of **standards for culturally responsive schools**
- Support preservation and use of indigenous **Alaska Native languages**
- Support and fund **culturally responsive educator** preparation programs
- Support and fund an authentic, and compressive **Alaska History textbook**
- Support creation and use of **culturally appropriate student achievement assessments**

Literacy as A Fundamental Human Right

- **Funding** and support for focus on **early childhood literacy skills** development
- Working towards **literacy proficiency** by the **third grade**
- Investing in **higher graduation rates** and a more literate populous
- Through **literacy proficiency** create educational **equity**
- Recognize literacy as a **fundamental human right**



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