

2020 Legislative Talking Points



SUPPORT RELIABLE, IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION - (HB236) (HB204, SB151)

A reliable and adequate investment in education, specifically through **an increase in the BSA**, is an investment in Alaska. Alaska's Foundation Formula provides a coherent and transparent system for funding education across the state. Furthermore, it gives local flexibility for school boards to allocate resources, which best address their specific needs. One of the surest ways to sustain our posterity is investing in the education of Alaska's children. *(AASB Belief 7, Resolutions 2.1, 2.2, 2.50)*

THE ALASKA READS ACT – (SB6)

School boards across the state **strongly agree** that reading proficiency by the 3rd grade is one of the most important educational priorities to ensure the greatest opportunity for students to graduate and become successful adults. However, there are many questions and concerns regarding the implementation and funding of SB6 that create confusion and doubt about its likelihood for success (i.e., assessments, curriculum, impact on existing bilingual language programs, the need for reading specialists, retention of students, facility space requirements, competitive Pre-K grants and "stair-step" funding, an unknown fiscal note) *(AASB Belief 19, Resolutions 2.34, 2.35, 2.6, 5.23)*

OPPOSE REPEAL OF BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT – (HB66, SB64)

AASB and school boards oppose the repeal of the state bond-debt reimbursement program that shifts the entire burden of large, expensive, construction, and maintenance projects entirely to local funding. This will create a local tax burden that is unsustainable and will lead to a further decline in the condition and creation of safe and sound facilities that support and enable student learning. *(AASB Belief 9, Resolution 2.12, 2.51)*

SUPPORT TEACHER RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

Alaska faces a teacher retention and recruitment crisis that severely impacts the ability of school districts to meet the basic needs of providing a quality education for every child every day. In particular, rural school districts struggle to attract and retain teachers due to issues with housing, wages, benefits, retirement, and remoteness. Alaska must do more to "grow its own" teachers that are familiar with the Alaskan challenges and cultures. An investment in a strong Alaska University system that provides for Alaska teacher certificates is necessary for our long-term success. *(AASB Belief 18, Resolutions 2.4, 4.1, 4.5, 4.7)*

Turn to the back to see more.

SUPPORT FOR A STRONG ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM – (HB204)

School districts across coastal Alaska rely upon a strong, reliable marine highway system to connect them to the rest of the state. The state ferry system provides a cost-effective and sometimes singular option of transportation that is necessary for the transport of students, materials, and food. The Alaska Marine Highway is an essential transportation infrastructure of the state. *(AASB Resolution 2.21)*

SUPPORT EXPANSION OF LIMITED TEACHERS CERTIFICATES – (HB24)

For school districts across the state, the ability to utilize local expertise through limited teacher certifications (Type-M) provides exceptional and needed educational opportunities. These certifications in Alaska Native cultures, non-English languages, CTE, and military science allow districts to provide classes that connect students to cultures and skills that may not otherwise be available. *(AASB Resolutions 4.11, 5.28)*