



AASB Legislative Priorities 2020

The AASB Board of Directors has chosen the following six priority areas for its 2020 legislative advocacy focus. Supporting resolutions of the membership can be found in the document ***Where We Stand 2020*** on the AASB website.

Sustainable, adequate funding for public education and our university system is the key to Alaska's future.

Ensuring a stable, sustainable and adequate funding for public education is essential to Alaska's long-term success and viability. A strong, well-funded and effective University of Alaska college program is vital to the success of public education in our state. A sustainable, long-term fiscal plan is crucial to this priority. Excellent, effective public education of the state's children and young adults is not only a constitutional mandate it is the best hope Alaska has in meeting its many future challenges successfully.

For applicable AASB resolutions in ***Where We Stand*** see the section(s): ***Funding***

Provide a culturally responsive education that includes language, place, and relevance.

AASB supports and encourages the creation of culturally responsive learning environments that support high expectations and academic achievement for all learners. In particular, AASB endorses the need for Alaska Native students to connect with their culture through the preservation and use of indigenous Alaska Native languages in the education system.

For applicable AASB resolutions in ***Where We Stand*** see the section(s): ***Personnel, Education Programs***

Embed practices to support the whole student and whole school (trauma engaged).

AASB recognizes that Alaska students experience high rates of adverse childhood experiences and childhood trauma. These experiences disproportionately impact education, health, safety and employment outcomes of Alaskans. AASB supports whole-school and trauma-informed approaches that transform learning environments, school climates, teaching practices, and relationships with students and their families. This can include:

- ✓ Caring relationships that are foundational
- ✓ An understanding of trauma and resiliency
- ✓ Integration of learning experiences for the whole child (social, cognitive, emotional, and physical)
- ✓ Prepared adults practicing and modeling skills

- ✓ School-wide coordination and climate building

For applicable AASB resolutions in *Where We Stand* see the section(s): ***Child Advocacy, Personnel***

Supporting literacy as a fundamental educational right and responsibility of the State of Alaska

AASB strongly recommends the legislature and the Governor fund and support statewide efforts that focus on significantly improving literacy skills for all Alaskan students but in particular, students' pre-k through the third grade. The ability to be proficient in literacy skills by the third grade has immense long-term impacts on the likelihood that those students will graduate high school and become productive, successful members of our society. The economic and human toll of an illiterate population is devastating to our state and our nation.

For applicable AASB resolutions in *Where We Stand* see the section(s): ***Funding, Education Programs***

Preparing students entering school to be ready to learn.

AASB encourages the Legislature to invest in Alaska's future workforce by supporting and providing resources for a quality Pre-K experience for every child. Many students enter kindergarten unprepared to begin school. Starting school without strong learning skills places some students in a position from which they may never be able to recover. Students who remain behind classmates throughout their public school experience are likely to be continually disadvantaged throughout their lives.

For applicable AASB resolutions in *Where We Stand* see the section(s): ***Funding, Child Advocacy, Education Programs***

Increase retention, recruitment, and training of highly effective teachers

AASB urges the Legislature to provide resources for a robust teacher-mentoring program while also supporting efforts, which will help retain highly effective teachers who depart the state because they can be, better compensated elsewhere. School districts across Alaska find it increasingly difficult to retain qualified, effective teachers let alone attract new candidates to vacant positions. The turnover rate is staggering in both urban and rural districts. AASB encourages the University of Alaska system to continue its emphasis to increase and improve training of teaching candidates for Alaska.

For applicable AASB resolutions in *Where We Stand* see the section(s): ***Funding, Personnel***