



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Lon Garrison, Executive Director

Email: lgarrison@asb.org

Phone: 907-463-1660

AASB's Response to Governor Dunleavy's 2024 Proposed Budget

JUNEAU - During yesterday's press conference introducing his proposed FY24 budget, Governor Dunleavy acknowledged the inflationary pressures school districts are facing and that education funding has not kept pace. While the Governor's new budget funds public education at the previous year's level, he said it is just a starting point for discussions with the legislature about how much additional funding will need to be added.

The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) is eager to take up the Governor's invitation to have a meaningful, forthright conversation about the need for significantly greater education funding that includes a long overdue increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

We are encouraged that the newly-formed Senate majority is also focused on sufficient education funding to support the outcomes we desire for all students.

Years of "flat funding" Alaska's public education system has prevented school districts from keeping up with rapidly increasing operating costs. Significant revenue shortfalls have resulted in catastrophic teacher shortages, the elimination of needed programs and services, and a continued decline in opportunities for student success.

Each year Alaska's school boards and superintendents struggle to allocate inadequate resources to meet students' needs. Schools have historically been the center of most Alaskan communities whose citizens and families now feel the true impact of insufficient funding.

The Governor and his commissioners mentioned their desire to make Alaska the best place to raise a family. Acting Commissioner Hedberg spoke about the need to support families, their health, and their communities as part of a Healthy Families initiative. Excellent public schools are a crucial element of that equation, and school board members understand this more than anyone.

AASB looks forward to engaging with Governor Dunleavy and the 33rd Alaska Legislature to develop a funding plan for Alaska's public school system that is both sufficient and sustainable.

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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. Visit asb.org to learn more.