

CORE RESOLUTIONS

1.10 LOCAL CONTROL FOR THE OPERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

AASB strongly supports the fundamental right of local control in all facets of the operation of local school districts and decisions affecting the education of public school students. AASB is protective of local control to include but not limited to the following:

- AASB is opposed to mandated school district or local school consolidation.
- AASB is opposed to mandated borough formation or consolidation.
- AASB is opposed to any attempt to create alternatives to the creation, operation, or revocation of charters for charter schools. Alaska's charter schools are public schools authorized, supported, and governed by local school boards.
- AASB opposes any overreach into the operation of local schools by both the state and federal government. School boards willingly comply with legislation that provides guidance but opposes regulatory direction beyond the general intent of legislation.
- AASB opposes any legislative intent to determine term limits for school board members. Local communities have the right of self-determination and are the best qualified to make decisions based on what is in the best interest for their students.
- AASB opposes non-legislative changes to the State funding formula, including those that further restrict local governance and decision-making for school funding already outlined in the State funding formula.

Rationale. Self-determination and local control of both Borough/Municipal school districts and Rural Education Attendance Area school districts are granted by the Alaska State Constitution and empowered through Alaska Statutes for these self-determination rights and local control of education. Alaska State Constitution Article 1, Section 2 – “All political power is inherent in the people. All government originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted for the good of the people as a whole.” Article 10, Section 1 – “The purpose of this article is to provide for maximum local self-government....”. Article 10, Section 2 – “All local government powers shall be vested in boroughs and cities.....”. AS 14.08.101 – Powers of an REAA Regional School Board and AS 14.14.090 – Duties of a Borough school board provide for broad authority for local school boards to operate, manage, oversee local public schools. “One size fits all” is not a valid or appropriate path for education. Local citizens know best what their students need and are able to discern the most appropriate curriculum, instructional methodology, and cultural nuances that provide the best education for their children.

*Adopted 2024
(Sunsets 2029)*

Amendment proposed by Juneau School District

CORE RESOLUTIONS

2.50 REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA REVISE THE SCORING OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO PRIORITIZE LIFE AND SAFETY ISSUES AND ESTABLISH A SEPARATE FUNDING LIST FOR REAA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) urges the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to revise the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) scoring system to ensure that projects addressing critical life, health, and safety concerns receive the highest priority for funding.

AASB supports the inclusion of the following improvements to the CIP process:

1. Prioritization of projects that directly address urgent life, health, and safety issues within school facilities.
2. Incorporation of the number of years a project has remained unfunded as a scoring factor, giving additional weight to long-delayed projects.
3. Establishment of a separate funding list for Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) districts to ensure equitable consideration for districts without local government funding support.

Rationale. The current State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Capital Improvement Project (CIP) scoring system does not adequately prioritize projects that address critical life, health, and safety issues within school facilities. Numerous school facility projects across the state have remained unfunded for multiple years, leading to worsening conditions and compounding risks for students and staff.

REAA school districts do not have a local tax base or municipal government to help share in the costs of capital facility projects and major maintenance. The State of Alaska therefore carries the responsibility to ensure that facilities in REAA districts are safe, functional, and conducive to learning. Revising the CIP scoring system to give greater weight to life, health, and safety priorities and to long-delayed projects would strengthen the state's ability to meet its obligation to provide equitable and safe learning environments for all Alaska students.

Proposed by Southeast Island School District

CORE RESOLUTIONS

2.51 ADDRESSING THE EMERGENCY FIRE SUPPRESSION FAILURE AT THORNE BAY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) urges the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to immediately address and fund the replacement of the failed fire suppression system at Thorne Bay School gymnasium, operated by the Southeast Island School District.

AASB further supports the establishment of emergency response and interim funding mechanisms within the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) program to ensure that imminent life-safety hazards in Alaska’s schools can be resolved without delay.

Rationale. The Southeast Island School District has operated the Thorne Bay School gymnasium with a failed fire suppression system for an extended period. Despite submitting this project through the State of Alaska’s CIP program for **seventeen consecutive years**, funding has not been approved. The District has identified this project as a critical life-safety need essential to the protection of students, staff, and facilities, yet less urgent facility projects have been funded ahead of this request.

On August 14, 2025, the District formally requested that unexpended funds from the Hollis K–12 School Replacement Project (GR-20-002) be reallocated to address this urgent need. The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) denied that request on August 26, 2025, citing statutory restrictions. In response, the District implemented Fire Impairment Plan #2025IMP0005 in consultation with the State Fire Marshal as an interim mitigation measure; however, this plan does not provide the permanent protection necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Given the prolonged delay in addressing this serious safety risk, AASB supports immediate state action to resolve the fire suppression system failure at Thorne Bay School and urges the creation of an expedited, emergency funding pathway within the CIP process for critical life-safety projects statewide.

Proposed by Southeast Island School District

CORE RESOLUTIONS

2.52 EDUCATION PAYROLL HEAD TAX

The AASB lends its full support to the establishment of an annual education head tax. An education head tax will provide a secure source of funding for public elementary and secondary education.

Rationale. The funding of public education in Alaska is subject to an annual appropriation from the state's general fund and is contingent upon available state revenues. State revenue is primarily derived from two sources: oil revenues and investment returns from the Permanent Fund. Both funding sources can vary wildly from year to year, providing little stability for education funding. Education funding is also subject to the changing funding priorities of administrations and legislatures. Funding for education has increasingly failed to provide a stable and secure source of funding for Alaskan students. A yearly education head tax will provide a secure funding source for public education funding and allow for long-range education planning. The education tax alone will not solve the issue of funding education, but it could serve as a solid foundation and as a part of a larger fiscal solution for the State of Alaska.

Proposed by Northwest Arctic Borough School District

CORE RESOLUTIONS

2.53 APPRECIATION TO THE ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS FOR ADVOCATING AND SECURING AN INCREASE TO THE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION

The Lower Yukon School District Regional School Board expresses its deep appreciation to the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) for its tireless advocacy on behalf of Alaska's students and districts. Through persistent efforts, collaboration with member boards, and effective communication with policymakers, AASB helped secure an increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This achievement, combined with the Legislature's override of the Governor's veto, provides districts with much-needed funding to support quality instruction, recruit and retain staff, and meet the diverse needs of students across Alaska.

Rationale. For more than a decade, Alaska's Base Student Allocation remained stagnant while the costs of education steadily increased. This strained district budgets, reduced services, and limited educational opportunities for students. During this time, AASB consistently elevated the voices of local boards, superintendents, educators, and communities across the state, keeping the call for predictable and adequate funding at the forefront of legislative discussion.

The 2025 BSA increase and veto override affirm that Alaska's children were a statewide priority. This success was made possible by AASB's advocacy and coordination, which unified districts and amplified the collective voice of school boards. Recognizing AASB's leadership in this effort encourages continued collaboration between school boards and the association to ensure that public education remains a top priority for state policymakers.

Proposed by Lower Yukon School District