The Alaska Legislature

What Happened in 2016 and What's Likely to Happen in 2017

Norm Wooten, Lisa Parady & Kathleen
Plunkett
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When the 29th Legislature Convened in January 2016

- Alaska North Slope crude @ \$30/barrel
- Alaska operating budget @ record \$3.5 billion deficit
- Gov. Walker proposes cuts, tax increases, draw on Permanent Fund earnings to fill gap
- Alaska Legislature agrees on budget cuts but little else



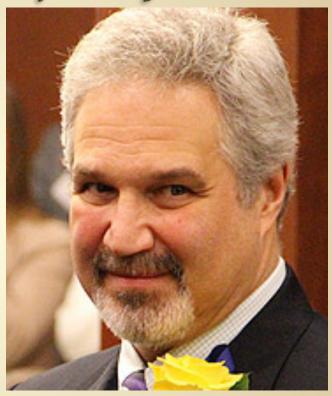
When the 29th Legislature Adjourned in June

- Gov. Walker vetoed \$1.3 billion from budget approved by Legislature, including \$58.3 million from K-12 Education:
 - Foundation formula: cut \$6.35 million
 - Pupil transportation: cut \$6.35 million
 - One-time funding outside formula: cut \$4.7 million
 - School debt reimbursement: cut \$30.5 million
 - Rural school construction fund: cut \$10.4 million



30th Alaska Legislature Senate Majority

Senate President Pete Kelly (Fairbanks)



Senate Finance Committee Co-Chairs



Lyman Hoffman (Bethel)



Anna McKinnon (Anchorage)



Other Senate Leaders



Sen. Peter Miccichi Majority Leader **Kevin Meyer Rules Committee Chair**



Senate Education Committee



Shelly Hughes (Palmer)



30th Alaska Legislature House Leadership



House Speaker
Bryce Edgmon
(Dillingham)



House Finance Committee Co-chairs



Neal Foster (Nome)



Paul Seaton (Homer)



Other House Leaders



Chris Tuck Majority Leader



Gabriel LeDoux Rules Committee Chair



Association of Alaska School Boards Advocates for Alaska's Youth

House Education Committee



Harriet Drummond (Anchorage)



<u>Major Issues</u> State Fiscal Plan

- North Slope crude oil sells at \$45 a barrel
 (October price): up 50 percent from January.
- Daily production at 498,000 barrels (2016)
- Caelus discovery of potentially large oil deposit on North Slope probably a decade away from production.
- Constitution Budget Reserve at \$6.3 billion (July
 1)
- FY 17 Budget <u>Deficit</u> \$3.1 billion (estimated)



<u>Major Issues</u> State Fiscal Plan

(Large Targets)

Budget Cuts

- Formula programs, i.e.
 K-12 foundation
- Permanent Fund Dividend
- Oil Tax Credits
- Reference: Resolves 2.1 (Fiscal Plan) 2.2 (Education Funding)

New Revenues

- Permanent Fund draw
- General taxation (income/ sales tax)
- Oil & other resource taxes



Major Issues Cost Shifting

PERS-TRS Retirement

- SB 207 & 208 proposed major shift of employer costs to municipalities and school districts.
- Buck Consultants
 estimated \$2.1 billion over
 20 years in TRS costs
 added to districts.
- Reference: AASB Resolve 2.19

School Debt Retirement

- Governor's veto of 25
 percent of state
 reimbursement funds shifts
 more costs to local govts.
- Veto of <u>rural school fund</u> transfer doesn't impact projects immediately, but may set precedent for future cuts.
- Reference: AASB Resolve 2.12



Major Issues School Improvement

Teacher & Superintendent Vacancies

- 64 vacancies in classrooms statewide at beginning of school.
 Substitute shortage, as well (Source: Alaska Teacher Placement)
- Superintendent turnover high

AASB Position

- Resolve 4.4 Bolster training & incentives for special education teachers
- Resolve 4.5 Flexibility & incentives for teachers & administrators
- Resolve 4.10 Re-open
 Retire-rehire



School Improvement Cost Cutting

Efficiencies to date:

- Repealed exit exam
- Eliminated 70% waiver paperwork
- Focused training mandate for crisis intervention to essential staff
- Collaboration & consolidation
- On-line classes

Efficiencies to come?

- Consolidate School
 Districts (see Resolve 1.2)
- Statewide salary & benefits system (see 2015 study by UA researchers)



Grassroots Lobbying



- Get to know your legislator
- Make contact before session starts on January 17th

Congratulate Them

Send a note
 congratulating them for
 election or re-election
 (if they were on the
 ballot)





Show Them Your Schools



- Invite them to visit schools or district offices
- Send them your district newsletters
- Notify them of success stories (students & staff)



Get Acquainted With Staff

- Staff in district or in Juneau play a key role in any legislative process
 - Staff often have longer tenure at the legislature than most legislators. They are an important source of historical information about issues. Staff also work full-time; legislators are at the Capitol only part-time.

venty-Ninth Legislatu e List, March 16, 201

ne / Fax	Staff	
e# 465-2327	Peter Fellman	
K #	Brittany Hutchison	1
	John Manly	
	Michael Smith	Finar
e# 465-3779	Wendy Focose	Kena
k # 465-2833	Sharon Kelly	
	Tyra Smith MacKinnon	
	Thomas Wright	465-6



Social Media & Newsletters

BE SOCIAL

CONNECT WITH US!









- Get connected to social media of your legislators
- Newsletters can be informative: get on the mailing list



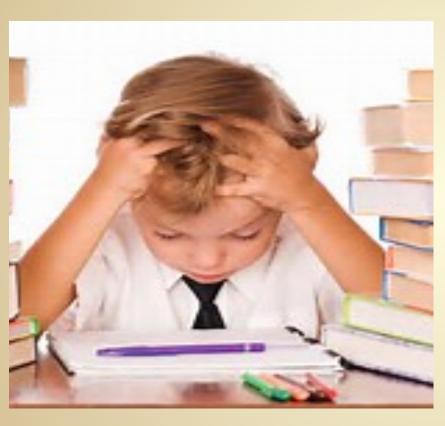
Legislative Fly-Ins

- Ask for an appointment well in advance
- AASB Fly-Ins scheduled for early February & Mid March





Do Your Homework



Prepare for your visit

- Who will tell <u>your</u> <u>story</u> and when will they speak?
- Bring handouts



Thank You Follow-up

 Send a note of thanks to every legislator you visit



