ADVOCACY

IN THE MIDST OF A PANDEMIC!
6 DAYS & COUNTING

- Legislative Council is already making contingency plans.
- Capitol is currently closed to the public.
- Legislators, staff, & press must be masked.
- Legislators & staff are asked to not travel outside of Juneau during the session.
- Public access will be revisited closer to the session convening.
The Importance of School Board Participation

- Grassroots advocacy will take on a new urgency
- School Boards are strongly encouraged to set up Zoom meetings and/or telephone calls with their legislators prior to session.
- This is even more critical if you have a new legislator.
The Importance of School Board Participation

• Prompt responses to email “Calls-To-Action” will provide meaningful input for legislators at critical points during the session.

• “Testify-by-Text” provides an alternative for testimony. To join: text AASB to 474747

• The Session newsletter will provide you with weekly information on upcoming committee hearings and updates on moving legislation.
What can we expect from the 32nd legislature?

• It’s obvious that politically the legislature is moving to the right.
• The R’s made big gains in both bodies – BUT it is not quite as simple as it might appear.
The Senate is composed of 13 R’s & 7 D’s
It may not be as it seems!
The “tipping point” may be the moderate “R’s” – Stevens, Stedman, Bishop, & von Imhoff.
And Senator Hoffman is also a “wild card.”
A coalition or a majority of “R’s”???
What can we expect from the 32nd legislature?

- The House is composed of 21 R’s, 16 D’s, & 3 I’s.
- District 10 (Rep. Eastman) is always a “wild card”.
- And – what will happen to those R’s who caucused with the coalition – LeBon, Thompson, Stutes?
- Then there is always the I’s (Non-Affiliated) Schrage, Ortiz, Patkotak
What can we expect from the 32\textsuperscript{nd} legislature?

- Depending on the organization we may see new leadership in House Ed Committee should the “R’s” gain the majority.
- Sen Stevens (R-Kodiak) may retain the Senate Ed Committee chair, depending on how the caucus decides to handle the moderate “R’s” from the 31\textsuperscript{st} legislature.
- Certainly no one in the 32\textsuperscript{nd} legislature can match the education experience of Sen. Stevens.
As if that wasn’t enough!

• A number of legislators ran on a platform of a “full” PFD.
• A $1000 PFD would cause a $900 million deficit.
• A statutory “full” PFD would create a $2.4 billion deficit.
The Budget Conundrum

• The CBR (cash reserve) has been drained beyond what is needed to meet state expenses.
• Will there be an attempt to “raid” the PF beyond the 5% POMV draw?
• The PF provides 2/3 of state expenditures.
• WTI Crude Oil futures were $52.98 per barrel as of Jan. 12 - 1 yr ago $60 – 2 yrs ago $73
What does this mean for education?

• Education is 2\textsuperscript{nd} largest budget consumer at $1.2 billion.
• This makes education a “target”!
• This could be accomplished in one of two ways:
  1. Outright reductions to the foundation;
  2. “Cost shifting” (i.e. bond debt reimbursement, pupil transportation, etc.)
Governor’s Proposed Budget

- Education budget decreased due to drop in ADM.
- No allowance for drop in ADM due to pandemic.
- Bond Debt Reimbursement at 2020 level (50%)
- Statutory PFD + ”make-up” for 2019/2020
Federal Election Results

• This election was the most acrimonious ever seen – in both parties!

• A majority of Alaskans supported President Trump in his bid for reelection.

• Senator Sullivan retained his seat over challenger Dr. Al Gross.

• Congressman Young prevailed over challenger Alyse Galvin.
• Sen. Alexander’s (R-TN) retirement will bring new leadership to the Sen HELP Committee.
• With the Georgia runoff complete the D’s seem to have regained control of the Senate.
• With the ”D’s” control of the Senate, Sen. Murray (D-WA) is the presumed chair of HELP.
Federal Election Results

• “D’s” will remain the majority in the House although they lost some seats.

• It is expected that Rep. Scott (D-VA) will retain the chair of the House Education & Labor Committee and Rep. Foxx (R-NC) will continue as the ranking member.
You can make a difference

• Contact your legislator
• Respond to Calls-to-Action, Testify-by-Text alerts
• Develop a relationship with your legislator
• Advocate for your students
• Tell your story
• Remember – If you don’t, who will? You were elected to provide a education for the children of your school district.