Key Legislative Issues & Bill Review

Norm Wooten
February 7, 2016
Good News
Supreme Court Decision

- Court ruled 4-0 on Jan. 8 to uphold constitutionality of required local contribution
  - Preserves $228 million in local share of foundation formula
  - AASB & ASA intervened on side of State of Alaska
Good News
Supreme Court Decision

- No need to rewrite foundation formula
- Legislature has plenty on its plate already:
  - Medicaid reform
  - Criminal Justice reform
  - Oil Tax rewrite
  - $4 billion deficit
Good News
Governor’s Budget

FY 2017 budget proposes full funding of foundation formula
- Includes $50 increase to BSA ($5,930) that was part of HB 278 passed in 2014
- Capital budget includes 7 school projects totaling $36.5 million
- $122 million in school bond reimbursement
Good News (maybe)
Alaska Measures of Progress

- EED begins search for new assessment for use in 2016-17
- Concerns with AMP voiced by districts; EED listened

Commissioner Mike Hanley
Transitions
EED Leadership

Susan McCauley
Interim Commissioner (March 1)

James Fields
Chair, State Board of Education

Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska’s Youth
Bills in Play
SB 80 Education Standards

- Requires review of new standards by committee of parents and legislative approval
  - Status: Senate CRA Committee
Bills in Play
SB 89 Parental Rights

- Requires districts to allow students to withdraw from tests or classes, with parental permission
- Prohibits districts from allowing Planned Parenthood on campus
  - Status: Senate Rules Committee

Sen. Mike Dunleavy, R-Wasilla
Bills in Play
SB 79 Rehire Retired

- Re-opens rehire program for retired teachers & administrators
  - Status: Senate CRA Committee
  - HB 172 identical bill in House Education Committee

Sen. Mike Dunleavy, R-Wasilla
Bills in Play

HB 102 Psychiatric Treatment Funding

- Requires districts to provide funding to residential centers for education of students under treatment
- Latest version (1/29) allows appeal of district decisions to EED & Board of Education
  • Status: House Education Committee

Rep. Wes Keller, R-Wasilla

Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska's Youth
HB 157 Language Immersion Charters

- Allows creation of Native language charter schools
- Teacher certification through local tribes authorized
- Benchmark tests in language of instruction
  - Status: House Education Committee

Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, D-Sitka
Bills in Play
SCR 1 Civics Education Task Force

- Creates 12-member task force to recommend civics education curriculum for K-12
  - Status: Passed Senate, in House Education Committee

sen. Gary Stevens, R-Kodiak

Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska’s Youth
New Bills

HB 285 Student Social Media

- Prohibits districts from compelling access to student’s social media, but may request access to investigate harassment or bullying
  - Status: House Education Committee

Rep. Andy Josephson, D-Anchorage
Amends 14.20.177(a) to allow layoffs for any reason

Deletes requirement of decreased enrollment or drop in basic need of 3 percent

- Status: House Education Committee

Rep. Cathy Tilton, R-Wasilla
New Bills
HB 302 School Discipline

- Prohibits suspension or expulsion of students for ‘willful disobedience or defiance’
  - Status: House Education Committee

Rep. Geran Tarr, D-Anchorage
Informal proposal to end state funding for any school of less than 25 students; no bill filed yet.

- AASB supports existing floor of 10 students; Resolve 2.34 recommends partial funding for even smaller schools for 2 years.

Rep. Lynn Gattis, R-Wasilla
Governor Walker proposes mix of budget cuts, taxes, and reserve funds to fill estimated $4 billion deficit.

(He will speak for himself at lunch... )
Governor proposes $100 million reduction, including cuts to EED:

- Early Childhood grants to districts: $2 million cut (zeroed out)
- Parents as Teachers: $500,000 cut (zeroed out)
- Best Beginnings: $320,000 cut (zeroed out)
- Broadband grants to districts: $672,000 cut (20% reduction)
“Getting to about $800 million... is certainly doable... possible.” (APRN interview Jan. 22)

Is it possible to cut $800 million without reducing education further?

Senate President Kevin Meyer, R-Anchorage
Fiscal Challenge
Why cut $800 million?

• Searching for ‘right-sized’ government
  • $800 million cut would leave $4.5 billion operating budget
  • Use reserve funds to fill remaining deficit, avoid taxes and PFD cuts

Sen. Pete Kelly, R-Fairbanks
Co-chair, Senate Finance
Fiscal Challenge
‘Right-Sized Government’

What does a right-sized classroom look like?
One result of a right-sized government can look like this.
Fiscal Challenge
Alaska vs. U.S.

- U.S. DOE reports Alaska spent $2.4 billion on K-12 education in 2013
- Did it feel like that to you?
- Foundation formula funding was half that, or $1.2 billion

Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2012–13 (Fiscal Year 2013)
First Look

Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska’s Youth
Brad Keithley report to Legislature:

- K-12 funding has been flat over past 10 years when inflation is considered.