



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Qaiyaan Harcharek, President
Members of the School Board

THROUGH: Legislative Committee, Board of Education

THROUGH: Rich Carlson, Superintendent

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Richard Carlson
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THROUGH: Fadil Limani, Chief Financial Officer

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Fadil Limani
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FROM: Chelsie Overby, Board Secretary

DATE: August 31, 2021

SUBJECT: Legislative Committee Update

Memo No. SB22-039
(Informational/Work Session)

NSBSD Strategic Plan Goal:

4.0 Financial & Operational Stewardship: Effectively employ our operational and financial resources to support our strategic goals and long-term stability of the district.

Issue Summary:

The Legislative Committee met on August 31, 2021 at 9:00 AM. The committee received a legislative update from Reggie Joule and Christine Hess on the following:

HB 3004, An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; making capital appropriations and supplemental appropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17(c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund; and providing for an effective date.

- 32nd Legislature (2021-2022); Sponsored by House Ways & Means

American Families Plan, Biden Administration

SB 8, An Act relating to early education programs provided by school districts; relating to school age eligibility; relating to funding for early education programs; establishing early education programs and a voluntary parent program; relating to the duties of the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to certification of teachers; establishing a reading intervention program for public school students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three; establishing a reading program in the Department of Education and Early Development; establishing a teacher retention working group; and providing for an effective date.

- 32nd Legislature (2021-2022); Sponsored by Sen. Begich, Sen. Kawasaki, Sen. Gray-Jackson

Governor Dunleavy, Commissioner Johnson, and Commissioner Kelly Tshibaka v. Alaska Legislative Council, on Behalf of Alaska State Legislature; Coalition for Education, Intervenor

- Supreme Court No. S-17666 and Trial Court Case No. 1JU-19-00753CI

Governor Dunleavy, Commissioner Johnson, and Commissioner Kelly Tshibaka v. Coalition for Education Equity

- Supreme Court No. S-17785 and Trial Court Case No. 1JU-19-00753CI

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Predetermination Proceeding, in accordance with 20 USC 7009(c)(1)(A), submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (US-Ed) its disparity test and formal notice that it intended to consider federal Impact Aid payments when allocating state aid to school districts. The disparity test measures the disparity among state aid revenues available to the school districts in the state. In order for the state to consider federal impact aid payments (and reduce state aid accordingly) there can be no more than 25% disparity among school districts, discounting the highest and lowest 5%. US-Ed recently requested for the first time that DEED include transportation costs in its disparity test submission. US-Ed held a telephonic predetermination hearing on June 8, 2021. The department filed a written response to the issues raised by US-Ed at the hearing on June 24, 2021 arguing that transportation costs should not be included in the state's disparity test. On June 30, 2021 US-Ed distributed its decision concluding that Alaska does not meet the disparity test federal requirements and that, as a result, the state is not eligible to consider a portion of impact aid payments as local resources in determining state aid entitlements for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. DEED intends to request a hearing on this decision.

In addition to the legislative update, the committee reviewed the Association of Alaska School Boards Where We Stand document, their resolution process and timeline; and the Board of Directors sun-setting resolutions. The purpose included setting the groundwork for this work session item; setting the groundwork for the Rural Caucus during the AASB Annual Conference; and to set the legislative priorities for the legislative session.

The legislative priorities were derived from the Belief Statements to set the “Big Picture” which included: Local Governance; Meeting School Facility Needs for Alaska Students; Funding for Early Learning Programs in Alaska; Equity in Education; Alaska Native Teacher Hire & Retention; and Early Childhood Education. In these priorities in the Belief Statements under subject area, the committee identified resolutions within the AASB Where We Stand document to discuss during the Rural Caucus. The resolutions are as follows:

Governance:

- 1.1 Opposing Mandated School Consolidation;
- 1.12 Supporting Local Control for Determining School Board Term Limits and Sectional Representation;
- 2.1 Sustained, Reliable and Adequate Educational Funding for Alaska’s students through nonvolatile funding source;
- 2.2 Urging Adequate, Equitable and Predictable Funding;
- 2.6 Funding Standards Based Early Learning Programs in Alaska;

Funding:

- 2.8 Following the Capital Improvement Project Priority List for Non-Bonded Projects;
- 2.26 Urging Revisions to the Step-Down Hold Harmless Clause for Reductions in ADM;
- 2.29 Urging the State to Conduct and Fund Facility Condition Surveys (et al);
- 2.41 Funding for Internet Services;
- 2.51 Fully Funding the REAA Rural Construction Fund and Bond Debt Reimbursement;
- 2.57 Addressing Equity Issues with Internet Access and Connectivity

Child Advocacy:

- 3.6 Opiates, Inhalants, Alcohol, Tobacco, Methamphetamine & Other Drug Abuse;

3.7 Cooperation among service providers serving children;

3.8 Suicide Prevention, Education, and Treatment Efforts;

3.26 Supporting the Adoption of Trauma-Informed and Culturally Relevant Practices to improve student achievement and reduce behavioral deficits for all Alaskan students;

Personnel:

4.5 Addressing the teacher, specialist, and administrator shortage

4.6 Repeal the social security government pension offset and windfall elimination provision

Education & Programs:

5.8 Supporting Regional career and technical education centers

While there are other resolutions that effect or are inclusive of the North Slope, the committee felt these resolutions were prevalent this fiscal year.

Background:

Committee Members: The Legislative Committee members on the Board are Robyn Burke, Frieda Nageak, and Qaiyaan Harcharek as alternate. This committee meeting included the participation of Robyn Burke and Qaiyaan Harcharek.

Rural Caucus/REAA: North Slope Borough School District; North West Arctic Borough School District; Alaska Gateway, Aleutians East; Bering Strait; Chatham, Chugach, Copper River; Delta/Greely, Denali; Iditarod; Kashunamiut, Kuspuk; Lake & Peninsula, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon; Pelican, Pribilof; Southeast Island, Southwest Region; Yukon Flats, Yukon Koyukuk, Yupiit