



Governor's flat funding of education equates to another cut for Public Schools

For Immediate Release

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Juneau, Alaska —Governor Dunleavy announced the state budget for the upcoming fiscal year, revealing a stark absence of additional funding for public education through the Base Student Allocation (BSA). It was discouraging to realize that the Governor recognizes the impact of inflation on the entire state and yet does not acknowledge the same effects on the operation of Alaska's Public Education system. As dedicated advocates for quality public education in Alaska, the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) and the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA) express profound disappointment and concern over this decision.

Despite the persistent efforts of educators, parents, families, and advocates across the state, the budget announcement falls far short of addressing the critical needs of our public education system. The decision not to allocate additional funds comes when schools are grappling with unprecedented challenges, including the ongoing effects of the global pandemic, national educator shortage, the impact of high inflation, and the urgent need for resources to support Alaska's students and educators alike.

Like the Governor, AASB and ACSA are proud of the achievements of Alaska's public charter schools. However, the success and support of our innovative public charter schools depend upon a healthy, and appropriately funded school district supporting all public school options.

Public education is the cornerstone of our society, shaping our children's future and ensuring our communities' prosperity. The lack of increased funding continues to jeopardize the ability of schools to provide a well-rounded and equitable education for all students. It undermines the tireless work of educators who are already stretched incredibly thin, striving to meet the diverse needs of their students with limited resources. Most importantly, it jeopardizes our ability to provide opportunities for positive student outcomes.

The ramifications of this budget proposal extend far beyond the classroom, affecting the long-term prospects of our state. A continuous and intentional investment in an excellent education for every student every day is an investment in Alaska's future workforce, economic stability, and the societal well-being of our state and its people. Families and businesses look for this when considering moving to a state. Without sustained, adequate funding, we risk compromising the very foundation upon which our communities thrive.

AASB and ACSA sincerely thank legislators for passing an increase in education funding in the FY2024 budget. Unfortunately, that significant support was dramatically reduced when it was vetoed by the Governor before being signed into law. Our organizations urge the state legislature to once again prioritize the needs of our students, communities, and schools. We call for reevaluating the Governor's budget to ensure that education receives the attention and investment it desperately requires.

As organizations committed to the well-being of our students and the strength of our educational system, we stand ready to collaborate with the Governor, policymakers, educators, and community members to find sustainable solutions that will uplift our schools and secure a brighter future for all.

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