

July 6, 2016

Southeast Island School District
Attn: Lauren Burch
PO Box 19569
Thorne Bay, AK 99919

Dear Lauren:

I hope this letter finds you well and that you are enjoying your summer! We thank you for your membership and continued support of the Coalition for Education Equity and have enclosed your school district's membership renewal invoice for 2016-2017. Please pay your membership invoice as soon as possible to help us conserve administrative costs.

2015-16 has been an eventful and challenging year for education in Alaska, making our presence and efforts more critical than ever. Our combined voices have truly made a difference this year in several key areas, demonstrating the influence of our organization and the importance of a strong and vibrant membership.

- Our amicus brief advanced a key constitutional argument emphasized in the Alaska Supreme Court decision in the Ketchikan Borough school funding case, which would have removed more than \$220 million from Alaska school funding – much of that loss coming from rural school budgets, though impacting most, if not all other districts in the long run;
- Before they gained momentum, we prepared a legal opinion and worked behind the scenes with Legislators and Legislative staff to quash efforts to increase the minimum school enrollment;
- In the midst of fiscal crisis and very tough budget negotiations, our presence in developing strategies and approaches for the House Independent-Democratic Minority was critical in leading to a legislative budget that included full BSA and early childhood funding, as well as school construction funding that unblocks the REAA fund for rural schools next year;
- Ed Connector, developed with superintendent input and guidance to expand school district administrative capacity and increase leadership collaboration, has more than 400 users representing nearly all of our state's 53 school districts. School leaders are sharing promising practices, tools and resources, and are able to dialogue and problem-solve with peers across the state.

Even with these successes, we experienced some disappointments and know that the road forward is going to be bumpy. Governor Walker's vetoes eliminated some of the key education funding we fought for; the Legislature failed to complete funding for the Kivalina School, placing the State in breach of the Kasayulie consent decree; and we faced several attempts this session to cut, eliminate or transfer funding to school

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districts that would have been devastating to our schools and Alaska's children. We can expect that these threats to education funding in Alaska will continue and we will be prepared to fight them – in the public arena, within the legislative process, and through legal action if necessary.

Your voice and your support are essential to ensuring we have a strong presence that effectively fights for our kids and wins. Please send in your membership renewal payment today.

Sincerely,



Sarah Sledge
Executive Director

Enclosure: 2016-2016 Membership Renewal Invoice