



Craig City School District

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To: House Special Committee on Ways and Means Members
From: Chris Reitan, Craig City School District Superintendent

I'm providing written testimony to the House Special Committee on Ways and Means in opposition to HB 165.

HB 165 provides additional funding for school districts operating correspondence programs through the Base Student Allocation (150% of the Base Student Allocation). However, HB 165, as currently drafted, would potentially financially destroy all statewide correspondence programs. Outlined below are specific concerns with the bill that Craig City School District has identified.

- The “shall” provide an allotment will cause challenges with late enrollments (after the student count period) for all districts operating statewide correspondence programs. As public schools, students are eligible to enroll in our programs at any time during the school year. However, forcing districts to provide full allotments for students, regardless of when students enroll in our program, would potentially mean operating our program could become financially unviable because we would be providing specific allotment amounts to students without having received any state funding for them during the annual four-week student count period. Additionally, the “shall” provide an allotment eliminates local control from the CCSD School Board from developing an annual budget that serves all students enrolled within our district.
- Requiring 100% of funding, every single penny of the funding formula, to pass through the correspondence school as an annual student allotment would make all correspondence schools financially unviable. As HB 165 is currently drafted, none of the monies correspondence programs receive for each student through the Base Student Allocation could be used to support our instructional support responsibilities as outlined in AS 14.03.300 which states:
 - (a) A district or the department that provides a correspondence study program shall annually provide an individual learning plan for each student enrolled in the program developed in collaboration with the student, the parent or guardian of the student, a certificated teacher assigned to the student, and other individuals involved in the student's learning plan. An individual learning plan must
 - (1) be developed with the assistance and approval of the certificated teacher assigned to the student by the district;
 - (2) provide for a course of study for the appropriate grade level consistent with state and district standards;
 - (3) provide for an ongoing assessment plan that includes statewide assessments required for public schools under AS 14.03.123(f);
 - (4) include a provision for modification of the individual learning plan if the student is below proficient on a standardized assessment in a core subject;
 - (5) provide for a signed agreement between the certificated teacher assigned to the student and at least one parent or the guardian of each student that verifies compliance with an individual learning plan;

- (6) provide for monitoring of each student's work and progress by the certificated teacher assigned to the student.

CCSD opposes HB 165 and requests the House Special Committee on Ways and Means terminate HB 165. HB 165 does not support our Alaska school districts' efforts to develop the most effective instructional programs to meet the specific needs of our student body and our families that we are privileged to serve. HB 165 appears to be in direct opposition to our collective responsibilities across the state to develop the most robust public education options for all students and families.

CCSD prefers HB 139, as currently amended, that provides correspondence programs 90% of the BSA x 1.20 Special Needs funding factor. It makes more sense to utilize the existing levers within the foundation formula and to expand funding to a student population that has been previously excluded from this funding source.