Revised

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #35 (2005-2006) September 12, 2005

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: ALASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS' CORE RESOLUTIONS

ASD Goal: *Ensure public accountability through effective consultation with community to ensure wise use of financial resources and responsible construction and maintenance of facilities, and effective communication with students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels.*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board move to approve and adopt the Anchorage School Board Legislative Subcommittee's changes and additions to the Association of Alaska School Boards' (AASB) Belief Statements and Core Resolutions (Attachment A).

PETINENT FACTS:

The Legislative subcommittee of the Anchorage School Board met several times over the past month to consider changes and additions to the AASB 2005 Belief Statements and Core Resolutions proposed by members of the Anchorage School Board. The attached document reflects these changes and additions.

At its annual meeting in November, AASB will adopt its 2005 Belief Statements and Core Resolutions. The belief statements and resolutions will form the basis for AASB's legislative program for the 2nd Session of the Alaska State Legislature, which begins January 9, 2006.

AASB will only consider recommendations for changes to its 2005 Belief Statements and Core Resolutions that are formally adopted by a school board.

Revised

Suggested Anchorage School Board proposed amendments are included within the document.

CC/LAW

Attachment

Prepared by: Larry Wiget, Director, Government Relation

Approved by: Carol Comeau, Superintendent

(Attachment A)

Core Resolutions

2005

Includes Anchorage School Board Legislative Subcommittee Recommendations

Notes:

Under a policy adopted by the AASB membership in 2002, all resolutions are subject to sunset after five years. The sunset date for each resolution is noted herein. In 2005 no resolution is scheduled to sunset. Belief Statements do not sunset.

District Action:

For purposes of making a recommendation on Core Resolutions, member school districts should consider the following actions:

Continue
Amend
Delete
Adopt (new resolutions)
None (no recommendation)

Legend:

Underlined indicates text being added.
~~Strikethrough~~ indicates text being deleted.

Recommendations…appear in boxed area along with comments on recent activity.

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AASB Mission Statement

The mission of AASB is to advocate for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing quality public education, focused on student achievement, through effective local governance.
Belief Statements

Belief Statements

Belief Statements are brief philosophical statements about issues the AASB membership believes to be true. They are distinguished from Resolutions in that they are long standing, universally accepted statements that require no specific action, yet underpin the beliefs of the association.

Recommendation: Continue all Belief Statements as they appear below.

GOVERNANCE

B.1 LOCAL CONTROL
Public education is the responsibility of the states and of the local school boards created there under. This system of local school board governance is one of the purest examples of democracy in action today, in that, school boards are held accountable for public education by the public they serve as locally elected representatives. The mission of the Association of Alaska School Boards is to advocate for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing students with quality public education, focused on student achievement through effective local governance. *Amended 2003*

B.2 BINDING ARBITRATION
Binding arbitration removes decision making from locally elected school boards and puts it in the hands of an outside entity, and allows a third party to determine the salaries, benefits and working conditions of school district employees who bargain collectively. It is the elected school board's responsibility to weigh the consequences of decisions concerning management of school resources. The Association of Alaska School Boards opposes any legislation that provides for binding arbitration as the final step in collective bargaining.

B.3 ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING
State law requires the establishment of advisory school boards in REAA's and allows them in city and borough school districts. School boards have delegated authority and responsibility to those advisory school boards, and are encouraged to provide in-service opportunities and training to local advisory boards to help them become effective contributors to excellence in education in their communities.

B.4 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING
School board members are elected by their local school district citizens based on minimum statewide requirements of eligibility to vote and residency. They are responsible to the public for policy issues and budgets of millions of dollars and are coming under increasing public scrutiny. The Association of Alaska School Boards strongly encourages all school board members to avail themselves of training opportunities to increase their understanding of the issues confronting their district to improve their ability to make the decisions required of them and to demonstrate their accountability to the public.

B.5 CLASS SIZE
AASB opposes any mandating of class size or making class size a negotiable item of bargaining. The Alaska Supreme Court has held that class size is not a mandatory subject of collective bargaining. While school boards recognize the advantage of small class size, they must be able to use discretion when weighing the costs of reduced class sizes with other financial obligations and educational needs of a district. Making class size a mandatory subject of collective bargaining might make class size subject to grievance binding arbitration or otherwise diminish board control over staffing levels.

FUNDING

B.6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS TOP PRIORITY
Article VII, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all school age children. Public education is fundamental to democracy and economic advancement of the state. As such, it is the largest entitlement program. AASB calls upon the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to make education of our youth a top funding priority. *Amended 2003*

B.7 UNFUNDED MANDATES
Schools have been inundated with statutes, regulations and court decisions that require additional services without accompanying appropriations. With inflation eroding purchasing power and increased expectations for services, schools are forced to respond with decreased resources. AASB encourages all policy makers to take responsibility for their mandates by fully funding or removing them. *Amended 1999*

B.8 MEETING SCHOOL FACILITY NEEDS FOR ALASKA STUDENTS
AASB believes that the Alaska State Legislature and the Governor must resolve the continuing need for additional school space and major school maintenance. *Amended 1998, 02*

CHILD ADVOCACY

Preamble
As community leaders committed to education and the equal opportunity for each resident to achieve his/her potential, we act on behalf of all children for the good of the community; and we act on behalf of each child. We accept our responsibility and its challenge of finding viable and relevant solutions to the myriad of problems facing children today. Realizing that it takes a whole community to educate a child, we invite the legislature, agencies, organizations, businesses, communities, congregations, extended families, parents and guardians to willfully commit to the development of each child. Together we will identify and clearly articulate the needs of our children, and together we will implement effective solutions and achieve measurable results. Together, we will share in the rewards that an emotionally healthy, educated, and vital citizenry will contribute to the future of Alaska. To fulfill our role in the shared responsibility of educating children, we are resolved to pursue the following resolutions. *Amended 2002*

B.9 CHILD ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT
The advocacy role of school board members is to promote parental, public and social service commitment to the shared responsibility of educating all children and youth in public education. *Amended 1998*

B.10 LANGUAGE, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY
Alaska is a vast state and is populated by persons of diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. Our schools must provide an environment that respects the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of the student populations. Furthermore, AASB believes that schools must make every effort to support programs that encourage learning and valuing diverse cultures, and in doing so, encourages tolerance and pride without isolating or alienating a particular group. *Amended 1998*

B.11 INCREASE IN FAMILY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
AASB believes, and research supports the belief, the single most important factor in student achievement is parental, family and guardian involvement in the educational process, both at home and in the schools. AASB strongly feels family involvement in the education of children is of highest priority. Research has shown family involvement at home, in schools and education programs enhances student success. *Amended 2003*

B.12 SUPPORTING SOBRIETY
AASB encourages our students and parents to help in overcoming our communities' affliction with alcohol and drugs. AASB has long supported schools and communities that are alcohol and drug free through various efforts that:

- encourage the formation of sobriety groups in every Alaska community
- encourage the practice of healthy lifestyles, values and activities
- support existing groups working to promote sobriety
- encourage and support sober role models

B.13 PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION
AASB believes in the prevention aspects of health and social service programs. Prevention is cost effective as costly problems–in dollars and in human suffering–can many times be averted by prevention strategies. Many of the social and health problems we are experiencing now will only continue to grow if effective prevention/intervention programs are not in place. AASB supports early identification of and intervention for children at risk; and, inclusion of parents and guardians in prevention and intervention services. *Amended 2002*

B.14 PROHIBITING PERSONS CONVICTED OF SEXUAL ABUSE FROM SERVING ON SCHOOLBOARDS
AASB believes that persons convicted of sexual abuse should be legally prohibited from serving on a school board while required to maintain registration as a sex offender under AS 12.63.010.020. School board members should serve as role models for students and staff. *Amended 1998*

PERSONNEL

B.15 ALASKA NATIVE TEACHER HIRE & RETENTION
Studies have shown that Native teachers have had a very positive effect on Native students. The hiring and retention of qualified Alaska Native teachers has long been supported by educational and Native organizations. AASB strongly urges school districts to recruit qualified Native teachers. The University of Alaska is encouraged to more actively recruit Native students. Local school districts, with the help of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, are encouraged to provide leadership in developing programs to encourage Native students to choose education as a field of study, and to make every effort to foster the hiring and retention of Native teacher aides and teachers.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

B.16 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION – Amend/Anchorage School Board
All children should have opportunities to learn during the formative early childhood years. Many of Alaska's young children are placed at risk for future school failure because they do not have access to rich learning opportunities for a variety of reasons. The Association of Alaska School Boards therefore supports and encourages the development of ~~districts to develop~~ early childhood education programs that include a parent and family involvement component, ~~which~~ especially targeting at-risk children. ~~and include a parent and family involvement component.~~
Amended 1998

B.17 EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT
AASB believes the elements of a quality educational improvement effort should address the following five key areas:

- Parental Involvement: Should encourage a high degree of parental involvement in all aspects of their child's education; collaboration on societal issues outside schools that impact children's learning (schools and various agencies must collaboratively plan to provide services to children to effectively meet their needs); and accountability to the public to assure desired results – a "world class" education.
- Community engagement: Should involve many different sectors of the community in the schools to broaden the experience afforded students and promote the shared responsibility of adults in our communities in supporting Alaska's youth to achieve academic success, engage in positive, thriving behaviors and reduce unhealthy behaviors.
- Student Standards: Should include the development of education programs to meet high standards and identified competencies (they should be delivered by a variety of means that meet the diverse needs of students and prepare them to be contributing and productive citizens in a rapidly changing world).
- Professional Standards: Should include the highest standards of professionalism by school employees throughout the district.
- Accreditation Standards: Adequate and appropriate space, furnishings, equipment and technology; adequate and equitable funding that will allow for the most effective planning and use of each educational dollar; and an early childhood education program.

Amended 1998

AASB CORE RESOLUTIONS

SUBJECT AREA: GOVERNANCE

1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Association of Alaska School Boards encourages each school board to incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance to our nation's flag in a manner that it sees fit as a regular part of each district's daily activities. AASB further urges that every effort be made to inform students of the true meaning of this pledge to deepen their interest and understanding of citizenship and civic responsibility in a democratic society.

Rationale. Public education is the cornerstone of our democracy. School board service, at its core, is one of the most purely democratic institutions in America today.

The Pledge of Allegiance is an important civics lesson, recited every day across the nation by school children. *(Adopted 2002, Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.2 OPPOSING MANDATED SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION
AASB is opposed to mandated school consolidation because it will greatly reduce local control for a significant number of school districts in Alaska.

Rationale. In 2004 the Alaska Local Boundary Commission (LBC) and Department of Education & Early Development (EED) completed report which suggests only marginal savings by consolidation of school districts. AASB continues to seek and engage in cooperative and shared service opportunities, thereby creating a significant savings of state tax dollars for all involved.

The concept of cooperation and shared services as an alternative to mandated consolidation ensures local autonomy and decision making are preserved. AS.14.14.115 provides a grant program that encourages the sharing of services to recognize cost economies. Some communities and school districts have considered it viable to consolidate, and have done so through their own volition as a local decision. Others currently participate in shared administrative services, including purchasing and other business functions, and should be applauded and encouraged in their efforts to achieve efficiencies.

No evidence has been provided to support the proposition that significant savings or improved student learning would result from the indiscriminate combining of school districts. Studies on school consolidation imply an imperceptible savings. Public perception may be different. School boards are encouraged to involve the public more thoroughly in efforts to explain their budget and to seek input throughout the budgeting process. *Amended 1999, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.3 OPPOSITION TO MANDATED BOROUGH FORMATION
AASB continues to oppose *mandatory* formation of boroughs. A mandatory borough act reduces the current level of local responsibility and control by encouraging the elimination of small REAA districts and small city districts, and would also reduce the level of local control of education as it exists today.

Rationale. Local communities may differ in their values and the priorities associated with the delivery of educational services.

A mandatory borough act ignores the economic reality of the lack of an adequate tax base in some rural areas of the State. If the state wishes to require local communities to contribute financially, the legislature already has the statutory authority to implement a tax in the unorganized borough. Creating an additional level of local government may not produce the desired effect. *Amended 2001, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.4 MAINTAINING LOCAL CONTROL IN CHARTER SCHOOL FORMATION

AASB recognizes charter schools as a locally developed alternative to the standard education program. AASB supports charter schools as long as the local school board:

(a) retains the sole authority to approve the charter;
(b) retains options to terminate the charter of any school that fails to meet criteria set forth in the charter or as otherwise specified by the local school board;
(c) maintains authority to require and enforce accountability, including determining the criteria, standards or outcomes that will be used in establishing the charter;
(d) ensures that a charter does not foster racial, social, religious or economic segregation or segregation of children with disabilities.

Rationale. Section 14.12.020 in Title 14 of the Alaska Education Laws states that a school district shall be operated under the management and control of a school board. SB 88, Formation of Charter Schools, became law in 1995. It gave local school boards the ability to approve or deny charter school applications, and not be overturned by another group, and gave local boards the ability to add other requirements for charter schools, including Principal/Head Teacher Certification. *Amended 1998, 99, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.5 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

The Association of Alaska School Boards is opposed to using public tax dollars to finance private, parochial, or home school vouchers.

Rationale. Public schools educate every child, regardless of race, ability, religion, economic circumstance or special needs. Public schools, through their elected school boards, are directly accountable to the citizens of the community for the expenditure of public funds. Taxpayer-funded vouchers for private, parochial, or home school tuition and fees drain scarce resources from public classrooms and diminish revenues available for public schools. Vouchers may raise local taxes if state appropriation is insufficient.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June 2002 that a voucher program in Ohio did not violate the U.S. Constitution. Referenda in other states have turned down vouchers. The Alaska Supreme Court has held that the following provision of the Alaska Constitution, a restriction independent of the U.S. Constitution, bars disbursement of public funds for the purchase of private or parochial education:

> *Alaska Constitution, Section 1. Public Education*. The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control.

No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.

In addition, voucher funding tied to students could not fully ensure students or taxpayers the benefits of accountability measures, like state mandated content and student performance standards, and could not satisfy other state and federal mandates under which public schools are required to operate, without invading the religious and other constitutional freedoms of private and parochial schools. *(Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.6 CENTRALIZED TREASURY: DISTRIBUTION OF ALLOCATED FUNDS FOR SCHOOLS AND INTEREST EARNED

AASB urges the Legislature to provide that all designated funds directed to school districts, including interest earning related thereto, must go to school districts without penalty, and that all interest on school district funds must accrue to the school district.

Rationale. Educational funds appropriated by State and local governments are appropriated for the purpose of public education. The efforts of local school districts should be to provide sound planning for future educational needs. State funds allocated to school districts have been retained by certain municipalities under centralized treasuries. Some municipalities retain fund balances on school budget monies, and interest accrued on school funds are sometimes held by the municipalities. As it is unclear how interest on school funds are to be distributed, this action will make certain all moneys allocated and earned for schools are used to benefit children. Currently, with a municipal centralized treasury it is possible for school money to be used for things other than education. “Use it or lose it” is a disincentive to utilize educational funds in the most efficient and effective manner. Adopted 1998. *Amended 02, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.7 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NCLB)

AASB and local school districts will work closely with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to improve the State of Alaska “No Child Left Behind” Work plan approved by the US Department of Education, and to reconcile Alaska’s accountability measures (including school designators and the high school graduation qualifying exam/benchmarks) with NCLB, the State’s federally approved NCLB Work plan and coming changes under federal I.D.E.A. reauthorization. AASB also urges EED and the State Board of Education to work with AASB to advocate for amendments to NCLB to better match its requirements to its goals.

Rationale. Alaska’s school designator system and other accountability measures adopted in the 1990s, as well as the federal ESEA No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which supercedes Alaska’s accountability measures, have created a dual system of accountability. Both systems have created new expectations for raising school and student achievement, but also pose a risk of public confusion. AASB continues to seek flexibility to improve Alaska’s NCLB Work plan, in particular meeting the “highly qualified” requirement for schools with one or two teachers. AASB also encourages flexibility in paraprofessional requirements. AASB supports recognition of achievement growth as a valid indicator of progress in student achievement that should be considered toward meeting adequate yearly progress. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.8 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HOME-SCHOOLED STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

AASB urges the Legislature to give State Department of Education and Early Development the authority and funding to register and track the achievement of all school-age children throughout the state who are not enrolled in public schools or private schools that perform assessment substantially equivalent to that performed by the state. Parents of such students should be required to provide information regarding instruction of and progress of their children, to provide accountability that essential skills are being taught and learned. Public school students are already tracked through benchmark exams and the HSGQE. AASB supports testing for all students to see that adequate, essential skills are being provided.

Rationale. The goal is to ensure every child receives a quality education. Children receiving an education outside the public school system at home are not required to register or be accountable throughout their education. The State of Alaska has no compulsory law requiring some form of educational plan be filed with the state. Whether by not enrolling or by leaving the school systems of the state, no "safety nets" for students are in place to assure that all students are receiving the benefit and right of an education. No independent or objective testing, including the high school qualifying exam, is required for these students.

Though home schooling can be very effective for some, public schools often receive students who have fallen behind due to failed home schooling or the lack of schooling. Entry of these students into public education puts the receiving districts in a position of providing substantial remedial assistance, while subjecting the students to the same testing and evaluation standards as other students. With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, public schools will be unfairly held accountable for any inadequate preparation of entering students. With the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam, inadequately prepared students will pay the price of the state's failure to monitor the progress of home-schooled students. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

1.9 COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW – Amend/Anchorage School Board

Current state law requires compulsory school attendance from age 7-16. AASB supports changing the mandatory age for school attendance to run from 6 to the earlier of 17 years old or high school graduation. AASB urges the Department of Education and Early Development and enforcement agencies to work with districts to support compulsory school attendance laws**.** ~~**and provide adequate funding for mandatory enforcement efforts as a matter of child welfare and public safety**~~**. Enforcement of any compulsory attendance law is a challenge, but parents and students can and should be held accountable.**

Rationale. State and local performance standards set high expectations in mathematics, reading and writing for children age 5 through 7. Furthermore, research indicates that earlier education is beneficial. In fact, most children in Alaska are enrolled by the age of 6.

Most 7-year-old kids are in first or second grade. With the renewed emphasis on reading, writing, and mathematics skills in the first few years, skills on which the child will be assessed, children starting school late are at a big disadvantage. With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, the legislature will be accountable for paying the cost of remediation to overcome that disadvantage [NOTE: STATE IS RESPONSIBLE; SCHOOL DISTRICT IS HELD ACCOUNTABLE]. Importantly, reduction of the compulsory school age to 6 would not eliminate active home-schooling as a viable alternative for parents.

Sixteen year olds are not ready to make the enormous decision to give up a high school education. Increasing the mandatory age to 17 helps ensure students who have not yet graduated from high school stay in school and have more opportunities to meet performance

standards and pass the HSGQE. Mandatory attendance laws must be enforced, but not all school districts are able to afford a truancy officer and not all communities in Alaska have law enforcement or judicial agencies to address the issue. *Adopted 2001, Amended 2002, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

Recommendation: Continue – Amend/Anchorage School Board

SUBJECT AREA: FUNDING

2.1 SUSTAINED, RELIABLE AND ADEQUATE EDUCATIONAL FUNDING FOR ALASKA'S STUDENTS THROUGH A NON-VOLATILE FUNDING SOURCE

The sustainability, reliability and adequacy of Alaska's funding for public education are of highest concern to the Association of Alaska School Boards. AASB urges the Legislature to develop a fiscal plan that provides a long-term approach to funding the costs of public education and other services upon which Alaska's students and their families depend.

Rationale. The State of Alaska provides a wide range of services to a diverse population spread over a logistically complex area. Providing these services currently costs more than the state is receiving in recurring revenue. A long-term plan that ensures reliability of funding for education and other state services that impact the delivery of education, regardless of variation in volatile resource markets, is needed to provide a stable business climate and to ensure the citizens of necessary services. *Adopted 2002 Amended 2004 (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue – Amend/Anchorage School Board

2.2 EXTRAORDINARY LOSS PROTECTION

The Legislature should enact a "safety net" for school districts to offset a loss of state formula funding due to extraordinary changes outside the control of the districts such as an extraordinary decline in enrollment.

Rationale. Schools districts are exposed to extreme hardship from an unbudgeted loss of funds due to an unanticipated sharp decrease in enrollment. School districts are not forward funded and are not currently allowed to carry more than 10 percent of their budget forward.

Districts do not know how much state revenue they will actually receive until after the first of November, by which time their greatest cost – teacher salaries – are largely locked into place for the year. Districts are required under current laws to notify tenured teachers of their contractual status for the following school year by March 16 of the preceding school year.

The loss of funding communities can have large, unexpected negative effects on the budget of the district. In 2003 several school districts suffered funding shortfalls, which consequently caused multiple financial catastrophes and serious personnel issues. *Adopted 2003. Amended 2004. (Sunset Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.3 EDUCATION FUNDING FORMULA ADEQUATE TO BRING ALL ALASKA STUDENTS TO PROFICIENCY OR BEYOND

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Legislature to provide sustainable funding adequate to allow all districts to bring their students to proficiency. ~~Although AASB has found no existing cost study to be a reliable basis upon which to revise the funding formula, completion of~~

~~a study and revision of the formula should remain a priority.~~ Sustainable funding requires a revised area cost differential that reflects the higher cost of operating schools in Alaska. Any adjustment to the area cost differential should be accompanied by an increase to the base student allocation for all districts, to better assure adequate funding for all districts regardless of the cost differential adjustment.

Rationale. In Alaska, *accountability measures* under the Quality Schools Initiative have created continuous, increasing financial demands on school districts. The initiative mandates K-1 grade screening, standards-based assessments and the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. It requires implementing and integrating state school and educator performance standards. It calls for a School Designator system requiring schools to show improvement over a period of time. All districts have been increasing the amount of resources directed to student testing and remediation.

AASB urges the Alaska State Legislature to reconsider the funding level for "intensive needs" children receiving special education as block grant funding provides an inadequate level of support. Also, combined block grant funding for special education, vocational education, and bilingual education programs is inappropriate because it fails to account for real differences among the costs of services for each student category. Instead, AASB supports funding bilingual and vocation education programs separately based on need.

Since passage of SB 36 in 1998, the area cost differential has not been adjusted by the state, despite two studies that produced rationale for changing the cost factors. This inaction threatens the integrity of the foundation formula program and the ability of many school districts to cope with higher operating and labor costs.

At the federal level, the reauthorization of ESEA "No Child Left Behind Act" 2001 has huge fiscal implications for Alaska schools. Already, Alaska districts are being required to provide additional supplemental services for students in Title 1 schools deemed failing, and to provide parents with the choice to send their children to another school at district expense. Also, Congress has stepped back from earlier pledges to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). We urge the Alaska Legislature to support full federal funding of these two Acts.

These state and federal mandates should receive an adequate, ongoing, consistent source of funding. *Adopted 2002, 03 Amended 2004 (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Amend
Discussion: Bills moved through three committees of the Alaska House of Representatives in May to phase in recommendations of the ISER study.

2.4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Alaska Legislature to provide the financial support necessary for public education, the Department of Education & Early Development, universities and other agencies to fully realize the potential of a standards-based educational system focused on increasing student achievement. To ensure a successful standards-based educational program, the Association of Alaska School Boards supports the following strategies:

1. Time–Increased learning time through an expanded day or extended school year and/or remediation efforts like summer school to increase learning.
2. Alignment—Professional/technical assistance to align curriculum with standards, instruction and assessments.
3. Enhanced teacher preparation and professional development.
4. Teacher/administrator recruitment to attract highly qualified professionals to come and stay in Alaska.
5. Accommodation of special needs students.
6. Early entry opportunities.

Rationale. Over the years, many forums have identified a variety of statewide strategies to help meet student performance standards.

In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires all students to meet high standards. Special Education students often require specific learning strategies, specialty trained educators and support staff, as well as additional time and resources. These strategies are critical to increase achievement, but also require increased funding. *Adopted 2000, Amended 01, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.5 AASB ADVOCACY ON INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)
~~AASB will continue to monitor and advocate the following as Congress reauthorizes the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).~~ Following passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, AASB will monitor and advocate the following:

1. Increased funding to fully fund the federal mandate.
2. Resolution of differential treatment and discipline for special education students.
3. Provision for adequate staffing/teacher preparation.
4. Establishment of post-secondary educational programs to train additional individuals as certified special education teachers and related services providers (i.e. school psychologists, physical therapists and speech therapists).
5. Decrease in current high staff turnover.
6. Provision for teacher liability/legal protections for advocates.
7. Placement of students and delivery of services.
8. Mediation between school districts and parents when disagreements develop over student placements.
9. Reduction of massive, required paperwork.

Rationale. AASB joins with the National School Boards Association in urging Congress to fairly and fully fund this federal mandate. IDEA was enacted in 1975 when the federal government committed to pay 40% of the costs associated with educating children with disabilities. According to the National School Boards Association, federal funding accounts for approximately 16% of the necessary funding. The remainder comes directly from the regular instructional program of local school districts. Nationwide in FY 2006, the total under funding of IDEA was estimated at $12.4 billion.

Local school officials must be empowered to preserve a productive and safe learning environment free of undue disruption or violence. Consistent discipline requirements and procedures are the keys to a safe environment.

Issues such as discipline and excessive paperwork are having a negative impact on educators; as a result fewer certified personnel are willing to teach in special education programs. *Adopted 2000. Amended 2001, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Amend as regulations process continues

2.6 FUNDING STANDARDS-BASED EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS IN ALASKA
AASB supports legislation to add additional funding for early learning programs in Alaska and that legislation be introduced that includes early learning program planning and funding for Pre-school-12 facilities in Alaska.

Rationale. State and local performance standards set high expectations in mathematics, reading and writing for children age 5 through 7. Research indicates that earlier education is critical for many children to successfully reach those expectations. With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, the legislature will be accountable for paying the cost of missing the opportunity to reach children at the age when the greatest gains in mental development are possible. Appropriately housed early learning programs should be an integral part of district curriculum. Inclusion of early learning in a school has an impact on facilities planning.

The state offers no funding for early-learning education. Many communities do not meet the qualifications for federal Head Start or early-learning funding and sources of present federal funding are uncertain. Most existing early-learning programs cannot afford certificated early-learning teachers. *Amended 2001, 02, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.7 FUNDING FOR INTENSIVE NEEDS PRE-SCHOOL AND OTHER INTENSIVE NEEDS STUDENTS ENROLLING POST-COUNT DATE - AMEND/ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
AASB supports ~~prorated~~ funding for 3-year-old preschool students with intensive needs who turn three years old **after the October count date, thereby becoming eligible to ~~and~~ enroll in public school after state funding has become fixed.** ~~and other intensive-need students who move to a new district after the October count date. Currently, districts receive no funding for the costly services they are required to provide to intensive-needs children who turn three years old and thus become eligible for public school services after the state's October count date~~. Because the cost to provide federally mandated services to a single intensive-needs child may be several times greater than a non-special needs child, districts cannot be expected simply to absorb the costs of services for such children who first enroll after the count date under ~~an inadequate~~ **a** budget **that provides no funding to satisfy this federal requirement.**

Rationale. IDEA '97 requires that public schools enroll students with disabilities at age three. These students typically require not only special education services but also extensive related services (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy). Preschool students with disabilities whose third birthday falls after the October count date incur costs to the district that are not typical of other students enrolling after the count date. The district is required to provide all services identified by the IEP team. **Currently, districts receive no funding for these costly services for those intensive-needs children who turn tree years old after the state's October count date. Other intensive-need students who move to a district after the October count date pose a similar financial challenge. A supplemental intensive needs count date, or other opportunity to receive funding for these students is critical.**
Adopted 2003.Amended 2004 (Sunset Nov.2008)

Recommendation: Amend to update – Amend/Anchorage School Board

2.8 FOLLOWING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PRIORITY LIST FOR NON-BONDED PROJECTS
AASB strongly advises the legislature to follow the priority list for non-bonded projects as presented by the Department of Education and Early Development with no adjustments, deletions, or additions that would not otherwise be of an emergency basis.

Rationale. The Capital Improvement Projects list goes through a very comprehensive prioritization process developed and implemented, based on need, by the Department of Education and Early Development. The legislature in recent times has not followed the priority list as presented. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.9 LOCAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA
AASB supports retaining in the school funding formula the local option of establishing a local contribution based on 45 percent of basic need.

Rationale. The current education funding formula was developed with statewide support for all school age children. It allows for a minimum local contribution of the lesser of 4 mills or 45% of basic need. *Adopted 2001, Amended 2004 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.10 EDUCATION ENDOWMENT
AASB lends its full support to the concept of an educational endowment to secure stable and full funding for education to be used for public elementary and secondary education.

Rationale. The funding of public K-12 education in our state is an annual appropriation from the General Fund and is subject to the shifting funding priorities of administrations and legislatures, and the variable level of state revenues. Budgetary cycles have increasingly failed to provide a stable and secure funding source for Alaskan students. Inflation and fixed costs have eroded the value of the foundation formula by approximately one-third during the past decade.

Adequate funding of education is ranked as a high priority by Alaskans. A recent Curriculum Management Audit of Alaska's largest school district found "overall fiscal support for education in Alaska is tenuous," and that financial uncertainty deters long-range planning that is critical to significant educational improvement. An educational endowment will provide a proven, secure, and dedicated fiscal resource for future public education funding for our state, and allow long-range education planning with confidence in the availability of that resource. *Amended 1998, 99, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.11 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
AASB urges the state and federal governments to ensure that all classrooms are provided affordable and equitable broadband access to the national information infrastructure. AASB urges the Legislature to implement appropriations or matching grants for instructional technology that would address hardware, software purchases, communication, infrastructure and training needs of students and staff. We request the Legislature to join us in urging Congress to fully fund either the provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (E-rate program) or a robust educational technology substitute that protects the Universal Service Fund to help provide affordable telecommunications to rural areas.

Rationale. Alaskan students are growing up in an Information Age that is rapidly becoming the Communication Age. The global information highway and the skills to communicate over it, as well as access to the rich store of information on it, must be made available to students. Throughout the years many schools have seen most of their technology purchases become obsolete, outdated and inoperable. Teachers are unable to effectively implement technology in the classrooms due to lack or inadequacy of equipment. Current school district budgets cannot provide adequate funds to meet existing or future instructional technology needs.

Equality in educational opportunity has always been a goal of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Future economic viability will not depend as much on physical presence, but rather the ability to import, transmit or convey ideas and information electronically. Today's globally competitive economy requires that all schools have access to modern technologies–Internet access, computers, distance learning–that can open new doors of educational opportunity for our school children. *Amended 1998, 99, 01, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.12 SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT RETIREMENT FOR BONDED INDEBTEDNESS
AASB calls upon the Legislature and the administration to fully honor all past commitments for bonded indebtedness reimbursement and to meet future school construction needs by extending and continuing to fully fund the school debt reimbursement program.

Rationale. Article 7, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children. Under AS 14.11.100 the State of Alaska agreed to repay school districts at set percentage rates for school construction bonded indebtedness in past years. Extending that program into the future will help meet school construction needs in areas of the state that are able to bond.

Over the past years of high growth many regions of the State have bonded for school construction with the expectation that the State would honor its obligation. In the past these good faith agreements have sometimes not been fully honored, placing a heavy burden on local taxpayers. This aforementioned tax burden has created a hardship for taxpayers and resulted in a loss of local revenue for classroom education.

Voters who passed Proposition C in 2002 have a justified expectation that the general obligation bonds approved by their communities will continue to be partially reimbursed at the level promised by the state. That expectation could very well influence voter acceptance of a new series of school bond reimbursement issues headed to many local ballots in 2005 and 2006, under terms of HB 73 as passed by the 2005 Alaska Legislature. Amended 1998, 01, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)

Recommendation: Continue

2.13 REVENUE SHARING & THE COMMUNITY DIVIDEND
Municipalities play a large part in financing education and providing community services necessary to student learning. Steep reductions in Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance programs have had and continue to have a serious impact on public schools. The Association of Alaska School Boards supports restored and increased funding for Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance, while recognizing that an increase in community support cannot substitute for necessary increases in direct education funding.

Rationale. State funding to municipalities has been decreasing annually. The loss of state aid to municipalities reduces the services they are able to provide, including funding of schools. These decreases are also forcing communities to raise taxes to offset state mandates. Support for this program is essential.

An alternative way to fund the Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance program is the concept of a Community Dividend—creating a mini permanent fund for Alaska municipalities which would distribute the interest earned in the form of a Municipal Dividend. This idea was forwarded by the Alaska Municipal League, and looks promising. *Adopted 1999, Amended 00, 01, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.14 EMERGENCY STATE FUNDING FOR REAA FUEL STORAGE AND TRANSFER FACILITIES
AASB requests emergency state funding for upgrades of state-owned fuel storage and fuel transfer facilities in REAA school districts where there is an imminent environmental and safety hazard.

Rationale. State-owned fuel storage and fuel transfer facilities in school districts across Alaska are aging and, because of the harshness of the environment, are deteriorating rapidly. The potential for disastrous leakage and spillage is extremely high as that deterioration continues and escalates.

Stringent regulations, both state and federal, mandate significant penalties for school districts suffering fuel spills from state-owned facilities. Replacement costs for aging systems are astronomical and far beyond the funding allocations prescribed by the state for schools. Emergency state funding is crucial to avoiding looming financial and environmental disasters, and in some districts, serious environmental health problems. *Adopted 2000 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.15 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION – Amend/Anchorage School Board
AASB believes the State of Alaska should fully fund pupil transportation under the new per-student funding mechanism**, as well as** ~~and~~ provide **additional** funding for districts with increased transportation needs due to special circumstances and/or student growth. Getting students safely to and from school is a vital part of public education.

Rationale. Providing access to public education via transportation is a major responsibility for schools. The new transportation funding mechanism, adopted in July 2003 caps the per-student allocation at the FY03 level with inflationary adjustments established at one-half the Anchorage CPI in FY05 and FY06. ~~It remains to be seen whether the new per-student allocation will provide a sufficient level of funding into the future. This adjustment is inadequate to meet rapidly rising fuel and other operating costs.~~ This adjustment is programmed to fall behind ordinary general inflation and is particularly inadequate in the face of rapidly rising fuel and other operating costs.

Pupil transportation is an important part of overall school funding. AASB requests that there be no short funding of this critical element. Districts need an adequate block of funds to provide safe access to schools and to ensure that districts are not forced to use instructional funding to meet the cost of transportation obligations. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001, 02, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue – Amend/Anchorage School Board
Discussion: In the current political climate, a return to a reimbursable program for district transportation costs is unlikely. Other solutions to higher transportation costs may require a higher adjustment factor or a rebate of gasoline taxes paid by operators.

2.16 FUNDING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT-OPERATED REGIONAL BOARDING HOME PROGRAMS
AASB supports expanding the Boarding Home Program to provide adequate funding for locally controlled and operated, regional boarding high schools throughout the state.

Rationale. Passage of a boarding schools/charter school law in 1997 (ASL Ch. 113) allows for the creation of boarding schools specifically not funded by the state. AASB would like to see that changed to provide students with the option of attending a larger, regional boarding high school operated by a school district.

The State of Alaska currently provides paid tuition and paid room and board for village students desiring to attend Mt. Edgecumbe school if they have no access to a high school program at their grade level in their village community, but also without regard to local availability of high school programs. It also provides students within urban settings with the opportunity to attend the state run boarding school. The number of students requesting enrollment at Mt. Edgecumbe School exceeds the space available.

Many students in small village high schools now desire the educational and extra-curricular opportunities found at larger, centralized high school sites. The distance from Northern and Interior villages, to Mt. Edgecumbe, however, may deter some students from enrolling. Galena, Nenana and other districts now offer boarding school programs that provide an alternative to some areas of the state. *Amended 1997, 00, 01, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008*)

Recommendation: Continue
Discussion: HB16 passed House, pending in Senate

2.17 FUNDING FOR TRANSIENT STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS
The Association of Alaska School Boards supports development of a funding mechanism for compensating schools for students entering after the October count date.

Rationale: Each year, students throughout Alaska enroll in boarding and other schools around the state. Often, students leave schools immediately following the October count. These students generally return to their home districts. Other districts face large influx of military-dependent and resource development project students. The untimely arrival of students after the count date puts the receiving school districts at a financial disadvantage. Districts receiving students after the October count must bear the financial responsibility for educating these students without corresponding funds. *Adopted 2002. Amended 2003. (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue

2.18 INSURANCE COSTS – Change Continue to Revise/Anchorage School District
AASB urges the Alaska State Legislature to take action, through increased funding or otherwise, to mitigate increases in insurance costs.

Rationale. Alaska Public Entity Insurance reports worker's comp insurance up about 8 percent in the fiscal year starting July 1, 2005. Liability insurance rates are up about 1 percent, while property insurance rates have dropped 12 percent. APEI says the blended rate for these three premiums shows an increase of 2 percent. ~~9 percent in the fiscal year starting July 1, 2004. Liability insurance rates are up 7 percent. Property insurance premiums have dropped 4 percent on average. APEI says the blended rate for these three premiums shows a decrease of one percent.~~ At the same time, health insurances have also increased by 30% to 250% per year over the last five years. Insurance costs are draining badly needed resources for the classrooms and will continue to do so unless steps are taken to mitigate these uncontrolled increases, which only add to the administrative overhead of all districts. *Adopted 2002. Amended 2003. (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue - Change to Revise – Anchorage School Board

2.19 FINANCIAL EXIGENCY
Every Alaska school board must and does use enrollment and revenue projections in the development of annual budgets. The Association of Alaska School Boards supports clarification of the law explicitly to allow the use of projections of enrollment and revenues as valid bases upon which to develop a plan for reduction in force under AS 14.20.177. If necessary, the term "financial exigency" should either be defined in statute to specifically allow the use of projections, or the March 16 non-retention provision should be waived to give districts the latitude to adequately plan a quality educational program that meets the needs of students. A state educational funding program that provides notification of adequate levels of financial support to districts a year in advance of their need would also address this problem.

Rationale. The Haines/Hoonah layoff lawsuit brought by NEA-Alaska in 2003 has far reaching implications for all school districts during an economic downturn. School districts, like corporate America, utilize revenue and other types of projections to determine staffing levels and program offerings. Districts must be able to project to make decisions about staffing because they do not have "actuals." The largest component of a district's budgetary commitment is to personnel. Without the use of projections to determine operational costs, districts could be placed at financial risk.

This lawsuit seeks to disallow declining enrollment and declining revenue projections as a reason to lay off employees, which may be necessary to reorganize the district educational program. NEA-Alaska is making the case that reductions in enrollment or revenue must have already taken place in order to lay off staff.

Tenured staff must be notified of non-retention before March 16 and non-tenured staff on or before the last day of the school term. State law requires school districts to determine a budget for the following fiscal year by May. The level of statewide school district funding, however, is often not known until June after the governor considers the state operating budget passed by the Alaska State Legislature, and the level of funding a particular district will receive is not known finally until the October count date. If lay-off notices must go out in March or June of the preceding school year and lay-offs are allowed only after attendance has decreased, districts would be required to retain a teacher surplus a full year after enrollment has declined. *Adopted 2003. Amended 2004. (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Amend
Discussion: The 2005 legislative session resulted in education funding decided on May 25, the final day of the session. SB 156, repealing the March 16 date for giving notice to tenured teachers, passed the Senate by a vote of 17-2 and is pending in House committee. If the state forward-funded K-12 schools, or adopted a budgeting approach that provided notification to districts of funding levels, the financial liability districts face in these situations would be diminished.

2.20 INCREASED FORMULA FUNDING

AASB calls on state policy makers to appropriate funding adequate to meet the needs of Alaska's youth, as mandated by state and federal law.

Rationale. Appropriating an adequate amount to fund education is a legislative responsibility. The primary responsibility for school boards is allocation of those funds. Unlike many school boards throughout the nation, Alaska school boards do not have fiscal autonomy.

School boards know from experience that "full funding" of the education funding formula by state policy makers does not necessarily equate to "adequate" funding. Our success as a state in meeting the requirements of NCLB will require an investment in people, processes, and accountability measures. AASB is committed to do its part to ensure success.

Our parents and communities are calling for decreased class size, additional support for at-risk students, adequate textbooks and teaching materials, and updated technology, all of which require additional funding. The state needs to provide funds to prevent declines in current educational services and to provide for strengthening the system into the future. *Adopted 2003, Amended 2004.*

Recommendation: Continue

2.21 LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL RELIEF FOR IMPENDING TRS AND PERS EMPLOYER RATE INCREASES – Amend/Anchorage School Board
The Association of Alaska School Boards supports ~~seeking~~ legislative financial relief to fully fund ongoing TRS and PERS mandated employer retirement rate increases. Those districts affected by the eroding floor should also be reimbursed for 100 percent of their PERS/TRS liability.

Rationale. Districts simply do not have the capacity to handle the massive unfunded liability of the state's retirement programs facing districts in FY05, FY06, and beyond. Without supplemental funding to cover the unprecedented huge increases in retirement costs these increases will directly reduce the instructional effort districts can pay for and harm Alaska's children. Last year's passage of SB 141 does not resolve the current extraordinary budget requirements for PERS and TRS. ~~A special appropriation, as approved by the 2004 Legislature for FY 2005, is the appropriate method for mitigating the eroding floor shortfall.~~ *Amended 2004.*

Recommendation: Continue – Amend/ Anchorage School Board

2.22 REPEAL OF MINIMUM INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENT
AASB requests modification of the Minimum Instructional Expenditure requirement, (AS 14.17.520), to reflect reasonable thresholds appropriate for districts of various sizes and cost levels.

Rationale. While AASB members place the highest priority on funding instruction, the requirement that all districts must spend at least 70% of the district budget on expenditures for teachers and for instruction is arbitrary and does not reflect state and federal mandates and other non-instructional expenses, and ignores the needs and wishes of the community.

For many remote school districts, the minimum instructional expenditure requirement is unrealistic and does not reflect the fiscal reality faced by most school districts.

The State Board of Education & Early Development regularly grants waivers of the minimum instructional expenditures requirement to more than half of Alaska's school districts, recognizing the impacted districts had no fiscal capacity to comply with the law. The administrative burden of making annual waiver requests absorbs critical instructional dollars at the district level as well as needlessly using up statewide administrative resources for review. *Amended 2004.*

Recommendation: Continue

SUBJECT AREA: CHILD ADVOCACY

Recommendation: Continue all resolutions in this subject area.
Discussion: Consider moving 3.16 to belief statements. Also see new resolution 3.17 related to student wellness.

3.1 PROMOTING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS IN ALASKA'S CHILDREN
AASB encourages each neighborhood, congregation, community, school district, and state agency to review the research in order to advocate, initiate and sustain programs that build assets in Alaska's children and teens.

Rationale. Research *(What Kids Need to Succeed–40 Developmental Assets by Benson, Galbraith & Espeland)*; Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development, Scales and Leffert, 1999) shows that effective schools, families, , faith communities, and all adults in our communities can contribute to the positive development of youth. The difference between troubled teens and those leading healthy, productive, and positive lives, is strongly affected by the presence of what is labeled "developmental assets." These assets are cumulative, meaning that the more a young person has, the better. Forty of these assets were identified–20 exist in the teen's environment and 20 belong in the head and heart of every child. These developmental assets serve as building blocks for human development in a young person's life and are developed through positive relationships with adults.

Research shows that the more assets teens have the less likely they are to use drugs and alcohol, the less likely they are to be sexually active, to be depressed or have suicidal thoughts, to fail in school, and to exhibit antisocial or violent behavior. The more assets teenagers have the more likely they are to succeed in school, to be involved in their community and to exhibit empathic and caring behaviors. *Amended 1998, 02, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.2 FETAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG EXPOSED STUDENTS

AASB requests that the Alaska Legislature provide and improve effective programs and services aimed at the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)/Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE) children within our state, and to allocate adequate funding necessary to provide parent and guardian training, school staff training, and specialized educational services necessary to serve FAS/FAE children.

Rationale. Prevention is the best long-term approach. The public must be educated that the use of alcohol/drugs during pregnancy may severely affect and damage children. The child who has been prenatally exposed to drugs and/or alcohol is at risk for developmental, behavioral, psycho-social and learning problems. Alaska's public schools must provide educational services to all children regardless of handicap. Although Alaska has one of the highest incidence rates of children born with FAS, not all communities have the ability to diagnosis this disease. Not all the FAS, FAE or FADE (Fetal Alcohol Drug Exposed) students meet the criteria for Special Ed Programs. It is estimated that for every child born with FAS, 10 are born with FAE, and are difficult to identify.

FAS/FAE often require special instructional strategies and materials. The educational identification and service of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect children is extremely expensive. Funding support for education of handicapped children is already barely sufficient to meet the needs of those children currently identified. *Amended 1998, 00, 02, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.3 PREVENTING ACCESS TO PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET

AASB supports efforts to prevent children's access to pornography on the Internet and encourages efforts to create a more positive, safe computing environment for children. AASB also supports self-regulation in the industry encouraging providers of pornography to post rating labels and "black-out" pages requiring adult verification before access is granted. AASB supports efforts to provide parents with the necessary information about the influence of the Internet in order to assist them in their decisions concerning internet access for their child.

Rationale. Pornography is highly prevalent on the Internet. The Internet allows access to material all over the world with very little regulation. Innocent searches for class or personal information can occasionally lead into pornography. With rating systems in place that would post a rating scale upon a search using an Internet search engine and voluntary "black-out" with adult verification, children's access to inappropriate material will be limited*. Adopted 1997, 02 Amended 2004 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.4 VIOLENCE IN MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

AASB supports efforts encouraging and challenging the media and entertainment industry, including manufacturing, to develop more positive content for both children and adults that demonstrate nonviolent solutions to problems and respect for human life. AASB also supports self-regulation within the industry by asking them to post rating labels on all videos rented or sold by video merchants or loaned by public libraries, and prohibiting children under age of 17 from renting R- or X- rated videos or attending R- or X-rated movies without parental permission. AASB supports efforts to provide parents with the necessary information about the influence of media in order to assist them in their decisions concerning its influences upon their children.

Rationale. It is estimated that children who regularly watch television are exposed through news and entertainment programming to tens of thousands of violent assaults and deaths by the time they reach adulthood.

Analysis of multiple victim school shootings (Anchorage Daily News, June 21, 1998) indicates a commonality of these four factors: Obsession with violent pop culture, a child who felt inferior or picked on (probably suicidal), easy access to guns, and ample warning signs. Reducing the violence will not eliminate the threat, but will work in conjunction with efforts directed at addressing the other three factors. *Amended 1998, 99, 01, 03, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.5 INHALANT, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, & OTHER DRUG ABUSE

AASB calls upon the Legislature of the State of Alaska to acknowledge the seriousness of the inhalant, alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse problems, to accept its responsibility to provide leadership, and to provide the funding and support to assist local communities in their strength based efforts to combat inhalant, alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, and to provide effective law enforcement to ensure laws pertaining to controlled substances are enforced. AASB also requests the State of Alaska make adequate funds available for community-based and residential efforts to address effective inhalant abuse treatment programs for children, young people, and their families.

Rationale: Drug-related problems, including inhalant, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, are a major debilitating influence on the lives of the youth of Alaska. They have been proven to be the primary contributing factor in the alarming number of dropouts and youth suicides in the State of Alaska. Community-based prevention and intervention efforts are proving effective in combating drug-related problems. The treatment of children and young people is very different from the treatment of adults for inhalant, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, yet there are no residential treatment facilities in the State for those young people who are addicted to inhalants. In addition, law enforcement and judicial agencies are under-staffed and under-funded, and are thus unable to address the illegal use of drugs and alcohol in many of Alaska's communities. *Amended 1998, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.6 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS SERVING CHILDREN

AASB supports the development of a state policy on children and youth to ensure that the needs of the whole child are addressed in a comprehensive manner. This can be done by:

- urging the State of Alaska to develop protocols (protecting each family's right to privacy but establishing criteria for need to know) that facilitate information sharing among agencies providing for services to children and that require those agencies to develop a cooperative treatment plan that involves appropriate school personnel
- partnerships between schools, mental health, and other services to ensure that children are able to come to school each day ready to learn
- incentives for interagency cooperation, including the removal of barriers that limit interagency collaboration and the flexibility to coordinate funds

Rationale. Children who need to or are receiving services from social service agencies are already experiencing dislocation in their lives. This dislocation frequently makes it difficult for them to concentrate on their schoolwork. These students need to have educational skills to succeed in the world. Yet decisions are frequently made about the life of these children that do not take into account their educational needs.

When children are receiving services from multiple agencies, one agency will frequently have information that may be crucial to the service delivery of another agency and/or the child is receiving duplicating and sometime conflicting services from more than one agency. Addressing the needs of the whole child requires an improved delivery system, which is comprehensive, collaborative, child and family centered, and focused on prevention. *Amended 2001, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.7 SUICIDE PREVENTION

AASB encourages the Legislature to provide funding for statewide suicide prevention efforts coordinated among the peer helper programs, mental health centers, and village based suicide prevention efforts. AASB requests that the legislature provide funding for both regional treatment programs and statewide long-term treatment programs.

Rationale. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people 15 - 19 years of age, (following unintentional injuries). The rate of teenage suicide in Alaska is much greater than the national average.

Suicide is often precipitated by depression, substance abuse, and separation from a significant other. Coordinated efforts among all agencies will be better able to present programs which address mental health, coping skills in response to stress, substance abuse, employment, and healthy relationships. Currently, 57 Alaskan communities participate in the Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program which allows each community to determine and implement the kind of project it believes is most likely to reduce self-destructive behavior. *Amended 1998, 99, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.8 SAFE SCHOOLS/SAFE COMMUNITIES

AASB supports efforts to establish a positive school climate–by training children in peaceful conflict resolution and youth violence prevention–that reinforces nonviolent solutions to problems and respect for all students and staff. AASB supports efforts to provide a school environment that is free from weapons, harassment and intimidation, violence, drugs (including alcohol and tobacco), and other factors that threaten the safety of students and staff. AASB supports school districts and their communities in developing plans and strategies to implement Safe Schools plans in all schools.

Rationale. All children have a right to attend schools that are safe and free from violence. Recent reports and surveys document an alarming increase in the incidence of school violence in all types of communities, particularly student-on-student violence. As school board members we must share the responsibility by involving the resources of the community to work for solutions.

Designated School Safe Zones are just one example of programs and laws that work, and have been supported by schools. *Amended 1998, 99, 01, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.9 SUPPORT OF STATE FUNDING FOR TEEN HEALTH CENTERS IN ALASKA

AASB recommends the Administration and the Legislature provide funding for school-based Teen Health Centers.

Rationale. Of the 45 states that have school-based health centers, Alaska is one of only 12 states that does not provide financial support for these activities.

The Juneau Teen Health Center, the only one in Alaska, is a collaborative effort of four local agencies, started in 1992. The Health Center, located in the Juneau-Douglas High School, has provided approximately 700 health care visits each year to students. 45% of the total visits have been for emotional health reasons. A majority of student health care visits are made solely because the Health Center is sited in the high school. *Amended 2002, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.10 HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

AASB supports providing effective HIV/AIDS education programs for students and parents, and training for certified and classified school staff. AASB supports an effective education effort that focuses on reducing risk by emphasizing abstinence, healthy decision making and refusal skills. An effective way to do this is to bring together a broad consensus of the community in order to develop and implement the district's HIV/AIDS curriculum.

Rationale. The dormancy of the HIV virus can be as long as 10 years and the statistics indicate that many young people are contracting the virus while in their teens. Health education should emphasize that advances in medical treatment that prolong and improve life with AIDS not lull teens into careless and risky behavior. *Amended 1998, 00, 01, 02 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.11 EDUCATION OF YOUTH FOR HEALTHY SEXUAL DECISION MAKING

AASB encourages responsible behaviors relating to human sexuality by supporting programs that promote abstinence, develop healthy decision-making skills, teach refusal skills and promote prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Rationale. The Youth Risk Behavior Study of 2003 indicates a substantial improvement in the behavior of youth in a statewide survey, with rates for smoking, consumption of alcohol and marijuana, and sexual intercourse. In 2003, about 40 percent of high school students reported having had sexual intercourse, compared to 47 percent in 1995. About 28 percent of students were currently sexually active, compared to 30 percent in 1995. Teen birth rates have also decreased, from a high of 72 births per 1,000 15-19-year-old girls in 1991 to 43 births per 1,000 in the same age group during 2001.

Research presented by the Search Institute and their "Building Assets in Youth" model has determined that a teen's belief "in the importance of abstaining from sexual activity and his/her willingness to postpone sexual activity" is significant to their personal and academic development. *Amended 1998, 01, 02 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.12 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST

AASB fully supports the work of the Alaska Children's Trust, and urges all member school boards to promote the Trust and its efforts to address the tragic consequences of abuse, neglect, violence, and crime experienced by too many of Alaska's children. AASB urges the Legislature to support and increase the Children's Trust Endowment.

Rationale. The Alaska Children's Trust was established by the Legislature in 1988 with the mandate to promote initiatives that strengthen families and serve dependent children. The goal

of the Children's Trust is to promote and provide opportunities so that Alaska's children can grow to responsible and productive adulthood. The Children's Trust will fund local programs that meet the needs and challenges of Alaska's families and children with innovative, efficient and effective services.

Today, the Trust's $9.2 million endowment offers the opportunity to create a true "permanent fund for prevention." *Amended 1997, 99, 01, 02, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.13 INCREASED SUPPORT OF ALASKA HEAD START PROGRAMS

Alaska Head Start programs and services are a partnership between federal, state and community-level entities. The Association of Alaska School Boards supports and urges the Congress of the United States, the President, the Alaska Legislature, and the Governor to provide sufficient and consistent funding to make Head Start available to all eligible young Alaskans, regardless of the number of children in the program.

Rationale. Project Head Start has had a beneficial impact on the academic, physical, social, and emotional development of impoverished pre-school students and their families throughout Alaska and the United States since its inception in the 1960's. A significant component of Goals 2000: Educate America and Alaska 2000 education initiatives is that all children will be properly prepared to start school.

Children at-risk who have benefited from a quality early childhood program spend 1.3 years less in some form of special education placement. They have been shown to score higher on such school readiness measures as verbal achievement, perceptual reasoning and social competence than other low-income children attending either another preschool or no preschool. Head Start has immediate positive effects on children's socio-emotional development, including self-esteem, achievement, motivation and social behavior. Parents involved in Head Start have been shown to participate more in activities, including transition, than non-Head Start parents.

Within Alaska, 17 Head Start grantee agencies serve children and their families in 101 communities. A large number of eligible Alaskan children (estimated to be nearly 76%) remain unserved, due to lack of sufficient funding. The Head Start communities across Alaska contribute over $4.2 million annually through in-kind support. *Amended 1998, 99, 00, 01, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.14 SUPPORTING THE DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT

AASB urges the U.S. Congress to continue funding for the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. The Association recommends that such valuable new initiatives as preventing violence in the schools be funded through separate appropriation.

Rationale. The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act authorized federal appropriations to state and local education agencies to devise programming to provide drug use education, counseling, and abuse prevention services for America's young people. Programs funded through the Act are currently providing valuable services and will be needed for the foreseeable future.

Although violence in the schools is a significant problem, and developing programs to combat it is an appropriate federal responsibility, any diversion of resources from the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act would cripple important drug education, counseling and abuse prevention programs that are only taking root and becoming effective. *Amended 1998, 00, 01, 02, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

3.15 REVISE PARENTAL PERMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS ADMINISTERED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
AASB supports modifying the requirements for parental or legal guardian permission for a student to participate in a questionnaire or survey administered in a public school by making it easier for school districts to obtain the necessary permission. As a result of the passage in 1999 of HB 70, schools are unable to obtain an adequate sample to provide reliable information.

Rationale. For state and federal grants, and to effectively target programs to increase student achievement, school districts need school-by-school data to accurately assess the need and success of current efforts*. Adopted 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

3.16 DECLARING CHILDREN THE TOP PRIORITY OF ALASKA
AASB encourages the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to declare children the top priority of the state. This declaration extends to the safety, health, education and future of our children.

Rationale. A declaration of this kind by the state would lend support to prevention and protective services, for all education needs and for a long-range fiscal plan for state government services.

(New) 3.17 STUDENT WELLNESS
Good physical and mental health of children is essential if they are to take full advantage of the educational services offered by their school. AASB urges students, parents, educators, community groups and state and local agencies to collaborate on collective ways to ensure all children are prepared to learn through healthy eating habits, physical activity and access to adequate housing and health care.

Rationale. School districts participating in federally subsidized nutrition programs will be required to establish a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year, under terms of the 2004 reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. The policy must include goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based programs that are designed to promote wellness in a manner deemed appropriate by local districts. But AASB recognizes that child wellness is also determined by circumstances outside the school, from the availability of good nutrition and physical activity to the ability of each family to provide housing and health care for their members. Therefore, community-based collaboration is essential for long-term success.

Recommendation: Adopt

(New) 3.18 PROMOTING EARLY CHILDHOOD BRAIN DEVELOPMENT – Anchorage School Board
AASB encourages legislative recognition that brain development in 0 – 3 year-old children critically impacts educational success. Failure to promote brain development in the very early years is impossible to overcome completely, and poses a huge and costly challenge for school districts. AASB supports efforts to inform parents and families about promoting healthy brain development in their very young children and to provide related resources that support early brain development efforts.

Rationale. Success in education is largely dependent on the degree of brain development achieved from birth to age 3. Improper early brain development is a major factor in the cause of the achievement gap. Age appropriate, culturally relevant, and native language supported resources need to be made available for families to stimulate proper brain development in order to increase children's learning potential. Various public and private agencies, including school

districts, should encourage collaborative efforts to provide information and effective, research-based resources to parents and guardians of very young children. The benefits of wise investment in young children will be substantial, and the consequences of poor investments costly.

Adopt – Anchorage School Board

SUBJECT AREA: PERSONNEL

4.1 SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

AASB supports funded opportunities and sufficient resources for quality and relevant staff preparation and demonstrably effective continuing development in both urban and rural settings for those educating Alaska's public school students. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pre-service: State training programs through postsecondary and other institutions (e.g. RANA–Rural Alaska Native Adult education program out of Alaska Pacific University and REPP–Rural Education Preparation Program out of University of Alaska Fairbanks)
- Expanding Department of Education & Early Development packaged training programs for all school districts to use in providing consistent mandated training to employees and in meeting the requirements of the new federal law, No Child Left Behind.
- Quality in-service programs at the local district level
- Necessary training for paraprofessionals and special needs educators

Rationale. Perhaps the greatest factor affecting the ability of the state's students to master Alaska's student performance standards is the quality of the teacher who delivers classroom instruction to the student. Compounding this critical concern is the shortage of qualified teachers administrators and paraprofessionals. Issues such as teacher, administrator and paraprofessional recruitment, distribution, preparation, and in-service continue to impact the supply and retention of qualified staff. While the state has recently increased efforts to attract teachers and staff from both conventional and non-traditional sources and to more effectively prepare teachers, the promise of these efforts has yet to reach most school districts. *Adopted 2002 Amended 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue

4.2 NATIONAL CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

AASB supports efforts to establish a financial incentive mechanism for state support of teachers and districts wishing to participate in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) process. State support for this resolution should be outside the foundation formula.

Rationale. NBPTS is an organization of teachers, administrators, board members, and other education stakeholders working to advance the teaching profession and to improve student learning. The mission of the NBPTS is to establish high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. Linked to these standards will be a new generation of fair and trustworthy assessment processes that honor the complexities and demands of teaching. The NBPTS certification process is offered on a voluntary basis for teachers wishing to demonstrate exemplary performance around the five core propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach, and how to teach those subjects to students.

3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring students learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

These standards are well-aligned with the Alaska State Board of Education adopted teaching standards. *Amended 1998 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

(New) 4.3 TIERED LICENSURE – Amend/Anchorage School Board
In June of 2005, the state Board of Education and Early Development passed regulations implementing tiered licensure for new teachers in Alaska. While teachers bear the primary responsibility for securing their licenses, **AASB has grave concerns about the lack of alternative methods for documenting teacher competence.** AASB **also** believes that school districts and the Department of Education and Early Development should ensure that tiered licensure ~~allows~~ **qualifies** teachers ~~to comply with the requirements to be~~ **for "highly qualified" certification** under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Rationale. As a performance-based system, tiered licensure holds the potential of raising the success of teachers and students and elevating quality instruction as a top priority. When combined with the state's teaching mentoring program, the tiered licensure system can improve public education. But like any new program, tiered licensure requires careful analysis and implementation to guarantee success, including new teacher compliance with terms of NCLB.

Recommendation: Adopt – Amend/Anchorage School Board

(New) 4.4 MENTORING
AASB applauds the willingness of veteran educators to serve as mentors to Alaska's teachers and principals. While this state training program has been launched with federal grants, AASB believes that more secure funding should be identified to continue professional staff mentoring in future years.

Rationale. Surveys have shown that far too many teachers and principals leave the profession within their first five years out of frustration or lack of success. Mentors who serve to provide advice and support during these critical early years are a proven remedy to this drop-out phenomenon. Alaska should invest money in mentoring programs to ensure that they exist into the future, when federal funds may not be available.

Recommendation: Adopt

4.5 SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TRAINING
The Association of Alaska School Boards promotes the establishment and expansion of post-secondary educational programs to train additional individuals as certified special education teachers and the initiation of programs to train related services providers (i.e. school psychologists, physical therapists, and speech therapists) within our state university system.

Academic programs to train special education-related service providers are not currently available within Alaska. Therefore, AASB supports providing financial relief while attending professional certification programs elsewhere to Alaska residents who are committed to providing services to children in Alaska public schools.

Rationale. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA-97) mandates appropriate educational services be provided to all certified special education students;

the Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities (34 C.F.R. Part 300), Section 300.381 identifies the role of "the State (to) undertake (activities) to ensure an adequate supply of qualified personnel including special education and related services personnel...necessary to carry out the purposes of this part;" and, the Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities (34 C.F.R. Part 300), Section 300.382 identifies the role of "Each State plan (to) include a description of the procedures and activities the State will under take to ensure that all personnel necessary to carry out this part are appropriately and adequately trained...to include a system for continuing education of regular and special education and related service personnel to meet the needs of children with disabilities."

School districts throughout the State of Alaska are having difficulty meeting the educational requirements of our special needs students due to a significant shortage of certified special education personnel. Furthermore, the University of Alaska has limited special education and related services professional preparation program opportunities available to individuals aspiring to become certified special education or related service professionals. *Adopted 1998, Amended 1999, 00 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

4.6 ADDRESSING THE TEACHER, SPECIALIST, AND ADMINISTRATOR SHORTAGE

The Association of Alaska School Boards does hereby urge the Alaska State Legislature, Alaska State Board of Education, and Teacher Education Programs in Alaska's universities to address the severe shortage of teachers, specialists, and administrators in the State of Alaska.

Suggested strategies may include:

- Incentives (salary bonuses, loan forgiveness, loan assumption, interest rate reduction, etc.)
- State supported marketing to recruit teachers
- Flexibility in certification requirements and reciprocity
- Improve availability and/or quality of teacher housing
- Mentoring programs for new teachers
- Rehire of retired (RIP'd) teachers and administrators
- Professional support/development

Rationale. It has been painfully demonstrated that a severe shortage of teachers, specialists, and administrators is being experienced in the school districts in every region of Alaska. Because of the "flat" funding of school districts imposed by the Alaska State Legislature, districts have been forced to hold salary levels of teachers and administrators at an equally "flat" level, resulting in actual decreases in salary levels. Such decreasing salary levels are highly detrimental to attracting new teachers to Alaska and detrimental to recruiting people into education.

Alaska is at a crossroads as it faces the same teacher and administrator shortage being experienced by the rest of the nation. Attracting and retaining quality teachers has become a critical issue facing school districts as they work to improve education in Alaska's public schools.

A teacher's job satisfaction is gauged by a number of factors, including a sense of accomplishment, professional support, decent living conditions, and adequate compensation/benefits. The degree to which Alaska meets these needs is a statement of the value we place on our educators. *Adopted 1999, Amended 2000, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

Recommendation: Continue

4.7 REPEAL THE SOCIAL SECURITY GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET AND WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION

AASB supports the elimination of two little known amendments to the Social Security Act that unfairly penalize certain public employees by reducing earned retirement benefits. They are the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

Rationale. The Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision unfairly reduce the Social Security rights of at least one-third of America's education workforce, including Alaskans enrolled in either the Teacher's Retirement System or the Public Employees Retirement System.

In 1977, Congress began treating government pensions, such as those earned by educators, as Social Security benefits. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) reduces an individual's Social Security survivor benefits (available to a person whose deceased spouse had earned Social Security benefits) by an amount equal to two-thirds of his/her public pension.

In 1983, Congress enacted the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). It changes the formula used to figure benefit amounts – reducing an individual's own Social Security benefits (earned while working in a job covered by Social Security). For example, a teacher taught 17 years in one state, then moved to a different state and taught another 14 years. According to the Social Security Administration, she earned monthly benefits of $540 per month for her contributions paid into the Social Security system while she worked in the first state. Because public employees in the second state do not participate in the Social Security system, her actual monthly benefits will be cut $196 due to the (WEP). She will receive $344 per month from Social Security instead of the $540 she earned. *Adopted 2002 (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*

Recommendation: Continue

4.8 ASSAULT OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

AASB urges that Alaska's criminal code or sentencing guidelines be revised so that a non-student adult convicted of assault on a school employee during or because of the performance of official duties will receive a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment similar to that imposed upon an adult who assaults a uniformed or otherwise clearly identified peace officer, fire fighter, correctional employee, emergency medical technician, paramedic, ambulance attendant or other emergency responder engaged in the performance of official duties at the time of the offence.

Rationale. State statute provides for specific terms of imprisonment for crimes committed against peace officers, firefighters, etc. in the performance of their official duties. Our school employees, who each day work with our most precious resource, our children, deserve the same level of respect and protection under the law. *Adopted 2002 Amended 2004 (Sunset: Nov. 2007*)

Recommendation: Continue
Discussion: HB 41 passed the House of Representatives 27 to 7 in 2005. Pending in Senate committee.

4.9 EXTENDING TYPE M TEACHER CERTIFICATION TO THE FINE ARTS

AASB supports extending the availability of Type M (Local Expert) Teacher Certification to the area of the Fine Arts. Type M Certification is currently allowed for local experts in Native Language and Culture, Vocational Education and Military Science.

Rationale. Research demonstrates that stimulation and participation in Fine Arts (such as Vocal Music, Instrumental Music and various Art classes, etc.) has a positive impact on academic achievement. However, in many small rural schools it is very difficult to begin and/or maintain Fine Arts classes due to various cost factors including the fact that only a part-time person is

required to meet the needs of many schools in a particular area of Fine Arts. Many communities do have local experts in music and other fine arts who are capable and respected members of the community. If a vehicle such as Type M Certification were available, these community members could utilize their expertise and offer a vital part of a well-rounded curriculum that is missing in many small, rural schools. *Adopted 2004.*

Recommendation: Delete
Discussion: The three fields currently covered by Type M certificates are not offered as college-level courses, while Fine Arts is. Districts can hire local experts to teach music and other fine arts but without the associated expense of a Type M certificate, including PERS-TRS benefits.

SUBJECT AREA: EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Recommendation: Continue all resolutions in this subject area

5.1 SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS
The Association of Alaska School Boards strongly supports adequate and equitable funding for the implementation of school-to-work programs, including school-to-work centers, vocational programs, and career technical student organizations, while ensuring resources to satisfy requirements of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam and demands of the No Child Left Behind law at the same time.

Rationale. Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development have endorsed and encouraged districts to offer school-to-work programs. The implementation of school-to-work programs inevitably results in additional expenses that are not part of the standard budget schedules of school districts and secondary schools. Increased costs include, but are not limited to: purchase of equipment and materials related to occupations, transportation for students between schools and workplaces, training for staff members, release time for staff members, new staff positions (school-to-work coordinator, transition specialist, job coach), insurance and workman's compensation costs.

There are a large number of students in rural villages that do not complete high school or job training programs. There is a need to provide school-to-work programs like the Rural Student Vocational Program (RSVP), which was eliminated in 1998, or innovative regional residency centers to enhance opportunities for these students. At the same time, school-to-work programs must integrate and ensure basic academic achievement. *Amended 1999, 02 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

5.2 CURRICULUM EXPANSION VIA TECHNOLOGY
AASB urges the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED) to expand its distance delivered education programs for students and teachers in partnership with local districts using existing facilities whenever possible, and supports funding for the purchase and installation of distance delivery education equipment.

Rationale. All school districts need to have the capability to offer a variety of courses for all students, including the remedial student, vocational student, and the college bound student. The technology exists to provide satellite instruction throughout the United States.

In order to take classes otherwise not available, students who attend small high schools must leave their community or take correspondence classes. There is available in the State the ability to deliver such courses utilizing technology. Many districts in the state are exploring the use of

current technology in the form of distance delivery. Programs that are currently being offered in local districts could be utilized by other districts in-state, or substituted for purchased programs now in use, with funding provided by EED.

Expanding distance delivery could also help meet the needs of “highly qualified” staff and training for paraprofessionals under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. *Amended 2001, 02, 03 (Sunset :Nov 2008)*

5.3 NATIVE LANGUAGE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
AASB supports state funding for staff training, program development and materials preparation to promote Native language instruction for those districts that desire Native language programs.

Rationale. The languages of the Indigenous Peoples of the United States have become endangered. The extinction of these languages would further erode the rich heritage of the Indigenous Peoples of the North American Continent. The technology exists to provide satellite language instruction in the Native tongues to communities throughout the United States. If we as a nation do not respond to this need to preserve this rich linguistic heritage, the language will become extinct. Financial support from the government for the preservation of Native languages would enable the use of a technology that has helped speed the loss of indigenous languages to reverse that trend. *Amended 1998, 99, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

5.4 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
AASB recommends that the Community Schools Act of 1980 be reinstated and the state explore independent funding status for Alaska’s Community Schools.

Rationale. AASB recognizes that Community Schools extends the concept of public education beyond the traditional K-12 program of "schooling" and views everyone in the community as both teacher and learner. Tight budgets and state demands for strict accountability may place community schools in competition with district academic priorities. Other states fund community schools in a variety of ways and this independent model may save community schools in the future. *Amended 2001, 04 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

5.5 INCREASING STUDENT CONTACT TIME
The Association of Alaska School Boards supports expanding the school day or extending the school year, with adequate state funding, to account for state mandated student testing, professional development, collaboration/planning, and/or increased instructional contact time.

Rationale. The lack of time is identified as one of the top challenges facing schools when it comes to effective schooling and raising student achievement. Education Summit participants identified the need for more time to align curriculum, more student contact time (day/week/year), more teacher preparation time, more time for professional development, reducing the loss of instructional time, entering school at a younger age, time for remediation efforts, and time to communicate test results and work with public expectations and collaborate with appropriate entities.

In addition, policymakers have decreased student contact time through state mandates that require additional testing days and related professional development requirements that potentially impact student achievement.

The most important challenge is an inadequate amount of time on task by students. Educators need time to make sure that each student has a solid foundation before moving him/her to the next level. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001, 02, 03 (Sunset: Nov. 2008)*

5.6 SEEKING CLARIFICATION ON THE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES AND THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACTS

Enlist the support of the President of the United States to direct the U.S. Department of Education to consult with Indian tribes and Native American governing bodies and traditional leaders and educators on evaluating the No Child Left Behind Act to determine and implement changes needed to bring it into compliance with the Native American Languages Act; and

Enlist the support of Congress, the Alaska State Legislature, the National School Boards Association, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the National Indian Education Association and the National Congress of American Indians to encourage the President of the United States to direct the U.S. Department of Education to consult with Indian tribes and Native American governing bodies and traditional leaders and educators on evaluating the No Child Left Behind Act to determine and implement changes needed to bring it into compliance with the Native American Languages Act.

Rationale: "Think not forever of yourselves, nor of your own generation. Think of continuing generations of our families, think of our grandchildren and of those yet unborn, whose faces are coming from beneath the ground." Peacemaker, Founder of the Iroquois Confederacy, circa 1000 A.D.

As the American people embark on the journey to implement the "No Child Left Behind Act", the First Peoples of our nation are forced to face, yet again, another challenge to the survival of our languages and our cultures. As indigenous peoples, the struggle to maintain the vitality of our languages and our cultures against the powerful mainstream odds of assimilation becomes a critical issue. Our very identity, our cultures, our worldview, the expression of who we are as Native peoples hangs in the balance.

HISTORY

According to a survey conducted in 1962 on the North American continent, there were 79 American Indian languages. Of those, most of the speakers were over 50. Fifty-one languages had fewer than 10 speakers. Thirty-five languages had between 10 and 100 speakers. Only six of them had at least 10,000 speakers. It is almost certain that at least 51 of these languages have all but disappeared (Nettle and Romaine).

In Alaska, Dr. Michael Krauss in 1980 predicted the future of Alaska Native languages in a paper entitled "Alaska Native Languages: Past, Present and Future." His deeply profound calculation that we would probably "see the death of the very last speakers of fifteen of the twenty languages" in the first half of the coming century was a wake up call that 22 years later we are finding so sadly, to be too close to being true. His prediction that Eyak probably would not survive this century came true. He predicted that Alaskan Tsimshian, Alaskan Haida, Holikachuk, and Tanana would probably be extinct by 2015 and Tlingit, Ahtna, Ingalik, Koyukok and Han by 2030. He said the languages with the best chance of survival were Central Alaskan Yupik and Siberian Yupik because of the large concentration of speakers of all generations. The impact that television and other media have had on the number of those speakers is serious cause for consternation.

Fortunately, the Native American Languages Act (NALA) was passed in 1990 (P.L. 101-477). This piece of federal legislation could very well be the saving grace of the indigenous languages that have continued to thrive. Specifically, NALA states, "It is the policy of the United States to – preserve, protect and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice and

develop Native America languages… encourage and support the use of Native American languages as a medium of instruction in order to encourage and support Native American language survival, equal education opportunity, increased student success and performance, increased student awareness and knowledge of their culture and history, and increased student and community pride; encourage State and local education programs to work closely with Native American parents, educators, Indian tribes and other Native American governing bodies in the implementation of programs to put this policy into effect."

NALA also has a provision for evaluating federal policies. In essence, this provision asks the President to direct Federal agencies to evaluate, in consultation with Indian tribes and other Native American governing bodies and traditional leaders and educators, their policies to determine and implement changes needed to bring them into compliance with the provisions of the Act.

RATIONALE

The discrepancies, between the terms of the Native American Languages Act (NALA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) at the minimum, merit legal analysis and scrutiny. On the one hand, we have the mandate for supporting educational Native American language efforts. On the other, we have the mandate in the No Child Left Behind Act where the emphasis is on academics and English. This brings into the spotlight and into direct conflict, issues with inconsistencies in the Native American Languages Act via heritage language programs and fulfilling the mandate of the NCLB Act. The quandary with which we are faced, forces those people affected to question the intent of the NCLB insofar as its assimilative qualities and aspects and on the effects it is having on the already taxed and limited efforts that schools have undertaken to assist communities in ensuring the continued strength of Native languages.

Specific to the issue of Academic Assessments, the NCLB requires "high quality, yearly student academic assessments that include, at a minimum, academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts…" This condition puts Native American immersion language programs at enormous risk. The requirements stating that the assessments shall "be used for purposes for which such assessments are valid and reliable, and be consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards" could preclude the development of Native American language based academic assessments. History, very clearly, makes us question whether academic assessments developed by indigenous people for purposes of measuring academic proficiencies would be considered "consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards."

Notwithstanding the fact that very few, if any, indigenous academic assessments have been developed and are recognized, the amount of funding that comes with the Title III program has serious implications. Aside from the predisposition to set priority on "World Language" and English language assessment issues as a national priority, the minute financial resources allocated for program implementation further strains resources that, in most cases, are already overstretched due to numerous federal and state mandates and priorities, most of which, if not all, are unfunded. The Act requires each State plan to include the identification of "languages other than English that are present in the student population and indicate the languages for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and are needed." The limited fiscal situation makes it highly unlikely that the State(s) will "make every effort to develop such assessments."

This puts districts with language immersion programs and native language programs in jeopardy for several reasons. Children who are taught in a language other than English are at a distinct disadvantage because of the academic testing rigors requiring that assessments be done in English. How can they pass a test administered in English if they are taught in Inupiaq or Yupik? In addition, districts must show adequate yearly progress as a fundamental part of the accountability system built into the Act or be at risk of being sanctioned for not performing up to

par. Understandably, Districts will not desire to have their schools negatively labeled and will take appropriate steps to ensure their schools are not stigmatized. These “appropriate” steps could very well mean compromising language programs resulting in the further decay of endangered languages, not to mention the social pathologies that accompany the concomitant loss of identity.

NCLB also requires a rigorous English language assessment. Beginning school year 2002-2003, each “local education agency” will “provide for an annual assessment of English proficiency (measuring students’ oral language, reading, and writing skills in English).” In today’s modern world technology and global issues make it necessary for our children to become proficient in English. Learning English, however, should not be at the expense of indigenous language programs. What is at issue in this regard is the colossal amount of energy that districts will need to exert on making certain their children can speak, read and write English sufficiently enough to pass both academic and English assessment programs. Contrast that amount of vigor with, inevitably, the infinitesimal amount of attention that will be given to language programs because of the need to comply with the new federal mandates. State and local educational agencies will need to be exceptionally innovative and utilize groundbreaking strategies to ensure that their languages are supported throughout the curriculum. *Adopted 2002 (Sunset: Nov. 2007)*