

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM # 38 (2007-2008)

September 10, 2007

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: ASD RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE
EDUCATION FUNDING TASK FORCE REPORT

*ASD GOAL: Ensure public accountability through effective communication with
students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the School Board Legislative Subcommittee's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board approve the attached resolution in support of the work and recommendations of the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force. It is further recommended that, once approved, the Superintendent transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor and to all members of the Alaska State Legislature.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force (JLETF) was established by Senate Concurrent Resolution 11 in the first session of the Twenty-fifth Alaska State Legislature for the purpose of examining school district cost differentials and the existing formula for distributing state aid for education. The JLETF was directed to submit a report of its findings and proposed legislative changes to the governor and the legislature by September 1, 2007 and was authorized to make any additional reports it considered advisable.

The JLETF met throughout the summer in a series of open meetings to examine the issues, hear public comment, and draft recommendations. The Anchorage School Board and the Administration were well represented at every meeting of the task force. The process was decidedly positive and was characterized by a respectful and candid sharing of ideas. Task force members listened attentively

to public comment as reflected by consistently thoughtful questions and by the reflection of districts' concerns in the final report and recommendations.

Key among these recommendations are the following: a substantial increase in the amount of intensive needs funding phased in over a period of years, the phasing in of the ISER cost differentials, the creation of standing education committees in the House and Senate to oversee and review education issues in the state, and an increase in the base student allocation set in statute for the next three years to provide some stability in funding for districts.

The Anchorage School District provided compelling testimony during the committee's public hearings that the minimum increase of \$100 per year in the base student allocation noted in the JLETF report would be approximately half of what the district would need to maintain existing programs, even with the proposed increases to the intensive needs multiplier, and requested an increase of \$200 per year to keep up with projected costs.

The Anchorage School District has seen steadily increasing student achievement for the past three years in every student subgroup in both language arts and math. Maintaining adequate funding is critical to our continued success in increasing student achievement and to meeting the ever-increasing requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Anchorage School District is appreciative of the work of the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force under the steady and responsive leadership of Chairman Mike Hawker and is pleased to offer this resolution in support of the work and recommendations of the task force.

Attachment

Prepared and Approved by: Carol Comeau, Superintendent

**ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
ASDR 2007-2008-02**

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE WORK AND THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION
FUNDING TASK FORCE REPORT**

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force met regularly over the summer; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force accepted public testimony, and openly discussed and debated the merits of different changes to the education funding formula; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has prepared a report to the Legislature and the Governor; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the Task Force recommendations will improve public education in the State of Alaska and provide local school districts with a more equitable and stable funding scheme; and

WHEREAS, in the creation of the report, compromises were made to reach a generally acceptable consensus; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force specifically discussed that the Base Student Allocation amount would be subject to further debate in the Legislature;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage School Board supports the recommendations of the Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Anchorage School Board specifically finds the following recommendations to be of high importance:

- The passing by the Legislature of S.B. 125 (PERS/TRS cost sharing) in substantially the same form as it currently exists.
- The creation of standing Education Committees in the House and Senate to oversee and review all education issues in the state;
- The referral to the education committees of the various long term issues discussed in the Task Force report;
- The implementation of the ISER district cost factors, phased in to statute over time as set out in the Task Force recommendations, with appropriation of sufficient funds to avoid a negative impact to Anchorage;
- The creation of a blue ribbon commission or some other body to obtain a neutral, professional review of the district cost factors and recommend

- changes to those cost factors if the ISER factors are found to be inaccurate, so that the cost factors in statute reflect as accurately as feasible the differences in the cost of educating students throughout Alaska;
- The phased increases in the Intensive Need funding with those increases set into statute;
 - The recalibration of the transportation reimbursement rate based on the most recent actual audited costs; and
 - An increasing Base Student Allocation amount, set in statute for Fiscal Years 2009, 2010, and 2011, at an amount that will keep pace with projected cost increases over those years;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Anchorage School Board requests that the BSA be set in statute for FY 2009 at \$5580, for FY 2010 at \$5780, and for FY 2011 at \$5980.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage School Board this 10th day of September, 2007.

Tim Steele, President

Jeff Friedman
Mary Marks
John Steiner

Crystal Kennedy
Macon Roberts
Chris Tuck

Carol Comeau, Superintendent