

(Attachment A)

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ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS

Association of Alaska school boards
1998 Belief Statements &

Core Resolutions

AS AMENDED BY THE
ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE 9/98

With Recommendations
by the AASB Board of Directors
for consideration at the
AASB Statewide Annual Conference
November 12, 1998, Anchorage, Alaska

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7

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34
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37
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40 Continue *1.2 Opposition to Mandated Borough Formation **ASB Abstain**

41 Amend *1.3 Non-Public School and Part-Time Student Access to Public School Activity

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39	Continue	3.1 Promoting Developmental Assets in Alaska’s Children <u>ASB Amend</u>
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 22 Continue 5.4 Native Language Instruction
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 24 Amend 5.6 Rural Student Vocational Program (RSVP)
 25 Continue 5.7 Funding for the Student Leadership Project
 26 Amend 5.8 Supporting Full Funding for the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act
 27 Continue 5.9 Alternative Education Programs
 28 Continue 5.10 Boarding Home Program
 29 Continue 5.11 Regional Residency School-To-Work Centers **ASB Abstain**
 30 Continue 5.12 Endorsing and Encouraging District Participation in Kids Voting Alaska
 31

Abbreviations:

- 32 AASB–Association of Alaska School Boards
 33 NSBA–National School Boards Association
 34 DOE–Department of Education
 35 AASA–Alaska Association of School Administrators
 36 PTA–Parent Teacher Association
 37 NEA–National Education Association
 38 AFT–American Federation of Teachers
 39 SEEK–Supporters for an Education
 40
 41

1 AASB Belief Statements

2
3 *Belief Statements are brief philosophical statements about issues that the AASB membership believes to be true. They*
4 *are distinguished from Resolutions in that they are long standing, universally accepted statements that require no*
5 *specific action, yet underpin the beliefs of the association.*
6

7 **GOVERNANCE**

8 **B.1 LOCAL CONTROL**

9 Public education is the responsibility of the states and of the local school boards created thereunder. This
10 system of local school board governance is one of the purest examples of democracy in action today, in
11 that school boards are held accountable for public education by the public they serve as locally elected
12 representatives. The mission of the Association of Alaska School Boards is to assist school boards in
13 providing quality public education and preserving local control.
14

15 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

16 17 **B.2 BINDING ARBITRATION**

18 Binding arbitration removes decision making from locally elected school boards and puts it in the hands
19 of an outside entity, and allows a third party to determine the salaries, benefits and working conditions
20 of school district employees who bargain collectively. It is the elected school board's responsibility to
21 weigh the consequences of decisions concerning management of school resources. The Association of
22 Alaska School Boards opposes any legislation that provides for binding arbitration as the final step in
23 collective bargaining.
24

25 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

26 27 **B.3 ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING**

28 State law requires the establishment of advisory school boards in REAA's and allows them in city and
29 borough school districts. School boards have delegated authority and responsibility to those advisory
30 school boards, and are encouraged to provide in-service opportunities and training to local advisory
31 boards to help them become effective contributors to excellence in education in their communities.
32

33 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

34 35 **B.4 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING**

36 School board members are elected by their local school district citizens based on minimum statewide
37 requirements of eligibility to vote and residency. School board members are responsible to the public
38 for policy issues and budgets of millions of dollars and are coming under increasing public scrutiny. The
39 Association of Alaska School Boards strongly encourages all school board members to avail themselves
40 of training opportunities to increase their understanding of the issues confronting their district to
41 improve their ability to make the decisions required of them and to demonstrate their accountability to
42 the public.
43

44 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

45 46 **FUNDING**

47 **B.5 EARLY FUNDING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**

48 AASB supports legislation to provide early funding of foundation revenues, school construction debt
49 reimbursement and student transportation for the following year by March 15 of each year to meet
50 personnel requirements under the law. A school district's and municipality's early knowledge of its

1 anticipated revenues for the following school year is absolutely necessary for responsible budgeting
2 decisions.

3 *Amended 1997*

4
5 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

6
7 **B.6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS TOP PRIORITY**

8 Article VII, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish and maintain
9 a system of public schools open to all children. Public schools in the State are the largest entitled
10 program. AASB calls upon the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to make education of our youth a top
11 funding priority.

12 *Amended 1997*

13
14 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

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1 **B.7 MANDATING PROGRAMS WITHOUT ADEQUATE FUNDING**

2 AASB believes that mandating new educational programs or forcing schools to absorb other school costs
3 is not in the best interests of education. All new programs, national or state mandated, or fiscal
4 management activities must be supported with adequate funding.

5 *Amended 1997*

6
7 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

8
9 **B.8 UNITED CAMPAIGN**

10 AASB believes that the educational community—the officers of AASB, AASA, Elementary and Secondary
11 Principals Associations, PTA, NEA-AK, AFT and other bargaining units—should utilize a united approach
12 to influence legislators to support legislation and educational issues that will meet the needs of all
13 students.

14 *Amended 1997*

15 **ASB RECOMMENDATION: TO PARTICIPATE IN COALITION WITH**
16 **SIGN OFF**

17
18 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

19
20 **B.9 MEETING SCHOOL FACILITY NEEDS FOR ALASKA STUDENTS**

21 AASB believes that the Alaska State Legislature and the Governor must resolve the urgent need for
22 additional classroom space and major school maintenance.

23
24 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

25
26 **COMMENTS: Deferred Maintenance Task Force recommendations and more than 10 bills addressed**
27 **this issue. Decline in oil prices scuttled Task Force plans to considerably fund backlog of projects. Need**
28 **to stay on this issue.**

29
30
31 **CHILD ADVOCACY**

32 **B.10 EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

33 AASB believes the elements of a quality educational improvement effort should address the following
34 four key areas:

35
36 Parental Involvement (~~Goals 2000~~): Should encourage a high degree of parental involvement in all
37 aspects of their child's education; collaboration on societal issues outside schools that impact children's
38 learning (schools and various agencies must collaboratively plan to provide services to children to
39 effectively meet their needs); and accountability to the public to assure desired results – a "world class"
40 education.

41 Student Standards: Should include the development of education programs to meet high standards and
42 identified competencies (they should be delivered by a variety of means that meet the diverse needs of
43 students and prepare them to be contributing and productive citizens in a rapidly changing world).

44 Professional Standards: Should include the highest standards of professionalism by school employees
45 throughout the district.

46 Accreditation Standards: adequate and appropriate space, furnishings, equipment and technology;
47 adequate and equitable funding that will allow for the most effective planning and use of each
48 educational dollar; and an early childhood education program.

49 *Amended 1997*

50

1 **RECOMMENDATION:** Amend

2
3 **COMMENTS:** Delete the “Goals 2000” reference to further de-politicize the effort.

4 **ASB: Agree**

5
6 **B.11 CHILD ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT**

7 The advocacy role of school board members is to promote parental, public and social service
8 commitment to the shared responsibility of educating all public school children.

9
10 **RECOMMENDATION:** Amend

11
12 **B.12 LANGUAGE, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY**

13 Alaska is a vast state and is populated by persons of diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds.
14 Our schools must provide an environment that respects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student
15 populations and can nurture tolerance by teaching students to appreciate diversity. Furthermore, AASB
16 believes that schools must make every effort to support programs that encourage learning and valuing
17 diverse cultures, and in doing so, encourages tolerance and pride without isolating or alienating a
18 particular group.

19
20 **RECOMMENDATION:** Continue

21
22 **COMMENTS: “English Language Only” will be on the ballot this November. NSBA Comment on this**
23 **issue: “Efforts to mandate languages via legislation should continue to be discouraged as school boards**
24 **already have the authority under local control.”**

25
26
27 **B.13 INCREASE IN FAMILY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL**
28 **PROGRAMS**

29 The Association of Alaska School Boards believes, and research supports the belief, that the single most
30 important factor in student achievement is parental, family and guardian involvement in the educational
31 process, both at home and in the schools. AASB strongly feels that family involvement in the education
32 of children is a high priority. Research has shown that family involvement at home, in schools and
33 education programs enhances student success.

34
35 **RECOMMENDATION:** Continue

36
37 **NEW BELIEF STATEMENT FOR PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION**

38 **AASB understands that no health-related problem has ever been solved by treating only it’s symptoms.**
39 **In order to reduce the incidences of a new problem, something must prevent the symptoms from**
40 **appearing in the first place. To prevent a problem, families, neighbors, community leaders, and public**
41 **decision-makers must work to identify the factors that cause a condition and then reduce or eliminate**
42 **those causes. Through these prevention efforts, Alaskans will help people become more productive**
43 **citizens, create a healthier Alaska, and save money.**

44
45 **RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt

46
47 **PERSONNEL**

48 **B.14 ALASKA NATIVE TEACHER HIRE & RETENTION**

49 Studies have shown that Native teachers have had a very positive effect on Native students. The hiring
50 and retention of qualified Alaska Native teachers has long been supported by educational and Native

1 organizations. AASB strongly urges school districts to recruit qualified Native teachers. The University
2 of Alaska is encouraged to more actively recruit Native students. Local school districts, with the help of
3 the Alaska Department of Education, are encouraged to provide leadership in developing programs to
4 encourage Native students to choose education as a field of study, and to make every effort to foster the
5 hiring and retention of Native teacher aides and teachers.

6
7 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

8
9 ***EDUCATION PROGRAMS***

10 **B.15 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

11 All children should have opportunities to learn during the formative early childhood years. Many of
12 Alaska's young children are placed at risk for future school failure because they do not have access to rich
13 learning opportunities for a variety of reasons. The Association of Alaska School Boards therefore
14 supports and encourages districts to develop ~~optional~~ early childhood programs which target at risk
15 children and include a parent and family involvement component.

16
17 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

18
19

AASB CORE RESOLUTIONS

SUBJECT AREA: GOVERNANCE

1.1 OPPOSING MANDATED SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION

AASB is opposed to *mandated* school consolidation when it will clearly not serve the best educational interests of the children and will significantly reduce local control for a majority of school districts in Alaska.

Rationale. Alaska Legislative Budget and Audit Committee has completed a study, the outcome of which suggests only marginal savings by consolidation of school districts at the expense of the significant advantages to home rule. The State of Washington Legislative and Budget Audit Committee has also completed a similar study, the outcome of which suggests that there are significantly better ways to accrue cost savings. AASB continues to seek and engage in cooperative and shared service opportunities, thereby creating a significant savings of State tax dollars for all involved.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

ASB: Abstain

COMMENTS: Two pieces of legislation were introduced this year by a member of the Majority that would have consolidated a significant number of school districts. AASB anticipates a continued effort aimed at reducing administrative costs that includes consolidation.

1.2 OPPOSITION TO MANDATED BOROUGH FORMATION

AASB continues to oppose *mandatory* formation of boroughs. A mandatory borough act reverses a decades long trend toward increased 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. 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.

A mandatory borough act ignores the economic reality of the lack of an adequate tax base in many rural areas of the State. No evidence has been provided to support the proposition that significant savings would result from the indiscriminate combining of school districts.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

ASB: Abstain

1 **COMMENTS: Sen. Torgerson's bill based on model borough boundaries received significant opposition**
2 **from the public who were opposed to taxation. Nevertheless, the issue of everybody paying something**
3 **to help fund education could reemerge next year.**
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1 **1.3 NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PART-TIME STUDENT ACCESS TO**
2 **PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS**

3 AASB opposes mandated, unrestricted, and unfunded non-public school and part time student
4 access to public school activity programs. Each school district is in the best position to decide
5 whether involvement in public school programs by non-public and part time school students
6 would be in the best interest of the public schools. Many of Alaska's public schools provide these
7 students varying degrees of access to activity programs where it is affordable and districts are able
8 to accommodate student needs. Current part-time student funding does not address activity
9 program costs.

10
11 **Rationale.** ~~Alaska's public school system was already underfunded, without a significant~~
12 ~~increase since the education foundation funding formula was revised in 1988.~~

13
14 Mandating non-public school and part time students access to public school activity programs
15 poses a number of serious problems including: lack of an adequate funding source (potentially
16 draining resources away from public school students), lack of standards for eligibility when it
17 comes to competitive extracurricular activities, and the unresolved issue of liability. It sets a
18 dangerous precedent, where non-public education institutions utilize public services without
19 paying for them, and without being accountable to the public. *Amended 1997*

20
21 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

22
23 **COMMENTS: Delete first sentence in rationale as it detracts from the focus of the resolution. HB 367,**
24 **relating to part-time public school students, passed into law in 1998. However, the bill specifies that this**
25 **legislation "does not apply to interscholastic or extracurricular student activities."**

26
27 **1.4 MAINTAINING LOCAL CONTROL IN CHARTER SCHOOL**
28 **FORMATION**

29 AASB recognizes charter schools as a locally developed alternative to the standard education
30 program. AASB supports charter schools as long as one of several mechanisms available to local
31 school boards, provided that the school board:

- 32 (a) retains the sole authority to grant the charter;
33 (b) retains options to decertify any school that fails to meet criteria set forth in the charter or as
34 otherwise specified by the local school board;
35 (c) maintains accountability, such as determining the criteria, standards or outcomes that will
36 be used in establishing the charter;
37 (d) ensures that a charter does not foster racial, social, religious or economic segregation or
38 segregation of children with disabilities.

39
40 **Rationale.** Under Section 14.12.020 in Title 14 of the Alaska Education Laws states that a school
41 district shall be operated under the management and control of a school board. SB 88, Formation of
42 Charter Schools, became law at the end of the 1995 legislative session which gave local school
43 boards the ability to approve or deny charter school applications, and not be overturned by
44 another group, and gave local boards the ability to add other requirements for charter schools,
45 including Principal/Head Teacher Certification. *Amended 1997*

46
47 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

48 **ASB: Should be a high priority for AASB**

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COMMENTS: Legislation was introduced in 1998 to significantly reduce local control of charter schools. Alaska State Board of Education supports an effort to allow another body to authorize districts to fund charter schools. State Board position for amending the Alaska Charter School Act: (1) Lift the current cap on the number of charter schools allowed, (2) Remove the sunset provision of 2005, (3) Create a body at the local community level to which applicants who are denied approval of a charter school application by a local board of education can appeal, (4) Ensure educational programs are based on state standards, (5) Require teachers to be certificated, (6) Establish fund raising guidelines for charter schools that establish themselves as nonprofit institutions so as not to jeopardize their public school status.

1 **1.5 CENTRALIZED TREASURY: DISTRIBUTION OF ALLOCATED FUNDS**
2 **FOR SCHOOLS AND INTEREST EARNED**

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

6
7 **Rationale.** Educational funds appropriated by State and local governments are appropriated for
8 the purpose of public education. The efforts of local school districts should be to provide sound
9 planning for future educational needs. State funds allocated to school districts have been retained
10 by certain municipalities under centralized treasuries. Some municipalities retain fund balances
11 on school budget moneys, and interest accrued on school funds are sometimes held by the
12 municipalities. As it is unclear how interest on school funds are to be distributed, this action will
13 make certain all moneys allocated and earned for schools is used to benefit children. Currently,
14 with a municipal centralized treasury it is possible for money to be used for things other than
15 education.

16
17 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

18
19 **COMMENTS: Doesn't seem to be a priority. There is a general feeling that a centralized treasury was**
20 **not intended to be used as a savings account.**

21
22
23 **1.6 STRIKE NOTIFICATION**

24 AASB supports legislation which would require employees and/or their bargaining agency to
25 give a school district a 72-hour advance notice when a strike to the district will occur and that
26 would require the district to give employees and/or their bargaining agency a 72-hour advance
27 notice of its intent to impose a contract on the bargaining agency.

28
29 **Rationale.** Unannounced strikes undermine public confidence in public education and do not
30 serve our communities. Strikes create security problems for facilities. The safety of school children
31 would be compromised in the event school employees walked off their jobs. Union members
32 should also have equal advance notification in the event a District decided to impose a contract.

33
34 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

35
36 **COMMENTS: Similar language was included in Sen. Pearce's labor bill in the 1998 Legislature. The bill**
37 **did not pass.**

38
39
40 **1.7 CLASS SIZE**

41 AASB opposes any *mandating* of class size or making class size a negotiable item of bargaining.

42
43 **Rationale.** The Alaska Supreme Court has held that class size is not a mandatory subject of
44 collective bargaining. While school boards recognize the advantage of small class size, they must
45 be able to use discretion when weighing the costs of reduced class sizes with other financial
46 obligations and educational needs of a district. Making class size a mandatory subject of collective
47 bargaining might make class size subject to grievance binding arbitration or otherwise diminish
48 board control over staffing levels.

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RECOMMENDATION: Continue

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2 **1.8 TRANSFER OF UNDERAGE STUDENTS INTO THE ALASKA SCHOOL**
3 **SYSTEM**

4 AASB requests the legislature to revise the language of AS 14.03.080(e) to make the enrollment of
5 underage school children permissive rather than *mandatory* by adopting the following revision:

6 "A child under school age may be admitted to school in the district of which the child is a
7 resident if immediately before the child became a resident of the district the child was legally
8 enrolled in and attended a public school of another district or state."
9

10 **Rationale.** AS 14.03.070 provides that a child is of minimum school age if the child is 6 years of
11 age before August 15 following the beginning of the school year. AS 14.03.080(d) has established
12 August 15 as the cut-off date for 6 year-olds entering first grade and 5 year-olds entering a
13 voluntary Kindergarten program.
14

15 AS 14.03.080(e) provides "A child under school age shall be admitted to school in the district of
16 which the child is a resident if immediately before the child became a resident of the district, the
17 child was *legally enrolled* in the public schools of another district or state." The term "legally
18 enrolled" is a phrase which can be easily misinterpreted. AASB believes that it is in the best
19 interest of school children to be placed in an age appropriate classroom.
20

21 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**
22

23 **COMMENTS: It appears this resolution addressed a single instance.**
24
25
26

27 **1.9 HEALTH INSURANCE**

28 AASB should assist in the process of securing reasonable health coverage for those districts that
29 are unable to self-insure.
30

31 **Rationale.** Health insurance costs for school districts are a significant budget line item which
32 continue to escalate. Since a large pool of participants is required to secure reasonable health
33 insurance rates, some school districts do not have the number of personnel for self-insurance. The
34 larger the pool, the lower the rates.
35

36 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**
37

38 **COMMENTS: AASB will continue to monitor this issue. AASB previously surveyed districts and found**
39 **some interest in a pooling program. South East Regional Resource Center then investigated self-**
40 **insurance plans for small districts and decided not to pursue. Most recently, NEA-Alaska instituted a**
41 **health insurance program targeting urban areas, but is experiencing difficulties with program**
42 **feasibility.**
43

SUBJECT AREA: FUNDING

2.1 OPPOSING LEGISLATIVE REDUCTIONS

AASB urges the Legislature to recognize the unique needs of all school districts, and that the Legislatures' efforts to adjust the foundation formula reflect the unique needs in these districts. AASB will direct its efforts towards securing additional funding and updating the area cost differential rather than redistributing existing revenues.

Rationale. AASB represents the needs of ALL school districts and their students. Our intent is to provide a quality education for all students in Alaska. The formulas being considered serve no other function than to put districts in competition with each other for already insufficient funds.

Amended 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENTS: Many of the current resolutions that address the funding formula are recommended for deletion due to passage of SB 36.

SB 36 increased state funding for school districts by \$26 million. The effort to redistribute existing revenues was rebuffed. The new formula, however, does need refinement in the areas of the District Operating Cost factor and the floor. The District Operating Cost factor will be revised as required by the new law in 2001.

2.2 HOLD HARMLESS – DECLINING ENROLLMENT – ECONOMIC DISASTER RELIEF

AASB supports a 10% hold harmless clause in the basic formula be changed to 5% loss in student enrollment and be funded at 100% the first year, 75% the second year and 50% the third year. AASB hereby goes on record as supporting districts faced with grave economic crisis which cause drastically reduced enrollment and/or a precipitous drop in local or state revenue. AASB strongly supports legislation that would allow school districts who face dramatically reduced enrollments to use past year student enrollment counts as a means of downsizing without destruction of programs, as well as a three-year reduction of the requirement for local match of all capital improvement projects funded by the legislature for districts faced with economic disaster.

Rationale. Economic disaster can strike at any time. Many communities within the state have narrow economic bases. The continued operation of the school district may be dependent upon the property or sales taxes. In consideration of the difficulty in managing a district budget during periods of rapid declining student enrollment, a great amount of time is needed to re-train and restructure the district under circumstances related to significant declines in enrollment.

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENTS: Lawmakers addressed these issues in the new foundation formula (SB 36). They were adamant that dual enrollment counts were a symptom of a faulty formula. The formula accounts for districts currently facing economic disasters through the revised district operating cost factor.

1 **2.3 INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT VALUE INCREASE/ INFLATION INDEX**
2 **INFLATION ADJUSTMENT TO THE FOUNDATION FORMULA**

3 A fully funded foundation program must include an inflation ~~index~~ adjustment to the foundation
4 formula. AASB strongly requests that the Legislature meet the essential funding needs of public
5 schools in Alaska by increasing the value of the instructional unit including an automatic, annual
6 adjustment for inflation.

7
8 **Rationale.** ~~The instructional unit value provided for in AS 14.17.056, originally established at~~
9 ~~\$60,000 in 1987, has been increased by only \$1,000 since that date, and has been frozen for the~~
10 ~~past five years. Inflation during the same period has amounted to over 30.93%, resulting in a unit~~
11 ~~value worth only \$46,589 in 1987 dollars. An instructional unit value of \$78,558 would be~~
12 ~~required to provide districts with the same purchasing power as they had in 1987.~~

13
14 ~~Many school districts in the state have exhausted fund balances, and exhausted all means of~~
15 ~~obtaining additional revenue. In 1998 the Alaska Legislature rewrote the education funding~~
16 ~~formula without an automatic adjustment for inflation. The new formula requires the Department~~
17 ~~of Education to review the "District Cost Factor" and "School Size Factor" every other year and~~
18 ~~make recommendations to the Legislature. There is no automatic adjustment.~~

19
20 School districts have been expected to reduce programs by 3% to 5% each year for the past 10 years
21 because of the costs of inflation. They have exhausted means to effect additional meaningful
22 economies in operations ~~and have been forced to defer maintenance of facilities, which will result~~
23 ~~in greatly increased long term costs to the state. It has been necessary to increase class size in~~
24 ~~many districts to unacceptable levels. In many districts counseling, health, art, music and library~~
25 ~~services to students have been non-existent, reduced or eliminated. Budgets have been cut to the~~
26 ~~point where it is no longer possible to provide updated textbooks, software, and other materials for~~
27 ~~students. In addition, the cost of operating schools (for example, inflation in costs of personnel,~~
28 ~~textbooks, fuel, and freight) has dramatically increased. Districts are not able to provide students~~
29 ~~with sufficient access to technology which will enable students to become equipped to function as~~
30 ~~productive citizens in the 21st century.~~

31
32 School districts are working to not only maintain the status quo, but to actively improve their
33 educational programs, to raise academic standards, and to improve student performance, in the
34 face of declining real dollars.

35
36 In addition, AASB does not endorse the use of the phrase "fully funded" to describe the current
37 legislative practice of approving funding with no adjustment for the increased cost of doing
38 business.

39
40
41 *Amended 1997*

42
43 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

44
45 **COMMENTS: Rewrite to address inflation only.**
46
47
48

1 **2.4 COMMUNITY SIZE ADJUSTMENT TO DISTRICT FUNDING**

2 AASB urges the Legislature to address the differences between districts of 1,000 students or more.

3
4 **Rationale.** In all current scenarios of funding before the legislature, all fund districts of 1,000
5 students and more in similar fashion. Districts with between 401-1000 students provide a 10%
6 premium to acknowledge that they cannot function without this additional support. However,
7 once a district reaches 1,000 students, it is assumed that the economies of scale for 1,000 students
8 is the same as 40,000. That obviously is not the case.

9
10 A “stair-step” needs to be added to funding districts of over 1,000 students. The following is a
11 potential formula:

12
13

401-1000	1.10
1001-2000	1.07
2001-5000	1.04
5001-8000	1.02
8001 and up	1.00

17

18 This type of formula would recognize that districts of 1,000 or 3,000 or 5,000 cannot operate with
19 the efficiencies of scale that are found in a very large district. That needs to be recognized in the
20 formula when it is rewritten by the legislature.

21 *Adopted 1997*

22
23 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

24
25 **COMMENTS: Addressed in SB 36 under District Cost Factor and School Size Factor. Will be revisited.**

26
27 **2.5 SINGLE/DUAL SITE FUNDING**

28 AASB strongly supports an equitable solution to the single/dual site funding issue.

29
30 **Rationale.** It has been generally recognized that a problem with single/dual site districts exists
31 within the foundation formula. Money has been appropriated by the legislature each year to
32 address this problem. This situation has intensified each year due to inadequate increases in the
33 funding unit.

34
35 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

36
37 **COMMENTS: Addressed in SB 36.**

38
39 **2.6 SMALL SCHOOL FUNDING**

40 AASB supports small schools and goes on record as opposing any additional change to the small
41 school funding/enrollment regulation.

42
43 **Rationale.** The State of Alaska has for years, by regulation, authorized the opening of a school
44 when a community had eight students. Members of these communities, whose populations may
45 fluctuate over time for a variety of reasons, have come to depend on these schools for the education
46 of their children.

47
48 The Department of Education, by regulation, has declared they will decertify schools first with five
49 then with eight and now with 10 pupils by 1999. There have been no hearings or studies

1 conducted on this issue, and there is no guarantee that this process will not continue until the
2 number is 12 or 14 or even 16.

3

4 *Amended 1997*

5

6 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

7

8 **COMMENTS: Addressed in SB 36 under the hold harmless provision.**

1 **2.7 LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS FORMULA TO COMPLEMENT THE**
2 **FOUNDATION**

3 AASB endorses and encourages a legislative revision of AS 14.17.025, Public School Foundation
4 Program, to remove the inequities and prohibitions herein identified that deny the opportunity to
5 excel to a significant portion of school children in Alaska. AASB recognizes that any formula
6 change in the foundation program will require an additional legislative appropriation so as not to
7 cause a decrease through proration for some districts.
8

9 **Rationale.** The current foundation formula, specifically AS 14.17.025, which defines the manner
10 and sums in which local contributions may be made by cities and boroughs to the school districts
11 contained therein, does not equitably recognize either the ability or the desire of the citizens of a
12 municipality or borough to exercise their collective judgment in allocating and disbursing funds to
13 the local school district. Any city and borough which exceeds the cap defined in AS 14.17.025(b)
14 is, in fact, levied a pecuniary punishment for having done so. AS 14.17.025 has language in it
15 which grants to the Alaska Department of Education authority to "adjust" seeming financial
16 disparities between school districts in a manner that is not specifically defined and thus subject to
17 possible subjectivity that may lead to arbitrariness in administration. AS 14.17.025 legislatively
18 denies the privilege and the right of any school district to excel in quality beyond that of its peers
19 through the device of limiting the amount of dollars a school district may expend on the provision
20 of quality education. AS 14.17.025 in fact prohibits local incentive from improving the quality of
21 educational services offered in school districts that have both the ability and intent to provide the
22 additional resources they may so desire for their students to excel.
23

24 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

25
26 **COMMENTS: Addressed in SB36 through a mandatory amount.**
27
28

1 **2.8 URGING AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHOOL FOUNDATION FUNDING**
 2 **FORMULA REGARDING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

3 AASB recommends that the Department of Education provide a mechanism for districts to apply
 4 for special ed funding if they have a special need, and that the dollars be allocated according to
 5 percentage of ADM (average daily membership) plus intensive costs, with a hold harmless
 6 provision for a reasonable time period. This is consistent with the recommendations of a
 7 statewide committee addressing the subject.
 8

9 **Rationale.** The State of Alaska, through the school foundation funding formula, provides funding
 10 to public school districts throughout the State. A component of that foundation funding is to be
 11 used to serve children with special needs. There is a close correlation between poverty and
 12 students needing special education services. Under the terms of Part B of the Individuals with
 13 Disabilities Education Act or IDEA (formerly the Education of the Handicapped Act), school
 14 districts shall, to the maximum extent possible, serve children with disabilities in the least
 15 restrictive learning environment possible. Under the Alaska foundation funding formula,
 16 exceptional children enrolled in special education programs generate 0.056 instructional units if
 17 the student receives resource services; 0.1 instructional units if the student receives self-contained
 18 services, or 0.333 instructional units if the student receives intensive or homebound/hospital
 19 services. The foundation formula thus provides an economic incentive for school districts to serve
 20 children in the *most restrictive* learning environment, contrary to Federal law.
 21

22 Schools that move students from a more restrictive environment into the regular classroom are
 23 losing the funding necessary to support that child and teacher because of the current funding
 24 formula and affects the education of all students in those classes. A statewide committee has been
 25 working under the direction of DOE since March 1994 to make specific recommendations for
 26 special education finance reform. National statistics show that the percent of students certified for
 27 special education categories of certification or placement of students increase when there is a
 28 financial incentive to do so within the state foundation allocation. That committee's
 29 recommendation was to avoid these concerns by providing funding according to a set percentage
 30 of ADM for the total district student population.
 31

32 **RECOMMENDATION: Replace with the following resolution**
 33
 34

1 **REPLACE 2.8 WITH THE FOLLOWING...**

2
3 **BLOCK GRANTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND BILINGUAL**
4 **EDUCATION**

5 AASB urges the Alaska State Legislature to reconsider the funding level for “intensive needs”
6 children receiving special education as it provides an inadequate level of support. Also, block
7 grant funding for special education, vocational education, and bilingual education programs is
8 inappropriate. Instead, AASB supports funding bilingual education programs separately based
9 on need.

10
11 AASB also recommends that Congress fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
12 (IDEA) and that the U.S. Department of Education develop regulations for the reauthorized IDEA
13 that provide maximum flexibility for states and local education agencies in the operation of special
14 education programs and services.

15
16 **Rationale.** AASB supports programs to assist local school districts to educate children with
17 disabilities in the least restrictive environment through a continuum of appropriate placements.

18
19 Citing a financial incentive to overidentify special education and bilingual education students,
20 lawmakers in 1998 changed the way it funds special education, vocational programs, and
21 bilingual instruction by offering a block grant (20% of a district’s funds) to cover the cost of those
22 programs. Bilingual program needs are diverse, however, and a block grant may bear no
23 resemblance to actual need, thus shortchanging some districts while overcompensating others.

24
25 The new “intensive needs” funding mechanism adopted will provide less funding compared to
26 last year. This, at a time when schools are struggling to comply with state and federal mandates
27 that are unfunded or underfunded.

28
29 **RECOMMENDATION: Adopt (to Replace current 2.8)**

30
31
32
33
34

1 **2.9 FUNDING PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN ALASKA**

2 AASB supports legislation to add funding for pre-school programs in Alaska and that legislation
3 be introduced that includes pre-school program planning and funding for Pre-school-12 facilities
4 in Alaska.

5
6 **Rationale.** Pre-school education is vital to the educational success of school children in Alaska.
7 Pre-school programs should be an integral part of district curriculum. Inclusion of pre-school in a
8 school has an impact on facilities planning.

9
10 The state does not mandate pre-school education. Many communities do not meet the
11 qualifications for federal Headstart or pre-school funding and sources of present federal funding
12 are uncertain. Most existing pre-school programs cannot afford certificated pre-school teachers.

13
14 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

15
16
17 **2.10 FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN**

18 AASB supports legislation that continues to fund kindergarten as a recognized grade level.

19
20 **Rationale.** All school districts in Alaska are already providing kindergarten as a part of the
21 educational curriculum of their school districts. Kindergarten is a funded grade level under the
22 current Foundation Program. There is no additional cost associated with enacting this legislation.

23
24 Thirty-five states and territories have recognized that kindergarten has a role and function in their
25 educational systems by offering kindergarten as a funded grade. Article VII of the Alaska
26 Constitution directs the State Legislature to establish and maintain a public school system open to
27 all children of the State.

28
29 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

30 **ASB: Delete**

31
32

1
2 **2.11 SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION / MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF**
3 **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

4 AASB supports the concept of a school facilities authority to meet the current and future needs of
5 the state. A constant source of funding separate from the foundation formula should be made
6 available to capital improvement projects each year so as to prevent the backlog of facility needs in
7 Alaska.

8
9 **Rationale.** The State of Alaska has a constitutional obligation to fund the public school system,
10 and the construction/major maintenance of the facilities required to support that system. The
11 student population of the State of Alaska continues to grow at an average rate of 2% annually and
12 over 10% a year in some communities. ~~The State of Alaska provided \$68 million last year to~~
13 ~~address past school construction debt; only \$13.5 million in FY95 and only \$7.68 million in FY97~~
14 ~~over the last two years for school facility needs.~~ The State of Alaska currently has a backlog of over
15 \$680,000,000 of educational facility projects. The backlog may be as much as \$1 billion due to
16 project needs that have not been submitted to the department of education because of a grant
17 program that is inadequately funded. The lack of adequate funding is discouraging districts from
18 applying.

19
20 The state capital budget is woefully inadequate to address state needs. Currently municipalities
21 are able to bond to meet facility needs while other districts must wait on a CPI list for their projects
22 to be funded by the Department of Education.

23
24 *Amended 1997*

25
26 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

27
28 **COMMENTS: Deferred Maintenance Task Force recommended establishing a school facilities authority,**
29 **but declining oil prices scared Legislature from implementing most of the recommendations, including**
30 **this one. Instead, the Legislature reinstated the debt reimbursement program (SB 11). Overall, Capital**
31 **funding for schools was greatly increased in 1998 over previous years. The capital plan floats bonds**
32 **from AHFC over the next 6 years. • SEAC has a pending lawsuit over lack of an equitable funding**
33 **scheme for school construction.**

34
35 **2.12 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION / HAZARDOUS ROUTES**

36 AASB supports the same funding of home-to-school transportation for all pupils as provided in
37 State Statute Section 14.09.010 with a hold harmless provision for existing dollars. AASB requests
38 the Department of Education to implement clear and consistent regulations on the reimbursement
39 of transportation costs in a manner that does not negatively impact the level of State support.

40
41 **Rationale.** The present method of funding pupil transportation addresses the original intent of
42 ensuring the safe transportation of students from their residence to their school. Alaska regulation
43 4 AAC 27.035 gives authority to the governing body of the school district to designate bus routes
44 as hazardous routes. Any other method of funding pupil transportation involving local support
45 would place a discriminatory burden on the taxpayers of districts that currently provide
46 transportation services. The Department of Education has not always adhered financially to the
47 State statutes—Sec. 14.09.010—which defines pupil transportation as a State responsibility—by not
48 requesting adequate appropriations to fully fund, and then not fully funding, student
49 transportation.

1
2 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

3
4 **COMMENTS: SB 36 addressed some concerns with a direct appropriation this session. Regulations were**
5 **recently proposed that would change the way districts are reimbursed. New reimbursement will be based on**
6 **route mileage rather than the current 50% reimbursement. This mechanism, currently utilized by the Mat-**
7 **Su School District, will provide more funds for hazardous routes, but still falls short of requested funding.**
8

9 **2.13 SUPPORT OF CONTINUED FEDERAL FUNDING**

10 AASB strongly encourages the Alaska Congressional delegation, the Department of Interior and
11 the US Department of Education to maintain continued funding levels for Alaska's schools.
12

13 **Rationale.** There is a federal role and responsibility in delivery of public education. The original
14 intent of PL 94-142 (federal special education funding) included the federal government paying
15 40% of the increased costs associated with its requirements. Alaska's schools receive a variety of
16 supplementary funds from the federal government to meet the varied needs of its students. Federal
17 funding, such as PL-874 Impact Aid, Carl Perkins, Migrant Education, Title IX Indian Education,
18 Bilingual Education, etc., directly affect state basic funding. Imminent cuts in education exacerbate
19 a situation in Alaska schools where funding has decreased while operating costs have risen.
20 Classroom requirements like handicap laws, the American Disabilities Act, health laws, while
21 worthwhile, have not had accompanying funding to meet the mandates. School lunch programs
22 are critical in meeting the nutrition needs of many of our children. With funding uncertainties, it
23 has become impossible to estimate available federal program funding, to get consideration of a
24 plan of education or to develop a plan and a timetable for receiving grant allocations.
25

26 Alaska schools are at a critical juncture in meeting nationwide standards and need federal
27 funding to reach those standards.
28

29 *Amended 1997*

30
31 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

32
33 **COMMENTS: There is a general belief that while block grants proposals being considered by Congress**
34 **could lead to greater flexibility for local school districts, they also make it easier for Congress to cut**
35 **funding.**
36

37 **2.14 EDUCATION ENDOWMENT**

38 AASB lends its full support to the concept of an educational endowment to secure stable funding
39 for education to be used for public elementary and secondary education.
40

41 **Rationale.** The funding of public K-12 education in our state is an annual appropriation from the
42 General Fund and is subject to the shifting funding priorities of administrations and legislatures,
43 and the variable level of state revenues. Budgetary cycles have increasingly failed to provide a
44 stable and secure funding source for Alaskan students. Inflation and fixed costs have eroded the
45 value of the foundation formula by approximately one-third during the past decade.
46

47 Adequate funding of education is ranked as a high priority by Alaskans. An educational
48 endowment will provide a proven, secure, and dedicated fiscal resource for future public
49 education funding for our state. A full public discussion of long-term education funding issues

1 would be of considerable value to the public and to public policy makers. Alaskan voters should
2 be given a voice in a matter of such long-term importance to the future of education in Alaska and
3 to present and future generations of students.

4
5 *Amended 1997*

6
7 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

8
9 **COMMENTS: SEEK effort failed to gain the necessary petition signatures, but succeeded in helping**
10 **forge a paradigm shift as to using PF earnings to fund state government. One year ago you could not**
11 **find lawmakers who would publicly say they would use PF earnings to fund state government. That is**
12 **slowly changing in light of declining oil prices.**

13
14

1 **2.15 START UP FUNDING OF CHARTER SCHOOLS**

2 The Association of Alaska School Boards supports legislation to provide full funding for the
 3 creation and start-up costs of all charter schools. Adequate planning, supplies, equipment, and
 4 funding for additional facility space for charter schools is necessary to successfully implement the
 5 charters that have been provided for in state statute.

6
 7 **Rationale.** SB 88, Formation of Charter Schools, became law at the end of the 1995 legislative
 8 session. The law gave local school boards the ability to approve or deny charter school
 9 applications. Funding for the day-to-day operation of the charter schools was provided through
 10 the Foundation Formula. However, no funding was provided for necessary planning and start-up
 11 costs associated with the opening of any new school.

12
 13 Also, many of our schools are over capacity and do not have space to house a charter school and
 14 many charter schools prefer to be housed in their own, separate facility because of the nature of
 15 their programs. Without adequate planning and start-up funding, many districts will have to deny
 16 a charter school application because of a lack of resources or fund charters out of already reduced
 17 budgets for neighborhood schools. The legislature must step-up to funding the planning and start-
 18 up costs associated with charter schools. This money should be in addition to regular foundation
 19 dollars.

20
 21 *Adopted 1997*

22
 23 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend title**

24
 25 COMMENTS: Additional charter schools help relax regulations and force schools to carve out money for
 26 charters. This siphons funds away from regular instruction programs. See related resolution on
 27 governance 1.4.

28 **ASB: Should be a high priority.**

29
 30 **2.16 EXPAND DEFINITION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TO INCLUDE**
 31 **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

32 AASB supports changing education regulations to expand the definition of junior high to include
 33 the words “middle school” and include the option of 6th grade in the configuration of the junior
 34 high/middle school. AASB also urges that the foundation formula and the language on facility
 35 square footage be changed to accommodate the funding difference.

36
 37 **Rationale.** The middle school concept is a more developmentally appropriate approach to the
 38 junior high experience. Middle schools positively affect all children regardless of ability or socio-
 39 economic background. There is overwhelming support for the implementation of the middle
 40 school philosophy and concepts by junior high principals and parents.

41
 42 The way that the law and current regulations are written, the middle school model is not
 43 addressed. Sixth grade is not given approval to be included in the junior high/ middle school
 44 mix. The grade configuration of middle schools varies but may include 6, 7, or 8th grades in
 45 various combinations. Several districts already have configurations ranging from 6th grade to
 46 ninth grade and are therefore out of compliance with Department of Education regulation.
 47 Inclusion of sixth grade in the middle school configuration has an impact on facilities planning.

48
 49 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

1
2 COMMENTS: Anchorage School Board put forth this resolution and would like help from other urban
3 districts.
4 **ASB: Should be a high priority.**
5

1 **2.17 ELIMINATION OF THE PHRASE “FULLY FUNDED” TO DESCRIBE**
2 **CURRENT FUNDING**

3 AASB does not endorse the use of the phrase “fully funded” to describe the current legislative
4 practice of approving funding at \$61,000 per unit with no adjustment for the increased cost of
5 doing business.

6
7 **Rationale.** The foundation formula unit value has been frozen at \$61,000 for five years and the
8 unit value has been increased only \$1,000 in the past 11 years, a paltry 1.7% increase. The only
9 increase in state responsibility has come from increased enrollment. Legislators have taken great
10 pride in saying, year after year, they have “fully funded” education. Worst of all, we have been
11 drawn into using “full funding” to describe legislatures actions. School districts have been
12 expected to reduce programs by 3% to 5% each year for the past eleven years because of the rising
13 costs of doing business, in every district in the State. “Funding cuts” equivalent to inflation is a far
14 more accurate phrase to describe what has been happening in every school district since 1986.

15
16 Without a fundamental change in this perception regarding funding, education will continue to be
17 viewed in a manner that twists the truth about what is happening, what has been happening for
18 the past 11 years, and what will continue to happen in the foreseeable future.

19
20 *Adopted 1997*

21
22 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

23
24 **COMMENTS: Moved from Instructional Unit to Per Pupil funding with SB 36. Level of adequacy still**
25 **an issue; addressed in other resolutions (2.3 Inflation).**

26
27 **2.18 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY GRANTS**

28 AASB urges state and federal governments to ensure that all classrooms are provided affordable
29 and equitable access to the national information infrastructure. AASB urges the Legislature to
30 implement matching grants for instructional technology that would address hardware, software,
31 communication, infrastructure and training needs.

32
33 **Rationale.** Alaskan students are growing up in an Information Age that is rapidly becoming the
34 Communication Age. The global information highway and the skills to communicate over it, as
35 well as access to the rich store of information on it, must be made available to students. Current
36 school district budgets cannot provide adequate funds to meet existing or future instructional
37 technology needs.

38
39 Another issue to be addressed is that inequities exist among schools and school districts in
40 providing access to technology and implementation into curriculum. Equality in educational
41 opportunity has always been a goal of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Future economic
42 viability will not depend as much on physical presence, but rather the ability to import, transmit or
43 convey ideas and information electronically. Today’s globally competitive economy requires that
44 all schools have access to modern technologies—Internet access, computers, distance learning—that
45 can open new doors of educational opportunity for our school children.

46
47 It’s estimated that by the year 2000, 60% of jobs will require computer skills. Currently only a small
48 percentage of classrooms have access to the Internet. Many of the schools in Alaska do not
49 generate enough funding to access and offer a variety of classes.

1 *Amended 1997*

2
3 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend (combine with 5.1 “Equal Access to Technology”)**

4
5 **COMMENTS: Resolution 5.1 “Equal Access to Technology” is combined with this resolution. FCC**
6 **reduced e-rate program by 43% in June 1998.**

7
8 **2.19 SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT RETIREMENT**

9 AASB calls upon the Legislature to fully honor all past commitments for bonded indebtedness
10 reimbursement.

11
12 **Rationale.** Article 7, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall
13 establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children. Under AS 14.11.100 the
14 State of Alaska agreed to repay school districts at set percentage rates for school construction
15 bonded indebtedness in past years. Over the past years of high growth many regions of the State
16 have bonded for school construction with the expectation that the State would honor its
17 obligation. In previous years these good faith agreements have sometimes not been fully honored,
18 placing a heavy burden on local taxpayers. This aforementioned tax burden has created a
19 hardship for taxpayers and resulted in a loss of local revenue for classroom education.

20
21 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

22
23
24 **2.20 FUNDING**

25 AASB requests the legislature act immediately to adopt a state financial plan that makes adequate
26 and equitable education funding a top priority.

27
28 **Rationale.** Our children are the most important and cherished resource of our State. The State of
29 Alaska has the legal responsibility to fund public education.

30
31 The current fiscal gap of \$513 million will increase to over \$1.3 billion by the year 2000. School
32 budgets have been cut to the point where it is no longer possible to meet basic needs. They are
33 faced with increased costs in all areas while revenues for education decline. Cost cutting measures
34 such as consolidation of purchasing, cuts in administration and support staff, combined staff
35 training, and shared professional services have been instituted by many school districts. The
36 citizens of the State of Alaska must have assurance that educational needs will be adequately
37 funded.

38
39 *Amended 1997*

40
41 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

42
43 **COMMENTS: The Legislative Majority is in the 3rd of its 5 year plan to reduce the fiscal gap. They have**
44 **adopted a state financial plan, and have made equitable education funding a top priority. Already**
45 **addressed in Belief Statement #1.**

1 **2.21 INCREASED SUPPORT OF ALASKA HEAD START PROGRAMS**

2 AASB does hereby urge the Congress of the United States, the President, the Alaska Legislature,
3 and the Governor to provide sufficient funding to make Head Start available to all eligible young
4 Alaskans, regardless of the number of children in the program.
5

6 **Rationale.** Project Head Start has had a beneficial impact on the academic, physical, social, and
7 emotional development of impoverished pre-school students and their families throughout Alaska
8 and the United States since its inception in the 1960's. A significant component of *Goals 2000:*
9 *Educate America* and *Alaska 2000* education initiatives is that all children will be properly prepared
10 to start school. Head Start experiences have prepared thousands of disadvantaged young
11 children to obtain public school readiness.
12

13 Within Alaska, Head Start programs serve over ~~2,600~~ 3,200 children and their families in ~~79~~ 94
14 communities. A large number of eligible Alaskan children (estimated to be nearly ~~8,000~~ 78%)
15 remain unserved, due to lack of sufficient funding. The Head Start communities across Alaska
16 contribute over ~~\$2~~ \$4 million annually through in-kind support.
17

18 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**
19
20
21

SUBJECT AREA: CHILD ADVOCACY

Preamble to Advocacy Resolutions

As community leaders committed to education and the equal opportunity for each citizen to actualize his/her potential, we act on behalf of all children; 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, 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 our Alaska. To fulfill our role in the shared responsibility of educating children, we are resolved to pursue the following resolutions.

Amended 1997

ASB: Move to Belief Statements

3.1 PROMOTING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS IN ALASKA'S CHILDREN

~~Research (What Kids Need to Succeed—40 Developmental Assets, by Benson, Galbraith & Espeland) shows that effective schools, families, congregations, and communities can contribute to the positive development of youth.~~ **ASB: Move to rationale** AASB encourages each neighborhood, congregation, community, school district, and state agency to review the research in order to initiate and sustain programs which build assets in Alaska's children and teens.

Rationale. ~~Research (What Kids Need to Succeed—40 Developmental Assets, by Benson, Galbraith & Espeland) shows that effective schools, families, congregations, and communities can contribute to the positive development of youth.~~ From September 1989, to today, over 300,000 adolescents in 600 communities in 33 states have participated in a study which asked kids to list the different supports in their lives. After analysis of the data, it was discovered that the difference between troubled teens and those leading healthy, productive, positive lives was 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.

Research shows that the more assets a teen has 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 a teen has the more likely they are to succeed in school and to exhibit empathic and caring behaviors.

Amended 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Continue ASB: Amend

COMMENTS: 40,000 copies of the new Alaska version of “What Kids Need to Succeed” have been printed.

1
2
3 **3.2 ACCESS TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

4 AASB supports vigorous enforcement of laws concerning the sale, use, and possession of tobacco-
5 related products by children and adolescents. Additionally, AASB seeks legislation to strengthen
6 penalties for illegal sale of tobacco products to minors, and to further reduce access to tobacco-
7 vending machines by minors.

8
9 **Rationale.** Nicotine is an addictive drug and has been proven to be harmful to children. Children
10 tend to vastly underestimate the likelihood that they will become addicted to nicotine. The average
11 teenage smoker starts at 14 1/2 years old and becomes a daily smoker before the age of 18. Studies
12 show that if people do not begin to smoke as teenagers or children, it is unlikely they will ever do
13 so. Each and every day, another 3,000 young people become regular smokers, and nearly 1,000 of
14 them will eventually die as a result of their smoking.

15
16 While Alaska state law prohibits the use of tobacco by minors, a 1994 Surgeon General's report
17 found that young people were able to buy cigarettes in vending machines an average of 88% of the
18 time.

19
20 **RECOMMENDATION: Replace with resolution to Support State & National Litigation Against Tobacco**
21 **Industry. (see below)**

22
23 COMMENTS: The above resolution has been addressed. Legislation was passed to strengthen penalties
24 for illegal sale of tobacco products to minors, and to further reduce access to tobacco vending machines
25 by minors.

26
27 (Replacement for 3.2)

28 **ALASKA'S LITIGATION AGAINST THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY**

29
30 AASB supports the efforts of Alaska's Attorney General to seek reimbursement from the tobacco
31 industry to repay Alaskan taxpayers for the expenses incurred during the years that the tobacco
32 industry knowingly and intentionally marketed harmful and addictive products to children and
33 youth. In the case of a pre-trial settlement, AASB would like the following provisions included:

34
35 Nothing in the settlement should in any way preempt or limit the ability of state, borough,
36 municipal, city, or village governments from enacting for enforcing tobacco control policies;
37 Nothing in the settlement should in any way preempt or restrict future lawsuits on behalf of
38 individuals, class-actions, third parties (including local government) against the industry for
39 recovery of costs or damages not covered in the settlement; If any of the settlement funds are
40 designated to tobacco education or research, there should be no restrictions or limitations placed
41 on how the money is to be spent; The industry will voluntarily agree to eliminate all forms of
42 tobacco advertising, promotions and sponsorship of community, cultural, musical and/or
43 sporting events in Alaska.

44
45 Rationale. Nicotine is an addictive drug and has been proven to be harmful to children. Children
46 tend to vastly underestimate the likelihood that they will become addicted to nicotine. The average
47 teenage smoker starts at 14 years old and becomes a daily smoker before the age of 18. Studies
48 show that if people do not begin to smoke as teenagers or children, it is unlikely they will ever do

1 so. Alaska has spent millions of dollars treating the diseases and maladies linked to active and
2 passive tobacco consumption.

3
4 (Note: this also replaces 3.6 Preserving the Rights of Local Governments to Regulate Tobacco.)
5

6 **3.3 FETAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG EXPOSED STUDENTS**

7 AASB requests that the Alaska Legislature provide and improve **effective (ASB : insert)** programs
8 and services aimed at the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)/Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE)
9 within our state, and to allocate the funding necessary to provide parent training, school staff
10 training, and specialized educational services necessary to serve FAS/FAE children.
11

12 **Rationale.** The child who has been prenatally exposed to drugs and/or alcohol is at risk for
13 developmental, behavioral, psycho-social and learning problems. Alaska's public schools must
14 provide educational services to all children regardless of handicap. Alaska has one of the highest
15 incidence rates of children born with FAS. Not all the FAS, FAE or FADE (Fetal Alcohol Drug
16 Exposed) students meet the criteria for Special Ed Programs. The public must be educated that the
17 use of alcohol/drugs during pregnancy may severely affect and damage children. It is estimated
18 that for every child born with FAS, 10 are born with FAE, and are difficult to identify.
19

20 FAS/FAE often require special instructional strategies and materials. Funding support for
21 education of handicapped children is already barely sufficient to meet the needs of those children
22 currently identified. The educational identification and service of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal
23 Alcohol Effect children is extremely expensive.
24

25 *Amended 1997*
26

27 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

28 **ASB: Amend**

29 **Comment: Should be a high priority**
30
31

32 **3.4 LIMITING ACCESS TO PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET**

33 AASB supports efforts which limit children's access to pornography on the Internet and
34 encourages efforts to create a more positive, safe computing environment for children. AASB also
35 supports self-regulation in the industry encouraging providers of pornography to post rating
36 labels and "black-out" pages requiring adult verification before access is granted. AASB supports
37 efforts to provide parents with the necessary information about the influence of the Internet in
38 order to assist them in their decisions concerning internet access for their child.
39

40 **Rationale.** Pornography is highly prevalent on the Internet. The Internet allows access to material
41 all over the world with very little regulation. Innocent searches for class or personal information
42 can occasionally lead into pornography. With rating systems in place that would post a rating
43 scale upon a search using an Internet search engine and voluntary "black-out" with adult
44 verification, children's access to inappropriate material will be limited.
45

46 *Adopted 1997*
47

48 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

1 **ASB: Continue**

2

3 **COMMENTS: The AASB Board of Directors unanimously voted to delete this resolution as it is being**
4 **addressed by both private and government entities at the local, state and federal levels. More**
5 **importantly, the Board felt the ultimate responsibility for such action rests at the local policy making**
6 **level.**

1
2
3 **3.5 VIOLENCE IN MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT**

4 AASB supports efforts which challenge the media and entertainment industry, including
5 manufacturing, to develop more positive content for both children and adults that demonstrates
6 nonviolent solutions to problems and respect for human life. AASB also supports self-regulation
7 within the industry by asking them to post rating labels on all videos rented or sold by video
8 merchants or loaned by public libraries, and prohibiting children under age of 17 from renting R-
9 or X- rated videos or attending R- or X-rated movies without parental permission. AASB supports
10 efforts to provide parents with the necessary information about the influence of media in order to
11 assist them in their decisions concerning its influences upon their children.
12

13 **Rationale.** It is estimated that children who regularly watch television are exposed through news
14 and entertainment programming to tens of thousands of violent assaults and deaths by the time
15 they reach adulthood. Increasingly, video games, computer software, and interactive video, song
16 lyrics, comic books, and movies are becoming more graphic and violent. Many experts believe that
17 prolonged exposure to violent imagery desensitizes us to it and teaches children that violence is
18 an appropriate means for solving problems. ~~[Surveys frequently cite media violence as a major~~
19 ~~factor contributing to school violence. In a 1993 national survey conducted by Met Life, 55% of~~
20 ~~teachers and 60% of law enforcement officials believed that violence in the mass media is a~~
21 ~~“major” factor contributing to violence in the schools. A recent National School Boards~~
22 ~~Association survey of school districts found similar results: 60% of the districts cited media~~
23 ~~violence as a leading cause of violence in schools.] **ASB: leave this in the rationale** Many surveys
24 have cited media violence as a major factor contributing to school violence including a 1995
25 National School Boards Association survey of school districts which found that 60% of the
26 districts cited media violence as a leading cause of violence in schools.
27~~

28 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

29 **ASB: Amend**
30
31

32 **3.6 PRESERVING THE RIGHTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO**
33 **REGULATE TOBACCO**

34 AASB supports the right and authority of local governments to enact their own restrictions on
35 alcohol and tobacco, and local governments' home rule to use their zoning, planning, and other
36 local police powers to control alcohol and tobacco problems, including advertising and access.
37

38 **Rationale.** ~~There is a movement in the United States to enact laws which preempt local governing~~
39 ~~bodies from adopting or enforcing any ordinance, rule, or regulation concerning the sale,~~
40 ~~distribution, advertising, display, or promotion of cigarette or tobacco products. Preemption would~~
41 ~~limit the authority of boroughs, cities and villages. Former US Surgeon General C. Everett Koop has~~
42 ~~called preemption “nothing more than a devious strategy conceived by the tobacco industry to~~
43 ~~keep your communities, and therefore your people, from becoming more involved in critical~~
44 ~~tobacco prevention efforts.” AASB believes local ordinances are more likely to give citizens a sense~~
45 ~~of ownership or loyalty to regulations, ultimately resulting in changed social norms related to the~~
46 ~~specific issue addressed.~~
47

48 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

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COMMENTS: Covered under the resolution replacing 3.2 ALASKA'S LITIGATION AGAINST THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

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3.7 SUPPORTING THE SOBRIETY MOVEMENT

AASB salutes and endorses the Alaska Federation of Natives Sobriety Movement, and encourages our students and parents to help in overcoming our communities’ affliction with alcohol and drugs by supporting the goals of the Sobriety Pledge.

Rationale. AASB has long supported schools and communities that are alcohol and drug free through various efforts, and has recognized the AFN Sobriety Movement and the positive effect it has had on our schools and communities. The AFN Sobriety Movement encourages groups like the AASB to promote sobriety amongst Alaska Natives. The Pledge of the Movement wants us to:

- encourage the formation of sobriety groups in every Alaska Native community
- encourage the practice of traditional Native values and activities
- support existing groups working to promote sobriety amongst Alaska's Natives
- encourage and support sober Alaska Native leaders and role models

~~The Pledge further states that "If we, Alaska Natives and concerned individuals, are to remain as healthy distinct nations, it will be because I took a stand against the elements which weaken and destroy our spirits, our values and our languages. If our spirits are to remain strong and sober, it has to begin somewhere, Let it begin with me."~~ **ASB: Delete, refers to Indian**

Country.AASB supports the goals and desires of the AFN Sobriety Movement.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

ASB: Amend

3.8 ALCOHOL, INHALANT & DRUG ABUSE

AASB calls upon the Legislature of the State of Alaska to acknowledge the seriousness of the drug abuse problem, to accept its responsibility to provide leadership, and to provide the funding and support to assist local communities in their efforts to combat alcohol and other drug abuse. AASB also requests the State of Alaska ~~establish and fund an~~ make grants available for community-based and residential efforts to address (effective) inhalant abuse treatment programs for children and young people.

Rationale. Drug-related problems, including alcohol and inhalant 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 youth suicides in the State of Alaska. Community-based prevention and sobriety movements are proving effective in combating drug-related problems. The treatment of children and young people is very different from the treatment of adults and the treatment for inhalant abuse is very different from the treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, yet there are no residential treatment facilities in the State for those young people who are addicted to inhalants.

RECOMMENDATION: AMEND

ASB: Amend

1
2 **3.9 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS**
3 **SERVING CHILDREN**

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

- 6 • urging the State of Alaska to develop protocols (that protect the families right to privacy but
7 establish criteria for need to know) for information sharing among agencies providing for
8 services to children and that require those agencies to develop a cooperative treatment plan
9 that involves appropriate school personnel
10 • partnerships between schools, mental health, and other nonprofit services to ensure that
11 children are able to come to school each day ready to learn
12 • incentives for interagency cooperation, including the removal of barriers that limit
13 interagency collaboration and the flexibility to coordinate funds
14

15 **Rationale.** Children who need to or are receiving services from social service agencies are already
16 experiencing dislocation in their lives. This dislocation frequently makes it difficult for them to
17 concentrate on their school work. These students need to have educational skills to succeed in the
18 world. Yet decisions are frequently made about the life of these children that do not take into
19 account their educational needs.
20

21 When children are receiving services from multiple agencies, one agency will frequently have
22 information that may be crucial to the service delivery of another agency and/or the child is
23 receiving duplicating and sometime conflicting services from more than one agency. Addressing
24 the needs of the whole child requires an improved delivery system which is comprehensive,
25 collaborative, child and family centered, and focused on prevention.
26

27 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

28
29 **COMMENTS: A number of bills have been passed (including HB 316, the juvenile crime bill) that**
30 **address some components of this resolution, but more can be done.**
31
32

33 **3.10 SUICIDE PREVENTION**

34 AASB encourages the Legislature to provide funding for statewide suicide prevention efforts
35 coordinated among the mental health centers, village based suicide prevention effort, and peer
36 helper programs, and requests that the legislature provide funding for regional treatment
37 programs.
38

39 **Rationale.** The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that suicide is the second
40 leading cause of death among young people 15 - 19 years of age, (following unintentional injuries).
41 The rate of teenage suicide in Alaska is three times greater than the national average with Alaska
42 reporting 32.1 incidents per 100,000; the national average reported at 10.3 incidents per 100,000.
43

44 Suicide is often precipitated by depression, ~~alcohol~~ substance abuse, and separation from a
45 significant other and coordinated efforts among all agencies will be better able to present programs
46 which address mental health, coping skills in response to stress, substance abuse, employment,
47 and healthy relationships. Currently sixty-six Alaskan communities participate in the

1 Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program which allows each community to determine and
2 implement the kind of project it believes is most likely to reduce self-destructive behavior.

3
4 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

5
6
7 **3.11 PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION**

8 AASB calls upon the Legislature of the State of Alaska and other local elected officials to
9 emphasize the prevention aspects of health and social service programs. AASB requests the
10 Department of Health and Social Services to make a sustained and concerted effort and
11 commitment to prevention programs. AASB supports early identification of and intervention for
12 children at risk; and inclusion of parents in prevention and intervention services, as well as K-12
13 counseling and guidance services and increased interagency support to assist students in
14 intellectual, occupational, social, and physical, and emotional development.

15
16 **Rationale.** Since the pay-off for prevention is distant—perhaps decades away—decision makers are
17 more inclined to fund treatment programs for those in crisis or at risk, and overlook the need to
18 consider the causes. Major Alaskan health reports issued in the last several years have
19 consistently called for an increased emphasis on prevention. Prevention is cost effective as costly
20 problems—in dollars and in human suffering—can many times be averted by prevention strategies.
21 Many of the social and health problems we are experiencing now will only continue to grow if
22 effective prevention/intervention programs are not in place.

23
24 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete as resolution. Move to “belief statement” (see below).**

25
26
27 **BELIEF STATEMENT FOR PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION**

28 **AASB understands that no health-related problem has ever been solved by treating only it’s symptoms.**
29 **In order to reduce the incidences of a new problem, something must prevent the symptoms from**
30 **appearing in the first place. To prevent a problem, families, neighbors, community leaders, and public**
31 **decision-makers must work to identify the factors that cause a condition and then reduce or eliminate**
32 **those causes. Through these prevention efforts, Alaskans will help people become more productive**
33 **citizens, create a healthier Alaska, and save money.**

34
35
36 **3.12 SAFE SCHOOLS/SAFE COMMUNITIES**

37 AASB supports efforts to establish a positive school climate—by training children in nonviolent
38 conflict resolution and youth violence prevention—that reinforces nonviolent solutions to problems
39 and respect for all students and staff. AASB supports efforts to provide a school environment that
40 is free from weapons, harassment and intimidation, violence, drugs (including alcohol and
41 tobacco), and other factors that threaten the safety of students and staff. AASB supports any
42 legislation which prohibits dangerous and/or concealed weapons on elementary and secondary
43 school premises, on school-provided transportation, or at school-sponsored events and activities,
44 except activities such as historical firearms displays, any program teaching weapons safety
45 instruction and on-duty law enforcement officers in the course of their duty.

46
47 **Rationale.** All children have a right to attend schools that are safe and free from violence. Recent
48 reports and surveys document an alarming increase in the incidence of school violence in all types

1 of communities, particularly student-on-student violence. As school board members we must
2 share the responsibility by involving the resources of the community to work for solutions.

3

4 *Amended 1997*

5

6 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

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3.13 SUPPORT OF STATE FUNDING FOR TEEN HEALTH CENTERS IN ALASKA

AASB does hereby petition the Administration and the Legislature to provide funding for school-based Teen Health Centers through appropriations to the State Adolescent Health Task Force.

Rationale. A 1992 report from the State of Alaska’s Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting Task Force Co-Chaired by Senators Drue Pearce and Johnny Ellis concluded unequivocally that “the state should provide adequate funding to school districts for school health services to combat problems associated with unhealthy teen behaviors.” School-based health centers are cited in the state’s recently-released Adolescent Health Plan prepared by the Adolescent Health Task Force as one of several “promising approaches” for programs that have been found to be effective in changing unhealthy behaviors. Notwithstanding such official pronouncements, the State of Alaska does not contribute any financial support for Teen Health Centers. Of the 32 states that have school-based health centers, Alaska is only one of 11 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.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

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3.14 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 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 World Health Organization estimates that 10 million people worldwide are infected with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). In the United States, approximately 1 million Americans have HIV, and more than 300,000 Americans have died of AIDS. HIV/AIDS is now the leading cause of death for males age 25-44 and the sixth leading cause of death for people age 15-24.~~

In June of 1997, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 612,078 Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS and that 379,258 have died. In the United States, HIV/AIDS is now the second leading cause of death for people ages 25-44 and the seventh leading cause of death for children aged 1-14. Globally, the World Health Organization estimates that 29.4 million adults and 1.5 million children have been infected with HIV, and 8.4 million have progressed to AIDS. By the year 2000, the Global AIDS Policy Coalition estimates that there will be up to 110 million HIV infections and 25 million AIDS cases.

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. The risks that young people face in relation to HIV/AIDS primarily are the result of adolescent sexual activity and drug use. The 1995 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRB) reports that 63.9% of high **(school)**seniors have been sexually active at least once, and that 17.6% of high school boys and 16.3% of high school girls report they have been sexually active with four or more partners.

RECOMMENDATION: Amend
ASB: Amend

1 **3.15 EDUCATION OF YOUTH ABOUT SEXUAL INVOLVEMENT**

2 AASB supports educational programs that promote abstinence, encourage responsible behaviors
3 relating to human sexuality, develop healthy decision-making skills, teach refusal skills and
4 promote pregnancy prevention.
5

6 **Rationale.** According to the 1995 Youth Risk Behavior survey, in 1993 the birth rate for 15-17 year
7 olds in Alaska is similar to that for the nation as a whole (37.3 per 1,000 girls in Alaska, 37.7 per
8 1,000 girls nationally) while the state birth rate for 18-19 year olds is higher than that for the
9 nation (113.7 in Alaska versus 94.5 nationally. The survey also reports that middle school boys are
10 more likely to have had intercourse than are girls. The percentage of Alaska students who report
11 ever having sexual intercourse increases from 34.8% among those aged 15 or less to 68.4% among
12 those aged 18 and older. The survey reports: "Early sexual activity can be associated with
13 unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection. Sexually
14 transmitted diseases can lead to infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease and other complications."
15

16 Research presented by the SEARCH Institute and their "Building Assets in Youth" model has
17 determined that a teen's belief "in the importance of abstaining from sexual activity AND his/her
18 willingness to postpone sexual activity" is significant to their personal and academic
19 development. Programs which teach refusal skills and sexual postponement decrease sexual
20 involvement among teens, such as the program "Postponing Sexual Involvement," being taught to
21 14 year olds in Atlanta, GA.
22

23 *Amended 1997*
24

25 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**
26
27
28

29 **3.16 SUPPORT FOR STATE OF ALASKA CHILDREN'S CABINET**

30 AASB supports efforts to pursue the four initiatives of the Children's Cabinet: activate Alaska's
31 Children's Trust to channel money into community programs that help prevent child abuse and
32 neglect; challenge child and family services to focus on prevention; raise awareness of children's
33 well being; and juvenile crime prevention.
34

35 **Rationale.** The mission of the Children's Cabinet is to work—in partnership with families—to
36 ensure children have opportunities for happy, healthy and productive lives. The Cabinet's charge
37 is to advance a statewide children's agenda that cuts through red tape and works across
38 departments.
39

40 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**
41

42 **COMMENTS: Numerous recommendations of the bipartisan Children's Cabinet were incorporated in**
43 **proposed legislation in 1998.**
44
45
46
47
48

1
2 **3.17 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST**

3 AASB fully supports to the work of the Alaska Children's Trust, and urges all member school
4 boards to work with the Trust to address the tragic consequences of abuse, neglect, violence, and
5 crime experienced by too many of Alaska's children. AASB urges the Legislature to add to the
6 Children's Trust Endowment on a yearly basis.
7

8 **Rationale.** The Alaska Children's Trust was established by the Legislature in 1988 with the
9 mandate to promote initiatives that strengthen families and serve dependent children. Stress
10 within families and communities has resulted in more children at risk for poor health, child abuse
11 and neglect, violence in the community, and juvenile crime. The goal of the Children's Trust is to
12 promote and provide opportunities so that Alaska's children can grow to responsible and
13 productive adulthood, free of threats to their dignity, physical safety, and emotional well-being. To
14 carry out its mandate, the Children's Trust will fund local programs that meet the needs and
15 challenges of Alaska's families and children with innovative, efficient and effective services.
16

17 Until 1995, the Children's Trust had received no funding. Its \$6 million endowment offers the
18 opportunity to create a true "permanent fund for prevention" since only the income of the Trust
19 may be spent on programs and administration.
20

21 *Amended 1997*
22

23 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

24 **COMMENTS: \$320,000 in interest earned on the \$6 million endowment was appropriated to the Trust**
25 **this year.**
26
27

28 **3.18 INCREASE IN ALCOHOL TAX**

29 AASB supports legislation which would increase the alcohol tax to the equivalent of \$0.10 per
30 drink, to be indexed yearly to inflation, and that the direction of funds raised under this tax to go
31 towards prevention efforts of our school-aged youth.
32

33 **Rationale.** ~~The current tax on alcohol is the equivalent of \$0.03 - \$0.04 per drink. The State of~~
34 ~~Alaska spends \$13.42 for alcohol abuse related services and health care per each \$1.00 collected in~~
35 ~~Alcohol taxes. The Anchorage Municipality of Anchorage spends \$17 million yearly for all~~
36 ~~services and loss of productivity related to alcohol abuse. Experience has shown that total~~
37 ~~consumption decreases when the tax was increased substantially. Consumption drops~~
38 ~~proportionately more for underage drinkers. 50% of all child abuse and juvenile crime in Alaska is~~
39 ~~performed while under the influence of alcohol. Student achievement and parental involvement in~~
40 ~~the education of their children is directly effected by alcohol abuse.~~
41

42 The Department of Health and Social Services reports that nearly half of all child abuse and
43 juvenile crime in Alaska is committed while under the influence of alcohol. Parent involvement in
44 the education of their children and student achievement are directly effected by alcohol abuse. The
45 current tax on alcohol is the equivalent of \$0.03 - \$0.04 per drink. (.35 tax per gallon of beer, .85 tax
46 per gallon on wine, and 5.65 tax per gallon of distilled spirits.) The State of Alaska spends
47 considerably more for alcohol abuse related services and health care than it collects in alcohol
48 taxes. Increasing the real cost of alcohol through taxation has shown a decrease in consumption.

1 Because underage drinkers are more price sensitive than adults, higher costs reduce their
2 consumption to an even greater degree.

3
4 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

5 **COMMENTS: Updated statistics.**

6
7
8 **3.19 PROHIBITING PERSONS CONVICTED OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**
9 **FROM SERVING ON SCHOOL BOARDS**

10 AASB believes that persons convicted of child sexual abuse should be ~~banned~~ legally prohibited
11 from serving on a school board while required to maintain registration as a sex offender under AS
12 12.63.010.020.

13
14 **Rationale.** School board members should serve as role models for students and staff.

15
16 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

17
18
19
20

SUBJECT AREA: PERSONNEL

4.1 PORTABILITY OF TENURE

AASB requests the State of Alaska Legislature repeal the section of Chapter 31 which provides for portability of teacher tenure.

Rationale. Chapter 31 includes a tenure portability feature which assures the attainment of tenure after only one year in a new district. All districts need ample time to judge whether a newly hired teacher in the district will be a proper match and meet the standards of the new district.

There is an absence of clear and universal teacher evaluation standards across the state making valid evaluation of past performance extremely difficult.

Amended 1997

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 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Legislative response: "No new money. Why should we pay educators more for their professional development?" Private companies provide employee development, why not pay for public employee development? DOE is offering a limited number of grants to help pay the cost of taking the NBPTS test.

1 **4.3 TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION IN RURAL**
2 **COMMUNITIES**

3 AASB urges improved teacher preparation and certification for those intending to teach in small
4 rural communities, and that opportunities are provided for potential candidates currently living in
5 small rural communities to become certified teachers.

6
7 **Rationale.** Teacher preparation is a key to successful instructional experiences for teachers and
8 students.

9 A high level of intellectual rigor and connection to the reality of the classroom interactions is
10 required. Teacher preparation needs to include a variety of experiences with several teachers and
11 several sites.

12
13 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

14
15 **COMMENTS: Rural Education Preparation Partnership is established with UAF in partnership with**
16 **school districts.**

17
18
19 **4.4 MANDATED STAFF TRAINING**

20 AASB urges the Department of Education to continue to provide professional quality videotape
21 programs for all school districts to use in providing consistent mandated training to employees.
22 AASB also urges the Department of Education or another state educational agency to be a
23 clearinghouse for training tapes that have been developed by other school districts and agencies to
24 be used by districts throughout the state.

25
26 **Rationale.** Mandated training affects all school districts in Alaska. State laws and regulations
27 increasingly require school districts to provide training in specific areas such as sex/race equity,
28 child abuse and fetal alcohol syndrome and suicide prevention. This training must be provided to
29 all new employees and on a cyclical basis to continuing employees. Employees required to receive
30 this training may be employed at many different locations, making it difficult to provide required
31 training at a central location. Yet the state does not provide school districts with additional
32 funding to implement the training.

33
34 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**
35
36

SUBJECT AREA: EDUCATION PROGRAMS

5.1 EQUAL ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

AASB urges state and federal governments to ensure that all classrooms are provided affordable and equitable access to the national information infrastructure.

Rationale. 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.

It's estimated that by the year 2000, 60% of jobs will require computer skills. Currently only a small percentage of classrooms have access to the Internet. Many of the schools in Alaska do not generate enough funding to access and offer a variety of classes.

Amended 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: combine with other technology resolution, or at least list them together. Add note about FCC reduced e-rate program by 43% in June 1998.

ASB: keep separate

5.2 CURRICULUM EXPANSION VIA TECHNOLOGY

AASB urges the Alaska Department of Education to expand its distance delivered education programs with the input of 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 the remedial student, vocational student, and the college bound student as well. 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 the village or take correspondence classes. There is available in the State the ability to deliver such courses utilizing technology. The Alaska Department of Education is piloting distance delivered education, and 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 the Department of Education.

Amended 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

1 **COMMENTS: The Alaska Department of Education has just hired its first technology coordinator in 5**
2 **years.**

1 **5.3 RECOMMENDING CHANGE IN CORRESPONDENCE STUDY**

2 AASB recommends that the Department of Education propose legislation that applies the same
3 regulations of operation for all state-wide correspondence programs.

4
5 ~~**Rationale.** Currently, state-wide correspondence programs have set up operations with an unfair
6 advantage over the Alyeska Central. The same rules of operation should apply for all state-wide
7 correspondence programs. AASB supports local determination of the program offered in each
8 district. Each district reserves the right to create and provide programs for their students and/or
9 contract for these services.~~ **ASB: Delete and replace rationale**

10
11 *Adopt 1997*

12
13 **RECOMMENDATION: Delete**

14 **ASB: Amend**

15
16 **COMMENTS: SB 36 has component granting 80% reimbursement for correspondence. Rationale is
17 contradictory. DOE recently placed a moratorium on new correspondence programs.**

18
19 **5.4 NATIVE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

20 AASB supports equitable funding statewide for staff training, program development and materials
21 preparation to promote Native language instruction.

22
23 **Rationale.** The languages of the Indigenous peoples of the United States have become an
24 endangered species. The extinction of these languages would further erode the rich heritage of the
25 indigenous peoples of the North American Continent. The technology exists to provide satellite
26 language instruction in the Native tongues to communities throughout the United States. If we as a
27 nation do not respond to this need to preserve this rich linguistic heritage, the language will
28 become extinct.

29
30 *Amended 1997*

31
32 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

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34
35 **5.5 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

36 AASB recommends that the Community Schools Act of 1980 be fully funded.

37
38 **Rationale.** AASB recognizes that *Community Schools* extends the concept of public education
39 beyond the traditional K-12 program of "schooling" and views everyone in the community as both
40 teacher and learner. *Community Schools* requires participation and values diversity; community
41 educators regularly consult with broadly representative community groups and have faith in the
42 ultimate good judgment of the community. *Community Schools* promotes interagency cooperation
43 for the purposes of avoiding duplication, saving money, and sharing responsibility and expertise.
44 *Community Schools* acknowledges that communities as well as schools educate.

45
46 Full funding of the Community School Act of 1980 is separate from and does not interfere with
47 Foundation Funding. Under the original Community School Act of 1980, half of one percent of a
48 district's operating budget will be funded by the State for community schools. ~~For example,~~

1 ~~Anchorage School District should have received approximately \$900,000, however, insufficient~~
2 ~~funds were appropriated and the Anchorage School District actually received approximately~~
3 ~~\$181,000 in fiscal year 1995-96 out of the statewide appropriation of \$600,000. Statewide, schools~~
4 ~~should have received \$3,171,728 in FY98. Instead, only \$500,00 was appropriated.~~

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RECOMMENDATION: Amend

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5.6 RURAL STUDENT VOCATIONAL PROGRAM (RSVP)

AASB requests that the Alaska DOE, Alaska State Board of Education, and the Alaska Legislature ensure the continuation and increased funding of RSVP.

Rationale. Rural Student Vocational Program (RSVP) has provided thousands of work experiences for rural Alaska high school students over the past two decades. This is the only state-sponsored program that provides students with work experiences which directly enhance their opportunities for employment in an "Alaska local hire" work force in the future. State funding for RSVP ~~has fallen from~~ was \$780,000 nine years ago. In 1998 funding for the RSVP program was eliminated. to \$100,000 over the last nine years, resulting in a reduction of participation from 700 to under 200 students annually. Most of our rural students desire to participate in RSVP and as such will gain the valuable work experience and city survival skills needed for their future economic well being.

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

5.7 FUNDING FOR THE STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT (SLP)

AASB fully supports the inclusion of Vocational Youth Organizations as a component of any quality program, and requests the Legislature restore funding for the Student Leadership Project (SLP) by providing a minimum of \$250,000 each year.

Rationale. Funding for the Student Leadership Project (SLP)–comprised of the Alaska Association of School Governments (AASG); Business Professionals of America (BPA); the Association of Marketing Students (DECA); the Alaska Association of the FFA; Future Homemakers of America/Home Economics Related Occupations (FHA/HERO); and Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA)–has decreased from \$450,000 in FY82 to \$136,000 in FY92. In FY96 the State of Alaska Department of Education deleted all funding for the SLP. SLP provides leadership workshops for students, conducts state officer training in leadership and organizational planning, and provides assistance in strengthening and expanding SLP's. Over 100 high schools are directly involved in the SLP; over 1,985 students have been trained in leadership and organizational skills at state conferences; and over 4,000 students are members of one of the six student leadership organizations.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

1 **5.8 SUPPORTING FULL FUNDING FOR THE DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND**
2 **COMMUNITIES ACT**

3 AASB hereby petitions to the U.S. Congress to retain full funding for the Drug-Free Schools and
4 Communities Act during ~~FY97~~ FY99. The Association urges that such valuable new initiatives as
5 preventing violence in the schools be funded through separate appropriation, and that copies of
6 this Resolution shall be transmitted to President Clinton, Secretary Riley, the Alaska
7 Congressional Delegation and School Board Associations in the other 49 states.
8

9 **Rationale.** The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act authorized federal appropriations to
10 state and local education agencies to devise programming to provide drug use education,
11 counseling, and abuse prevention services for America's young people. Programs funded through
12 the Act are currently providing valuable services and will be needed for the foreseeable future.
13

14 ~~According to the 1995 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 47.5% of Alaska High School~~
15 ~~students reported having had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days. YRBS found that~~
16 ~~31.3% of the students report binge drinking (five or more drinks in a row at least once in the past~~
17 ~~30 days) which is one of the highest rates in the United States.~~
18

19 Although violence in the schools is a significant problem, and developing programs to combat it is
20 an appropriate federal responsibility, any diversion of resources from the Drug-Free Schools and
21 Communities Act would cripple important drug education, counseling and abuse prevention
22 programs that are only taking root and becoming effective. ~~In FY96 congress appropriated \$466~~
23 ~~million, and this year appropriated \$441 million.~~ Congress is considering a proposal to divert up
24 to 57% of the current funding to a new initiative to combat violence in the schools.
25

26 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend**

27
28 **COMMENTS: Funding was increased in FY98 by 20%**
29
30

31 **5.9 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

32 AASB encourages the Legislature to provide financial aid to districts to develop and improve a
33 variety of alternative education programs for all students likely to drop out as well as re-entry
34 programs for those who have already dropped out or been expelled.
35

36 **Rationale.** 70% - 80% of high risk youth can be saved from dropping out or from being expelled
37 through flexible, accountable alternative programs. The gun-free schools act mandates a calendar-
38 year mandatory expulsion of any student determined to have brought a weapon to school.
39 Interagency, inter-community cooperation will be required to meet the educational, social and
40 basic needs of this population. Once potential dropouts are identified, too few resources are
41 devoted to effective alternative education and necessary supportive services. Potential dropouts
42 can be identified using indicators such as attendance, low performance differential between ability
43 and attainment.
44

45 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**
46
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48

1 **5.10 BOARDING HOME PROGRAM**

2 AASB supports the State Boarding Home program expanding to provide funds for a new boarding
3 home program in the Interior of the State.

4
5 **Rationale.** The State of Alaska currently provides paid tuition and paid room and board for
6 village students desiring to attend Mt. Edgecumbe school, without regard to local availability of
7 high school programs. The number of students requesting enrollment at Mt. Edgecumbe School
8 exceeds the space available. The State Boarding Home program provides for room and board
9 support for students to attend centralized high school programs if they have no access to a high
10 school program at their grade level in their village community.

11
12 Many students in small village high schools now desire the educational and extra-curricular
13 opportunities found at larger, centralized high school sites. The distance from Northern and
14 Interior villages, from Mt. Edgecumbe, however, may deter some students from enrolling. Passage of
15 a boarding schools/charter school law in 1997 (ASL Ch. 113) allows for the creation of boarding
16 schools specifically not funded by the state.

17
18 *Amended 1997*

19
20 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

21
22 **COMMENTS: Legislation passed (Rep. Bunde) in 1997 allowing for more boarding schools, but with the**
23 **caveat that state funds not be used.**

24
25
26 **5.11 REGIONAL RESIDENCY SCHOOL-TO-WORK CENTERS**

27 AASB urges the Commissioner of Education, State Board of Education and the Governor to
28 support funding for innovative regional residency centers to provide school-to-work opportunities
29 for rural Alaskan students.

30
31 **Rationale.** There are a large number of students in rural villages that do not complete high school
32 or job training programs. The cost of providing adequate vocational programs prohibit small
33 schools from preparing students for the world of work. There is a need to provide school-to-work
34 programs for these students.

35
36 *Amended 1997*

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38 **RECOMMENDATION: Continue**

39 **ASB: Abstain**

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5.12 ENDORSING AND ENCOURAGING DISTRICT PARTICIPATION IN KIDS VOTING ALASKA

The Association of Alaska School Boards endorses this exciting “one-of-a-kind” program and encourages district involvement in Kids Voting Alaska.

Rationale. In 1996 less than 50% of the voting age public participated in the presidential election. The number of adults voting in local elections is even less. And only half of the 18-24 year olds are even registered to vote. Twenty Alaska school districts involving over 80% of the student enrollment are currently participating in Kids Voting Alaska Kids Voting Alaska is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to educating Alaska’s youth about the importance of an informed electorate to sustain democracy. An action oriented K-12 curriculum involves parents and the community in understanding our democracy and the importance of being informed. Then on election day kids go to the official polling sites accompanied by their parent or guardian to cast their own ballot. The goals of Kids Voting are to create an informed electorate, increase adult voter turnout and to develop lifetime voting habits in Alaska’s youth. Kids Voting students are becoming active and attentive citizens and at the same time their parents are becoming more informed and involved in voting.

Adopted 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: AASB’s endorsement of this program was written into a Senate Concurrent Resolution 22, which was adopted this year.