



ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS

Belief Statements &
CORE
RESOLUTIONS

**SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS BY THE
ASB LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

Sept. 13, 1999

AASB Board of Directors Recommendations for consideration at the AASB
Annual Conference, Resolutions Committee Meeting, November 6, 1999,
Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska

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About AASB

The mission of the Association of Alaska School Boards is to assist school boards in providing quality public education and preserving local control.

AASB represents approximately 330 locally elected individuals from all walks of life who volunteer their time to represent the educational interests of Alaska's school children. With 94% of Alaska school boards choosing to be members of the association, AASB is one of the largest groups of publicly elected officials in the state. Associate members of AASB include school superintendents, advisory school boards, the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education and the Special Education Service Agency. By working collectively, school board members from every type of district — large and small, urban and rural — strive to ensure that the needs of their local schools are being met.

AASB is supported financially by dues and earnings from fee-based services to its members. By joining forces through an association, Alaskan school boards have provided themselves with access to cost-effective services from top quality professional staff who help them advance the agenda of maintaining and improving public education.

AASB Belief Statements

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

GOVERNANCE

B.1 LOCAL CONTROL

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.2 BINDING ARBITRATION

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.3 ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.4 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

FUNDING

B.5 EARLY FUNDING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

AASB supports legislation to provide early funding of foundation revenues, school construction debt reimbursement and student transportation for the following year by March 15 of each year to meet personnel requirements under the law. A school district's and municipality's early knowledge of its anticipated revenues for the following school year is absolutely necessary for responsible budgeting decisions.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS TOP PRIORITY

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.7 MANDATING PROGRAMS WITHOUT ADEQUATE FUNDING

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.8 UNITED CAMPAIGN

AASB recognizes the value of collaboration and believes that the educational community—the officers of AASB, AASA, Elementary and Secondary Principals Associations, PTA, NEA-AK, AFT and other bargaining units—should utilize a united approach participate with all interested parties to influence legislators to support legislation and educational issues that will meet the needs of all students. ~~AASB will participate in the coalition by “sign off.”~~

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

B.9 MEETING SCHOOL FACILITY NEEDS FOR ALASKA STUDENTS

AASB believes that the Alaska State Legislature and the Governor must resolve the urgent need for additional school space and major school maintenance. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

CHILD ADVOCACY

Preamble

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.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.10 EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

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

- Parental Involvement: Should encourage a high degree of parental involvement in all aspects of their child's education; collaboration on societal issues outside schools that impact children's learning (schools and various agencies must collaboratively plan to provide services to children to effectively meet their needs); and accountability to the public to assure desired results – a "world class" education.
- Student Standards: Should include the development of education programs to meet high standards and identified competencies (they should be delivered by a variety of means that meet the diverse needs of students and prepare them to be contributing and productive citizens in a rapidly changing world).
- Professional Standards: Should include the highest standards of professionalism by school employees throughout the district.
- Accreditation Standards: Adequate and appropriate space, furnishings, equipment and technology; adequate and equitable funding that will allow for the most effective planning and use of each educational dollar; and an early childhood education program. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.11 CHILD ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT

The advocacy role of school board members is to promote parental, public and social service commitment to the shared responsibility of educating all public school children. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.12 LANGUAGE, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

B.13 INCREASE IN FAMILY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

PERSONNEL

B.14 ALASKA NATIVE TEACHER HIRE & RETENTION

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

B.15 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

All children should have opportunities to learn during the formative early childhood years. Many of Alaska's young children are placed at risk for future school failure because they do not have access to rich learning opportunities for a variety of reasons. The Association of Alaska School Boards therefore supports and encourages districts to develop early childhood programs which target at risk children and include a parent and family involvement component. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

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

COMMENTS: Sen. Miller, Senate HESS Committee Chair, warned school boards in April that some form of school consolidation may be on its way. In 1998 two pieces of legislation were introduced that would have consolidated school districts. They failed to pass. Instead, lawmakers passed a new education funding formula designed, in part, to drive consolidations through a “minimum instructional expenditures” component.

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

COMMENTS: Sen. Torgerson’s 1998 legislation to mandate boroughs received significant opposition and was not re-introduced in 1999.

1.3 NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PART-TIME STUDENT ACCESS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

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

Rationale. Mandating non-public school and part time students access to public school activity programs poses a number of serious problems including: lack of an adequate funding source (potentially draining resources away from public school students), lack of standards for eligibility when it comes to competitive extracurricular activities, and the unresolved issue of liability. It sets a dangerous precedent, where non-public education institutions utilize public services without paying for them, and without being accountable to the public. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

1.4 MAINTAINING LOCAL CONTROL IN CHARTER SCHOOL FORMATION

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENTS: Rep. Dyson introduced numerous versions of proposals (HB 191, HB 197, HB 242) in 1999 to amend the law that would give charters a better chance to succeed. Some of the proposals were supported by AASB, while others were not.

1.5 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges policy makers to oppose efforts to use public tax dollars to finance private, parochial, or home school vouchers. AASB also urges policy makers to work with local communities to ensure that our public schools provide world-class educational opportunities for children.

Rationale. Public schools educate every child, regardless of race, ability, religion, economic circumstance or special need. Public schools, through their elected school boards, are directly accountable to the citizens of the community for the expenditure of public funds. Taxpayer-funded vouchers for private, parochial, or home school tuition and fees drain scarce resources from public classrooms and diminish revenues available for public schools. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENTS: Amend to include home school vouchers. 1999 was the first year public school voucher proposals were introduced in the legislature. Three proposals were introduced (HB 5, HJR 6, SB 168). The proposals will sooner or later require a planned, sustained effort by AASB to address.

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Ketchikan and Kodiak are impacted.

1.7 STRIKE NOTIFICATION

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Rep. Kohring introduced legislation(HB 224) in 1999 at the request of Mat-Su School District. The bill requires that school districts receive a minimum of three work days advance notice before a strike can be called by a union representing district employees.

1.8 CLASS SIZE

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

SUBJECT AREA: FUNDING

2.1 FULL FUNDING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOUNDATION FORMULA

The Association of Alaska School Boards calls upon the Legislature to fully fund the second year of the foundation formula by providing the \$26 million needed to complete the implementation.

Rationale: A new funding formula was adopted in the 2nd session of the 20th Legislature. The new foundation was approved with the expectation of full implementation after two years. AASB encourages the Legislature to fund its commitment to education funding. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENT: Resolution speaks specifically to a period of time that has passed.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADEQUACY REVIEW OF THE FOUNDATION FORMULA

The Association of Alaska School Boards calls upon the governor and the Legislature to:

1. ~~Fully fund the second year of the education formula approved in 1998's Senate Bill 36.~~
2. Immediately appropriate sufficient funds for the new education formula, and implement the "thorough review of education adequacy" as approved by Legislative Intent in 1998. The review shall:
 - have a comprehensive and broad work plan based on complete and accurate data that addresses all questions regarding statewide equity in the quality of education programs and educational opportunity; the efficiency of education management, and financial adequacy, and
 - meaningfully involve school boards, assemblies, and councils providing funding for schools, and
 - make changes to the education funding formula to ensure that it adequately responds annually to inflationary cost increases and additional program needs, and
 - ~~be completed as far in advance of the deadline of January 15, 2001, as prudent, and~~
 - ~~establish and publish a timeline that identifies completion of the study by January 15, 2001.~~
2. ~~3.~~ Assess and address the systemic effect and financial impact of correspondence schools, alternative schools under 200 ADM, part-time students and charter schools on local school districts.

Rationale: The Alaska Constitution mandates, "The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state." And the Alaska Supreme Court has stated (MacCauley v. Hildebrand, 1971): "The constitutional mandate for pervasive state authority in the field of education could not be more clear. First, the language is mandatory, not permissive. Second, the section not only requires that the legislature "establish" a school system, but also gives to that body the continuing obligation to "maintain" their system. Finally, the provision is unqualified: no other unit of government shares responsibility or authority."

If Alaska's children are going to be well prepared to compete in the world marketplace, Alaska must continue to improve its educational system, and reasonably adjust education funding for annual cost increases.

Additional state funding approved last year was critical and appreciated, but the first year increase did not meet all education needs, and was locally significantly offset by other state cuts and local payments back to the state. It should be noted that cost-shifting to local governments results in undue hardship.

A Letter of Intent was adopted by the Legislature that state the Department of Education and Early Development would do a "... thorough review of educational adequacy in the schools of Alaska, paying particular attention to differences in the costs of school operations between communities, differences in costs of school operations depending on their size, and the particular effects and impacts described in AS 14.17.490 section (d), and to report to the legislature no later than January 15, 2001." (Note: (d) provides that schools benefited by the "funding floor" receive 60% funding for additional new students until the "floor" is eliminated.) *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENT: No point in seeking "timely" adequacy study which is essentially required next year. EED did not support an early review. EED also referred to the adequacy study as an Impact Report designed to update legislators on the level of district funding, versus a more comprehensive "adequacy" study sought by AASB. Therefore, focus the resolution on seeking a thorough adequacy study.

2.3 CREATION OF A REALISTIC INSTRUCTION REQUIREMENT OF THE FOUNDATION FORMULA

AASB believes that 65% is an unrealistic requirement to be placed on Alaska School Districts, and urges the Governor and the Legislature study and make a realistic percentage, while offering understandable criteria of a comprehensive education so as to meet the Instruction percentage. The Governor and 21st Legislature work with AASB to correct unrealistic mandate.

Rationale. Texas has the highest percentage in the nation with a statewide average of 61% of their budget spent on instruction. Nearly 30% of district budgets of Alaska Schools are spent on maintenance alone. With 70% spent on instruction and 30% spent on maintenance, no other student needs can be met. ~~Presently only six school districts of Alaska's 53 districts would meet the 70% requirement.~~ *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENT: Last sentence does not ring true, according to EED. 13 districts were unable to meet the requirement in 1998- 99 school year and were granted waivers. Sen. Wilken is determined to keep the requirement at its current level to help force school district consolidation.

2.4 MT. EDGE CUMBE HIGH SCHOOL DUAL ENROLLMENT FUNDING

The Association of Alaska School Boards supports legislation to allow individual school districts to count students enrolled in Mt. Edgecumbe High School as enrolled in the school of their home residence when that school has less than ten.

Rationale. Under SB36, the Department of education will not provide funding to schools with enrollment of less than ten. Some small schools have students who enroll in Mt. Edgecumbe High School and are therefore no longer counted in the school of their home residence. Choice of enrollment for students is supported. However, choice at the expense of the school of their home residence when enrolled in Mt. Edgecumbe reduces the educational options of the community. The school is the center of a small community. Student population often fluctuates, but community needs remain the same. Continuity of quality educational programs in small rural schools in Alaska is pertinent to the success of K-12 students. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: What this is really asking for is a waiver, according to EED officials. The AASB Board is concerned this resolution impacts AASB's credibility and asked Kodiak Island School Board (originator) to re-submit a resolution for consideration by the AASB Resolution Committee.

2.5 ESSENTIAL FUNDING NEEDS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND INFLATION ADJUSTMENT TO THE FOUNDATION FORMULA

AASB strongly requests that the Legislature meet the essential funding needs of public schools in Alaska and include an automatic, annual adjustment for inflation. A fully funded foundation program must include an inflation adjustment to the foundation formula.

Rationale. In 1998 the Alaska Legislature rewrote the education funding formula without an automatic adjustment for inflation. The new formula requires the Department of Education and Early Development to review the "District Cost Factor" and "School Size Factor" every other year and make recommendations to the Legislature. There is no automatic adjustment.

School districts have been expected to reduce programs by 3% to 5% each year for the past 10 years because of the costs of inflation. They have exhausted means to effect additional meaningful economies in operations. In addition, AASB does not endorse the use of the phrase "fully funded" to describe the current legislative practice of approving funding with no adjustment for the increased cost of doing business. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Discuss during Adequacy Study process. Sept. 14 vote will have far reaching impact.

2.6 BLOCK GRANTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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

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

Rationale. AASB supports programs to assist local school districts to educate children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment through a continuum of appropriate placements. Citing a financial incentive to overidentify special education and bilingual education students, lawmakers in 1998 changed the way it funds special education, vocational programs, and bilingual instruction by offering a block grant (20% of a district's funds) to cover the cost of those programs. Bilingual program needs are diverse, however, and a block grant may bear no resemblance to actual need, thus shortchanging some districts while overcompensating others. The new "intensive needs" funding mechanism adopted will provide less funding compared to last year. This, at a time when schools are struggling to comply with state and federal mandates that are unfunded or underfunded. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Adequacy study is prime opportunity to pursue annual adjustment in the education formula.

2.7 FUNDING PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN ALASKA

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

2.8 FUNDING FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The Association of Alaska School Boards strongly supports increased financial support to all local districts for the implementation of the High School Qualifying Examination [Chapter 58 SLA 97 (AS 14.03.075)]

Rationale. In 1997, the Alaska Legislature mandated secondary pupil competency testing that student must pass prior to receiving a high school diploma from any school district in Alaska. No funding appropriation was made to cover increased costs to school districts for the implementation of the secondary pupil competency test or the related costs in the preparation of all students to pass the examination. State funding should be allocated to cover the costs of remediation of students who fail the examination, curriculum development, assessment development and administration, increased legal fees, and the purchasing of material and supplies to implement the new standards. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: In FY 2000 individual school districts will receive about \$3-3.5 million in Quality Schools Grants designed to get up to speed on standards, develop assessment programs, intervention programs, exit exams, etc. This amount is inadequate to cover the true costs involved. The expended amount needs to be recognized.

2.9 SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION / MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

AASB supports the legislation that would provide continuing and adequate funding to meet the current and future needs of the state. A source of funding separate from the foundation formula should be made available to capital improvement projects each year so as to prevent a backlog of facility needs in Alaska.

Rationale. The State of Alaska has a constitutional obligation to fund the public school system, and the construction/major maintenance of the facilities required to support that system. The student population of the State of Alaska continues to grow at an average rate of 2% annually and over 10% a year in some communities. The State of Alaska currently has a backlog of over \$680,000,000 of educational facility projects. The backlog may be as much as \$1 billion due to project needs that have not been submitted to the department of education because of a grant program that is inadequately funded. The lack of adequate funding is discouraging districts from applying.

The state capital budget is woefully inadequate to address state needs. Currently municipalities are able to bond to meet facility needs while other districts must wait on a CPI list for their projects to be funded by the Department of Education. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: For the first time in many years there was no funding earmarked in the FY2000 education budget for school construction and maintenance of school facilities.

2.10 SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOLS IN ALASKA

AASB will urge the Governor and the Legislature to make a long-term commitment to fund CIP grants in priority order under AS 14.11, and to annually appropriate adequate funding for school construction grants and major maintenance grants.

Rationale: The State of Alaska has a constitutional obligation to fund the public school system, and the construction/major maintenance of the facilities required to support that system. Each school district in the State of Alaska should have the same opportunity as every other district to obtain, by appropriation and/or taxation, school facilities such that each student would have the same opportunity to access adequate facilities.

Great discrepancy in physical condition of facilities exist within and between school districts further creating inequity, and the need for school construction and major maintenance has been extensively documented. The Legislature has established a constantly changing priority system under AS 14.11 to fund such projects on the basis of demonstrated need. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: This resolution addresses the rural school construction issue. For the first time in many years there was no funding earmarked in the FY2000 education budget for school construction and maintenance of school facilities. This bolsters the argument contained in the CEAAC lawsuit.

2.11 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION / HAZARDOUS ROUTES

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENTS: Success. Issue of hazardous routes has been addressed. SB 36 recalculated pupil transportation reimbursement. DOE regulations adopted in June 1999 clarified and made uniform the reimbursement procedures.

2.12 OPPOSING THE ALASKA STATE BOARD'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO PUPIL TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

AASB is strongly opposed to adoption of regulations relating to student activity travel that exceeds federal safety guidelines. AASB supports local flexibility in meeting requirements of regulations relating to student activities.

Rationale. The Alaska State Board of Education has proposed considerable changes to 4 AAC 27.045, dealing with pupil transportation. The proposed change includes new language that would seek to regulate school district vehicle use for activities outside the scope of pupil transportation to and from school. This would fall within the definition of "unfunded mandate," as the state provides funding for student transportation solely to and from school. Any expenses in excess of Federal standards should be funded by the State. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENTS: Success. State Board dropped the proposal.

2.13 SUPPORT OF CONTINUED FEDERAL FUNDING

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

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

Alaska schools are at a critical juncture in meeting nationwide standards and need federal funding to reach those standards. *Amended 1997*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

2.14 EDUCATION ENDOWMENT

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

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

Adequate funding of education is ranked as a high priority by Alaskans. An educational endowment will provide a proven, secure, and dedicated fiscal resource for future public education funding for our state. ~~A full public discussion of long-term education funding issues would be of considerable value to the public and to public policy makers. Alaskan voters should be given a voice in a matter of such long-term importance to the future of education in Alaska and to present and future generations of students.~~ *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Discontinue

COMMENTS: The state is currently proposing a new type of Statewide endowment to provide for priority services like education. The Long Term Financial Plan will be voted on this September. Pursuing this resolution at this time would be confusing and counterproductive. (SEE SEPARATE RESOLUTION FOR AASB BOARD CONSIDERATION—"SUPPORT FOR THE ALASKA LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN")

2.15 START UP FUNDING OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Association of Alaska School Boards supports legislation to provide full funding for the creation and start-up costs of all charter schools. Adequate planning, supplies, equipment, and funding for additional facility space for charter schools is necessary to successfully implement the charters that have been provided for in state statute. This money should be in addition to regular foundation dollars.

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

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

Adopted 1997 Amended 1998

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Rep. Dyson introduced numerous versions of proposals (HB 191, HB 197, HB 242) in 1999 to amend the law that would give charters a better chance to succeed. Some of the proposals were supported by AASB, while others were not because they shifted funding from regular programs to charters or simply did not provide funds at all.

(
2.16 EXPAND DEFINITION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TO INCLUDE MIDDLE SCHOOL (ASB Amend)

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue (**ASB Amend**)

COMMENTS: Rep. Dyson introduced HB 195 last session addressing this issue. The bill didn't pass, in part, due to a significant fiscal note attached that assumes all districts will reconfigure their schools (highly unlikely). Pursue through the Adequacy Study process.

ASB Comment: The Foundation Formula no longer designates between elementary and secondary students.

2.17 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

AASB urges state and federal governments to ensure that all classrooms are provided affordable and equitable access to the national information infrastructure. AASB urges the Legislature to implement matching grants for instructional technology that would address hardware, software, communication, infrastructure and training needs. We urge Congress to fully fund the provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (E-rate) while protecting the original purpose of the Universal Service Fund to help provide affordable telecommunications to rural areas. ~~Appropriations for the Telecommunications Act were cut 43% in June 1998. These cuts will have a severe impact on Alaskan access to and educational use of technology.~~-1

Rationale. It's estimated that by the year 2000, 60% of jobs will require computer skills. Alaskan students are growing up in an Information Age that is rapidly becoming the Communication Age. The global information highway and the skills to communicate over it, as well as access to the rich store of information on it, must be made available to students. Current school district budgets cannot provide adequate funds to meet existing or future instructional technology needs.

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

~~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.~~ 2 *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENTS: U.S. Sen. Stevens is concerned that support for the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (E-Rate program, which brought in \$12 million to Alaska last year) could erode funding granted to Alaska under the Universal Service Fund (which brings in \$63 million to Alaska each year). Funding for both programs essentially comes out of the same pot of money. Luckily, at this time he is in a position to keep that from happening. Last year Anchorage and LKSD each received \$1 million, with Mat-Su receiving \$750,000—the top three E-Rate recipients in Alaska. All districts received funding.

1 Delete sentences. FY2000 E-Rate program was fully funded at \$2.25 billion.

2 Move first sentence in last paragraph under rationale, then delete last two sentences. Very few schools in Alaska don't have internet access (with the exception of Anchorage due to its size, and they are getting close). This has been accomplished in large part through grants from the Alaska Science and Technology Fund. What Alaska schools don't have is affordable access.

2.18 SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT RETIREMENT

AASB calls upon the Legislature to fully honor all past commitments for bonded indebtedness reimbursement and to meet future school construction needs by continuing to fund the school debt reimbursement program.

Rationale. Article 7, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children. Under AS 14.11.100 the State of Alaska agreed to repay school districts at set percentage rates for school construction bonded indebtedness in past years. Over the past years of high growth many regions of the State have bonded for school construction with the expectation that the State would honor its obligation. In previous years these good faith agreements have sometimes not been fully honored, placing a heavy burden on local taxpayers. This aforementioned tax burden has created a hardship for taxpayers and resulted in a loss of local revenue for classroom education.
Amended 1998

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

2.19 INCREASED SUPPORT OF ALASKA HEAD START PROGRAMS

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

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

Within Alaska, Head Start programs serve over 3,200 children and their families in 94 communities. A large number of eligible Alaskan children (estimated to be nearly 78%) remain unserved, due to lack of sufficient funding. The Head Start communities across Alaska contribute over \$4 million annually through in-kind support. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue under Advocacy section

SUBJECT AREA: CHILD ADVOCACY

3.1 PROMOTING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS IN ALASKA'S CHILDREN

AASB encourages each neighborhood, congregation, community, school district, and state agency to review the research in order to 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 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.2 ALASKA'S LITIGATION AGAINST THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY (ASB Delete)

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

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

Rationale. Nicotine is an addictive drug and has been proven to be harmful to children. Children tend to vastly underestimate the likelihood that they will become addicted to nicotine. The average teenage smoker starts at 14 years old and becomes a daily smoker before the age of 18. Studies show that if people do not begin to smoke as teenagers or children, it is unlikely they will ever do so. Alaska has spent millions of dollars treating the diseases and maladies linked to active and passive tobacco consumption. *Adopted 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue (**ASB Delete**)

The litigation has been settled.

3.3 FETAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG EXPOSED STUDENTS

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

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

FAS/FAE often require special instructional strategies and materials. Funding support for education of handicapped children is already barely sufficient to meet the needs of those children currently identified. The educational identification and service of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect children is extremely expensive. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.4 LIMITING ACCESS TO PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.5 VIOLENCE IN MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

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

Rationale. It is estimated that children who regularly watch television are exposed through news and entertainment programming to tens of thousands of violent assaults and deaths by the time they reach adulthood. Increasingly, video games, computer software, and interactive video, song lyrics, comic books, and movies are becoming more graphic and violent. Many experts believe that prolonged exposure to violent imagery desensitizes us to it and teaches children that violence is an appropriate means for solving problems. Surveys frequently cite media violence as a major factor contributing to school violence. In a 1993 national survey conducted by Met Life, 55% of teachers and 60% of law enforcement officials believed that violence in the mass media is a "major" factor contributing to violence in the schools.

Analysis of the recent multiple victim school shootings (Anchorage Daily News, June 21, 1998) indicate a commonality of these 4 factors: Obsession with violent pop culture, a child who felt inferior or picked on (probably suicidal), easy access to high-powered guns, and ample warning signs. Reducing the violence will not eliminate the threat, but will work in conjunction with efforts directed at addressing the other three factors. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.6 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." AASB supports the goals and desires of the AFN Sobriety Movement.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.7 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 make funds 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. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.8 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS SERVING CHILDREN

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

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.9 SUICIDE PREVENTION

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.10 PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.11 SAFE SCHOOLS/SAFE COMMUNITIES

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

Rationale. All children have a right to attend schools that are safe and free from violence. Recent reports and surveys document an alarming increase in the incidence of school violence in all types of communities, particularly student-on-student violence. As school board members we must share the responsibility by involving the resources of the community to work for solutions. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.12 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

3.13 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. 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. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.14 EDUCATION OF YOUTH ABOUT SEXUAL INVOLVEMENT

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

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

Research presented by the SEARCH Institute and their "Building Assets in Youth" model has determined that a teen's belief "in the importance of abstaining from sexual activity AND his/her willingness to postpone sexual activity" is significant to their personal and academic development. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.15 SUPPORT FOR STATE OF ALASKA CHILDREN'S CABINET

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.16 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST

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

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

Until 1995, the Children's Trust had received no funding. Its \$6 million endowment offers the opportunity to create a true "permanent fund for prevention" since only the income of the Trust may be spent on programs and administration. *Amended 1997*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.17 INCREASE IN ALCOHOL TAX

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

Rationale. The Department of Health and Social Services reports that nearly half of all child abuse and juvenile crime in Alaska is committed while under the influence of alcohol. Parent involvement in the education of their children and student achievement are directly effected by alcohol abuse. The current tax on alcohol is the equivalent of \$0.03 - \$0.04 per drink. (.35 tax per gallon of beer, .85 tax per gallon on wine, and 5.65 tax per gallon of distilled spirits.) The State of Alaska spends considerably more for alcohol abuse related services and health care than it collects in alcohol taxes. Increasing the real cost of alcohol through taxation has shown a decrease in consumption. Because underage drinkers are more price sensitive than adults, higher costs reduce their consumption to an even greater degree. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

3.18 PROHIBITING PERSONS CONVICTED OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE FROM SERVING ON SCHOOL BOARDS

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

Rationale. School board members should serve as role models for students and staff. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

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: Delete

COMMENTS: AASB supported the compromise passed in SB 98, which amends the portability provision by extending tenure re-acquisition by an additional year (to two years) if a teacher has a break in service and is seeking re-acquisition of tenure status in the same district. The bill was signed into law by the Governor in July.

4.2 NATIONAL CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

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

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

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach, and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring students learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

These standards are well-aligned with the Alaska State Board of Education adopted teaching standards. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: US DOE offered stipends for half the cost of taking the test (\$2,000 total cost). DOE is also offering some financial assistance. As of 1998 12 Alaska educators were nationally certified. In 1999 another 12 took the test; results not yet released.

4.3 TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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

Rationale. Teacher preparation is a key to successful instructional experiences for teachers and students. A high level of intellectual rigor and connection to the reality of the classroom interactions is required. Teacher preparation needs to include a variety of experiences with several teachers and several sites.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

4.4 MANDATED STAFF TRAINING

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

Rationale. Mandated training affects all school districts in Alaska. State laws and regulations increasingly require school districts to provide training in specific areas such as sex/race equity, child abuse and fetal alcohol syndrome and suicide prevention. This training must be provided to all new employees and on a cyclical basis to continuing employees. Employees required to receive this training may

be employed at many different locations, making it difficult to provide required training at a central location. Yet the state does not provide school districts with additional funding to implement the training.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF POST SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ALASKA AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALASKANS TO COMPLETE SPECIAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION TRAINING OUTSIDE ALASKA

The Association of Alaska School Boards promotes the establishment and expansion of post-secondary educational programs to train additional individuals as certified special education teachers and the initiation of programs to train related services providers (i.e. school psychologists, physical therapists, and speech therapists) within our State University system.

The Association of Alaska School Boards also supports Alaskan residents completing certification as a special education related service provider while attending an academic program outside the State of Alaska and who, upon certification, are committed to provide services to Alaska public school systems.

Rationale. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA-97) mandate appropriate educational services be provided to all certified special education students; the Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities (34 C.F.R. Part 300), Section 300.381 identifies the role of "the State (to) undertake (activities) to ensure an adequate supply of qualified personnel including special education and related services personnel...necessary to carry out the purposes of this part;" and, the Assistance to states for the Education of Children with Disabilities (34 C.F.R. Part 300), Section 300.382 identifies the role of "Each State plan (to) include a description of the procedures and activities the State will under take to ensure that all personnel necessary to carry out this part are appropriately and adequately trained...to include a system for continuing education of regular and special education and related service personnel to meet the needs of children with disabilities."

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

SUBJECT AREA: EDUCATION PROGRAMS

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

The Association of Alaska School Boards strongly supports adequate and equitable funding for the implementation of school-to-work programs, including school-to-work centers and vocational programs.

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

There are a large number of students in rural villages that do not complete high school or job training programs. There is a need to provide school to work programs like the Rural Student Vocational Program (RSVP), which was eliminated in 1998, or innovative regional residency centers to enhance opportunities for these students.

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENTS: Combines 5.1, 5.6 and 5.11

5.2 CURRICULUM EXPANSION VIA TECHNOLOGY

AASB urges the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development 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. EED 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 EED. *Amended 1997*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

5.3 RECOMMENDING CHANGE IN CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

AASB recommends that the Department of Education and Early Development propose legislation that applies the same regulations of operation and funding for all statewide correspondence programs.

Rationale. The same rules of operation should apply for all statewide correspondence programs. AASB supports local determination of the program offered in each district. Each district reserves the right to create and provide programs for their students and/or contract for these services. Statewide Correspondence programs shall also accept all students who apply after the funding count.
Adopted 1997 Amended 1998

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENTS: Recent amended regulations assure that funding is uniform. Regarding the last sentence under rationale, district programs are required to accept the infrequent addition of a student after the funding count. However, it works both ways; in the event a student drops out, the district retains the funding.

5.4 NATIVE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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

Rationale. The languages of the Indigenous peoples of the United States have become an endangered species. The extinction of these languages would further erode the rich heritage of the indigenous peoples of the

North American Continent. The technology exists to provide satellite language instruction in the Native tongues to communities throughout the United States. If we as a nation do not respond to this need to preserve this rich linguistic heritage, the language will become extinct. The government being responsible for the endangerment of the language being lost should fully fund Native language instruction. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

5.5 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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

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

Full funding of the Community School Act of 1980 is separate from and does not interfere with Foundation Funding. Under the original Community School Act of 1980, half of one percent of a district's operating budget will be funded by the State for community schools. Statewide, schools should have received \$3,171,728 in FY99. Instead, only \$500,00 was appropriated. For FY2000 the Legislature reduced funding 25% to \$400,000. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

5.6 RURAL STUDENT VOCATIONAL PROGRAM (RSVP)

AASB requests that the Alaska EED, 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 was \$780,000 nine years ago. In 1998 funding for the RSVP program was eliminated. 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. *Amended 1998*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (Combined with 5.1)

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 EED 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: Delete

COMMENTS: Funding deleted in 1995-96. There are other avenues to fund leadership training.

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

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

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Updated stats on new survey not yet available.

5.9 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Rep. Dyson introduced legislation (HB 197) that would effectively increase funding for alternative (and charter) schools. Held in committee.

5.10 BOARDING HOME PROGRAM

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: Legislation passed in 1997 allowing for more boarding schools, but with the caveat that state funds not be used. Nenana School District has formally proposed a boarding home program and is seeking state support.

5.11 REGIONAL RESIDENCY SCHOOL-TO-WORK CENTERS

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

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

Amended 1997

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (Combined with 5.1)

COMMENTS: Galena's regional residency Charter school may re-constitute as a boarding school with sponsors to increase funding opportunities .

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. ~~Thirty five twenty~~. Alaska school districts involving over ~~90%~~ ~~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: Amend

COMMENTS: Many districts participate in Kids Voting Alaska. Some are not doing as yet. Consider dropping next year.