



REVISED 9/23/02

2002

CORE RESOLUTIONS

With recommendations by the Board of Directors for consideration by members of the Association of Alaska School Boards.

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD RECOMMENDED CHANGES

Anchorage School Board (ASB) recommended changes to the Core Resolutions are highlighted in the index. Within the body of the document, ASB changes are highlighted in bold, larger point text.

NEW RESOLUTIONS

New resolutions proposed by the Anchorage School Board are contained in Appendix A

Legend:

Underlined indicates text being added.

~~Strikethrough~~ indicates text being deleted.

Recommendations: ...appear in boxed area along with information/background Comments.

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Adopted by the delegate assembly on Nov. 11, 2001

* Indicates Priority Education Issue as determined by AASB Board of Directors on Nov. 12, 2001

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- Amend stats 3.1 Promoting Developmental Assets In Alaska’s Children
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Recommendation PERSONNEL

- Adopt (NEW) SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT (combines 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) (AASB Board of Directors) – ASB: Amend**
- Delete 4.1 National Certification Of Teachers

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Recommendation Education Programs – ASB recommends moving this section to the front of the resolutions section as a statement of our belief in the importance of our role in providing students with a quality education.

Continue 5.1 School-To-Work Programs (ASB: amend)

Continue 5.2 Curriculum Expansion Via Technology – ASB: Amend

Continue 5.3 Native Language Program Development

Continue 5.4 Community Schools

Delete/Revisit 5.5 Extend School Year (revisit under Resolution 2.2) – ASB: Amend

Delete/Revisit 5.6 Assistance To Align Curriculum With Standards (revisit under Resolution 2.2)

AASB

Mission Statement

"The mission of AASB is to assist school boards in providing quality public education, focused on student achievement, through effective local governance."

Belief Statements

RECOMMENDATION: Continue all Belief Statements

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

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 students with quality public education through effective local governance.

B.2 BINDING ARBITRATION

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

B.3 ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING

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

B.4 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

School board members are elected by their local school district citizens based on minimum statewide requirements of eligibility to vote and residency. They are responsible to the public for policy issues and budgets of millions of dollars and are coming under increasing public scrutiny. The Association of Alaska School Boards strongly

encourages all school board members to avail themselves of training opportunities to increase their understanding of the issues confronting their district to improve their ability to make the decisions required of them and to demonstrate their accountability to the public.

B.5 CLASS SIZE

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

FUNDING

B.6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS TOP PRIORITY

Article VII, Sec. 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all school age children. Public education in the State is the largest entitlement program. AASB calls upon the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to make education of our youth a top funding priority. *Amended 00*

B.7 UNFUNDED MANDATES

Schools have been inundated with statutes, regulations and court decisions that require additional services without accompanying appropriations. With inflation eroding purchasing power and increased expectations for services, schools are forced to respond with decreased resources. AASB encourages all policy makers to take responsibility for their mandates by fully funding or removing them. *Amended 1999, 00*

B.8 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*

CHILD ADVOCACY

Preamble

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

B.9 CHILD ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT

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

B.10 LANGUAGE, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

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

B.11 INCREASE IN FAMILY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

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.

B.12 SUPPORTING SOBRIETY

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

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

B.13 PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION

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

B.14 PROHIBITING PERSONS CONVICTED OF SEXUAL ABUSE FROM SERVING ON SCHOOL BOARDS

AASB believes that persons convicted of sexual abuse should be legally prohibited from serving on a school board while required to maintain registration as a sex offender under AS 12.63.010.020. School board members should serve as role models for students and staff. *Amended 1998*

PERSONNEL

B.15 ALASKA NATIVE TEACHER HIRE & RETENTION

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

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

B.16 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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*

B.17 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*

AASB

CORE RESOLUTIONS

SUBJECT AREA: GOVERNANCE

NEW: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Rationale. Public education is the cornerstone of our democracy. School board service, at its core, is one of the most purely democratic institutions in America today. The Pledge of Allegiance is an important civics lesson, recited every day across the nation by school children. ~~The June 2002 ruling by the 9th Court of Appeals declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional due to the words "...under God." It shocked many Alaskans, who see the pledge as a classroom staple and a patriotic touchstone in the wake of Sept. 11. The ruling has been put on hold pending judicial review.~~

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt (ASB amend)

COMMENT: AASB does not wish to specify **and would oppose a mandate as to** how districts incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance (recite out loud each morning in class, recite in silence, require a moment of silence, recite at sporting events, etc.) as that is best determined at the local level by individual communities through their locally elected school board.

1.1 OPPOSING MANDATED SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION

AASB is opposed to *mandated* school consolidation because it 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.

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.

No evidence has been provided to support the proposition that significant savings would result from the indiscriminate combining of school districts. *Amended 1999 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: SB 48 was introduced to require mandatory borough formation. (See comments under 1.2)

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.

A mandatory borough act ignores the economic reality of the lack of an adequate tax base in many rural areas of the State. *Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: In 2001, SB 48, by Sen. Wilken, received considerable attention. SB 48, also called the Equity in Education Funding Act, was designed to generate local matching dollars for education from residents that are able to contribute. It created a new process for considering borough formation and annexation that bypasses a public vote on the issue. Public meetings, however, would be held. The process requires the Local Boundary Commission to recommend model boroughs. SB 48 passed the Senate 11-9 but lay dormant in the House. Rep. Carl Morgan, R-Aniak, chairman of C&RA Committee on the House side, made it clear he would bury the bill citing constituent displeasure.

In 2002 Sen. Wilken introduced a sponsor substitute. Discouraged at the reception to his previous bill, the substitute simply implements selected new boroughs. SB 48 never received a hearing this session in C&RA Committee. With anticipated changes in legislative leadership and committee chairmanships, and Sen. Wilken's promise to revisit the issue again, AASB expects a renewed effort to organize the state into boroughs.

The Alaska Legislature currently has the authority to tax the unorganized borough, but appears to prefer a process that requires people to pass a tax on themselves.

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.

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, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Legislation was introduced some years back that would have allowed non-public school and part-time student access to public school activity programs. The legislation did not pass. At that time the State Board drafted a position supporting enrollment in public school activities for home schooled, private and correspondence students, but the Board never moved forward with the proposal.

Alaska Schools Activities Association rules state: private school and home schooled students are only eligible to participate in their "school of enrollment" (only students from alternative schools can select another school within their district) and they must be enrolled in at least the equivalent of four classes. Seven years ago this rule was challenged in court. The ASAA rule was upheld.

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. It gave local school boards the ability to approve or deny charter school applications, and not be overturned by another group, and gave local boards the ability to add other requirements for charter schools, including Principal/Head Teacher Certification. *Amended 1998, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Last year's charter school bill, HB 101 by Rep. Dyson, protects local control, and was supported by AASB. No activity on charter schools this year.

1.5 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

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

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

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

Alaska Constitution, Section 1. Public Education. The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution

Voucher proponents seek In addition, voucher funding tied to students, **but continue to seek exclusion from could not fully ensure students or taxpayers the benefits of** accountability measures, like **meeting** state mandated **content and** student performance standards, and **could not satisfy** other state and federal mandates under which public schools are required to operate, **without invading the religious and other constitutional freedoms of private and parochial schools. Resource support through such structures as internet-based public schooling and the Family Partnership charter school already provide an accountable model for public financial support for home schooling.** ***Alaska Constitution, Section 1. Public Education. The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and***

~~institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution~~

Adopted 1998, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (ASB amend)

COMMENT: No new legislation was introduced recently on the state level. However, the recent US Supreme Court decision on June 27, 2002 upholding Cleveland's voucher program will throw the ball back into state courts as proponents seek to prove vouchers are constitutional under individual state constitutions. It **would** take a change in the Alaska constitution **(see text below)** to allow vouchers—**always** a difficult **task that AASB opposes as a matter of public policy. The revised language takes care to avoid criticism of well-meaning voucher proponents, but also to avoid any suggestion that a voucher program could include accountability measures and thus become acceptable to AASB.**

~~Alaska Constitution, Section 1. Public Education.~~ The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. ~~Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.~~

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. **"Use it or lose it" is a disincentive to utilize educational funds in the most efficient and effective manner.** (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

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. (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: NEA successfully convinced lawmakers last year it was not worth their effort to fight this battle. They characterized the unbridled right to strike as part of the agreement reached over the issue of binding arbitration—an issue lawmakers don't wish to revisit. Requiring advance strike notification breaks the agreement, NEA argued. No action on this issue this session by the legislature.

1.8 CONCERN REGARDING VOTING BY MAIL ELECTIONS

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Division of Elections to remain vigilant in its efforts to conduct fair, impartial, and fraud-free elections in Rural Education Attendance Areas where voting by mail has been instituted for school board elections.

Rationale. Concern has been raised regarding voters who may ask others to fill out their ballot, discarded ballots (e.g. found in the waste basket at the post office) that could be collected and used in an illegal manner. The vote-by-mail election has created the opportunity for fraudulent and illegal election practices to occur. AASB would like assurances that the voting-by-mail election process eliminates fraud as nearly as possible. *Adopted 1999, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENT: Forwarded to Division of Elections for three years running. They have given all assurances they are conducting fair and fraud-free elections and will remain vigilant in doing so.

1.9 ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS AND FOR STUDENTS SCHOOL DESIGNATORS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

AASB urges **review of any variations in the standards and criteria between Alaska's school designators and federal designators to avoid unnecessary inconsistency and public confusion, and to ensure the greatest validity of designators as descriptive of school performance, rather than student population. AASB also urges** collaboration between Alaska School Districts and ~~all education stakeholders~~ the Department of Education and Early Development to support the needs of Alaskan schools designated as "deficient" or "in-crisis." AASB will make its school improvement programs available to school districts, including board development based on board standards, emphasis on student instruction through QS2, and community engagement through Alaska ICE.

Rationale. Alaska's school designator system and other accountability measures, as well as the federal ESEA No Child Left Behind Act, have created new expectations for raising school and student achievement, **but also pose a risk of public confusion. Designators are valid only to the extent they measure the contribution or lack of contribution by the school, rather than simply reflect the performance of the student population for the test year.** It is understood that not all schools are going to be designated as "successful" or "distinguished" and that not all high school students are going to pass all sections of the HSGQE. It is the responsibility of public education—school boards, with technical assistance from the Department of Education and Early Development, educators, and other stakeholders—to give all students the opportunity to become productive members of our society. The State of Alaska and the public school systems must continue to develop programs that will help all Alaskan youth. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: Forwarded to Legislature, EED, State Board, Other Education organizations. **The added language address critical aspects of this issue otherwise unaddressed in the Core Resolutions.**

1.10 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HOME-SCHOOLED STUDENTS

The State Department of Education and Early Development should have the authority and funding to track **the achievement of school-age children** ~~students~~ throughout the state who are not enrolled in public or private educational institutions. Parents of such students should be required to provide information regarding instruction of and progress of their children.

Rationale. Students-Children receiving an education at home are not required to register or be accountable throughout their education. Whether by not enrolling or by leaving the school systems of the state, no "safety nets" for students are in place to assure that all students are receiving the benefit and right of an education.

Though home schooling can be very effective for some, pPublic schools often receive students who have fallen behind due to failed home schooling or the lack of schooling. Reentry **of these students** into public education puts **these students and** the receiving districts in a position of providing **and the legislature funding** substantial remedial assistance, while **being subjecting the students** to the same testing and evaluation standards as other students. **With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, public schools will be unfairly held accountable for any inadequate preparation of entering students. With the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam, inadequately prepared students will pay the price of the state's failure to monitor the progress of home-schooled students.** *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB: amend)**

COMMENT: This was a huge issue this session, with home schooler/correspondence study parents vehemently opposed to proposed EED regulations to tighten oversight of student progress, revised in SB 345, which passed, to grant *districts* basic oversight responsibilities. **The added language is to clarify what must be tracked and the fact that children not in school are not necessarily "students." For the sake of credibility, the rationale needs to acknowledge that some home-schoolers are highly successful, while emphasizing the cost and accountability implications—for the legislature and students as well as for schools--of failure to address the issue.**

1.11 COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

Current state law requires compulsory school attendance from age 7-16. AASB supports changing the mandatory age for school attendance **to run** from 6 to 17 years old. AASB urges the Department of Education and Early Development and enforcement agencies to work with districts to support compulsory school attendance laws.

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

Most 7-year-old kids are in first or second grade. With the renewed emphasis on reading, writing, and mathematics skills in the first few years, skills on which the child will be assessed, children starting school late are at a big disadvantage. **With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, the legislature will be accountable for paying the cost of remediation to overcome that disadvantage. Importantly, reduction of the compulsory school age to 6 would not eliminate active home-schooling until age 7 an alternative available to parents.**

Increasing the mandatory age to 17 helps ensure students who have not yet graduated from high school stay in school and have more opportunities to meet performance standards and pass the HSGQE. Regular school attendance is critical for student achievement. Mandatory attendance laws should be enforced. Currently the state has provided no funding or enforcement agent to do this. *Adopted 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: SB 11 changes the mandatory age for school attendance, but not nearly to the degree called for by resolution. In its final form, SB 11 requires students who are *voluntarily* enrolled at 6 years of age to maintain attendance like older children. SB 11 was signed into law by Gov. Knowles. **The added language is to correct a grammar error, to highlight and allocate the financial burden of failure to address the problem, and to anticipate a counter-argument.**

SUBJECT AREA: FUNDING

NEW: IN SUPPORT OF A LONG RANGE FISCAL PLAN FOR ALASKA

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

Rationale: The State of Alaska provides a wide range of services to a diverse population spread over a logistically complex area. Providing these services currently costs more than the state is receiving in recurring revenue. A long-term plan for fiscal integrity is needed to provide a stable business climate and to ensure the citizens of necessary services.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: This is the overriding issue of the day! Adequate funding for education is dependent on a stable Alaskan economy. Based on resolution passed by Anchorage School Board in 2002. **The added language is to maintain AASB's educational focus, to note the educational relevance of other services and to avoid any appearance of reaching beyond AASB's mission.**

NEW: EDUCATION FUNDING FORMULA REWRITE

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Legislature to utilize the A+ Study on Education Funding as a guide to meet district needs as it reopens the education funding formula to consider new District Cost Factors, and to mitigate any negative financial impact on districts.

Rationale: Issues to consider regarding education funding:

COST FACTOR STUDY—A new Cost Factor Study is due to be submitted to the Alaska Legislature Nov. 15, 2002.

The intent of the study is to determine the true cost of educating kids in Alaska (versus looking at how districts currently spend money), and then develop Cost Factors from that. Hopefully the study will yield accurate and reliable costs associated with educating kids in our vast state. Any negative impact on districts should be mitigated through some type of hold harmless provision so that student needs don't continue to be compromised.

TASK FORCE A+ STUDY—Provides guidelines on school district needs. It clarifies and makes recommendations on the issue of funding distribution (adequacy and equitability). Its primary finding: Increase funding to make up for past flat funding, and add approximately a **1.5%-2%** increase each year thereafter to account for the impact of inflation. **AASB urges adoption of a 2% annual increase to more fully keep pace with inflation.** The increased funding will provide much needed assistance to low performing schools, allow other districts to duplicate what successful schools are doing, implement remedial and other supplemental services, and help districts attract and retain new teachers through various incentives.

THE UNADJUSTED ADM—For the past few years Learning Opportunity Grants (LOGs) have been provided outside the education foundation formula. These funds, while greatly appreciated, are distributed on a straight ADM basis, unadjusted to take into consideration economies of scale and the cost of providing services in different parts of the state. The Unadjusted ADM for LOGS is troubling; these are one-time funds and cannot reliably be counted on because they expire annually. If funding needs adjusting, all revisions should be made within the formula utilizing an Adjusted ADM.

INCREASING STATE AND FEDERAL ROLE—In Alaska, accountability measures under the Quality Schools Initiative created continuous, increasing financial demands on school districts. The initiative mandates K-1st grade screening, benchmark exams, and the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. It requires implementing and

integrating state school and educator performance standards. It calls for a School Designator system to be implemented in two years, requiring schools to show improvement over a period of time. All districts will be increasing the amount of resources directed to student testing and remediation. These state mandates should receive an ongoing, consistent source of funding.

At the federal level, the reauthorization of ESEA “No Child Left Behind Act” 2001 has huge fiscal implications for Alaska schools. Already, Alaska districts are being required to provide additional supplemental services for students in Title 1 schools deemed failing, and to provide parents with the choice to send their children to another school at district expense. Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is currently being debated, but Congress is stepping back from earlier pledges to fully fund this program.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt (Replaces Resolution 2.1) **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: With the Cost Factor Study due following the election (Nov. 15, 2002), the education funding formula will again be opened up. We anticipate the new cost factor within the formula will once again result in winners and losers. AASB’s goal is to encourage sufficient funding to meet district needs and mitigate losses.

2.1 IN SUPPORT OF THE EDUCATION FUNDING TASK FORCE A+ STUDY YEAR TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

The Association of Alaska School Boards supports the findings of the Education Funding Task Force in its A+ Study, Year Two recommendations dated Oct. 19, 2001, and urges the Legislature to follow its recommendations.

Rationale:

A+ STUDY provides guidelines on school district needs. It clarifies and makes recommendations on the issue of funding distribution (adequacy and equitability). The A+ Study recommends the following: Increase funding in year two, with approximately a 1.5% increase each year thereafter **(AASB urges adoption of a 2% annual increase to more fully keep pace with inflation)**. Provide financial incentives for high performing schools and assistance for low performing schools; Provide funding to attract and keep new teachers, including a loan assumption plan; Suspend the supplemental funding floor pending the new district cost factor study.

Other issues to consider regarding education funding:

COST FACTOR STUDY—The Cost Factory Study should be thorough—addressing the methodology, fair distribution, and adequacy of funding to ensure school and student success. It should be reviewed regularly, and must be legally defensible.

THE UNADJUSTED ADM—For the past few years Learning Opportunity Grants (LOG) have been provided outside the education foundation formula. These funds are distributed on a straight ADM basis, unadjusted to take into consideration economies of scale and the cost of providing services in different parts of the state. District cost factors (area cost differentials) have historically been used to provide fairness in distribution of funds. The inconsistency in using adjusted and unadjusted ADM for LOGS is troubling. In addition, these are one-time funds and cannot reliably be counted on because they expire annually. If funding needs adjusting, all revisions should be made within the formula.

INFLATION PROOFING—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. The foundation program must include an inflation adjustment to the foundation formula. If inflation proofing is valid for the Permanent Fund, then it is valid for funding our children’s education.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FLOOR—Any district can ill afford to lose additional funding when enrollment is decreasing significantly—or increasing. A district should lose or gain funding solely on a per pupil basis. Districts under the supplemental funding floor receive only 60% of funds for each additional student.

QUALITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE–The Quality Schools Initiative creates continuous, increasing financial demands on school districts. The initiative mandates benchmark, kindergarten and HSGQE testing; it requires implementing and integrating state school and educator performance standards. All districts will be increasing the amount of resources directed to student testing and remediation. These state mandates should receive an ongoing, consistent source of funding. *Adopted 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete/Replace with New resolution (above) “Education Funding Formula Rewrite”
COMMENT: Significant progress made on a number of fronts this year. While the Majority did not publicly endorse the A+ report, they did increase funding outside the formula equal to the amount of inflation (by increasing LOGs to \$23 million and adding another \$6 million by adjusted ADM), and suspended the supplemental funding floor for a year until the Cost Factor Study is completed by EED.

2.2 FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ACHIEVE STATEWIDE STRATEGIES

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

1. Time–~~An extended school year~~ Increased learning time **or extended school year/summer school** for targeted students and teacher in-service
2. Alignment–Professional/technical assistance to align curriculum with standards
3. Enhanced teacher preparation/in-service
4. Teacher/administrator recruitment to attract professionals to come and stay in Alaska
5. ~~Re-address special education testing issues~~ Address accommodation of special needs students

Rationale. A bipartisan group of parents, teachers, administrators and policymakers met in Girdwood, Alaska on Sept. 29-Oct. 1, 2000 for an Education Summit to review results of Alaska’s benchmark tests and the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination. They identified student “needs and causes” to develop targeted plans for improvement. The group established priorities and developed statewide strategies for districts, the State Board, Department of Education & Early Development, universities, state agencies, organizations and the Legislature to help students meet statewide standards.

Participants at the Education Summit identified time and alignment (curriculum, instruction and assessments) to the state standards as the two most important issues. With enough time to align curriculum to state performance standards, participants learned that students’ chances of academic success go up dramatically. Given adequate time, a well qualified instructor can deliver a curriculum aligned to standards, helping ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed. *Adopted 2000, Amended 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires all students to meet high standards. Special Education students often require specific learning strategies, specialty trained educators and support staff, as well as additional time and resources.

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (ASB amend)

COMMENT: Distributed to affected parties. Though significant progress is being made, mostly through some new funding, much remains to be done. The \$23 million in LOGs and \$6 million in adjusted ADM could be used to address (1), (2), (3) and (4) above. Also, EED received significant teacher recruitment grant monies.

The amendment above addresses the cost prohibitive nature of extending the school year **for all students;** instead, an increase in learning time **or extended school year or summer school** for targeted students focuses the effort where it is needed most.

2.3 ~~BLOCK GRANTS~~ **Funding** FOR STUDENTS WITH-DISABILITIES, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, 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.

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 over-identify 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, and vocational **and special education** 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 previous years.** In 1997 a Special Education Task Force determined 18.5% was an appropriate figure for Special Education programs alone. A 2001 Department of Education and Early Development audit found special education instruction and support expenditures accounted for 25.3% of total FY01 instructional expenditures.

AASB is also concerned that an increase in federal funding levels for special education, is not supplanted by reducing the state commitment to special education programs. *Adopted 1998, Amended 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (ASB amend)

COMMENT: A year ago Congress was considering mandatory full funding of special education (IDEA), which would dramatically increase funding for Alaska. In light of 9-11, however, lawmakers are backing away from that financial commitment. Last year the Alaska Legislature introduced a resolution supporting education block grants in general (SJR 6), and one in support of full funding for special education (SJR 26).

This year, the Alaska Legislature passed SB 345 which, among other things, allows EED and DHSS to develop a process (direct billing) to capture more funds from Medicaid for special education services; thus offsetting some of the high cost of these special services.

Note: It is inappropriate to compare the 20% figure (see above resolution) under the new funding formula and the 25.3% noted in the EED FY01 audit. They do not compare identical expenses.

2.4 AASB FORUM BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE ON INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

AASB will create an appropriate forum on special education issues to gather data and articulate the needs of Alaska as we enter into the federal negotiations for reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). ~~urges the formation of a Blue Ribbon Task Force to include, all stakeholders, to address a number of critical issues dealing with IDEA.~~ At a minimum, the forum Blue Ribbon Task Force should address the following:

- 1 Inadequate funding of a federal mandate
- 2 Differential treatment and discipline for special education students
- 3 Inadequate staffing/teacher preparation
- 4 Establishing post-secondary educational programs to train additional individuals as certified special education teachers and related services providers (i.e. school psychologists, physical therapists, and speech therapists)
- 5 High staff turnover
- 6 Teacher Liability/legal protections for advocates
- 7 Placement of students and delivery of services
- 8 Mediation between school districts and parents when disagreements develop over student placements
- 9 Reduction of massive, required paperwork

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

Issues such as discipline and excessive paperwork are having a negative impact on educators; as a result fewer certified personnel are willing to teach in special education programs.

AASB joins with the National School Boards Association in urging Congress to fairly and fully fund this federal mandate. IDEA was enacted in 1975 when the federal government committed to pay 40% of the costs associated with educating children with disabilities. ~~Today~~ According to the National School Boards Association, federal funding accounts for approximately ~~10%~~ 16% of the necessary funding. The remainder comes directly from the regular instructional program of local school districts. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

NOTE: Resolution 4.4 is combined into this resolution as #4 in list of issues to study.

COMMENT: Resolution distributed to interested parties, but no interest shown on forming a Blue Ribbon Task Force thus far. In visiting with DEED, department officials recognize the issues listed above as priorities for the department as well. Re-direct the resolution to authorize AASB to create a statewide forum to study the issue.

2.5 FUNDING PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN ALASKA

AASB supports legislation to add additional 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. **State and local performance standards set high expectations in mathematics, reading and writing for children age 5 through 7. Research indicates that earlier education is critical for many children to successfully reach those expectations.** Pre-school education is vital to the educational success of school children in Alaska. **With the enactment of federal No Child Left Behind legislation and state designators, the legislature will be accountable for paying the cost of missing the opportunity to reach children at the age when the greatest gains in mental development are possible.** 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 Head Start or pre-school funding and sources of present federal funding are uncertain. Most existing pre-school programs cannot afford certificated pre-school teachers. *Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: The body of research on child development continues to grow, highlighting the importance of pre-school learning. The Education Commission of the States is pressing P-16 education, and views pre-school as a critical issue, focusing on developing standards to coordinate efforts of Head Start, child care, and pre-school. Failure to educate at an early age results in a preparation gap, which in turn results in an achievement gap later on.

New EED regulations were recently adopted allowing the “governing body of the school district to approve early entry of a student on an individual basis,” thus allowing selected 4-year-olds to enter kindergarten (and receive state funds for those students). In Alaska, at least one district has entered into an agreement with EED to recapture Impact Aid monies for 3& 4-year-olds, thus providing funds to offer a pre-school program.

2.6 SUPPORT FOR G.O. BONDS PROPOSITION FOR CONSTRUCTION/MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

AASB supports legislation that “Bond Proposition C” for schools/University of Alaska/Anchorage Museum in the 2002 general election, and the Debt Reimbursement package that is contingent upon its passage, to provides continuing and adequate capital funding for public school facilities. ~~A source of funding separate from the foundation formula should be made available for all capital improvement projects each year to prevent a~~ The G.O.

Bonds and Debt Reimbursement package will go a long way toward addressing Alaska's backlog of facility needs so that all of Alaska's children will have equitable access to safe and sound comparable education facilities.

Rationale. The G.O. Bond for schools proposition would provide \$236 million for mostly rural projects (on the Department of Education & Early Development's Construction Incentive Program list) the University of Alaska, and the Anchorage Museum of Art and History. K-12 education would receive about \$168 million. Upon voter approval of Proposition C, the Debt Reimbursement Program is reopened for municipalities that vote to bond between 1999 and 2005, affecting mainly larger communities. The debt reimbursement program will provide the tools for larger communities and organized boroughs to address renovations, additions, and growth for current and future students through voter approved debt at the local level until January 1, 2005. Thus, the G.O. Bond Proposition C addresses both urban and rural needs.

~~Two decisions in as many years by the Alaska Superior Court found Alaska's funding of school construction discriminatory to rural school districts, and inadequate. 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. Greater effort is needed to fund school facilities so that all of Alaska's children will have equitable access to good school buildings. The State of Alaska currently has a backlog which may be as much as \$1 billion partly due to project needs that have not been submitted to the Department of Education & Early Development because of a grant program that is inadequately funded. Alaska has an obligation to maintain and renovate outdated school construction. [DELETE THIS PARAGRAPH AND PLACE IN COMMENTS SECTION]~~

~~Some areas of the state are experiencing rapid population growth, and that growth is significantly impacting the capacity of schools; many have student capacity loads well in excess of 200%. The state capital budget has been inadequate to address state needs. The CIP list for projects funded by DEED and municipal bonding for facility needs should both be adequately funded. Amended 1998, 99, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)~~

[ALTERNATE: 2.6 SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION/MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

AASB pleads for legislation that provides immediate and continuing adequate capital funding for public school facilities and debt reimbursement despite Alaska's dire fiscal condition. Due to the recent failure the GO Bond proposition, other state services or capital needs must be sacrificed to cure judicially identified failure to provide constitutionally equitable educational resources. Funding separate from the foundation formula must be made available for all capital improvement projects each year to address Alaska's backlog of facility needs so that all of Alaska's children will have constitutionally equitable access to safe and sound education facilities. This is a statewide crisis-level issue of constitutional proportions, the importance of which cannot be overstated.]

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (to address GO Bond proposition) **(ASB amend and propose presentation of alternative)**

COMMENT: Even though the general election will be held just days prior to the AASB Annual Meeting, it is imperative for districts to show their support for continued construction and major maintenance funding.

For the first time in 20 years the Legislature passed a GO Bond package (HB 2003) for rural construction needs, linked to a debt reimbursement plan for municipalities and boroughs, which, if passed by voters in the November election, will go a long way to eliminating the backlog of projects. The legislature passed the following school construction bills in 2002:

HB 2002 GO BONDS FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION / MAJOR MAINTENANCE--Appropriates \$236 million for rural schools, University of Alaska, and the Anchorage Museum of Art and History. \$113.8 million is appropriated for school construction covering 8 new schools and planning and design funding for another 5 districts; \$54.8 million for 37 school major maintenance projects. Must be approved by voters at the next general election.

HB 2003 DEBT REIMBURSEMENT--Provides 60%-70% debt reimbursement for municipalities that vote to bond between 1999 and 2005. The bill takes effect ONLY if the GO Bonds in HB 2002 are approved by voters in November.

HB 528 DEBT REIMBURSEMENT--Provides debt reimbursement for "special municipal capital projects." Two school projects are funded within the bill: the Northwest Arctic School District receives \$10.6 million for Ambler's K-12 School. Fairbanks North Star Borough receives \$4.5 million for Eielson AFB schools major maintenance and upgrades.

Additional construction projects were covered in the Capital budget.

Two decisions in as many years by the Alaska Superior Court found Alaska's funding of school construction discriminatory to rural school districts, and inadequate. 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. Greater effort is needed to fund school facilities so that all of Alaska's children will have equitable access to good school buildings. The State of Alaska currently has a backlog which may be as much as \$1 billion partly due to project needs that have not been submitted to the Department of Education & Early Development because of a grant program that is inadequately funded. Alaska has an obligation to maintain and renovate outdated school construction. **The court decisions also raise serious doubt that any debt reimbursement for urban districts would withstand challenge without a means, such as the GO BONDS, to address promptly the needs of rural school districts. Alternative language is proposed in case the GO Bond proposition fails. The purpose of the alternative is to highlight publicly before the vote the fact that the GO Bond proposition is not merely desirable, but imperative.**

2.7 SIMPLIFYING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS

AASB supports simplifying the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) application process to mirror other state grant processes requiring significantly less paper and significantly less personnel cost to the district in terms of contracted professional experts.

Rationale. The application process for Capital Improvement Projects is very time consuming and labor intensive, and requires professional services of architects, engineers and others that may have to travel to the site on at least one occasion. The expenses accrued during the application process must be budgeted to non-instruction. The amount of effort and resource required in the application process presents a burden for local districts that are funded for the purpose of educating children. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Resolution forwarded to EED, Legislature, Gov. EED's Bond Reimbursement Grant Review Committee (authorized by AS 14.11.014) is charged with reviewing the CIP application process annually. The current process was developed by the Review Committee, which includes a representative from both the House and Senate. All information requested is necessary to prioritize the CIP list, says an EED representative.

2.8 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PRIORITY LIST FOR NON-BONDED PROJECTS

AASB strongly advises the legislature to follow the priority list for non-bonded projects as presented by the Department of Education and Early Development with no adjustments, deletions, or additions that would not otherwise be of an emergency basis.

Rationale. The Capital Improvement Projects list goes through a very comprehensive prioritization process developed and implemented, based on need, by the Department of Education and Early Development. The legislature in recent times has not followed the priority list as presented. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: ContinueCOMMENT: For the second time in as many years the Legislature *did* largely follow the CIP priority list.**2.9 OPPOSING PROPOSED SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA CHANGE (ALLOWING 45% OF BASIC NEED)**

AASB opposes a change to the funding formula that would eliminate the 45% factor and result in an inequitable burden on some districts.

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

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Legislature did not pursue this change this session.

2.10 INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING COMMENSURATE WITH INCREASING FEDERAL ROLE SUPPORT OF INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING

AASB strongly encourages the U.S. Congress, Alaska Congressional delegation, the Department of Interior and the US Department of Education to increase funding levels for **all of** Alaska's **public** schools.

Rationale. There is an expanding federal role and responsibility in delivery of public education. The cornerstone of the presidential education policy calls for increased testing and adequate yearly progress for each student through the ESEA "No Child Left Behind" Act, and should therefore include commensurate funding.

~~Potential cuts in education exacerbate a situation in Alaska schools where funding has decreased while operating costs have risen.~~ The original intent of PL 94-142 (federal special education funding through the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act) 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.

Classroom requirements like handicap laws, the American Disabilities Act, and 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, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (**ASB amend**)

COMMENT: Both the House and Senate in Congress are considering major education legislation to increase funding, but 9-11 events are causing a budget crunch jeopardizing the increases. The federal role is expanding under ESEA, and they are currently debating how to implement the new mandates.

2.11 EDUCATION ENDOWMENT

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

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

Adequate funding of education is ranked as a high priority by Alaskans. **A recent Curriculum Management Audit of Alaska’s largest school district found “overall fiscal support for education in Alaska is tenuous,” and that financial uncertainty deters long-range planning that is critical to significant educational improvement.** An educational endowment will provide a proven, secure, and dedicated fiscal resource for future public education funding for our state, **and allow long-range education planning with confidence in the availability of that resource.** *Amended 1998, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (**ASB amend and Continue**)

COMMENT: This issue has passed its time. A statewide ballot initiative was withdrawn in 1998 due to anticipated lack of support. The State Fiscal Plan adopted by the House in 2002 included non-binding language stipulating that funds from PF earnings, if used to reduce the fiscal gap, should be used for primarily for education.

2.12 EXPAND DEFINITION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TO INCLUDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

AASB supports changing education statute AS 14.03.60 and 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 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 current law and regulations are written, the middle school model is not addressed (statute only recognizes grades 7 and up). 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 & Early Education regulation.

Inclusion of sixth grade in the middle school configuration has an impact on facilities planning. *Amended 1999, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENT: Success! Resolution is no longer required.

Legislation was introduced in both years of the 21st Alaska Legislative Session. Both attempts were unsuccessful, partly because of a fiscal note that assumed all districts would reconfigure their schools. The increased fiscal note would be due to building a larger school with an increase of 25 sq. ft. per 6th grade student.

However, regulations adopted by the State Board of Education in June 2002 increased the facilities space requirement from 104 sq. ft. to 110 sq. ft. per student at the elementary level; and from 150 sq.ft. to 157 sq. ft. per student at the secondary level. Additionally, the State Board adopted regulations that provide that 6th graders will be assigned secondary space in a qualifying middle school or junior high. The theory is that elementary students don’t typically move from class to class and need less room; whereas in the secondary school students move throughout the school all day. However, some middle schools utilize the secondary school model with students moving throughout the school. The argument was that these schools should be allotted more space.

2.13 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 program) while protecting the original purpose of the Universal Service Fund to help provide affordable telecommunications to rural areas.

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

Equality in educational opportunity has always been a goal of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Future economic viability will not depend as much on physical presence, but rather the ability to import, transmit or convey ideas and information electronically. Today's globally competitive economy requires that all schools have access to modern technologies—Internet access, computers, distance learning—that can open new doors of educational opportunity for our school children. *Amended 1998, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: There was previously concern that support for the E-Rate Program (Telecommunications Act of 1996) to get all schools online could erode funding granted to Alaska under the Universal Service Fund (subsidizing rural areas) which brings in \$60 million to Alaska. The concerns appear to have dissipated, as the program is very popular in Congress and well established. Not an issue this year.

Della Mathis, EED E-Rate contact, said they haven't heard any objections from Sen. Steven's office on the issue in 18 months. Political support for the E-Rate program is very strong, said Mathis.

2.14 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. Extending that program into the future will help meet school construction needs in areas of the state that are able to bond.

Over the past years of high growth many regions of the State have bonded for school construction with the expectation that the State would honor its obligation. In the past these good faith agreements have sometimes not been fully honored, placing a heavy burden on local taxpayers. This aforementioned tax burden has created a hardship for taxpayers and resulted in a loss of local revenue for classroom education. **Whether or not the recent GO Bond proposition to fund specified school projects was successful, it remains incumbent upon the legislature to appropriate sufficient funds each year to fund debt reimbursement to local districts.** *Amended 1998, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: When the CIP was first implemented, the idea was to spend down bonded debt. But urban areas witnessed increasing enrollments and continued to build. A new debt retirement program, extended until Jan. 1 2005, is tied to the November election on GO Bonds (HB 2003). **That program is not, however, funded by the bonds and will require annual appropriation funding.** Whether or not the bond passes, future debt retirement for school construction will remain an important option for Alaska.

2.15 REVENUE SHARING & THE COMMUNITY DIVIDEND

Municipalities play a large part in financing education. If Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance programs are reduced or eliminated it has a serious impact on public schools. The Association of Alaska School Boards supports increased/restored funding for Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance.

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

An alternative way to fund the Municipal Revenue Sharing & Assistance program is the concept of a Community Dividend—creating a mini permanent fund for Alaska municipalities which would distribute the interest earned in the form of a Municipal Dividend. This idea was forwarded by the Alaska Municipal League, and looks promising. *Adopted 1999, Amended 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: The Community Dividend was a strong part of the House debate over a state fiscal plan, but was ultimately not incorporated into the plan.

2.16 EMERGENCY STATE FUNDING FOR REAA FUEL STORAGE AND TRANSFER FACILITIES

AASB requests emergency state funding for upgrades of state-owned fuel storage and fuel transfer facilities in REAA school districts where there is an imminent environmental and safety hazard.

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

Stringent regulations, both state and federal, mandate significant penalties for school districts suffering fuel spills from state-owned facilities. Replacement costs for aging systems are astronomical and far beyond the funding allocations prescribed by the state for schools. Emergency state funding is crucial to avoiding looming financial and environmental disasters, and in some districts, serious environmental health problems. *Adopted 2000 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: The Denali Commission is leading the effort to meet infrastructure needs in rural Alaska. According to the Commission, rural arctic and sub-arctic Alaska communities are fully dependent on diesel fuel for heat, power and light. The fuel is routinely stored in large tanks located within or near the community. Historic problems including fuel spills that contaminate the environment, and community water sources, as well as, not meeting applicable State and Federal laws.

The State of Alaska Division of Energy (DOE) is the primary agency for the design and construction of rural bulk fuel upgrade projects. A number of utility cooperatives and businesses are also upgrading their own tank farms. A recent estimate by the DOE is that it cost \$ 457,000,000.00* to construct new code-compliant tank farms for all of rural Alaska. Current issues include leaking tanks and piping, and inadequate spill control features.

In FY99 the Denali Commission entered into an agreement with DOE to provide \$10 Million in construction funding and \$500,000 in planning and design funding for bulk fuel upgrades. The Commission funding complemented funding from DOE, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State of Alaska Department of Education and other sources for a total funded effort of \$19,177,000 for construction of 14 bulk fuel farms and design for 20 additional farms.

2.17 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

AASB believes the state of Alaska should fully reimburse the cost of pupil transportation. Getting students safely to and from school is a vital part of public education.

Rationale. The legislature recently discussed paying only 95% of pupil transportation costs as incentive for districts to align contracts, encourage competition, and presumably reduce costs. ~~Over the past two years the alignment has been completed.~~ The alignment was completed from 2000-2001. Capping proposals at 95% of the current rate will not help districts improve competition, especially in light of the recent increased in fuel costs, the rise in the minimum wage for drivers, and the low unemployment rate. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend

COMMENT: The 95% issue never arose this year. Pupil transportation was fully funded in both the FY02 supplemental and for FY03 EED budget. Pupil transportation is invariably an increasing cost to the State. A new legislature may look for more efficiencies in education.

2.18 FUNDING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT-OPERATED REGIONAL BOARDING HOME PROGRAMS

AASB supports expanding the Boarding Home Program to provide funding for new, locally controlled and operated, regional boarding high schools throughout the state. The appropriateness of a regional boarding school is best determined within the region and its governing body.

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

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

Many students in small village high schools now desire the educational and extra-curricular opportunities found at larger, centralized high school sites. The distance from Northern and Interior villages, from Mt. Edgecumbe, however, may deter some students from enrolling. Galena, Nenana and other districts now offer boarding school programs that provide an alternative to some areas of the state. *Amended 1997, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (ASB amend – comment section – **grammar/punctuation**)

COMMENT: Mt. Edgecumbe's expenditures per pupil is approximately \$15,000; REAA expenditures typically exceed that **cost, thus** making an argument for cost savings for the state, and to support state funding for boarding schools. Rep. Foster's Vocational Education Pilot Program (HB 239) offered one option. Language from HB 239 was inserted into the GO Bonds proposal (HB 2003) in 2002, recreating the Nome-Beltz boarding school, with Bering Strait School District serving as "feeder schools." The bill passed, but funding is tied to the November 2002 general election/GO bond vote. It retains the appropriateness of local control within the region.

2.19 STATE FUNDING FOR STATE BOARDING SCHOOLS

AASB recommends the following change to AS 14.17.440 State Funding For State Boarding Schools:

Amend AS 14.17.440 by adding:

“(C) State boarding schools that send students back to their home districts before the end of the school year will return the remaining funding with the student as calculated below. Arrive at a percentage of days in attendance by taking the 180 days minus number of days in attendance at the boarding school/180 days. Multiply this percentage by the amount of money the student would have received in their district under AS 14.17.460. Return that amount of money with the student to the receiving school district.”

Rationale. Boarding schools operate like private schools but with public funds. Boarding schools select the students that they will take, whereas regular public schools take all students in their attendance areas. Boarding schools send students home if they do not meet the standards set by the boarding school. As currently practiced, if a boarding school student is sent home or voluntarily decides to return home after the 20 day count in October, the funds for that student remain with the boarding schools. The regular public school has the student but not the funds. As an incentive for boarding schools to work hard on retaining students/improving their screening techniques, boarding schools would lose money if they lose students. As the current statute operates, there is a reward for taking in a large number of students then sending them home after the 20-day count. The reward is more money and fewer students to spend it upon. Unfortunately the receiving school has the student without the money. If a student chooses to go to a boarding school and remains the entire year no one is harmed. The teaching school has the state funds to teach and the sending district is not teaching a student without money to do so later in the year. *Adopted 2000 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete

COMMENT: EED does not believe the change called for in this resolution is warranted as there are so few cases where Mt. Edgecumbe sends kids back to their originating district after the official student count date. Characterized as isolated instances.

Last year the AASB Board of Directors recommended deleting this resolution because the current funding mechanism works both ways. While it is true that districts could lose funds depending on shifting enrollment, they also might gain funds for the same reason. The membership ultimately voted to retain the resolution.

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~~ 1.2 million adolescents in ~~600 communities in 33~~ each of the 50 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 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend stats
COMMENTS:

3.2 FETAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG EXPOSED STUDENTS

AASB requests that the Alaska Legislature provide and improve effective programs and services aimed at the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)/Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE) within our state, and to allocate adequate funding necessary to provide parent training, school staff training, and specialized educational services necessary to serve FAS/FAE children. **AASB also urges the federal government specifically to identify FAS and FAE under IDEA both to provide funding and to facilitate better data gathering and service management.**

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. **IDEA fails to list FAS and FAE as identified conditions for special education services. Affected children frequently receive special education services based on a variety of different IDEA-identified conditions or may receive no services at all. The result is an absence of both funding and the effective tracking and comprehensive data gathering necessary to quantify the need and to identify and apply the most effective educational strategies.** *Amended 1998, 00 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend)**
COMMENTS:

3.3 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 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

<p>RECOMMENDATION: Continue COMMENTS:</p>
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3.4 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 demonstrate nonviolent solutions to problems and respect for human life. AASB also supports self-regulation within the industry by asking them to post rating labels on all videos rented or sold by video merchants or loaned by public libraries, and prohibiting children under age of 17 from renting R- or X- rated videos or attending R- or X-rated movies without parental permission. AASB supports efforts to provide parents with the necessary information about the influence of media in order to assist them in their decisions concerning its influences upon their children.

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

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 guns, and ample warning signs. Reducing the violence will not eliminate the threat, but will work in conjunction with efforts directed at addressing the other three factors. *Amended 1998, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

<p>RECOMMENDATION: Continue COMMENTS:</p>
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3.5 INHALANT, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, & OTHER DRUG ABUSE

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

Rationale. Drug-related problems, including inhalant, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, are a major debilitating influence on the lives of the youth of Alaska. They have been proven to be the primary contributing factor in the alarming number of youth suicides in the State of Alaska. Community-based prevention and intervention efforts are proving effective in combating drug-related problems. The treatment of children and young people is very different from the treatment of adults for inhalant, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse,

yet there are no residential treatment facilities in the State for those young people who are addicted to inhalants.
Amended 1998, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: US **Congressman Senator** Frank Murkowski was able to retain funding for a center in Bethel last year. It opened this past fall.

3.6 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS SERVING CHILDREN

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

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

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

When children are receiving services from multiple agencies, one agency will frequently have information that may be crucial to the service delivery of another agency and/or the child is receiving duplicating and sometime conflicting services from more than one agency. Addressing the needs of the whole child requires an improved delivery system, which is comprehensive, collaborative, child and family centered, and focused on prevention.
Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend – grammar/parallel structure)**

COMMENTS:

3.7 SUICIDE PREVENTION

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

Rationale. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people 15 - 19 years of age, (following unintentional injuries). The rate of teenage suicide in Alaska is ~~three times~~ **much** greater than the national average with Alaska reporting 17.2 ~~32.4~~ incidents per 100,000; the national average reported at 10.7 ~~40.3~~ incidents per 100,000.

Suicide is often precipitated by depression, substance abuse, and separation from a significant other. Coordinated efforts among all agencies will be better able to present programs which address mental health, coping skills in response to stress, substance abuse, employment, and healthy relationships. Currently, ~~57~~ **66** Alaskan communities participate in the Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program which allows each community to determine and implement the kind of project it believes is most likely to reduce self-destructive behavior. *Amended 1998, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend stats

COMMENTS: A Suicide Prevention Task Force was appointed by Gov. Knowles this year. Have yet to make recommendations.

3.8 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 school districts and their communities in developing plans and strategies to implement Safe Schools plans in all schools.

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

Designated School Safe Zones are just one example of programs and laws that work, and have been supported by schools. *Amended 1998, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: This is what Alaska ICE works to address.

3.9 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 ~~45~~ ~~32~~ states that have school-based health centers, Alaska is **only** one of **only 12** ~~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. *(Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (stats **only(ASB and grammar)**)

COMMENTS: The number of school-based health centers in the United States climbed to 1,380 in school year 1999/2000, a 20 percent increase over two years and nearly a seven-fold increase over the past decade.

3.10 HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

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

Rationale. ~~Through June 2001~~ ~~In 2000~~, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that ~~793,026~~ ~~774,467~~ Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS and that ~~457,667~~ ~~448,060~~ have died. ~~Through the same time period,~~ ~~8,994~~ AIDS cases were reported in children under age 13; ~~5,168~~ children under age 15 have died. Globally, CDC estimates that 36.1 million people (including 1.4 million children under 15 years of age) have been infected with HIV. During 2000 AIDS caused the deaths of an estimated 3 million people worldwide, including 1.3 million women and 500,000 children under 15.

The dormancy of the HIV virus can be as long as 10 years and the statistics indicate that many young people are contracting the virus while in their teens. **Health education must counter any tendency for advances in medical treatment that prolong and improve life with AIDS to lull teens into careless and risky behavior.** Amended 1998, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (stats only) **(ASB amend)**
COMMENTS:

3.11 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 1997 Youth Risk Behavior survey, in 1993 the birth rate for 15-17 year olds in Alaska **is was** similar to that for the nation as a whole (26.1 per 1,000 girls in Alaska, 32.6 per 1,000 girls nationally) while the state birth rate for 18-19 year olds **is was** higher than that for the nation (94.2 in Alaska versus 84.4 nationally). The percentage of Alaska students who report **ed** ever having sexual intercourse increases from 28.6% in grade 9 to 56.7% among those in grade 12. The survey **reports reported**: “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.” **More current behavior rates are unknown. Legislative restrictions requiring parental consent for behavior surveys make it impossible to collect reliable information. (See AASB Core Resolution 3.16) This lack of current data impairs the development of effective healthy behaviors education.**

Research presented by the SEARCH Institute and their “Building Assets in Youth” model has determined that a teen’s belief “in the importance of abstaining from sexual activity AND his/her willingness to postpone sexual activity” is significant to their personal and academic development. Amended 1998, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend: 1993 data cannot be stated in present tense)**
COMMENTS: No new numbers. YRBS was not administered in all districts because of the positive parental consent law we are currently trying to change. HB 408, making the changes sought, passed the House, but remained in S. HESS Committee. **Because t**This remains an important goal as it relates to AASB/Alaska ICE activities, **it is critical to emphasize the relationship between the consent law and the lack of current data.**

3.12 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 state wide children’s agenda that cuts through red tape and works across departments. (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Continue
COMMENTS: With change of administration, we would like to see this continued.

3.13 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA CHILDREN’S TRUST

AASB fully supports the work of the Alaska Children’s Trust, and urges all member school boards to promote the Trust and its efforts to address the tragic consequences of abuse, neglect, violence, and crime experienced by too many of Alaska’s children. AASB urges the Legislature to support and increase the Children’s Trust Endowment on a yearly basis as a source of funding for the Children’s Cabinet.

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 have 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.

Today, the Trust's ~~\$9.2~~ \$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, 99, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (stats only)
COMMENTS:

3.14 INCREASED SUPPORT OF ALASKA HEAD START PROGRAMS

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

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

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

Within Alaska, ~~17~~ Head Start ~~grantee agencies programs~~ serve ~~nearly 3,500~~ children and their families in ~~101~~ 407 communities. A large number of eligible Alaskan children (estimated to be nearly 76%) remain unserved, due to lack of sufficient funding. The Head Start communities across Alaska contribute over \$4.2 million annually through in-kind support. *Amended 1998, 99, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend stats
COMMENTS:

3.15 SUPPORTING THE DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT

AASB hereby petitions to the U.S. Congress to continue funding for the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act during FY01. 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 the President of the United States, Education Secretary, 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 1999 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 46.9% of Alaska High School students reported having had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days. YRBS found that 34.4% 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, 00, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: YRBS survey stats are most recent.

3.16 REVISE PARENTAL PERMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS ADMINISTERED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AASB supports modifying the requirements for parental or legal guardian permission for a student to participate in a questionnaire or survey administered in a public school by making it easier for school districts to obtain the necessary permission. As a result of the passage **in 1999** of HB 70, ~~in 1999~~ schools are unable to obtain an adequate sample to provide reliable information.

Rationale. For state and federal grants, school districts need school-by-school data to accurately assess the need and success of current efforts. The low response rates on the 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) made this kind of detailed data impossible. In Anchorage, for example, the Anchorage School District Safe and Drug Free Schools alone had seven grants asking for such data. During the fall 1999 Site Review, federal auditors put the ASD Safe and Drug Free Schools program on notice that it was bordering on non-compliance due to lack of current data. The program lost three grants totaling \$296,915 in lost grant funds. Other grants have not been applied for because the criteria indicated that without contemporary data, the application would not be competitive. Other youth-serving agencies and programs in Anchorage and throughout the state face similar grant rejection prospects. *Adopted 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2006)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENTS: HB 408, making the changes sought, passed the House, but remained in S. HESS Committee. This remains an important goal as it relates to AASB/Alaska ICE activities.

SUBJECT AREA: PERSONNEL

NEW: SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

AASB supports **funded opportunities and efficient resources for continuous**, improved **staff** preparation **and continuing development** in both urban and rural settings for those educating Alaska's public school students. This includes, but is not limited to:

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

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

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt (ASB amend) **“Continuous preparation” may be interpreted as ongoing programs for initial preparation instead of ongoing development)**

COMMENT: COMBINES RESOLUTIONS 4.1, 4.2, AND 4.3

4.1 NATIONAL CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

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

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

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

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

Amended 1998 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (COMBINED WITH NEW RESOL: SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT)

COMMENT: State Board of Education & Early Development is seeking funds for only 5, down from 10, scholarships per year to promote national certification. Currently Alaska has about 21 NBPTS certified teachers. Nationally, the success rate for passing the NBPTS is 37%. Some states are suspending rewards for certification because proof does not exist that it improves student learning.

4.2 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 should include a variety of experiences with multiple teachers and multiple sites. *Amended 2000 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (COMBINED WITH NEW RESOL: SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT)
COMMENT: Current teacher preparation programs

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--UAA 5th year education program is in trouble...legislators want to eliminate the 5th year.

--TYPE I Teaching Certificate for classroom aides enrolled in an approved teacher prep program.

-- SB 86 SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERT LIMITED TEACHER CERTIFICATE (passed last year) creates a limited teacher certificate for a person to teach in a subject matter in which the person is an expert.

4.3 MANDATED STAFF TRAINING

AASB urges the Department of Education & Early Development and the University system to continue to expand availability of professional quality packaged training programs for all school districts to use in providing consistent mandated training to employees. AASB also urges the Department of Education & Early Development and the University system or another state educational agency to be a clearinghouse for training tapes and online programs that have been developed by other school districts and agencies to be used by districts throughout the state.

Rationale. Mandated training, without additional funding to implement the 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, 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. *Amended 2000, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete (COMBINED WITH NEW RESOL: SUPPORT FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT)
COMMENT: DEED offers training on 10 mandated subjects, always trying to update its training using the latest appropriate technology and by partnering with appropriate professional organizations. Some of the training is provided on video, some on CD.

4.4 SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TRAINING

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

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

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

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

School districts throughout the State of Alaska are having difficulty meeting the educational requirements of our special needs students due to a significant shortage of certified special education personnel. Furthermore, the University of Alaska has limited special education and related services professional preparation program opportunities available to individuals aspiring to become certified special education or related service professionals. *Adopted 1998, Amended 1999, 00 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

(rewrite to include paraprofessionals/ta's) -4.5. and 4.4 – mention NCBL.

4.5 ADDRESSING THE TEACHER, SPECIALIST, AND ADMINISTRATOR SHORTAGE

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

Suggested strategies may include:

- Incentives (salary bonuses, loan forgiveness, loan assumption, interest rate reduction, etc.)
- State supported marketing to recruit teachers.
- Flexibility in certification requirements.
- Improve availability and/or quality of teacher housing.
- Mentoring programs for new teachers.
- Reducing the vesting time in TRS to five years.

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

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

A teacher’s job satisfaction is gauged by a number of factors, including a sense of accomplishment, professional support, decent living conditions, and adequate compensation/benefits. The degree to which Alaska meets these needs is a statement of the value we place on our educators. *Adopted 1999, Amended 2000, 01 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Forgiveness addresses future debt. Assumption applies to debt already incurred. / SB 181 passed, which provides low interest loans to build teacher housing in small communities. Also, it should be noted that EED, through regulation last year, is honoring teacher certificates from all other states for a period of time (2 years) within which the educator must meet EED certification requirements. This is not officially “reciprocity” because other states do not necessarily honor Alaska certificates, but the new regulation is enormously helpful in attracting teachers and administrators to Alaska.

SUBJECT AREA: EDUCATION PROGRAMS

5.1 SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

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

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

There are a large number of students in rural villages that do not complete high school or job training programs. There is a need to provide school-to-work programs like the Rural Student Vocational Program (RSVP), which was eliminated in 1998, or innovative regional residency centers to enhance opportunities for these students. **At the same time, school-to-work programs must integrate and ensure basic academic achievement.** *Amended 1999 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend)**
It is important to acknowledge recent requirements for academic accountability as part of preparation for work.

5.2 CURRICULUM EXPANSION VIA TECHNOLOGY

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

Rationale. All school districts need to have the capability to offer a variety of courses for **all students, including** the remedial student, vocational student, and the college-bound student **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 their community or take correspondence classes. There is available in the State the ability to deliver such courses utilizing technology. EED is partnering in efforts to provide distance delivered education for educators, 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 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue **(ASB amend)**

COMMENT: EED is currently involved in a number of distance delivery projects geared toward educators. They are working with UAS to provide online in-service courses on standards assessments. EED is also partnering in the ARCTIC project with Chugach School District and the University of Alaska, training educators via distance delivery to integrate technology standards into the educational program.

A new EED direct service to districts is the sharing of online high school courses through Alyeska. The Alaska Online Consortium is a group of districts (Mat-Su, Kenai, Delta-Greely), Alyeska and EED. The idea is to pool all online courses to offer more a complete selection from which districts may choose. Piloting 14 high school courses this fall. Could serve as option for “approved supplemental services” for Title 1 schools labeled as failing under the new re-authorized ESEA. Start up federal money originated from Sen. Stevens appropriation.

5.3 NATIVE LANGUAGE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

AASB supports state funding for staff training, program development and materials preparation to promote Native language instruction. AASB also believes that any state mandated program should require commensurate state funding.

Rationale. The languages of the Indigenous Peoples of the United States have become endangered. The extinction of these languages would further erode the rich heritage of the Indigenous Peoples of the North American Continent. The technology exists to provide satellite language instruction in the Native tongues to communities throughout the United States. If we as a nation do not respond to this need to preserve this rich linguistic heritage, the language will become extinct. The government being responsible for the endangerment of the language being lost should fully fund Native language instruction. *Amended 1998, 99 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: SB 103 passed into law in 2000. The law supports Native Language Education curriculum by requiring each school with over 40% Native students to establish a Native Language Curriculum Advisory Committee. Also, the Alaska History bill (HB 171 by Kapsner), which includes Alaska Native History, passed the House overwhelmingly but not the Senate.

5.4 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

AASB recommends that the Community Schools Act of 1980 be fully funded and the state explore independent funding status for Alaska’s Community Schools.

Rationale. AASB recognizes that *Community Schools* extends the concept of public education beyond the traditional K-12 program of "schooling" and views everyone in the community as both teacher and learner. *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 over \$3 million in FY02. Instead, only \$500,000 was appropriated.

Tight budgets and state demands for strict accountability may place community schools in competition with district academic priorities. Other states fund community schools in a variety of ways and this independent model may save community schools in the future. *Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

COMMENT: Was on the chopping block in early House discussions, but ultimately funded at the \$500,000 level.

5.5 ~~EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR~~ INCREASING STUDENT CONTACT TIME

The Association of Alaska School Boards supports extending **the school day or extending** the school year with appropriate funding. Specifically, AASB urges the Legislature to increase student contact **days to 180 days, or the equivalent through extended school days**, and an additional 20 days **for** state mandated student testing and for professional development activities to strengthen teacher skills in standards-based teaching and assessment.

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

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

The most important challenge is an inadequate amount of time on task by students. Educators need time to make sure that each student has a solid foundation before moving him/her to the next level. *Adopted 2000, Amended 2001 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Amend (ASB: Amend) – may need additional work to reflect Board intent of extending the school day as well as the school year.

COMMENT: The fiscal note for extending the school year is prohibitive.

5.6 ASSISTANCE TO ALIGN CURRICULUM WITH STANDARDS

The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Alaska Legislature, Department of Education & Early Development, teacher preparation institutions, and Alaska Staff Development Network to provide professional/technical assistance for all districts to align curriculum with standards and build capacity to sustain that effort.

AASB urges the Department of Education & Early Development to work with districts to formulate recommendations for technical assistance and support for districts. Those recommendations should address the following: Creation of an information clearinghouse, web site, technical assistance, curriculum recommendations, and staff development.

Rationale. School districts are putting considerable effort and resources into aligning local curriculum with state mandated standards, but they need help. For state assessments like the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam to be valid, local schools need to teach what is being tested. Developing a clearinghouse for materials, strategies, and best practices related to standards would strengthen the local effort. *Adopted 2000 (Sunset: Nov. 2003)*

RECOMMENDATION: Delete/Revisit under Resolution 2.2

COMMENT: Educational organizations appear to be in sync with this effort. EED, U of A Center for Educational Excellence, and ASDN are involved in this. AASB's QS2 effort involves professional development covering standards, instructional strategies tied to standards, assessments aligned to standards, reporting student results in meeting standards, and sustainable continuous improvement.

APPENDIX A

New Resolutions Proposed by the Anchorage School Board

1. ASSAULT OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

(New- submitted by the Anchorage School Board)

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

Rationale. State statute provides for specific terms of imprisonment for crimes committed against public employees, peace officers, firefighters, etc. in the performance of their official duties. Our school employees, who each day work with our most precious resource, our children, deserve the same **level of respect and** protection under the law ~~and respect~~.

2. RIGHT TO ATTEND SCHOOL

(New- submitted by the Anchorage School Board)

The AASB supports amendment to state statutes or regulations to afford At the discretion of the governing body of a school district **the discretion to delegate to** the superintendent or his/her designee **may the authority to** approve early entry of a student on an individual basis. Approval for early entry will be based on minimum standards prescribed by the board for identifying whether the child has the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform satisfactorily in the educational program being offered.

Rationale: Under AS 14.03.080(-c), a child under school age may be admitted to the public school in the school district of which the child is a resident at the discretion of the governing body of the school district if the child meets minimum standards prescribed by the board evidencing that the child has the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform satisfactorily for the educational program being offered.

Regulations established by DEED and effective July 1, 2002, have interpreted this statute to mean, “the governing body of the school district must approve early entry of a student on an individual basis.”

The Anchorage School **Board** District believes **that once it has adopted appropriate policy standards, it should have the discretion to delegate** this responsibility **for implementation to** resides with the district administration.

3. INCREASE LIABILITY FOR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY BY MINORS

(New- submitted by the Anchorage School Board)

AASB encourages the Legislature to increase ~~from \$10,000 to the actual cost the amount~~ **the maximum** that may be recovered from either parent, both parents, or the legal guardian of an unemancipated minor under the age of 18 years who, as a result of a knowing or intentional act, destroys real or personal property belonging to a school district ~~from \$10,000 to the actual amount of~~ damages.

Rationale. Vandalism damages ~~our~~ **a school district's** physical plant, **has a negative impact on student learning**, and demoralizes hard-working staff and students. Every dollar spent on **repairing** vandalism is a dollar we cannot invest in textbooks, teachers or technology.

Currently, school districts can recover **a maximum of \$10,000** from either parent, both parents, or the legal guardian of an unemancipated minor under the age of 18 years who, as the result of a knowing intentional act, destroys real or personal property belonging to a school district. **The current law forces taxpayers to bear the cost of vandalism even when a parent's liability insurance is otherwise available to pay the full cost.**

4. REPEAL THE SOCIAL SECURITY GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET AND WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION

(New- submitted by the Anchorage School Board)

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

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

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

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

5. FULLY FUND TUITION PAYMENTS

(New- submitted by the Anchorage School Board)

AASB urges the Administration to request and the Legislature to fully fund Tuition Costs **for qualifying out-of-district students** as required under 4 AAC 090.030 (5), which states that children living in mission homes or other nonprofit institutions, and children whose custody has been placed elsewhere by decree of the court, and who are attending public schools in a district, are eligible for tuition payments by the department regardless of their place of original residence.

Rationale. The Office of Management and Budget requested a \$400,000 increase in the Department of Education's Operating Budget for FY 03 to cover the increased costs projected for full funding of Tuition costs provided for under 4 AAC 090.030.

The failure of the Legislature to fund the projected increase will result in school districts receiving a prorated amount for FY 03 equivalent to 75% of the amount to which they are entitled. In Anchorage, for example, the projected loss is \$175,000 in revenue.

In FY 02, the Administration did not request from the Legislature full funding of the Tuition costs, which resulted in districts receiving a similar prorated amount of their entitlement.