

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE SURVEY

**Chris Tuck**  
**District 29**

**1. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges:**

The economy and demographics of Alaska are changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Even as state and federal standards require districts to bring all students to greater proficiency, employers demand graduates with continually increasing and changing content competencies.

- A. How do you think our school/district should change to ensure that all students receive an education that will equip them to succeed?

*My strong support for education is not diminished by my promotion of improvements and changes in the learning environment. One suggestion is to improve staff diversity to better reflect our student body. Another suggestion would be to maximize opportunities for lifelong learning.*

- B. What, if any, is the role of the legislature in implementing or facilitating these changes?

*The primary role for the legislature is funding. I believe forward funding of the budgetary process will guarantee the stable and predictable funding necessary to demonstrate increased academic achievement.*

- C. What ideas do you have to help school districts prepare Alaska's students to meet the current and growing demand for a trained and technically skilled workforce?

*Provide necessary funds creating more opportunities for career and technical education keeping students engaged and better prepared.*

*Budgets can be funded by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to provide for the specialized classes, equipment and instructors.*

*Remove the high school qualifying exam.*

**2. Increasing Technology Needs for Student Learning and Parent Access to Information:**

Not always visible, but critical to the success of the whole education program, technology must receive the increased attention required to keep up with ever-expanding demands.

- A. What role do you see technology playing in education of today's students for jobs of the future?

*Technology plays a critical role in the future development of citizens who think and are also employable. We must focus on measurable achievement goals while making funding available for the most advanced technologies. These tools should be utilized for more effective teaching and learning.*

B. What is your plan for providing adequate funding to meet the growing and ever-changing need for technology in our schools to keep our students competitive in the global market?

*An education endowment and special appropriations and/or grants from the Alaska legislature are appropriate uses for public funding.*

### **3. Early Childhood Education:**

Alaska is one of only ten states that do not offer early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds. What are your thoughts about providing early childhood education opportunities in Alaska?

*The proposal for early education can be promoted by providing more classroom space. One suggestion is to utilize empty classrooms during the summer months for early childhood education.*

### **4. Highly qualified Staffing Needs:**

What ideas do you have to help Alaska school districts attract and retain highly qualified and ethnically diverse teachers, principals and other professional staff?

*Retaining, recruiting and training a highly qualified staff is always a challenge but the declines in wages, retirement and health benefits in recent years have made this challenge much more difficult.*

*Bring back a defined benefit retirement plan, create affordable housing and special mortgage loans, and promote student loan programs for educators.*

### **5. Capital Needs:**

The state of Alaska currently estimates that school districts need about \$1 billion this year to meet current requirements for new schools and major maintenance to existing facilities, Anchorage alone has \$800 million in identified needs (at today's costs) over the next ten years, but outstanding bonded indebtedness has become a concern to local voters. As a legislator, how would you propose that we address this need?

*I support special legislative allocations for paying off current bonded indebtedness and needs. Allocations must also be made for new schools and major maintenance.*

### **6. Ideas for Improving Alaska's Public Schools:**

Please discuss any ideas you have about improving Alaska's public schools or the way we fund them.

*Additionally, I would like to reduce classroom sizes for the early elementary grades, make instruction material relevant to create purpose for our students, and provide for more collaboration time for teachers. My primary goal is to increase funding using a fair and equitable foundation formula for all districts.*