



Dear Alaska Legislators,

As mayors representing communities across Alaska, we write with urgency: our public schools are in fiscal crisis, and immediate state action is required.

As you already know, the Base Student Allocation has failed to keep up with inflation and school construction and major maintenance funding has been minimal. Rising costs for energy, transportation, health care, facility repair and replacement and basic operations have steadily eroded districts' purchasing power. We greatly appreciate last year's BSA increase of \$700, but the shortfall has only continued to compound.

Districts across Alaska are confronting serious structural deficits. They are closing schools, eliminating teachers and staff, increasing class sizes, reducing career and technical education, and cutting essential student supports. These are reductions to core instructional services, and the long-term damage to outcomes will be difficult to reverse.

Even as state funding has stagnated, local governments are paying more through the required local contribution, which grows with assessed value. This means local taxpayers are paying more for schools each year even as overall funding levels reach crisis levels; schools don't receive the benefit, since this reduces the State's own obligation under the current formula.

Public education is foundational to Alaska's economic future and the strength of our communities. Our schools prepare the workforce that powers every sector of our economy. Continued erosion of school funding weakens our competitiveness, discourages families and employers, and undermines the stability of our communities. Families vote with their feet and are choosing to live elsewhere.

We therefore urge the Legislature this session to pass an inflationary adjustment for the BSA and sufficient maintenance and operations funding. We ask that you appropriate the funds necessary to stabilize school districts and prevent further damage to our ability to educate Alaska's children. Meaningful, sustained funding is essential to restore stability and protect the quality of education our students deserve.

Alaska's future depends on the decisions you make now.

Sincerely,

[Mayors]