From: Tracey Burke
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local school funding
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:27:28 AM

You don't often get email from tkbak2004@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities. And there is no evidence that federal regulators will be satisfied.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Tracey Burke, Anchorage
[redacted]

From: Jay Satterfield
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:31:32 AM

You don't often get email from osportal@mac.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Juneau.. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Lisa Oberle
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska. 99891
[redacted]

From: Nicole Simasko
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State Education
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:32:34 AM

You don't often get email from nrsimasko@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent, educator, and community member in the Municipality of Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.
As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Nicole Simasko
[redacted]
Eagle River, AK 99577

From: Melodie Wright
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:36:18 AM

You don't often get email from rewrighter@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Palmer. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state.This proposed regulation does NOT meet that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. WHY in the world would you support something so harmful, given the governor has already cut funding to districts significantly from last year? Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska, and the exodus will only accelerate if you negate a local funding stream option for our schools.

There's also NO evidence that this will solve the issues with disparity that Alaska has already failed, to great cost.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Melodie Wright

[redacted]., Palmer

From: Rosene Beachy
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Our children's schools
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:37:44 AM

You don't often get email from beacheby@alaskalife.net. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage . I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules. It is painful to watch what is happening to our schools. I want my grandchildren to have a great education like my children did, becoming successful adults, but the current trajectory isn't looking good.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Rosene Beachy

From: Angela Palmer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:45:06 AM

You don't often get email from palmerfischer@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member from Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Angela Palmer

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Diana Johnson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:53:36 AM

[You don't often get email from akdianaj@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Board of Education,
Please do not change local contribution rules without assurance from the federal government that this would solve the federal disparity test. This would be an unnecessary and unhelpful change for our students.
Diana Johnson
Anchorage, AK
99508

From: milligan.rosie@gmail.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:02:06 AM

You don't often get email from milligan.rosie@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Juneau. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Rosie Milligan

[redacted]

Juneau, AK 99801

Overlook typos (using voice texting often) Sent from my iPhone.

From: Mitch Laird
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:12:12 AM

You don't often get email from mitchell.laird@icloud.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a community member in Anchorage. I demand you oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Laird

[redacted]

Anchorage AK 99501

Sent from my iPhone

From: David Nees
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Limiting funding by local organized boroughs
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:43:28 AM

You don't often get email from davidneesak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The fact that the unorganized borough is not taxed for schools has been a root issue.
Your proposed action to reduce the cap on local contributions is a first step.

Your next step is to recommend to the Legislature that the REAA system be scrapped and they finish the work started by the mandatory Borough act of 1962.

David Nees
[redacted]
Cooper Landing Akaska

From: Edelweiss Serlin
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 11:25:31 AM

You don't often get email from edubak82@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Ketchikan. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Edelweiss Muench

[redacted]

Ketchikan, AK 99901

Sent from my iPhone

From: annsant
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: oppose proposed regulation
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 11:57:38 AM

You don't often get email from anniesant@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Angela Santiago

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK. 99507

From: Willie Recknagle
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: New local regulations
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:14:44 PM

You don't often get email from wrecknagle@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in south Anchorage . I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

William Recknagle

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99516

Sent from my iPhone

From: William Tompkins
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation Changes to Local Contribution Rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:16:40 PM

You don't often get email from williamrtompkins@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

William Tompkins

[redacted]. Anchorage AK 99508

From: Christine Niemi
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support Local Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 1:31:00 PM

You don't often get email from cmniemi@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Our family supports local control of our public schools. The current governor is not following our Alaska Constitution with his lack of support for our public schools.
Reducing local school funding will only harm our children. Alaska's children deserve your and our support.
Christine Niemi
(longtime Alaska resident)

From: Helena Fagan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 11:04:16 AM

You don't often get email from helenafagan2@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a retired teacher, grandparent, and community member in Juneau. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

I taught during what now feels like a golden age in Alaskan education. I had terrific support from the district and our local community to not only teach creatively, but was supported in the creation of new programs for our Juneau district, some of which remained in place for close to 20 years. Now, I am grateful to no longer be teaching in a state that provides such minimal support to its students, teachers, administrators, and even buildings.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting. Teachers I know who still work in the district are dismayed and so unhappy that many are looking to leave the state. My daughter, who grew up here, now wonders if this is a good state to stay in and raise her child. **This proposed regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids and our teachers. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.**

Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm. Do your job faithfully and with great care for our students, as I did mine.

Sincerely,

Helena Fagan
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99802

From:	Betsy Baker
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Please oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date:	Wednesday, July 9, 2025 11:05:22 AM

You don't often get email from baker3b@mac.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a community member in Anchorage: **I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules**.

You can help local communities keep what little state funding is still available. As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. **Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska. And know that they are leaving because of declining funding for our public schools.** I live a block from **Lake Hood Elementary School**, beloved in our community but closed after the last day of school this year, due to funding related decisions in Anchorage.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Betsy Baker

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99517

From: Lindsey Berkelman Banning
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 11:26:43 AM

You don't often get email from lberkelman@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent, community member, and part of an Active Duty military family in South Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Lindsey B. Banning, Ph.D.

From: Jacqueline Muehlbauer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulations
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:18:44 PM

You don't often get email from naturegal64@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Fairbanks. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Jacqueline Muehlbauer

From: Kirby Kauffman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support Public Education in Alaska
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:20:25 PM

You don't often get email from kauffman.kirby@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and teacher in Anchorage, Alaska. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. **It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools.** It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Kirby Kauffman

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99502

From: Larri Spengler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: reject proposal reducing local school district control/local funding
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:31:00 PM

You don't often get email from larri.irene.spengler@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings:

I urge you to oppose the regulation proposed by the Governor that would change local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Larri Spengler

--
Larri Irene Spengler
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801
[redacted] (phone/fax)
Larri.Irene.Spengler@gmail.com

From: Marlie Wild
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support Public Education
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 12:36:46 PM

You don't often get email from marlie@elfincove.net. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent, community member and teacher in Sitka. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Marlie Wild
Sitka parent, educator, and life long Alaskan

From: Sarah Fineman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject Dunleavy's local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 1:41:03 PM

You don't often get email from sarahbbbb@mac.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting from the Dunleavy vetoes for adequate school funding, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska. Your actions determine the educational future of our children and our state

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fineman

[redacted]

Anchorage Alaska 99508

From: Jennifer Ransom
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution rule changes
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 2:08:33 PM

You don't often get email from jenaransom@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent of three children living in Seward. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

At this very moment, while learning about the regulation changes suggest lowering the bar to equalize schools, many of my peers and I are brainstorming together to make our local schools better. Our think tank is exploring options ranging from creating our own school district to changing all brick and mortar schools to charter schools to make sure our children's education is better, not worse. We are exploring all options, and talking to other similar-sized communities with schools that are doing better to get ideas. This parent-led think tank has started because we see the discrepancy between our schools and other schools throughout our district snd the state. Seeing this, we are thinking proactive and looking for ways for our kids to have an equal education by being proactive within our community. Please let us do that!

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools.

It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities. Parents and the local community need more power, not less, to work to provide the best possible education for our youth.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Jen Ransom

[redacted]

Seward, AK 99664

Sent from my iPhone

From: James Morton, Jr.
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Request the School Board reject Dunleavy
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 2:38:32 PM

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Dear School Board Members,

I ask you reject any request from Governor Dunleavy to pull or reduce local control or funding of our local district. Instead, please advocate greater autonomy from state-level control.

Thank you,
James Morton

James R. Morton, Jr., Ph.D., NCC
E: drmortonjr@gmail.com

CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2025-50

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE DEFINITION OF "LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS" AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska provides significant funding to the Unalaska City School District ("District") and consistently funds the District to the statutory cap and provides additional appropriations to support facility maintenance, food service, student activities and funding for the preschool; and

WHEREAS, the District's FY26 budget request included the maximum allowable general fund contribution of $4,398,965, which is 54.4% of the District's operating budget, along with additional essential non-instructional and in-kind contributions, including approximately $975,000 for community schools (shared maintenance), $400,000 for food service, $160,000 for student activities and $210,000 for the preschool; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, the city's total contribution has increased 26% in general fund and 37% in special funds to maintain the status quo, or less, for the operation of school buildings and instructional programs; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and Early Development is proposing new regulations expanding the definition of "local contribution" (4 AAC 09), beyond the federal definition of "current expenditures" used in the Impact Aid Program disparity test; and

WHEREAS the definition of the term "current expenditures", per 20 U.S.C. 7713(4), means expenditures for free public education, including expenditures for administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulatory change may cause certain in-kind contributions and non-instructional financial support currently provided by the City of Unalaska to the District to be classified as part of the capped local contribution, thereby potentially forcing reductions in these services or in the instructional budget to maintain compliance with the new definition; and

WHEREAS, such a reclassification would have a significant adverse financial impact on the District's FY26 budget, and future budgets, and the District's ability to deliver quality education; and

WHEREAS, the District is anticipating a substantial budget deficit of $1 million dollars for FY26, and a General Fund balance of zero; and

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska recognizes the importance of meeting federal compliance standards for the Impact Aid disparity test and the severe consequences of non-compliance for State funding, but believes there is no evidence that this regulatory change would change the outcome of the disparity test; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulatory change will disproportionately harm the District, due to the City's longstanding financial support of the District, and the District's reliance on City funding above the cap; and

WHEREAS, if the proposed change is adopted, other local contributions, such as those from the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, Ounalashka Corporation and the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, would be included in the "in-kind services" and would further negatively impact the District's ability to provide a quality education; and

WHEREAS the proposed regulatory change is a direct assault on local funding contributions for our District; and

WHEREAS the Unalaska City Council's appropriated contribution to the District for FY26 is $6,143,965; and

WHEREAS the new definitions will negatively impact the District's budget between $1,700,000 to $3,500,000, nearly 35% of the District's FY26 budget, depending on the final determination of "in-kind donations" and how broadly "local contribution" is defined; and

WHEREAS the Federal Department of Education has not asked the State to solve this issue in this way; and

WHEREAS, sudden implementation of this change without sufficient transition time jeopardizes the District's budget planning and local agreements developed in good faith with the City of Unalaska.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Unalaska respectfully urges the State Board of Education and Early Development and the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development to:

1. To provide adequate funding to school districts in Alaska; and

2. Address the root cause of any existing funding disparity between school districts in Alaska; and

3. Provide clear guidance and flexibility in the treatment of longstanding shared services and in-kind contributions that have provided critical value to school districts like Unalaska without undermining compliance with federal requirements; and

4. Work with the local school boards and superintendents to pursue Impact Aid compliance solutions that do not inadvertently penalize districts that have robust local support and collaboration; and

5. Engage with school boards, superintendents, and municipal leaders across the state to ensure that future regulatory adjustments are transparent, predictable, and protect the educational opportunities of Alaska's students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Unalaska communicates this resolution to State and federal officials to advocate for a balanced solution that preserves both local partnerships and the integrity of State and federal education funding.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on July 8, 2025.

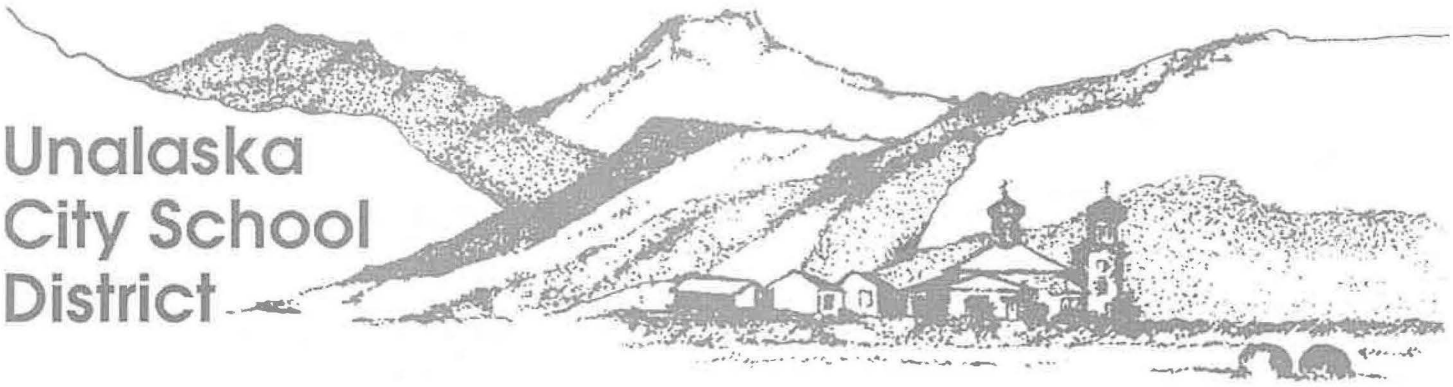
Vincent M. Tutiakoff, Sr.
Mayor

ATTEST:

Estkarlen P. Magdaong, CMC
City Clerk

CITY OF UNALASKA CORPORATE SEAL STATE OF ALASKA

Unalaska City School District



June 30, 2025

Unalaska City Council and Mayor Tutiakoff,

As Superintendent of the Unalaska City School District (UCSD), I respectfully request your active support—specifically, through a City Council resolution—opposing the Alaska State Board of Education's adoption of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)'s proposed changes to state regulation 4 AAC 09.

In short, the proposed changes would require school districts to count all local appropriations currently received outside the general fund cap—including all "in-kind services"—as part of the capped general fund local contribution. If enacted, this change would result in UCSD losing between $1.7 million and $3.5 million in city-approved funding for FY26. This represents nearly 35% of our total district budget. The high-quality, comprehensive educational programs that UCSD is able to offer—thanks to the City of Unalaska's longstanding and generous support—would be at serious risk.

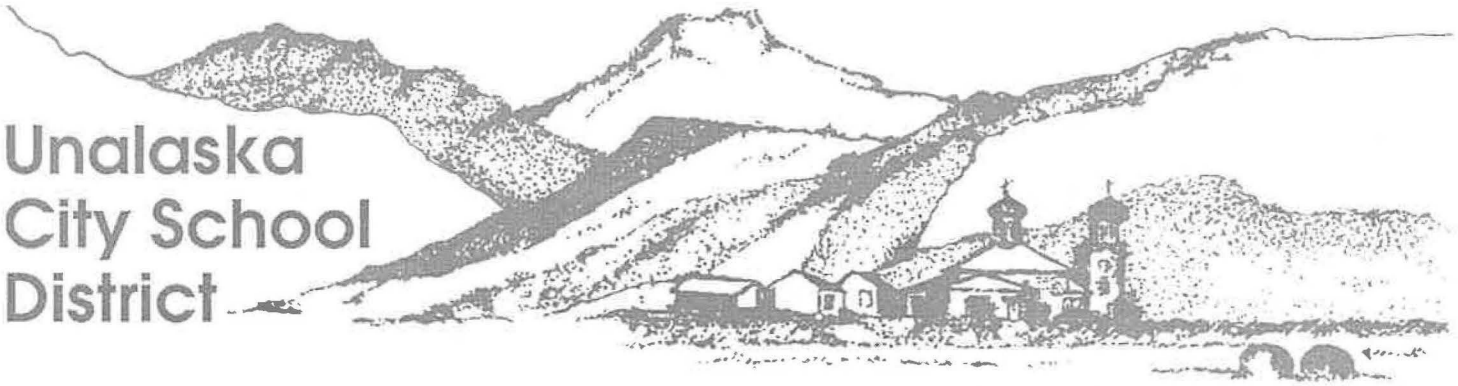
As you know, the City of Unalaska has already approved general fund contributions up to the state's cap, totaling $4,398,965 for FY26. In addition, the City has appropriated another $1.7 million through Special Funds to support programs such as community schools, food service, student activities, and preschool. Further, through the Community Schools Agreement, the City provides UCSD with full access to the Unalaska City School building, Eagle's View Elementary School, and additional facilities—at no charge—and assumes responsibility for all major maintenance of these shared properties.

Under the proposed regulatory changes, these in-kind contributions could be reclassified as part of the capped local contribution, effectively reducing the City's ability to provide this essential support without penalty.

Unalaska has always stood firmly behind its schools and its students, ensuring they have access to a wide range of meaningful learning opportunities—on the island and beyond. These proposed changes not only endanger critical funding, but also erode local control over educational investments. DEED's response to a failed federal disparity test—intended to secure Impact Aid funding—fails to address the true source of the problem: Alaska's inadequate state education funding. Rather than engaging stakeholders in a collaborative effort to find sustainable, equitable solutions, this approach shifts the burden to local communities like ours that are doing the most to support students.

P.O. Box 570, Unalaska, Alaska 99685 • (907) 581-3151 • Fax (907) 581-3152 • www.ucsd.net
Kim Hanisch, Superintendent • Mark Alston, Principal • Riley Spetz, Principal

Unalaska
City School
District



I appreciate your time and consideration, and I urge the City Council to take formal action in defense of our community's commitment to education.

Sincerely,

Kim Hanisch
Superintendent
Unalaska City School District

P.O. Box 570, Unalaska, Alaska 99685 • (907) 581-3151 • Fax (907) 581-3152 • www.ucsd.net
Kim Hanisch, Superintendent • Mark Alston, Principal • Riley Spetz, Principal

Alaska State Legislature

Official Business

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska
99801-1182

Alaska House Majority Coalition

July 10, 2025

Delivered electronically

To the State Board of Education and Early Development:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulation change (4 AAC 09) seeking to adjust the definition of allowable local contributions to school districts. We strongly urge the Board of Education and Early Development to set aside the proposal in favor of an alternative that does not disrupt the budgetary process for school districts and municipalities across the state. The proposed regulatory change is being suggested as a way to ensure the State of Alaska passes a test imposed by the federal government, allowing us to offset approximately $80 million in state support for public education with federal funding. The regulatory change before you would upend this long-standing mechanism that spreads federal funding across the entire state, thus creating more equal educational opportunities for all students, rather than just those who attend a school near federal land that is untaxed.

Failing the disparity test is concerning, but the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) can resolve the issue by working with the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to request a waiver for transportation or nutrition costs. The DOE letter dated May 16, announcing that Alaska failed the latest disparity test, stipulated that DEED can request a hearing if it is adversely affected by the action. It is abundantly clear that the State of Alaska and every school district in Alaska would be adversely affected if Alaska both continues to fail the disparity test and uses this failure as an excuse to significantly alter how local municipalities can support their children and the larger community.

Alaskans value a level playing field for students, and much work has been done locally to guarantee the kinds of equity the disparity test seeks to maintain. For example, Sitka passed ballot measures to provide support for student activities through an increase in the local marijuana tax, as well as increasing summer sales tax to help fund building maintenance. These non-instructional items enable the complete Base Student Allocation to be utilized in the classroom, serving as a strong statement of support from the local community. Examples of this kind of community support can be found in districts across the state in the form of longstanding partnerships with Tribes and nonprofits, all of which would be included inside the cap under the proposed regulation change. The inclusion of these types of in-kind support would directly offset, or reduce, the amount of financial support a school district could receive.

The proposed regulation change also poses a threat to the way of life in communities across Alaska, where schools often serve as the community center. Whenever a function takes place in the school building, a bridge is built between the school and the people who entrust their children

to the educators working there. We should not reduce local support for schools by placing a price tag on the use of community-owned school buildings or by tracking the work of volunteers to determine if their efforts benefit students or the broader community.

An additional concern is that the proposed regulation change was created without meaningful consultation with key education stakeholders, including the Alaska Association of School Boards, the Alaska Council of School Administrators, the Alaska Association of School Business Officials, and Alaska Native Tribes. As a matter of sound process, we strongly encourage the Board to seek additional input from these education partners before considering any changes in regulations. Finally, the broad changes to how local schools are funded and the implications for municipal budgets, as called for in the proposed regulatory change, should be decided by the people's elected representatives in the Alaska State Legislature. That process has already begun with hearings during the 2025 session in the House and Senate Education Committees, as well as the creation of a Task Force on Education Funding to analyze public education funding in Alaska and recommend changes.

As you learn more about the proposed regulation change, please carefully consider whether municipalities should be penalized for supporting their local education systems, especially in light of the benefits these contributions bring to students. Please set aside the regulation change and, instead, work with us on lasting solutions that benefit students, families, and communities.

Sincerely,

Rep. Rebecca Himschoot

Rep. Andi Story

Speaker Bryce Edgmon

Majority Leader Kopp

Rep. Mears

Rep. Hannan

Rep. Burke

Rep. Josephson

Alaska State Legislature

Official Business

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska
99801-1182

Alaska House Majority Coalition

Rep. Carrick

Rep. Dibert

Rep. Schrage

Rep. Fields

Rep. Galvin

Rep. Holland

Rep. Gray

Rep. Hall

Rep. Mina

Rep. Foster

Rep. Eischeid

From: Kathleen Porterfield
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:48:58 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Juneau, AK. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Porterfield

[redacted]

Juneau, AK 99801

From: Nancy Hjelm
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local contribution rules
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 8:35:48 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent, grandparent, retired educator, and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hjelm

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK

From: jetta whittaker
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Vote NO on the proposed regulations change on local support!
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 9:03:59 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Juneau. Though my own children have long since graduated from JDHC, I continue to be involved with local education in my retirement, mainly by volunteering as a Reader Buddy at my neighborhood elementary school but also keeping up on education news statewide. I am very worried that the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules will decimate Juneau's struggling educational system.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children across our vast state. The proposed regulation takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

All school districts across the state are already hurting; this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. There are other ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

You know your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska, so I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules that is before you now.

Sincerely,

Jetta Whittaker,

[redacted]

Juneau AK

From: Kersten Christianson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No to Changing Local Contribution
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 9:22:38 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Sitka. I strongly urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty and responsibility to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided, irresponsible, short-sighted, punitive proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Kersten Christianson

[redacted]

Sitka, Alaska 99835

From: betsyabrenneman@gmail.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject Dunleavy regulation to take away local decision-making
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 2:57:48 PM

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Dear members of the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development,

I am shocked by the Dunleavy administration's many attempts to undermine public schools in Alaska. The governor's efforts have been many, and as far as I am concerned, his attempts have been unscrupulous, immoral and illegal. I ask that you recognize your complicity in this critical situation and reject the administration's proposed regulation to take away local control in school funding decisions.

I have volunteered in Juneau schools for many years from preschool through high school and plan to be volunteering again this fall at an elementary school. At times I've been paid on a part-time or temporary basis to do a job in a school. Years ago, I completed one or two short-term contract projects for the school district, and I created a new after-school program for our two middle schools, based largely on volunteers and funded by the community.

I also coordinated the state's federal Preschool Development Grant which the Dunleavy administration asked the Association of Alaska School Boards to take on and from which came a statewide needs assessment of Alaska's early childhood education system as well as a very detailed, robust and thorough strategic plan to improve that system from 2020-2025. Over 30 years, I have seen the whole Pre K-12 system, our local schools, teachers, staff members and administrators up close when they were thriving and when they started heading downhill.

Yes, there is a big need for improvement. I wholeheartedly support well-thought-out and well-planned, data-driven scrutiny of how we can improve public education. We should ALL be united behind that goal, and I'm hopeful the task force being created by the legislature will begin that process.

However, the proposed regulation to take away the right of local communities to make their own decisions about funding for their schools is NOT, definitely NOT, the way to help all of us unite behind improving our schools. I urge you to reject this egregious proposal **especially when the state has blatantly and intentionally refused to meet its constitutional obligation to adequately fund our public schools!**

Do you feel the Covid pandemic didn't hurt Alaska students enough? Do you somehow think students have recovered from the deficits in their education those years brought on and the terrible toll it took on teachers, staff and administrators? Do you think the governor's vendetta year after year reducing funding for our schools struggling to find their footing again will improve the situation? I surely hope your answer to these questions is a strong NO.

When I was a young student myself, experiencing a number of different schools and both great and mediocre teachers, it dawned on me there is almost nothing more important than the quality of public education. As I got older, I also understood there is nothing more indicative of the health of a democratic community, state and country. I came to believe the hardest and most important job in our country is that of public school teacher, and I never wanted to be one because I was so afraid of not being a good one. We MUST find ways to raise up, respect and compensate many more good teachers all over the state in every school. As far as I can see, for the last six years the work of this administration, assisted by the pandemic, has had the opposite effect.

And now, the proposed regulation is another attempt to reduce that quality even more by taking away the right and the wisdom of local decision-making just when we need that wisdom more than ever. To add to my dismay, as far as I can tell from my research, the state does not even know if the proposed regulation meets requirements of the federal government or satisfies the so-called “disparity test” which DEED and the governor have been touting as the reason for this divisive proposal.

For the good of our state and in support of truly improving and reforming public education in Alaska, I urge you to reject the proposed regulation and instead, help all Alaskans unite around a truly viable well-funded plan to improve our public education system.

Thank you for your consideration,

Betsy Brenneman
[redacted], Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: WENDY BURKE
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: PLEASE Do NOT limit local contributions!
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 8:21:15 PM

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Dear DEED,

Please do not pass your proposed regulation to limit local contributions for our public schools! I am the mother of twin 8th graders in the Juneau School District, and I have seen first hand how budget cuts affect classes and activities offered for my kids at school (and I mean all those that are no longer offered due to budget cuts). Our schools are struggling and cannot handle anymore cut backs. Alaska teachers are going to leave and go to other states to teach. Alaska families are going to move out of state because our state public education system is so underfunded. You are going to lose hard workers, good people and great families if you limit the local contribution rate. This is a terrible idea, please do not pass this regulation! Our president has already made huge cuts to the public education system, please do not make any more at the state level.

Sincerely,
Wendy Burke
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Pamela Weiler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please reject a proposed Dunleavy regulation reducing local control and local funding for our school districts!
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 8:33:58 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,
I am a grandparent and a mother of a teacher and I am a community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.
As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.
Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska. There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.
Sincerely,

Pamela L. Weiler
[redacted]
Anchorage, Ak 99518

From: Marin Granholm
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to change in local contribution rules
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 5:59:52 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in West Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Marin Granholm

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99517

From: Lacey Derr
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Changes on Local Contributions - Public Comment
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 8:15:14 AM

[You don't often get email from lebartlett@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,

My name is Lacey Derr and I am a resident in Juneau Alaska. I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS PROPOSED CHANGE AND LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION FUNDING AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT!

The reality is our education funding has been far too less for far too long. The current administration both Presidential and Gubernatorial have continued to attack education funding, putting our children's futures at risk and alienating teachers. Local communities pick up the pieces to fill the gaps so our children have food, transportation, and access to supportive educational opportunities.

For the love of our children DO NOT APPROVE THIS CHANGE. You should be ashamed of yourselves for trying to push it through with an emergency amendment. Stop playing politics and protect our children. Or get out of education because true educators do not harm our students.

Lacey Derr

From: Lisa Bishop
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Current Actions
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 8:29:34 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent , special education teacher and community member in Fairbanks. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

I am incredibly disheartened by the ongoing attempts of the governor and his administration to defund public education. If home school and private/charter schools are the answer, then prove that to us by compelling those students to take and report their standardized test scores. I am beyond tired of hearing how they are somehow more successful and see so many children who return to public school years below grade level. I do not want MY tax dollars continuing to fund this ridiculousness. You are losing the best of us and it is to the detriment of this state and its future.

Sincerely,

Lisa Bishop

[redacted]

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

From: Sally Dybdahl
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: LocalSupport
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 12:11:25 PM

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Please reject proposal to reduce local financial contributions and local control of Alaska's school districts.
Thanks,
Sally Dybdahl
Hoonah, AK [redacted]

From: Caruthers, Betsy
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:02:37 PM
Importance: High

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Betsy Caruthers, Valdez High School Parent

Protected Document. Refer to Alyeska Data Classification Policy, LEGAL-DPOL-001.

From: Tahnee Cadiz
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:03:30 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students.

Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs.

Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Tahnee King [Valdez Parent]
[redacted]

From: Amalyn Hamilton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Urgent matter
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 4:58:41 PM

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To the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my profound concern and strong opposition to the proposed changes in state regulations that threaten to reduce local funding for municipal school districts, specifically impacting Valdez City Schools. These changes are not just numbers on a ledger; they represent a direct and deeply hurtful blow to the educational experiences and overall well-being of our children in Valdez.

Our community in Valdez is unique. As a remote location, our students already face inherent limitations in access to opportunities that larger, more centrally located districts take for granted. Our after-school programs are not mere extracurriculars; they are vital lifelines providing enrichment, safe spaces, and crucial developmental activities that are simply not available elsewhere in our isolated community. Similarly, our transportation services are not a convenience but a necessity, ensuring every child can access their education regardless of distance or challenging weather. Nutrition services are fundamental to our students' health and ability to learn, and any reduction here would directly impact their academic performance and physical well-being.

These proposed regulations, by reducing local funding, will inevitably mean even more severe limitations on the already constrained opportunities available to Valdez students. For children in a remote setting like ours, every program, every service, and every opportunity funded locally is magnified in its importance. Cutting these funds would not just trim budgets; it would diminish futures, narrow horizons, and further isolate our children from the experiences they need to thrive.

I urge you to consider the disproportionate and devastating impact these changes will have on Valdez City Schools and, most importantly, on our children. We must protect Valdez kids and uphold the principle of local control, allowing our community to best serve the unique needs of its students. Please reconsider these proposed regulations and safeguard the essential programs that make a profound difference in the lives of our students.

Very Respectfully,

MST2 Amalyn Hamilton
USCG Sector Western Alaska & U.S Arctic
Prevention Department
[redacted]

Get BlueMail for Android

From: Iris Morton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject the proposal
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 8:30:59 AM

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I am a community member living in Eagle River, Alaska. Please reject the proposal for changing local contribution rules.

Thank you,
Iris Morton

SITKA
SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISCOVER | NURTURE | INSPIRE

RESOLUTION OF THE SITKA SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-01

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE DEFINITION OF "LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS" AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the Sitka School District (SSD) receives significant local financial support from the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS), which consistently funds the District to the statutory cap and provides additional in-kind contributions such as facility maintenance, Performing Arts Center support, student activities funding, and other services vital to educational operations; and

WHEREAS, the SSD's FY26 budget request includes a maximum allowable general fund contribution of $7,972,424.04, alongside additional essential non-instructional and in-kind contributions, including approximately $67,000 for Performing Arts Center utilities, $125,000 for Performing Arts Center contracts, $134,600 for student activities, and significant ongoing support through the maintenance of school buildings and Blatchley Pool operations; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and Early Development is proposing new regulations expanding the definition of "local contribution" (4 AAC 09), beyond the federal definition of "current expenditures" used in the Impact Aid Program disparity test; and

WHEREAS the definition of the term "current expenditures", per 20 U.S.C. 7713(4), means expenditures for free public education, including expenditures for administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities;

WHEREAS, this regulatory change may cause certain in-kind contributions and non-instructional financial support currently provided by CBS to be classified as part of the capped local contribution, thereby potentially forcing reductions in these services or in the instructional budget to maintain compliance with the new definition; and

WHEREAS, such a reclassification would have a significant adverse financial impact on SSD's FY26 budget and its ability to deliver quality education, as the District is already anticipating a substantial budget deficit of up to 3,916,800 without additional State funding; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka School Board fully recognizes the importance of meeting federal compliance standards for the Impact Aid disparity test and the severe consequences of non-compliance for State funding, but believes that this regulatory change disproportionately harms districts like Sitka that have longstanding, community-supported local partnerships and investments in education; and

WHEREAS the Federal Department of Education has NOT asked the State to solve this issue in this way; and

WHEREAS this proposal is a direct assault on local control because the community of Sitka voted in 2022 in favor of a ballot initiative to support student activities travel through a Marijuana Tax which in FY '24 contributed $300,000, in FY'25 $350,000, and in FY'26 has committed $360,000; and

WHEREAS Sitkans voted in favor of a seasonal sales tax in 2023 that contributes to the major maintenance of school buildings which in FY '24 stands at $772,942; and

WHEREAS the city and borough of Sitka contributes a total of $9,731,9066.04 in total contributions; and

WHEREAS other local contributors include, but are not limited to, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka Sound Science Center, Charitable Trust Grants and if the proposed changes go through may impact those "in-kind" services and funding sources and

WHEREAS the new definition will impact the Sitka School's budget by anywhere from $2,000,000 to more than $4,000,000 depending on final determination of "in kind donations" and how broadly defined local contribution is

WHEREAS, sudden implementation of this change without sufficient transition time jeopardizes SSD's budget planning and local agreements developed in good faith with CBS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sitka School Board respectfully urges the State Board of Education and Early Development and the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development to:

1. Provide clear guidance and flexibility in the treatment of longstanding in-kind contributions and shared services agreements that have provided critical value to districts like Sitka without undermining compliance with federal requirements;
2. Work with the local schoolboards and superintendents to pursue Impact Aid compliance solutions that do not inadvertently penalize districts that have robust local support and collaboration;
3. Engage with school boards, superintendents, and municipal leaders across the state to ensure that future regulatory adjustments are transparent, predictable, and protect the educational opportunities of Alaska's students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sitka School Board authorizes the Board President and Superintendent to communicate this resolution to State and federal officials, and to advocate for a balanced solution that preserves both local partnerships and the integrity of State and federal education funding.

Adopted this 18th day of June, 2025, by the Sitka School Board.

Phil Burdick

Phil Burdick, President

From:	Phil Burdick
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc:	Deidre Jenson; Dawn Georgia
Subject:	Letter AGAINST proposed Regulation Change defining Local Contribution
Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025 11:43:34 AM
Attachments:	Resolution No. 2025-01.pdf

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School Board Members,

Thank you for your service to the students, families, educators, and schools in Alaska. As a fellow board member, I understand the complexities of the work you do and I appreciate your time and effort to "offer an excellent education to every student every day".

It is for this reason that I am writing to **strongly oppose** the proposed change to State Statute 4 AAC 09 changing the definition of "local contribution" and "in-kind donations". In attempting to solve the problem of failing the Disparity Test for Impact Aid, this proposal strips away local governance, punishes communities who are able to support local educational choices, and fails to support the State's constitutional mandate to adequately fund education. In fact, it is **because** the State hasn't adequately funded education that we failed the disparity test.

Depending on the final determination of what constitutes local contribution and in-kind donation, the Sitka School District is looking at a loss of anywhere from **$2.3 to $4 million dollars**. How will penalizing Districts, who have the ability to support inadequate State funding with local contributions, achieve the mission of "an excellent education for every student every day"? Instead of raising every District, this proposed change pulls us down to the lowest common denominator like crabs in a cooler. It is a form of equity but an equity that relies on everyone to be equally underfunded.

This resolution won't solve the problem of equity, especially at the local level. Here, in Sitka, our community voted to use money from a Marijuana Tax to help fund student activity travel. This helps ALL students access that opportunity. If this resolution passes, we will have a situation where activities will only be available to families who can afford to travel. And this is only one example of how Sitka will be impacted. In the race to create an underfunded, statewide (in)equity, this change creates more inequities at the local level.

This is the wrong solution to a different problem. The problem is chronic underfunding of education. If the State were to adequately fund education, local communities wouldn't have to find ways to support education through non-instructional avenues. If the State adequately funded education, the "disparity" between the top 95% and the bottom 5% would shrink, thereby solving the failure of the federal Disparity Test.

The problem is using Impact Aid to supplant State funding instead of passing the money through to the local communities who cannot access the tax base of the federal lands surrounding them. By using Impact Aid to reduce State expenditures, districts are losing

opportunities.

Please vote against this proposed regulation change to AS 4 AAC 09.
I am including a resolution the Sitka School Board passed at our June meeting for further reference.
Again, thank you for your service

Phil Burdick
Sitka School Board President

"We belong to each other, we belong to our time, pushing relentlessly to reshape the world to our vision."
Unknown

From: Sarah Ferrency
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Phil Burdick
Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Regulation Limiting Local School District Contributions
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 11:46:19 AM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would redefine "local contribution" to include services provided at no charge to school districts by municipalities. This regulation would be detrimental to Alaska's students, communities, and the future of public education in our state.

This Regulation Will Harm Students and Communities

When cities like Sitka provide access to pools, libraries, and other facilities for educational activities, they are investing in our children's well-rounded education. This regulation would penalize such community support and reduce funding available for classroom instruction.

The Retroactive Application Is Unconscionable

The most egregious aspect of this proposal is making it retroactive to fiscal year 2025, which ended June 30. This retroactive application creates financial chaos for local governments and school districts that have already closed their books and finalized their budgets based on existing regulations. Communities that supported their schools in good faith throughout FY25 will be retroactively penalized, suddenly finding themselves in violation of contribution caps through no fault of their own.

This retroactive penalty punishes communities for being good partners to their schools. Since FY25 has already concluded, any required adjustments would have to be absorbed in FY26, creating a devastating double impact. School districts would face not only reduced local contributions going forward, but would also have to absorb the financial penalty for FY25's "excess" contributions—all while receiving less state funding than they had last year. This creates an impossible financial situation that will force immediate and severe cuts to educational programs. The retroactive nature of this regulation represents a fundamental breach of trust with Alaska's communities and violates basic principles of fair governance.

Alaska's Unique Use of Impact Aid Is the Real Problem

Alaska is the only state in the nation that uses federal impact aid as a replacement for state funding rather than as additional support. The disparity and equity test failures that prompted this regulation are symptoms of Alaska's inadequate state funding for education, not excessive local support. The solution should be increased state investment in education, not reducing local contributions that help fill critical funding gaps.

Local Control and Community Investment Should Be Encouraged

Communities across Alaska have stepped up to support their schools through local contributions, volunteer efforts, and partnerships. This regulation undermines the principle of local control and discourages the very community engagement that makes our schools stronger. Sitka residents have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make our schools better —this regulation punishes that civic involvement.

The Impact Will Be Severe

This regulation will cost Sitka School District up to $4 million in FY26. For communities already facing budget constraints and districts that have been forced to cut programs and close schools due to flat state funding, this represents a devastating blow. The regulation threatens to undermine community partnerships that have been built over years and provide essential educational opportunities for our children.

Request for Action

I urge you to:

1. Reject this emergency regulation
2. Engage in meaningful public consultation before considering any changes to local contribution definitions
3. Advocate for increased state education funding rather than restricting local support
4. Protect the community partnerships that strengthen our schools

Alaska's students deserve adequate state funding and the continued support of engaged local communities working together to provide quality education. Our children's education should not be sacrificed to address problems created by inadequate state funding policies. I respectfully urge you to vote against this harmful regulation and instead work toward solutions that strengthen, rather than weaken, support for Alaska's public schools.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ferrency

Sitka, AK

From: Kaitlin Kramer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 11:55:43 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent and community member of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:

• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements.

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,

Kaitlin Kramer (parent and community member of Valdez)

The cure for anything is saltwater - sweat, tears or the sea.

From: Carole Bookless
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Fwd: Feedback on comments for 4 AAC 09 amendment
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 1:05:58 PM

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I am sending comments in regard to proposed changes to Alaska Board of Education 4 AAC 09.

Both the state and federal statutes for this issue are complicated and convoluted.

In trying to get the background on this rule change, I was unable to find 34 CFR 222.16 (c)(2)(1) that is listed in the Board of Education amendment. The closest I found was 34 CFR 222.16 (b). I would appreciate an email with the exact wording of part (c)(2)(1).

However, Federal statute 20 USC 7713 (4) lists:

"administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities"

I did not find a list of services in Federal statute that is identical to the one in the proposed Alaska Board of Education rule: "INSURANCE, UTILITIES, ENERGY, AUDITS, AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES".

Putting the two sections together, I am assuming that "administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities" as well as "INSURANCE, UTILITIES, ENERGY, AUDITS, AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES" would be considered for the Impact payment. The first part is federal law and the second is BoE language. I found that the BoE language was not consistent with the federal language. My reading of the "emergency" was that the State language was inconsistent with the Federal language - but it is still inconsistent, so this change seems to NOT meet its goal.

From the media, I gather that the State feels that rural districts are being underfunded by local governments and larger districts are overfunded by local districts. It is incumbent on the Alaska State Board of Education (SEA) " to submit the rationale for the additional factors selected to

identify generally comparable districts and describe how those factors affect the cost of educating students".

I can think of some factors right off the top of my head.

For small rural districts, some of the unique rural factors that affect the cost of educating students are energy costs, aging infrastructure, transportation costs for food and materials.

For larger districts, some of the unique larger district factors that affect the cost of educating students include bussing (several small districts have 0 cost), admin (small districts may only have one administrator doing everything), as well as every other factor being supersized in relation to a small school district. Larger districts also traditionally provide regional services such as regional juvenile offender, behavioral and health services. Some families relocate to urban centers to access the specialized services their children need. Larger districts also have larger numbers of families experiencing homelessness..

- *Statute:* Section 8003(b)(1) of the Act contains the formula for determining an LEA's maximum payment amount, based in part on calculating each LEA's local contribution rate (LCR). The statute states that the LCR is to be determined under the procedures set forth in the Department's regulations as they were in effect on January 1, 1994.

  Current Regulations: The current regulations in § 222.39-§ 222.41 provide that an LEA's LCR is determined by identifying generally comparable districts. Under § 222.40, for certain qualifying LEAs, the SEA may use additional factors in identifying the generally comparable LEAs for the purpose of calculating and certifying an LCR. Section 222.40(d) provides that if an SEA proposes to use a special additional factor to select a group of generally comparable districts (GCDs) to support a higher LCR for a specific LEA, it must be a generally accepted, objectively defined factor that affects the LEA's cost of educating its students.

  Proposed Regulations: The proposed regulation would clarify that SEAs that wish to use special additional factors to identify GCDs for

purposes of calculating a higher LCR for certain LEAs must provide a rationale and explain how the selected factor or factors affect the cost of education. The proposed regulation does not substantively alter the manner in which the LCRs are calculated.

Reasons: To determine GCDs for local contribution rate purposes, an SEA may use a special additional factor only if that factor has an impact on the cost of education for an LEA. In the past, the Department has had to contact the SEA to learn the rationale for a specific factor or factors after the GCD data were submitted. Requiring the rationale as part of the submission process would help ensure timely and accurate payments to the LEAs in the State.

Alaska certainly should be identifying those additional factors. I acknowledge that it must be challenging, but it is part of the Board of Education mandate to do so.

There also seems to be a factor relating to the numbers of students whose parents are working on Federal premises. Larger districts are also hubs for military and federal workers which also is part of the funding picture.

In conclusion, my take on the proposed amendment is that it does nothing to clarify the situation but in fact may make things worse and put federal funding in jeopardy. My read on what the federal agency wants is for the Board of Education to make a list of reasonable, defensible factors that affect Alaska districts with different circumstances and justify how those factors are relevant to defining which school districts are comparable and how they affect education funding in Alaska.

Carole Bookless, [redacted], Douglas, AK 99824

From: Matt Smelcer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:12:49 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent and community member of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Matthew C Smelcer
Parent, and Community Member

From: Susan Love
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to Proposed Regulation Changes Re: Outside the Cap funding
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:42:24 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez School District students, a community member, and a former City Councilmember of Valdez. I strongly urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

In a climate of reduced and uncertain funding for public schools, it is astounding that this regulation is being pursued without clear definitions of what constitutes 'in-kind' contributions, and to do so at a time when school districts have just begun a new budget cycle. The partnership between the City of Valdez and Valdez School District has been one of mutual benefit and collaboration and this regulation erodes Valdez' ability to address our unique needs, weather, and population.

Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Susan Love
Parent, Community Member

From: Paul Rioux
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Dawn Georgia
Subject: OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:43:40 PM
Attachments: image.png

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Members and Commissioner of Alaska State Board of Education,

A close-up of a label□□ AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Above I've included the graphic from the website of your board reflecting Article 2 of your

Bylaws.

I'd ask you to reflect on how the proposed new interpretation of the rules on local contributions align with this mission and vision.

Additionally, the impact is not fully clear since the full specifics of the rules have not been provided.

Proceeding with any action without first making the rules clear is staunchly undemocratic.

This proposal seems like it would be the very last path that a board charged with working towards excellent education would take.

Please reject this option. Please request a hearing and waiver with the feds. Please exhaust all reasonable options.

Moreover, this proposal appears to move away from the principle of *local control*, which has long been a cornerstone of Alaska's public education system. Communities should be empowered—not discouraged—from investing in their children's future.

I again urge the Board to reject this proposed regulation. Instead, I encourage you to work collaboratively with districts, local governments, and communities to find sustainable solutions that strengthen, rather than weaken, Alaska's public education system.

Thank you for your time and for your enduring commitment to Alaska's students, our greatest natural resource!

Yours in service,

Paul Rioux, Sitka School Board

"The world is changed by your example, not your opinion." -Paulo Coelho

From: Callie Hatfield
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:44:21 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members, I am writing as a concerned parent and community member of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. These changes will: • Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

This will drastically impact our children and community in the worst ways possible.

Sincerely,

Callie Hatfield
Parent and Valdez Community Member
Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

From: Jill Boyd
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please help!
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 1:58:48 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Jill Boyd

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Kirsten Hart
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 2:02:53 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members, I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. These changes will: • Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes. Sincerely, Kirsten Hart a parent, and long time citizen of Valdez

From: Alexis Cook
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 2:22:56 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. As a homeschool parent who has children that also benefit from the after-school activities to enrich their education and learn valuable life skills this not only affects the local public school kids, but also many of my fellow homeschoolers here as well that have kids who participate in these activities. The local community/government should be allowed to use their funds as they please to help the kids in our community as we deem appropriate.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, after school opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Alexis Cook
Valdez Homeschool Parent

From: Lacey Ace
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 3:06:26 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members, I am writing as a concerned [parent/community member] of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. These changes will: • Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes. Sincerely, Lacey Ace a parent in the community of Valdez.

From: Amanda Tippetts
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 5:04:41 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city. We moved to Valdez last year and have a child in each of the three schools in the district. Poor education in Alaska was a serious concern for us moving here and limiting funding seems like the opposite of what the state needs especially if we want more students in schools instead of choosing alternative forms of education or leaving the state. If there is inequity, we request solutions that increase funding to schools instead of taking it away.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements.

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Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jason Tippetts
Concerned Parent

From: Jason and Amanda
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support Valdez Students! Oppose new regulation proposal
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 5:07:33 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. We moved to Valdez last year and have a child in each of the three schools in the district. Poor education in Alaska was a serious concern for us moving here and limiting funding seems like the opposite of what the state needs especially if we want more students in schools instead of choosing alternative forms of education or leaving the state. If there is inequity, we request solutions that increase funding to schools instead of taking it away.

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Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jason Tippetts

Concerned Parent

From: Bonnie Saxum
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 5:43:53 PM

[You don't often get email from bonbon8010@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
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All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Bonnie Saxum
Parent

From: Hunter .
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 6:29:44 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned [parent/community member] of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
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• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
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All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jason & Becky Smilie
Valdez — Parents

Sent from my iPad

From: Kit Winchester
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed DEED Regulation Changes to School Funding
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 9:13:10 PM

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To : State board of education
Just as I think we might one day have kids test higher than a third world country you cheap dumb bastards do it again. We will be the only state in the nation to use only federal funds for schooling? That there is enough to show you're goddamn idiots! Do any of you actually have secondary education? I hold tight that money doesn't make a smarter student but I also believe that a community has the right to fund schools where the state falls short. It's our decision to do so. Don't interfere with our funding because the state falls short, way short! The state steals our dividends and cuts school funding and does what with the money? Fund the god damned school you cheap pieces of shit. There are plenty of uneducated kids in the world, don't let ours be the worst. According to US News we are 49th in the nation. You are doing a horrible job! All of you should quit because obviously you don't care.
I bet New Mexico is hoping this bill passes so they won't be last anymore.
Regards
Kit Winchester

From: Jessica McKay
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 8:36:23 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
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All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jessica McKay
Parent and VCS Alumni

From: Cherie McKay
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 8:41:45 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members, I am writing as a concerned [Grandparent] of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. These changes will: • Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes. Sincerely, [Cherie McKay] [Parent/Grandparent]

From: Scott D. McKay
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 8:44:46 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned grandparent and retired educator of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

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All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Scott McKay
Retired Special Education Teacher, 20 year Valdez resident

Sent from my iPhone

From:	Harvey Brandt
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Harvey Brandt; Kathleen Brandt; Susan Brandt-Ferguson; Cindy Litman; Patti MacPike; Patricia Kehoe
Subject:	Letter of protest against proposed actions by Board
Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025 9:54:19 AM
Attachments:	state board of ed. letter of protest 7112025.docx

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Please see attached letter of protest against your proposed actions considering adding local support to your metrics for measuring local support for education in our community.
See attached letter. Act on it.

Harvey Brandt

--
Harvey Brandt
[redacted]
Sitka, AK 99835
hbrandt742@gmail.com
[redacted]

From: Erika Burr
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Proposed Regulation to change local contribution rules
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 10:25:01 AM

You don't often get email from burrlike@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello!

I am a Fairbanks parent, teacher, and community member. You must **oppose the proposed regulation that would change local contribution rules**. It is a reckless attack on local control and local initiative to build a strong workforce and healthy communities.

It is your **responsibility** to act in support of education for all Alaskan students and support their communities and families. Limited funding has already placed unsustainable burdens on our districts. We are **barely surviving** under current funding conditions when we **could be** and should be **thriving**.

Send a clear message that you **stand with our hard-working families** and oppose this attempt to stifle local control over public schools. Explore **solutions** to address the "disparity test problem" that demonstrate **good faith** in local government decisions to support classrooms in the ways that best serve their communities. Seek waivers for student nutrition and transportation. **Reject rules that undermine local self-determination** and do not align with the ingenuity and needs of our unique circumstances.

DEED should emulate the **collaborative approach** taken in 2023 by working with the Director of the Federal Impact Aid Program to **prevent negative budgetary impacts**.

Your **choices** have a real and lasting impact on the experience of kids, parents, and communities who are trying to **build a life and a future** in this great state. We require your unwavering help.

We are counting on you to show your support of Alaskans trying their best for their kids, communities, state, and nation. We need you in our corner.

Thank you,
Erika Burr
parent, teacher, life-long Alaskan
[redacted]
Fairbanks, AK 99709

From: Kathleen Brandt
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State funding to School Districts
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 10:52:19 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development

I am a retired Alaska teacher and a long-time community member in Sitka. I strongly urge you to oppose The proposed regulation that changes local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children, who are students and future voters of our state. This proposed regulation does not meet that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools.

Our districts are hurting and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please REJECT this misguided proposal, evaluate all options and choose an approach that does the least harm to our state.

Sincerely,
Kathleen C. Brandt
[redacted], Sitka, AK 99835
--

From: jeff budd
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Help save our children and get them the best education we can provide.
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 12:17:46 PM

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11 July 25

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Sitka with school age grandchildren in Juneau. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules. As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self- determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

There is no use kidding ourselves about Dunleavy's dislike of education. If you searched deep enough you would see he was let go from two school districts that signed a non-disclosure agreement. Wouldn't it be interesting to see why he was let go twice?

Sincerely,

Jeff Budd

[redacted] Sitka, AK 99835

David Means
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801
davidmeans.retired@gmail.com

July 16, 2025

Members of the State Board of Education
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

Re: Proposed regulation changes to local contributions

Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

Thank you for rejecting emergency regulation changes concerning local contributions. They needed time for public comment and additional analysis.

I am **opposed** to the proposed changes to the regulations concerning local contributions. I urge you to reject these changes.

1. These changes do not solve the federal disparity test. I understand the rationale for these changes is to ensure that Alaska passes the federal disparity test in the future. However, I have not seen any documentation that rewriting the definition of local contributions would assure the State Board that Alaska will pass this test in the future. I encourage the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development staff to analyze the 2024 school district financial statements by removing municipal appropriations to pupil transportation, student activities, food services, and other similar funds. Does this change the results of the 2024 disparity test? I think the State Board should know this before approving these regulation changes.

2. The proposed language is ambiguous. I have three principal concerns. First, I think this proposed language requires the city or borough to charge school districts a fair market value for rent for schools using city or borough owned facilities. The city or borough owns the school buildings in most cases. Implementing this would adversely impact the school district's finances because the city or borough would have to reduce their cash appropriation to the school district's operating fund for educational expenditures. This regulation should explicitly exclude rents or leases for use of school district facilities. Second, it is not clear whether the city and borough would have to account for area-wide public safety services such as fire and police protection. I recall that several years ago a small city charged the school district for every police visit or drive by, even during nighttime when services were not needed or wanted. The city wanted to reduce its cash

appropriation to the school district. Fortunately, the Department of Education and Early Development stepped in to clarify that those services were not in-kind services. More recently I learned about a municipality that wants to include fire protection services as part of its in-kind appropriation to the school district. Public safety services provided to every resident, business, and property owner ought to be excluded as an in-kind service. Third, many student athletic teams use city or borough facilities for their games and practices. Perhaps the swim team uses the parks and recreation swimming pool, or the baseball team uses a parks and recreation baseball diamond. There are numerous instances of this throughout Alaska. School districts and their municipal's park and recreation department can set up an accounting method to record the fair market use of these facilities, if they have not already established this. Some of these facilities were built with school bonds reimbursed by the state. The public may become very concerned that when a team uses a public a parks and recreation facility that their city and borough cannot appropriate cash to the school district for the value of these uses. They may not understand this because they voted for a bond issue to be partially reimbursed by the state, and their property taxes are paying for the remainder. Furthermore, there is not always a clear demarcation between grounds operated by the school district and operated by their parks and recreation department—sometimes they are operated collaboratively.

3. <u>The State Board needs to know the fiscal impacts to school districts.</u> The public notice states that there is not a financial impact to the state. However, these changes prohibit a city or borough from appropriating directly into a school district's pupil transportation, food services, student activities, or similar funds. The school district will need to find other sources to pay for expenditures from these funds—and that will usually mean transferring money from their operating fund thereby reducing resources to pay for classroom instruction. I encourage the State Board to request from departmental staff a listing by district and purpose of all city or borough direct appropriations to these funds during fiscal year 2024. This analysis will provide some, but not all, financial information concerning adverse impacts to local school districts.

Again, for these and other similar reasons, I urge the State Board of Education to **reject** changes to the regulation.

These changes, if approved, need a clear and workable effective date for implementation. In order to provide cities, boroughs, and school districts time to adjust, I suggest the earliest implementation date be July 1, 2026.

If the State Board approves these proposed changes, I suggest that the official State Chart of Accounts for School Districts be amended concurrently so that school district personnel and their financial auditors prepare and opine on properly prepared annual financial statements.

Sincerely,

David Means
Retired
davidmeans.retired@gmail.com

CC Legislature: Senator Kiehl
Representative Story
Representative Hannan

DEED: Commissioner Bishop
Deputy Commissioner Morrison
Finance and Support Services Director Heinenken
School Finance Manager Weed

ALASBO: Executive Director Carter
President Hulett
EFWG Chair Parrott

Juneau: School District Superintendent Hauser
Chief Financial Officer Herbert

From: Timi Tullis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Jolin, Kathijo M (EED)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rule Change Regarding Impact Aid and the Disparity Test
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 4:44:50 PM

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July 15, 2025
From:
Timi Tullis
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801
timitullis@yahoo.com

To:
Alaska State Board of Education

Department of Education & Early Development (DEED)
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed regulatory change by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) that would limit local contributions to school districts in an attempt to meet the federal "disparity test" and preserve $81 million in Impact Aid.

While I understand the importance of complying with federal requirements to maintain access to critical Impact Aid funding, this proposed rule places an unfair burden on local communities and undermines their ability to support and invest in their own public schools. Limiting local contributions removes an essential tool districts use to address unique local needs, provide enrichment programs, maintain class sizes, and retain qualified educators—particularly in areas where the state allocation alone is insufficient.

Moreover, the suggestion that these limitations could be applied retroactively creates uncertainty and concern for school administrators and communities that have already committed local resources in good faith. This type of retroactive action is not only unjust but would disrupt district budgets and planning efforts already in progress.

Rather than reducing the ability of local communities to invest in education, I urge the Board and DEED to work collaboratively with the Legislature, school districts, and stakeholders to find an equitable and transparent solution that both preserves federal

funding and maintains local control and investment.

Failing the disparity test is a serious issue—but so is undermining the quality of education of children in all our communities. Alaska's students deserve better than a race to the bottom in school funding equity.

Please reconsider this approach and prioritize long-term, sustainable solutions that protect both our federal funding and the integrity of local educational investment.

Sincerely,

Timi Tullis
Juneau, AK

From: Alex Pastorino
To: Jolin, Kathijo M (EED)
Subject: Proposed Regulatory Change
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 7:13:47 AM

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,
I am writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed regulatory change by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) limiting local contributions to school districts in an attempt to meet the federal "disparity test" and preserve $81 million in Impact Aid.

Local contributions are essential for addressing unique local needs, especially where state allocations are insufficient. While complying with federal requirements to maintain access to critical Impact Aid funding is important, there is no one size fits all. The proposed rule undermines community ability to support and invest in their own public schools, to maintain class sizes, to retain qualified educators, and much more.

Reducing the ability for local communities to invest in education seems to undermine our overall goal in education. Do we not want more community support, not less. Wouldn't it make more sense for the Board and DEED to work collaboratively with school districts, stakeholders, and the Legislature to find equitable and meaningful solutions that both preserve federal funding and also maintain local investment. Can we not find sustainable solutions that protect both concerns and, ultimately, create a better system, as well as enhanced relationships with local communities.

Please reconsider the proposed regulatory change and think outside the box to come up with a better, more collaborative, and meaningful solution. Our children are our priority; and I do believe we all agree on this point. So, thank you for the work you do and for considering my input. I realize you have a difficult task ahead of you and wish you the best. I am confident your actions will be in the best interest of our children and our communities who support them and their education. And I'm confident there is another solution and trust your creative and skillful abilities to address this.

Sincerely,

Barbara Pastorino (retired educator), Juneau, Alaska

From: Amy Ainslie
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Representative.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov
Subject: Public Comment: Regulations on Local Contributions
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 7:07:34 PM

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State Board Members,

Thank you for providing a public comment opportunity on the proposed regulations redefining local education contributions. I am opposed to the proposed change in regulations for the following reasons:

1. The stated rationale for this change, compliance with Impact Aid Program (IAP) requirements and passing the required disparity test, is a red herring. In its findings and determination letter addressed to Commissioner Bishop on May 16, 2025, the US Department of Education makes no reference whatsoever regarding concerns about in-kind or non-instructional contributions on the part of local governments or other organizations. Additionally, the argument for the need to align the State's definition of local contributions to federal definitions for expenditures is irrelevant given that Alaska elects to use the **revenue** based methodology under the IAP disparity testing as explained in the above referenced letter. The IAP-based rationale for the proposed regulation change becomes even more suspect when considering, as Commissioner Bishop stated in her June memos to the Board on this matter, that School Finance began looking into potential "outside the cap" local in-kind and non-instructional contributions in 2023 - far before IAP disparity test results were of issue. In consideration of this proposed regulation change, I urge the Board to weigh the potential outcomes; it is tenuous at best that this regulation change would affect the outcome of future IAP disparity tests, but it is absolutely certain that it would be devastating for local education.

2. Given that IAP funding is likely unimpacted by this regulation change, there is only harm, not benefit, to the proposed regulation change. Municipalities, tribes, non-profit organizations, and businesses are doing everything in their power to make-up for State shortfalls in education funding. To penalize them for doing so would be nothing short of callousness and an affront to community self-determination. If the State cannot meet its obligations to fund education, the policy direction of the Board should be focused on **removing** barriers to local funding, not adding more.

3. The proposed regulation is too vague to be practicable or enforceable - most services that a municipality would provide don't have a "market value", nor do the referenced federal codes clarify this point (and in fact, neither make any reference to in-kind services).

As an aside, I wanted to note that as of the time I am writing this comment, the proposed regulation change is not posted on the Board's proposed regulation page (https://education.alaska.gov/regs), nor is it listed in the Online Public Notices system. I am only aware of this public comment period because of our local school district's efforts to get the word out.

I urge the Board to deny the proposed regulation change, and instead direct staff to produce a report which evaluates the recent IAP disparity test failure and provides the Board with the full-spectrum of options to prevent future disparity test failures.

Sincerely,
Amy Ainslie
[redacted]
Sitka, AK 99835

From: Goold, Jonathan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 5:59:54 AM

You don't often get email from jonathan.goold@alyeska-pipeline.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a parent of two very independent pre-teens and as a community member of Valdez to urge you to support the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs, I support this change.
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns, I support this change, our streets are crowded with bus traffic and our children have a serious obesity problem.
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools, I support this change, the city government influence needs to be reduced whenever possible.
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements, I support this change. The school's budget is out-of-hand, and the money is not spent wisely.

Our community does not depend on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding enhances accountability for this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will increase the students' ability to make decisions for themselves, weaken local partnerships that are of no value, and threaten the very programs that enable our children to fail.

Students in Valdez have access to safe transportation, their feet, quality nutrition is not provided by the school and this feeding children garbage food by the state should be eliminated, afterschool opportunities abound without government funding, and community-supported programs also abound. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and support these regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Goold

Parent of two very independent children in the Valdez City Schools and my wife and I are both products of thirteen years of education from these same institutions.

Protected Document. Refer to Alyeska Data Classification Policy, LEGAL-DPOL-001.

Alaska Association of School Business Officials
600 Barrow St. #603
Anchorage, AK 99501
alasbo@alasbo.org

July 11, 2025

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Alaska Dept. of Education & Early Development
PO Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

The Alaska Association of School Business Officials (ALASBO) is writing on behalf of all Alaska students to formally express our opposition to the proposed changes regarding local contributions in the regulations of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

Our primary concern lies in our ability to meaningfully engage in the process and accurately articulate the potential impacts of the proposed regulations. To date, DEED has provided no meaningful clarification or opportunities for engagement throughout this process.

Notice of the June 3–4 State Board of Education meeting was provided with minimal lead time. Nevertheless, we responded promptly by submitting an initial list of questions to the State Board, CC'ing DEED in our correspondence. We followed up on June 17 with a second, more detailed request for clarification directed to DEED in preparation for the public comment period, with the intention of offering thoughtful and informed feedback within the 30-day window.

After receiving no response, we followed up again one week later and were finally provided a letter dated June 30. In that letter, DEED stated it was unable to provide any binding interpretation of the proposed changes. While the Department indicated that general guidance and support would be available, the letter failed to include any substantive responses to our specific questions.

Per DEED's recommendation, we subsequently forwarded our June 17 email—along with DEED's June 30 response—to the State Board of Education, trusting that questions submitted prior to the July 13 deadline will be included in the Department's response to the Board.

As a result, ALASBO is unable to provide the detailed and meaningful feedback necessary to evaluate the real-world implications of the proposed regulatory changes. This is deeply concerning, as our intent has always been to inform the Board on how these changes could affect Alaska's students, families, and communities. Without adequate understanding of implementation, we fear the Board may be unable to fully meet its fiduciary responsibility in evaluating this proposal.

In addition to procedural issues, we have substantial concerns with the proposed language:

1. Inappropriate Treatment of Local Contributions as Expenditures
The proposal requires districts to track local appropriations and in-kind services as expenditures—a mechanism not supported by the current state chart of accounts. Revenue tracking by expenditure function (e.g., instructional services, student services, debt services, capital outlay) is not a feasible or standardized practice, which introduces both compliance and reporting inconsistencies across districts.

2. Disincentives for Community Support and Local Innovation
Including all local appropriations and in-kind services in the local contribution maximum:

- Discourages student and community fundraising efforts for special programs.
- Penalizes districts for offering nutrition services, as meal payments would now count toward the local contribution maximum.
- Undermines the authority provided under AS 14.14.060(a), which allows borough assemblies to grant districts central treasury authority. Under this proposal, interest earned from prudent local investments is counted against districts, whereas those without such authority are not similarly impacted.

3. Equity Concerns in the Valuation and Tracking of In-Kind Services
Mandating that all in-kind services provided by cities or boroughs be included in the total contribution maximum creates an uneven playing field. Not all municipalities have the same capacity to document contributions. Some may itemize extensively—even tracking building rent or meeting time spent on district matters—while others may not have the resources or infrastructure to do so. This inconsistency will lead to inequitable assessments of local contributions across the state.

Proposed Amendments

We are committed to collaboration and remain solution-oriented. In that spirit, we respectfully submit the following recommended changes:

~~4 AAC 09.985. Permissible local contribution appropriations and in-kind services. In AS 14.17, a local contribution is limited to appropriations or in-kind services that are consistent with 20 U.S.C. 7713(4) or 34 C.F.R. 222.161(c)(1)~~

4 AAC 09.990(b) is amended to read:
(b) In the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990,

(1) "appropriations" means money appropriated to a district~~'s school operating fund~~ by the city or borough; **EXCLUDING THOSE INTENDED FOR THE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION FUND, NUTRITION SERVICES FUND, STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUND, COMMUNITY SCHOOL FUND, BOARDING HOME AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL FUND, DEBT SERVICES FUND, OR CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND**

(2) "value of in-kind services" means the documented fair market value of insurance, utilities, energy, audits, and maintenance of facilities provided at no charge to a district by the city or borough ~~as reported in the district's school operating fund~~.

Respectfully,

ALASBO Board of Directors

Alaska Association of School Business Officials
600 Barrow St. #603 Anchorage, AK 99501
alasbo@alasbo.org

Jun 17, 2025

Ms. Heather Heineken, Director of Finance & Support Services
Ms. Lori Weed, School Finance Manager
Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
PO Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Ms. Heineken and Ms. Weed,

In order to meaningfully plan and engage in the upcoming public process of the proposed regulation amendments to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution, ALASBO has compiled the following questions from our members to better assist in understanding the implementation and impact of the changes.

Below are preliminary questions from our membership based on a review of the information made available:

1. What analysis has been done by DEED on the impacts of implementation of this regulation on municipalities and school districts for FY26 and FY27?
    a. What information has been gathered from Districts and municipal governments to identify how this will immediately impact District and municipal financial obligations and decision-making?

2. Can the department show or provide the analysis that explains how this change would have led to the State passing disparity based on FY24? (There is confusion amongst members how this is possible, and it would be helpful to see the data.)

3. What methodology will be used for considering whether a service a municipality pays for will be counted as a local or in-kind contribution? Consider the following scenarios:
    a. If a local municipality operates a small healthy kids grant program, and makes an award to a sports team where there is no booster club or external organization that hosts the sport, does this count as a local contribution?

    b. If a local municipality utilizes its resources to establish a discretionary or competitive grant program that the District is eligible to apply for to provide supplemental services to the community, would this be considered a local contribution?

c. If a local municipality is awarded a federal or state grant, and partners with the school district to provide passthrough funds for some component of the grant objectives?

    i. Would Secure Rural Schools/forest receipts be considered local, subject to the cap?
    ii. Would funds conveyed through federally and state recognized Tribes be to school districts be considered subject to the cap?

d. If a local municipality provides regular service such as snowplowing in the area that benefits a school, can that count as an in-kind contribution?

e. With the update to the definition of in-kind contribution, would the construction and major repair of school buildings—when required by the borough assembly under AS 14.14.060—now be considered an in-kind contribution?

f. Is the Mayor and Assembly's time in meetings spent on District topics (budget approval, bond-debt, etc.) considered an in-kind local contribution?

g. If a municipal health department employee speaks to a health class, is that an in-kind contribution?

h. If students use the city parkland or trails for gym class or field days, is that an in-kind contribution?

4. Who will mediate disputes between municipalities and school districts regarding what is counted and reported as an in-kind contribution?

5. With the amendment to 4 AAC 09.900(b), the definition of "local contribution" no longer limits appropriations to money given by a city or borough to a school district's operating fund. This change appears to broaden the scope of local contribution to include other local funds such as community donations, student fundraisers, tuition payments, breakfast/lunch payments, fees, rebates, and investment earnings.
    a. Is that the case?

    b. Will these items be subject to the cap?

    c. If all local revenue is counted towards the maximum local contribution for City and Borough Districts, will there be any similar local revenue limit for REAA's which do not have a maximum local contribution limit?

6. Currently, the State of Alaska is allowed to exclude Pupil Transportation revenue from the Impact Aid Disparity Test and has recently treated transfers into and out of this fund as part of that exclusion. With the implementation of 20 U.S.C. § 7713(4), wouldn't local

districts be held to a stricter standard than the State itself in relation to how current expenditures are defined and applied under the Federal regulations?

7. The proposed regulation references 34 C.F.R. § 222.161(c)(1), but this subparagraph does not appear to exist. Section 222.161(c) provides a list of definitions, but they are not labeled with subparagraph numbers. Clarification is needed on whether the proposed regulation intends to reference only the definition of current expenditures (the first definition listed), or all seven definitions included under 34 C.F.R. § 222.161(c)?

8. Local contribution revenue will be limited based on the definition of current expenditures. Since revenues are not recorded at the function level, we need clarification on the following scenario:

   A special revenue fund receives $25,000 in local revenue and $10,000 from a state/federal grant. During the year, the district records $20,000 in community services expenditures.

   For the purposes of the new regulation, what amount will be excluded?

   - The full $25,000 in local revenue, since it was intended for community services?
   - Or only the $20,000 in actual recorded community services expenditures?

   How would the exclusion amount change if revenues collected exceed expenditures within the same school year?

9. For the community services exclusion, we need clarification on the following scenarios:
   a. Building rentals overall is a community service recorded as “other local revenue” ; these revenues are not recorded under the function of “community service” so is the expectation for the District to determine and break out those associated expenses so they can be excluded?
   b. Student activities are not limited to only District enrolled students. How does the State advise on how to break out the revenue/expenses related to non-District students being allowed to participate in those activities?

10. Could or would Emergency preparedness and response activities or EOC-related costs be exempt? Districts have no way of controlling or predicting these costs, which often requires collaboration and shared services/costs with the municipalities.

11. How will this regulation change be interpreted to impact formula funding for charter schools, if at all, under AS 14.03.260?

12. Who will the state hold responsible for failure to adequately track and report items considered in-kind? Who is responsible to establish the market value and track time or cost allocations? Are estimated established by the school district sufficient? Does the municipality have to sign off on these estimates or valuations?

If at all possible, ALASBO would like to receive this information by EOB Friday, June 20th. However, we understand that the holiday this week may impact staff time to respond.

Clarifying the department's intent and/or interpretation of how this change will be implemented will greatly assist Alaska's school districts and municipalities in evaluating the true impact of the change. This will make for a better public process, as well as assist in more effective planning as districts conduct FY26 budget adoption & revisions and enter into budget planning for FY27.

We look forward to working with you through this process, and appreciate everything you and your staff do to support Alaska's school districts.

Sincerely,

ALASBO Leadership
Darcy Carter, Executive Director
Phil Hulett, President
Katie Parrott, President-Elect

Cc: Deputy Commissioner, Karen Morrison

THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Education & Early Development
FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES
333 Willoughby Ave., 9th Floor, SOB
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500
Main: 907.465.2800
Fax: 907.465.2806

June 30, 2025

Alaska Association of School Business Officials
600 Barrow St. #603
Anchorage, AK 99508

Dear ALASBO Leadership,

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the proposed regulation amendments to 4 AAC 09 related to the definition of local contribution. We appreciate the thoughtful and detailed questions, many of which reflect important considerations about practical implementation and hypothetical scenarios.

While we recognize the desire for clarity, the Department is limited in its ability to provide binding interpretation during the open public comment period and while an appeal is pending with the U.S. Department of Education's Impact Aid Program.

Please submit this letter and any other public comments through the formal public comment process so that the department may respond in accordance with Administrative Procedures Act (APA), AS 44.62.213(b). Please know the questions and feedback submitted during the process, particularly those from your membership, are valuable and will be carefully reviewed as part of the regulation adoption process. The department will be posting answers to frequently asked questions about the proposed action on the Alaska Online Public Notice System and may aggregate substantially similar questions and agency responses and provide a single consolidated response to substantially similar questions.

Comments can be emailed to eed.stateboard@alaska.gov. Please ensure questions are submitted prior to July 13 to be included in the department's responses.

DEED is available to offer general guidance and support. Decisions regarding how specific contributions are categorized or valued must ultimately be determined through collaboration between the school district and municipality to ensure equal reporting on both entities' financial statements. The Department encourages the use of tools such as the Uniform Chart of Accounts, external auditors, and other professional resources to support this process.

We appreciate your engagement and encourage continued participation through the formal public comment process. The input of you and your membership is essential as we work to finalize regulations that support both fiscal integrity and educational equity across Alaska. The Department remains committed to working alongside districts by providing the guidance, tools, and support necessary for successful implementation. We also want to emphasize that all public comments will be taken seriously and thoughtfully considered as part of the decision-making process leading up to final action by the State Board of Education.

Sincerely,

Heather Heineken
Division Director

Presented by: Superintendent
Introduced: 06/26/2025
Drafted by: Law and JSD

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Serial No. 2025-02

A Resolution of the Juneau Board of Education Opposing the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's Proposed Regulation Regarding Local Contributions.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Constitution requires the establishment and maintenance of public schools for all children in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the State is responsible for appropriating adequate funding for schools through the foundation formula and base student allocation; and

WHEREAS, the State's near flat-funding of the base student allocation between FY 2011 through FY 2025 has significantly impacted many districts, including the Juneau School District; and

WHEREAS, the City and Borough of Juneau has supported the Juneau School District by providing the maximum local contribution while separately supporting non-instructional and community services, in alignment with guidance from DEED; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2025, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) advanced a revised and significantly more restrictive proposed regulation redefining "local contribution" and "in-kind services" for school funding in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, this proposed regulation would greatly limit, and possibly eliminate, local support for non-instructional services, such as student transportation, food service, Pre-K, and extracurricular activities, that have traditionally been funded locally, in alignment with guidance from DEED, and that are critical to student wellbeing and success; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation would include in the state-imposed cap all local revenues, such as fundraising, food service income, donations, and other community supports, disincentivizing municipal and community investment in schools; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation introduces ambiguous and sweeping language on "in-kind services" that would limit municipal facilities, equipment, maintenance, and support services to the district, and that would redefine shared supports, such as maintenance, use of facilities, guest instruction, and public safety coordination, as capped contributions, undermining collaborative and cost-effective partnerships between districts and local governments; and

WHEREAS, non-instructional services, local and community revenues, and in-kind services play vital roles in supporting all students in the district, and restricting local communities' abilities to provide these services and funding risks increasing inequities in access and outcomes and undermines local funding authority; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation poses a significant financial risk to the Juneau School District, with an estimated $8 million reduction in funding based on the District's FY 2024 Audited Financial Statements, along with additional, currently undetermined impacts related to in-kind services provided by the City and Borough, thereby threatening to eliminate and destabilize services critical to student success; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation would directly conflict with and extend beyond federal guidance and regulation, which recognizes Alaska's unique geographical challenges and allows for exclusions in the disparity test; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation would directly conflict with DEED's 2021 testimony on the disparate student transportation need in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, DEED's proposed regulation would not alter or affect the FY 2026 disparity test failure, which was based on FY 2024 audited data and two districts, at the 5th and 95th percentiles, that were not "funded to the cap"; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's FY 2026 disparity test failure should prompt a collaborative review of federal exclusions and state funding adequacy and not a

unilateral and harmful regulatory shift that jeopardizes local partnerships and public trust; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Impact Aid Program has stated that it neither asked nor recommended that DEED change its state regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Impact Aid Program has stated that "State regulations are not within the Impact Aid Program's interest or purview"; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation would immediately, directly, and negatively impact Alaska's students.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU BOARD OF EDUCATION OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

The Juneau Board of Education strongly opposes the draft regulation and directs the Superintendent to submit this public comment on behalf of the Board of Education reflecting this opposition.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon approval by the Juneau Board of Education. Adopted this 26th day of June 2025, at Juneau, Alaska.

JUNEAU BOARD OF EDUCATION

Deedie Sorensen, Board President

Elizabeth Siddon
Britteny Cioni-Haywood
Emil Mackey
Amber Frommherz
David Noon
Steve Whitney

From:	Morrison, Karen B (EED)
To:	Jolin, Kathijo M (EED); Zadalis, Bryan M (EED)
Subject:	FW: Juneau Board of Education Resolution Opposing Proposed Local Contribution Regulation Change
Date:	Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:52:14 AM
Attachments:	JSD BOE Resolution No. 2025-02.pdf

From: Frank Hauser <frank.hauser@juneauschools.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:35 AM
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored) <eed.stateboard@alaska.gov>
Cc: Commissioner, DEED (EED sponsored) <deed.commissioner@alaska.gov>; Morrison, Karen B (EED) <karen.morrison@alaska.gov>
Subject: Juneau Board of Education Resolution Opposing Proposed Local Contribution Regulation Change

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

On behalf of the Juneau Board of Education, I am submitting as public comment the attached resolution opposing the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's proposed regulation change related to local contribution and in-kind services.

The proposed regulation change would significantly and negatively impact essential educational services and non-instructional programs for Juneau students and students across Alaska.

We appreciate your consideration as you deliberate on this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions or require additional information. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have on the negative statewide impacts of the proposed regulation change.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Frank Hauser
Superintendent
Juneau School District
[redacted]

From: Bob Shavelson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Don"t Limit Local Aid
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 10:05:01 PM

You don't often get email from bobshavelson@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board -

At a time when public school funding is failing our kids, it's bad public policy to limit local municipal aid to local schools.

If anything, the Board should be looking for ways to increase local school funding; a good first step would be to remove the Impact Aid Deduction.

Thanks for your service, and hope you will give local schools more fiscal options.

--
Bob Shavelson
bobshavelson@gmail.com
9[redacted]

From: Beverly Colapietro
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support all Students
Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 9:05:57 AM

You don't often get email from brcolapietro@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education,

I would like to protest the motion to cap district spending, for practical and philosophical reasons. Practically speaking this will impede services in towns that require extensive slow removal and other extenuating expenses currently covered by other municipalities. It would negatively impact the numerous opportunities some communities have for after school sports and extra curricular activities. These benefits are usually due to excellent community involvement–and funding.

Philosophically speaking, why would you hinder school districts that are able to enrich students' lives? This sounds like some kind of communist movement, to make everyone wear the same size kuspuk. That does not make sense for many communities. In more prosperous communities there is an opportunity and an incentive to help the students flourish. Why would you take opportunities away from students? Because a community is not prospering economically, does that mean that you have to make everyone else in the state suffer? You're not even taking from the rich and giving to the poor, you're just hindering the “rich.” There's no law that says people can't move to more prosperous communities if they so choose. Why take away the incentive for people to prosper? Isn't that exactly what the Communists do so that only really corrupt people are able to have perks in life?

To reiterate the main point, please do not pass this motion to cap all districts’ spending. Please allow prosperous communities to prosper! It's great that we can fund all districts to a certain extent, but why impede those that are able to further enrich their students' lives? The end result of this capping philosophy is that you will soon not even allow esteemed Elders, who share cultural knowledge in the schools, to receive an honorarium for their efforts. When you start capping all enrichment to students, we will eventually hinder all school districts from doing their best.

Sincerely,

Beverly Colapietro
(Retired after serving in LKSD, NSBSD, LYSD, FNSBSD, and VCS, for a total of 32 years.)

[redacted]
Valdez, AK 99686

From: Gregory Walter
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding change
Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 9:16:52 PM

You don't often get email from gwalter@ifhs.org. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello board of education,

As a nurse practitioner in Unalaska, and a permanent resident here whose daughter will soon be entering the school system, I ask you to please consider changing the new rules for grouping instructional and non-instructional contributions together, and counting in-kind services against the cap.

The students in Unalaska, who I care for in our small medical clinic here, face many challenges and headwinds as they prepare themselves for life in the wider world. Effectively cutting the amount of funding for their school will be directly harmful to the children of Unalaska, and I urge you to oppose this change.

Thank you for your time,

Greg Walter, NP
[redacted]
[redacted]
Unalaska, AK 99685

From: Shiery, Tauga
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:17:10 AM

You don't often get email from tshiery@valdezcityschools.org. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the State Board of Education:

I am writing in strong opposition to the proposed regulation changes that would push funding for essential services like transportation, food service, and student activities inside the school funding cap, and redefine "in-kind" support in a way that penalizes communities like Valdez for going above and beyond to support their students.

I did not move to Valdez so the State could punish a city that prides itself on supporting its youth, investing in quality education, and building a strong community through meaningful local partnerships. The proposed changes would directly harm the very values our city holds dear — self-determination, local investment, and student-centered planning.

This isn't just about budget lines. It's about real kids, real programs, and real consequences. Cutting transportation could mean children have no safe way to get to school in a rural, winter climate. Undermining funding for food services risks the health and well-being of students who depend on school meals. And targeting programs like after-school activities and computers? That hurts learning, engagement, and opportunity — especially for those who need it most.

Valdez's partnership with our city has been a model of community-driven success. Our School Resource Officer, ski trail grooming, and support for student safety are not excesses — they are essentials. Reclassifying them as "in-kind" and then penalizing our schools for them is not just illogical, it's unjust.

This proposed regulation is an overreach by DEED. It removes local control, discourages community investment, and tells cities like Valdez that if we step up to take care of our kids, the State will simply step in and take away our ability to do so.

Please do not enact these regulations. Let local communities continue to do what's right for their students — without state interference that would set them back.

Respectfully,

Tauga M. Shiery, M.Ed.
First Grade Teacher
Hermon Hutchens Elementary

July 15, 2025

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

When I go to the DEED website, it reads "A Shared Commitment. Meeting Alaska's Education Challenge Together." As I start my 30th year of teaching in Sitka next month, I want to feel like you are meeting this challenge with me and my colleagues and doing everything in your power to support the students of Alaska. However, the recent moves to change rules around how municipalities can financially support their struggling districts makes me feel like instead we are having the rug pulled out from under us. In short, I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

There is no argument that Alaska schools have challenges, that student learning can and should improve, and that teachers can do better. There is also no question that Alaska is not funding their public schools adequately. Inflation has changed the cost of education, and the BSA has not come close to keeping up. Yet another indicator that we have let education funding lapse is that ***Alaska is the only state in the country to use the federal "impact aid" money ($81 million this year) as a replacement for state education funding, rather than an additive.*** In fact, it is because of THIS that the state must pass the "disparity test"—not that municipalities are funding "outside the cap!"

Because Alaska's education funding has eroded over many years, we have been up against this "disparity test" in the past. Four short years ago, in 2021, DEED successfully appealed when Alaska failed the "disparity test." Until state education funding is fixed, why is appealing not the course of action?

It is alarming that municipalities feel the need to fund "outside the cap." But this is not an indication that these cities are looking to give their children an unfair advantage. Instead, it indicates that they are doing all they can when the decreased BSA ties their hands –in fact, the "cap" amount is dictated by the BSA, so even that has eroded due to inflation!

The bottom line is this: Alaska's schools are starving for funds. Municipalities see it first-hand. They are the place that districts go to beg for their bread and butter. Because the state limits what cities can give with the "cap," creative people have found ways to feed our starving districts—much like one might grow a garden, pick berries, or harvest subsistence fish. This is the Alaskan way. Can it really be that our own Department of Education and Early Development will take away more funds because of our grass-roots efforts to support our schools? I hope not. I look forward to August when I will do my part to Meet Alaska's Education Challenge. I hope I am not doing it without the support of the very department that is charged with that goal.

Sincerely,

Susan Brandt-Ferguson

[redacted]

Sitka, AK 99835

[redacted]

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senator Löki Gale Tobin
Education Committee Chair

EDUCATION
HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
JUDICIARY
TRANSPORTATION

July 15, 2025

Sally Stockhausen, Chair
Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
333 Willoughby Ave, 9th Floor
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Chair Stockhausen,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations because the impact on Alaska's public education system will be devastating.

As the State Senator who represents Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, I am concerned the proposed regulation will adversely impact the operation of K-12 schools on Alaska's largest military base and the education services provided to the children of military personnel. The goal should be to make it easier for the children of soldiers and airmen to receive a high-quality public education on base, rather than placing unclear regulatory obstacles in the way.

There has been limited public clarification regarding the expansion of the definition of local contributions to encompass all in-kind services. Given the current fiscal volatility faced by Alaska's public schools, it is imperative to enhance fiscal certainty and not arbitrarily change long-standing regulatory language without full consideration of how any change will impact our local communities.

I urge you and your colleagues on the State Board of Education to reject the proposed regulatory changes and instead work collaboratively with lawmakers and stakeholders to improve public education in Alaska. Thank you for considering my public comments. Please do not hesitate to contact my office for further assistance.

With gratitude,

Löki Gale Tobin

Sen. Löki Gale Tobin
Chair, Senate Education Committee
Alaska State Legislature

WHILE IN SESSION
State Capitol / Juneau, AK 99801 / (907) 465-3704

WHILE IN ANCHORAGE
1500 W Benson Blvd / Anchorage, AK 99503 / (907) 269-0169

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senator Löki Gale Tobin
Education Committee Chair

EDUCATION
HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
JUDICIARY
TRANSPORTATION

CC: DEED Commissioner Deena Bishop
James Fields, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
James Fowley, Military Advisory, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Pamela Dupras, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Barbara Tyndall, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Kimberly Bergey, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Kathryn McCollum, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Sen. Gary Stevens, President, Alaska State Senate
Rep. Bryce Edgmon, Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives
Rep. Rebecca Himschoot, co-chair, House Education Committee
Rep. Andi Story, co-chair, House Education Committee
Jordan Shilling, Legislative Director, Gov. Mike Dunleavy
Tyson Gallagher, Chief of Staff, Gov. Mike Dunleavy
Dr. Lisa Parady, Executive Director, Alaska Council of School Administrators
Lon Garrison, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards
Tom Klaameyer, President, NEA Alaska
Nils Andreassen, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League

WHILE IN SESSION
State Capitol / Juneau, AK 99801 / (907) 465-3704

WHILE IN ANCHORAGE
1500 W Benson Blvd / Anchorage, AK 99503 / (907) 269-0169

July 15, 2025

Letter of OPPOSITION to proposed regulation to limit municipal aid to local schools.

Alaska State Board of Education
Via email: eed.stateboarad@alaska.gov

Greetings:

I urge the Alaska State Board of Education to OPPOSE the noticed adoption of a proposed regulation to limit municipal aid to local schools.

This regulation first undermines local control of local school districts.

Secondly, the Alaska State Board of Education is composed of APPOINTED members and therefore is eroding the importance of the ELECTED local school board members at the borough levels who know their districts and are accountable to their district's constituents.

Third, this proposed regulation most likely will have unintended consequences, including undermining the basic concept of Alaska's being more protective of Alaskan students than the federal government. States always may be more protective than the federal government. Additionally, removing the federal impact aid deduction from Alaska's education funding formula will avoid both burdening Alaska's school districts and impermissibly interfering with local control of Alaska's schools.

Please SUPPORT local control, remove the federal impact aid deduction, reaffirm your duty to foster a strong public school system in Alaska and thereby reaffirm Alaska's school system as a key component to strong economies at the local, regional and statewide levels.

Thank you,
Landa Baily
[redacted]
Homer, AK 99503

July 15, 2025

State Board of Education
P. O. Box 110500
333 Willoughby Avenue, 9th floor
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Comment on proposed changes to the local contributions regulation 4 AAC 09

Dear Board members,

Do not pass the commissioner's proposal to amend the local contributions regulations.

First, you have no assurance that the change will effectuate the outcome the commissioner is aiming for. The proposed language is based on no suggestions from the Education Department. Consequently, you don't know whether or how the commissioner's proposal would factor into the US Education Department's decisions about parity tests.

Secondly, the new term "value of in-kind services" is too broad for implementation. It has meaning beyond the proposal's goal to delete school operating funds from the definition of local contributions. The proposed terms would replace a less ambiguous list of specified services with an undefined, ambiguous term that invites mis-understanding.

Thirdly, how much does the proposal consider that changes in local contribution enumeration may affect military families' students who attend public schools off base, or receive remedial or support services associated with their parents' deployment?

Most importantly, instead of using the disparity test at all, the state should add its money to impact aid and send the dollars directly to the school districts. The state should join the other states and not be replacing its funding of schools with impact aid. The legislature and governor have long avoided full funding of schools and have ignored their constitutional obligation to provide adequate public schools. Rather than decreasing school funding by way of the proposed regulations, the board instead should help increase overall school funding with regulations that remove disparity tests altogether.

Sincerely,

Mike Bronson, Anchorage

From: Brorson, Alonna
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose local contributions proposal
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 2:57:30 PM

You don't often get email from alonna.brorson@conocophillips.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Board of Education-

I oppose this proposal: NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices

You are destroying public education at every turn. Please reconsider.

Thank you!

[redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted], Anchorage, AK

From: Diane McBride
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: please reject amendment that hurts our schools and communities
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 3:48:50 PM

You don't often get email from diane@alaskawildernesslodge.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Membes,
Firstly, thank you for serving on this board. We do not want funding challenges that takes more money from classrooms and students. Please ask the state to remove the Impact Aid Deduction from the public education funding formula.
Or work to explore all available options, such as waivers for student nutrition and transportation. We do not want cuts. Class size should not be increased.
Thank you for considering this amendment rejection.
Sincerely your,
Diane McBride, a mother, grandmother, and Alaskan for 58 years.
--
Diane McBride
Kachemak Bay Wilderness Lodge
[redacted], China Poot Bay
Homer, Alaska 99603 USA

[redacted]
www.alaskawildernesslodge.com

July 15, 2025

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
c/o Chair Sally Stockhausen
333 Willoughby Ave, 9th Floor
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Redefining Local Contributions

Dear Chair Stockhausen and Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of the Association of Alaska School Boards to express strong opposition to the proposed modification of state regulations that would redefine "local contributions" to include all sources of municipal support to school districts, including in-kind contributions.

This proposal represents a significant and troubling expansion of the definition of local effort. It would penalize communities for voluntarily providing resources—such as facility use, school resource officers, or transportation services—that enhance education and relieve operational burdens. These in-kind supports have long been understood as supplemental, not part of the statutory local contribution under AS 14.17.410.

By counting virtually all municipal assistance toward the required local effort, the regulation would discourage community support and reduce local flexibility. Worse, it would push the financial burden for education even further onto municipalities while the state continues to underfund public education. The result would be reduced services, deepened inequities, and weakened local governance.

Stakeholders across Alaska, including school leaders, finance officers, municipal representatives, and legislators, have voiced clear concerns. This regulation is not a solution to the federal disparity test failure. Instead, we encourage the Department to work collaboratively with all school districts and local governments to find a solution that does not further imperil or reduce funding for schools at this critical moment.

Alaska remains the only state that offsets its education funding with federal impact aid in this way. Other states have moved on because this approach undermines local decision-making and federal intent. Rather than using equity as a justification for limiting support in local communities, the state should focus on lifting all students through adequate baseline funding and working with the US Department of Education to agree upon Alaska-specific exemptions that make sense.

Furthermore, DEED's lack of clear guidance and its unwillingness to engage substantively with stakeholders have added to the confusion. If adopted, this regulation would create ongoing uncertainty, placing districts and municipalities in financial and legal jeopardy with no clear implementation plan.

AASB respectfully urges the Board to reject this proposal and instead support efforts to modernize and strengthen Alaska's education funding system in a way that respects local contributions, meets federal requirements, and ensures opportunity for all students.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lon D. Garrison
Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards

From: Jamin Burton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local school contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 5:51:26 PM

You don't often get email from jamin.burton@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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While I support the idea of having a more equitable process for funding school that doesn't rely on local property tax and assemblies, the state has proven themselves unwilling to invest adequately in education. Please do not remove locals abilities to fund things beyond the state funding .

Jamin Burton
[redacted]

From: Amy Lujan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on Proposed Changes to Local Contribution Regulation
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:32:22 PM

You don't often get email from amylujan400@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Members of the State Board,

I have worked in the K-12 school finance sector in Alaska for more than 30 years. I do not support the proposed regulation change.

School funding in our state is a complex house of cards. A change of this nature requires careful study and will have implications for districts across the state. It may also impact the federal disparity test. My colleagues with the Alaska Association of School Business Officials (ALASBO) have asked specific questions about the regulation change, but they have not received detailed answers. This indicates that the proposal has not been adequately studied. I urge you not to approve this regulation change without answers to these questions.

--
Amy Lujan
Past ALASBO Executive Director
Past School Business Officials in Three Alaskan K-12 Districts

From: Ariel Johannes
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Defend Public Education Funding in Alaska
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:18:42 PM

You don't often get email from arieljjohannes@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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State Board of Alaska,

I am writing to you not only as a concerned Alaskan but as a parent of children who attend public school in the Anchorage School District. The recent freeze of nearly $46 million in federal education funds by the U.S. Department of Education — including over $14 million intended for ASD — is deeply alarming. This funding freeze, combined with repeated state-level vetoes and last-minute cuts, is threatening the very core of our public education system.

Our family, like many others, relies on the stability and strength of our local public schools. These federal funds were allocated for critical services — after-school programs, special education, English learner support, and programs for Alaska Native students. These aren't optional extras — they are essential services for our kids.

When ASD receives layoff notices and issues reassignments just weeks before the school year starts, it doesn't just affect budgets. It affects children. My children. Our community's children. It erodes trust in the systems that are supposed to support and educate the next generation of Alaskans.

Even after the Legislature rightly voted to override the Governor's education funding veto, an additional $200 per student was slashed without warning. Districts had already passed their budgets in good faith. This kind of instability doesn't just hurt schools — it undermines public confidence in government.

And now, the proposal by the Department of Education and Early Development to cap how much local communities can contribute to their schools is yet another blow. Why should Anchorage — or any Alaskan community — be penalized for investing in its own children?

I'm asking you to stand up for students and override the veto again during the special session. I'm asking you to reject the proposed cap on local school funding. I'm asking you to fight for sustainable, predictable, and equitable public education funding across Alaska.

This is not about politics. It’s about children. And our children deserve better.

Thank you,

Ariel Johannes

[redacted]

Anchorage, Alaska

Parent of one student at ASD

From: Meghan Clark
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose the Proposed Cap on Local Education Contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:37:09 PM

You don't often get email from meghan.clairemarie@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Members of the State Board of Education and DEED Leadership,

As a parent and Alaskan deeply committed to the success of our public schools, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would cap how much local communities can contribute to public education.

This proposal is deeply concerning. It comes at a time when school districts are already grappling with instability—federal education funds have been unexpectedly frozen, and last-minute state funding reductions have forced painful decisions in Anchorage and across Alaska. Our district is issuing layoffs and scrambling to protect student services just weeks before the school year begins.

Now, the idea of limiting the ability of local communities to invest in their own children adds yet another layer of uncertainty—and potential harm.

Capping local contributions would:

- Remove critical funding from districts that already operate lean budgets.
- Disempower municipalities that want to take ownership of their public schools.
- Disregard the unique needs of urban and diverse districts like Anchorage, where flexibility is essential to meet student needs.

Families want solutions that stabilize and strengthen education—not proposals that reduce resources and remove local control. If we truly care about outcomes for students, we must support communities in contributing what they can—not restrict them.

I urge you to reject this proposal and focus instead on building trust, restoring stability, and working in partnership with local school districts to support Alaska’s students.

Sincerely,

Meghan Clark, Anchorage

[redacted]

ASD Grad and Mother to Five ASD Grads and Current Student

From: jeffrey snedgen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: education funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:48:31 PM

You don't often get email from jwsnedgen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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dear board
in order for our community, country, and civilization to have a future education must be a priority.
please do what you can to unfreeze federal funds for educational Alaska.
thanks for your consideration in this matter
Jeffrey Wayne Snedgen

From: Cady Lynn O"Brien
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Stop destroying our future
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:41:50 PM

You don't often get email from cadylynndancelessons@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello.
Your lack of funding and support for the educational system is reckless, short-sighted, and devastating to Alaska's students—our future.

Our children deserve better then this! We demand you take action to fund our schools and appropriately support our students.

Stop defending education!
Stop defending educational supports for students and schools!
Stop dismantling the educational system!

-Cady Lynn

From: Megan Richotte
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Request to remove cap on local contributions to public school districts
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:50:33 PM

You don't often get email from meganrichotte@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

I am writing to request that the cap that local jurisdictions currently have regarding how much they can contribute to local school districts be removed. I understand that you are considering lowering the cap. This is the opposite direction from what should be happening. Our local school district is in need of additional funds beyond what our municipality is currently allowed to contribute in order to ensure that our community's students receive quality educations. Lowering the cap will make this situation even worse. I ask you to remove it altogether.

We currently have two high school students. Classes are too large, sports and activities are being cut. We need more tools, not fewer to care for our kids.

Respectfully,
Megan and Rich Richotte

From: Laura Bruce
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public comment for ASD
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:11:34 PM

You don't often get email from laura@apcm.net. Learn why this is important

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Dear sir/Madam:
I am an employer for a large firm here in Anchorage. My workforce and potential workforce are all in Anchorage. I am urging you to not to enact the cap on my community's ability to fund public schools. My future workforce depends on us prioritizing education.

Sincerely,
Laura Bruce
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502

This e-mail and its attachments may contain confidential information that is intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient (or responsible for delivery of the message to such person), you may not use, copy, distribute or deliver to anyone this message (or any part of its contents) or take any action in reliance on it. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify APCM or AWA immediately by e-mail or telephone and delete the e-mail from all computers under your control.

From: Dr B-the-VERB!!
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local funding contributions for education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:18:49 AM

You don't often get email from bert.lord@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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This is a post for public comment regarding local funding contributions for education.

In the name of equity, a community should not be penalized for wanting to allocate more of its tax dollars towards education.

Urban communities tend to have more financial resources, and they pay higher taxes. These tax dollars are already being allocated to non-urban schools through the state's tax coffers. Suppose the same urban community chooses to allocate further dollars to pay for education, which is more expensive in urban areas. In that case, they should not be penalized through a reduced base student allocation from the state.

To penalize communities for investing in the education of their members is simply a money grab with the façade of equity.

-Bert Lord
A challenge for us in this century is to keep knowledge alive. When it is only useful for passing a test, it is lifeless.

From: Michael McNeil
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: McNeil Christy
Subject: ASD Superintendent Requests I Contact you
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:31:20 AM

You don't often get email from mike.mcneil@mac.com. Learn why this is important

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The ASD has become an activist organization - calling on others to take action, and making statements that "we're not backing down"! Thank you for holding student and school spending down. Spending is OUT OF CONTROL! Until there's a correlation between funding and quality of education I am vehemently opposed to spending more. ASD has a goal of graduating 98% of its students while hoping to have only a third of them "proficient" in math and reading. This is outrageous! I've emailed Begich, Murkowski, and Sullivan with the same message.

Thank you,

Mike McNeil

Dear ASD Staff and Families,

This is not the kind of message I expected to send in mid-July. Just weeks before students return to school, we are being forced to issue layoff notices and reassignments across the Anchorage School District. This is happening only because public education in Alaska is being actively undermined by unstable decision-making, delayed funding, and systemic negligence.

Many in our community are only now learning how serious the situation has become. That is understandable. Summer in Alaska is short, and families rightfully take this time to rest, not monitor legislative backchannels. But while our community was enjoying the holiday weekend, **federal education funding was quietly frozen just before July 4**, leaving districts and students stranded without warning.

This letter is not just an update. **It is a warning, and a call to action.**

What Just Happened, and Why It's Alarming

On July 3, the U.S. Department of Education froze nearly **$46 million** in federal education grants statewide, including more than **$14 million** for ASD. These funds were already budgeted to support **after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services**. Now, with the school year weeks away, we are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources.

At the state level, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding **twice**, after districts had already finalized their budgets. When the Legislature overrode his veto

by a **46–14 vote**, the Governor **still slashed an additional $200 per student** without warning, creating a **$4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare.** A special session is now scheduled to give lawmakers a chance to override the veto.

The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to **cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools**—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like ours.

This is not a coincidence. It is a pattern. These decisions reflect a coordinated failure of leadership that disregards the will of Alaskans and jeopardizes the foundation of our public schools.

Standing with Courage and Thinking Beyond the Crisis

Some state and local leaders have had the courage to speak out. They have called this pattern what it is: reckless, short-sighted, and devastating to Alaska's students—our future. But speaking out is not enough. We must act. And we must hold ourselves accountable for what happens next.

We have to hold two truths at once:

- Yes, our schools need more funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions made in bad faith.
- Yes, we also need a long-term, coherent strategy to ensure every dollar is aligned to student needs and our shared values.

These truths are not in conflict. They are both essential. We must advocate and plan. Defend and lead. React and rebuild. That is what this moment requires.

What We Have Already Done, and Why It Was Not Enough

Earlier this year, ASD approved one of the leanest budgets in district history. We cut 42 central office positions. We reduced more than $30 million in salaries, benefits, and services. We drew down reserves below our policy minimum. After exhausting these options, we had to make agonizing decisions to increase class sizes, and pause enrichment programs. These decisions were not made lightly. They were made to protect the classroom and preserve core services.

But even those deep cuts were not enough to absorb the shock of frozen federal funding and last-minute state reductions.

That is why **today, layoff notices and staff reassignments were issued**. These are not abstract policy outcomes. They are real people. These are real losses. And students will feel the difference when they walk into school in August.

This Is What Happens When Systems Fail Students

When school districts are blindsided by mid-year funding losses, school districts **cannot plan, cannot hire, and cannot deliver**the consistent services that students need. These disruptions weaken everything from after-school programming to

counseling to special education.

We are being asked to run a modern school system with **unstable and unpredictable resources**. This is not sustainable, and this is not acceptable.

If we don't stop this trend now, it will continue. The proposed **cap on local education contributions** would make it harder for communities like Anchorage to invest in their own children. If approved by the State Board of Education, it could remove millions more from our schools in the years ahead.

What You Can Do Right Now

There is still time to act, but not much. Here's how you can choose to make a difference:

- **Submit public comment to the State Board of Education** at eed.stateboard@alaska.gov by 5:00 p.m. on July 25 regarding the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education.
- Contact your state legislators before August 2 to share your perspective ahead of the upcoming special session.
- Reach out to Alaska's congressional delegation to let them know how you feel about the federal funding freeze.
    - Senator Dan Sullivan
    - Senator Lisa Murkowski
    - Representative Nick Begich
- **Share this information with others** who may want to stay informed or participate in the process. We've created a frequently asked questions (FAQs) webpage with more information and details.

We Are Not Backing Down

To Team ASD: Thank you. Your commitment, even in the face of disruption and uncertainty, is extraordinary. You should not have to carry this burden.

To our families: Thank you for your trust and for your growing advocacy for excellent public schools for every child. We need your voice now more than ever.

To our students: You deserve stability, opportunity, and a system that is worthy of your potential. This is not your fault, and we will not stop fighting for you.

We are not just managing a crisis. We are resisting the slow dismantling of public education in Alaska. And we are doing it with clarity, courage, and purpose.

When this moment passes, **Anchorage will still be standing**. That is because we will not be silent. We will not be passive. We will lead.

In solidarity and resolve,

Dr. Jharrett Bryantt
Superintendent, Anchorage School District

From: Alex Pastorino
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulatory Change
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 7:11:40 AM

You don't often get email from abpastori49@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,
I am writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed regulatory change by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) limiting local contributions to school districts in an attempt to meet the federal "disparity test" and preserve $81 million in Impact Aid.

Local contributions are essential for addressing unique local needs, especially where state allocations are insufficient. While complying with federal requirements to maintain access to critical Impact Aid funding is important, there is no one size fits all. The proposed rule undermines community ability to support and invest in their own public schools, to maintain class sizes, to retain qualified educators, and much more.

Reducing the ability for local communities to invest in education seems to undermine our overall goal in education. Do we not want more community support, not less. Wouldn't it make more sense for the Board and DEED to work collaboratively with school districts, stakeholders, and the Legislature to find equitable and meaningful solutions that both preserve federal funding and also maintain local investment. Can we not find sustainable solutions that protect both concerns and, ultimately, create a better system, as well as enhanced relationships with local communities.

Please reconsider the proposed regulatory change and think outside the box to come up with a better, more collaborative, and meaningful solution. Our children are our priority; and I do believe we all agree on this point. So, thank you for the work you do and for considering my input. I realize you have a difficult task ahead of you and wish you the best. I am confident your actions will be in the best interest of our children and our communities who support them and their education. And I'm confident there is another solution and trust your creative and skillful abilities to address this.

Sincerely,

Barbara Pastorino (retired educator), Juneau, Alaska

From: Mary Steiert
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regulation change regarding financing of public schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:02:17 AM

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State Board of Education -
I oppose the proposed changes to section 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administration Code regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula. Our schools are being gutted and limiting any funding is harming the education of our children.

thank you for your consideration,
Mary Steiert
Anchorage, AK

From: Shaina Seidner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:19:42 AM

You don't often get email from shaina.seidner@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'm voicing my support to remove any proposed cap on local education contributions. The amount of destruction the governor has already done to our school districts is beyond comprehension, we need help, not additional slashing of funds or op eds based on outdated studies or with key data mysteriously absent. Our family attends our neighborhood school which we love, Huffman Elementary, and hope to stay there until we move onto middle school. However, we have the opportunity to move out of state in two years and it is a real consideration of ours given the way things have been going here. Alaska expects schools to educate their students with less money, no pensions for newer teachers, unstable funding year to year, and a governor and (some) state reps who apparently believe we should be able to do more with less, but aren't in the classrooms to back up their decisions. It blows my mind that there are still people who 'back' the governor's ridiculous threats and are holding funding back from public schools out of spite. As this education crisis continues, Alaska will keep losing the young families and households, like ours, that the state needs to survive.

Shaina Seidner | REALTOR®
Keller Williams Alaska Group | KLOUD
[redacted]
https://kloudrealtygroup.kw.com/

From: Gloria Burnett
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment: Local Funding Contributions for Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:17:53 AM

You don't often get email from glow313@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning,
I am writing in **opposition** to the proposal presented by the DEED Commissioner to the State Board of Education to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. As a mother/stepmother of 4 children currently attending public school via the Anchorage School District, I cannot believe this proposal has even been put forward considering the current fiscal climate in our state and nation.

At a time when our Federal Department of Education is being dismantled, federal funds appropriated to longstanding programs are being rescinded, bipartisan state support for education funding is being vetoed and outmigration of Alaskans is at an all time high, we need to be doing MORE to SUPPORT our education system. Instituting a cap on the amount of local contributions to our public schools will further exacerbate and stress a situation that is already in survival mode.

Please decline this proposal and allow local communities to make whatever contributions they see fit to maintain public schools in Alaska.

Sincerely,
Gloria Burnett

From: Daly Beth
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Help support and ensure our future
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:36:02 AM
Attachments: Outlook-kvxnltx2.jpg

You don't often get email from daly_beth@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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Hello,
Help us in this dire time of need for support for schools in Alaska, please.

Our education system in Alaska is crumbling and the cost will be tremendous to this state's future, not just for our children but for our future economy and the health of our communities. The foundations of any state and local community are the schools, and the consistent stripping of funds to public education in Alaska shows that our communities are crumbling with leaders that continue to tear it up.

Please, we need your advocacy for education funding for the state of Alaska.

I am an elementary school teacher of 22 years, a mother of two within the Anchorage School District, and an active community member in Anchorage. Over the last couple of years, I've watched the value our state government places on education severely weaken and dive into a collapse. As teachers, we feel more like soldiers on a battlefield than mentors for youth in a classroom. It's eaten away at us, most of who are working without a pension, with large student numbers in classrooms, as well as amplified student-behaviors with lack of supports, and heavy stresses from families that feel there's no one else to turn to but teachers. My colleagues are resigning at epic rates because of the stress and lack of support, and our communities are floundering and suffering from weak resources for their children. The layoffs our school district must repeatedly do to cover the lack of funding are more punches in the gut to educators--educators that children need in their lives to thrive.

Please, use your power and your voice to reinstate funding for Alaska's education and, in turn, future survival. It's a nightmare to think what will come out of this slashing of education funding for years and years to come.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth Daly Gamble
Grade 2 Classroom Teacher
Inlet View Elementary
IB World School, PYP

"Be the change you wish to see in the world"
-Mahatma Gandhi

From: Wendy Anderson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do not expand contributions definition
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:38:28 AM

You don't often get email from akbookgrl@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To: The Alaska State Board of Education & Early Learning Development

As a 30+ year resident of Alaska, I've always been impressed at how communities support their students. As such, I was shocked to hear you were considering expanding the definition of local contributions that would essentially limit the funding available for our children's education. With the State underfunding education, this would be another devastating blow to Alaska's schools.

The State of Alaska consistently ranks in the bottom half in K-12 education performance rankings in the USA. If the state won't fund Alaska's schools, communities should have the right and ability to ensure their kids receive a good education. We need kids to grow into adults with the skills to compete in our world and make a stronger Alaska.

Your proposed change hurts Alaska's children, our families. It hurts Alaska. Don't do it.

Sincerely,
Wendy Anderson
Alaska Resident & Voter

David Means
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801
davidmeans.retired@gmail.com

July 16, 2025

Members of the State Board of Education
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

Re: Proposed regulation changes to local contributions

Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

Thank you for rejecting emergency regulation changes concerning local contributions. They needed time for public comment and additional analysis.

I am **opposed** to the proposed changes to the regulations concerning local contributions. I urge you to reject these changes.

1. These changes do not solve the federal disparity test. I understand the rationale for these changes is to ensure that Alaska passes the federal disparity test in the future. However, I have not seen any documentation that rewriting the definition of local contributions would assure the State Board that Alaska will pass this test in the future. I encourage the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development staff to analyze the 2024 school district financial statements by removing municipal appropriations to pupil transportation, student activities, food services, and other similar funds. Does this change the results of the 2024 disparity test? I think the State Board should know this before approving these regulation changes.

2. The proposed language is ambiguous. I have three principal concerns. First, I think this proposed language requires the city or borough to charge school districts a fair market value for rent for schools using city or borough owned facilities. The city or borough owns the school buildings in most cases. Implementing this would adversely impact the school district's finances because the city or borough would have to reduce their cash appropriation to the school district's operating fund for educational expenditures. This regulation should explicitly exclude rents or leases for use of school district facilities. Second, it is not clear whether the city and borough would have to account for area-wide public safety services such as fire and police protection. I recall that several years ago a small city charged the school district for every police visit or drive by, even during nighttime when services were not needed or wanted. The city wanted to reduce its cash

appropriation to the school district. Fortunately, the Department of Education and Early Development stepped in to clarify that those services were not in-kind services. More recently I learned about a municipality that wants to include fire protection services as part of its in-kind appropriation to the school district. Public safety services provided to every resident, business, and property owner ought to be excluded as an in-kind service. Third, many student athletic teams use city or borough facilities for their games and practices. Perhaps the swim team uses the parks and recreation swimming pool, or the baseball team uses a parks and recreation baseball diamond. There are numerous instances of this throughout Alaska. School districts and their municipal's park and recreation department can set up an accounting method to record the fair market use of these facilities, if they have not already established this. Some of these facilities were built with school bonds reimbursed by the state. The public may become very concerned that when a team uses a public a parks and recreation facility that their city and borough cannot appropriate cash to the school district for the value of these uses. They may not understand this because they voted for a bond issue to be partially reimbursed by the state, and their property taxes are paying for the remainder. Furthermore, there is not always a clear demarcation between grounds operated by the school district and operated by their parks and recreation department—sometimes they are operated collaboratively.

3. <u>The State Board needs to know the fiscal impacts to school districts.</u> The public notice states that there is not a financial impact to the state. However, these changes prohibit a city or borough from appropriating directly into a school district's pupil transportation, food services, student activities, or similar funds. The school district will need to find other sources to pay for expenditures from these funds—and that will usually mean transferring money from their operating fund thereby reducing resources to pay for classroom instruction. I encourage the State Board to request from departmental staff a listing by district and purpose of all city or borough direct appropriations to these funds during fiscal year 2024. This analysis will provide some, but not all, financial information concerning adverse impacts to local school districts.

Again, for these and other similar reasons, I urge the State Board of Education to **reject** changes to the regulation.

These changes, if approved, need a clear and workable effective date for implementation. In order to provide cities, boroughs, and school districts time to adjust, I suggest the earliest implementation date be July 1, 2026.

If the State Board approves these proposed changes, I suggest that the official State Chart of Accounts for School Districts be amended concurrently so that school district personnel and their financial auditors prepare and opine on properly prepared annual financial statements.

Sincerely,

David Means
Retired
davidmeans.retired@gmail.com

CC Legislature: Senator Kiehl
Representative Story
Representative Hannan

DEED: Commissioner Bishop
Deputy Commissioner Morrison
Finance and Support Services Director Heinenken
School Finance Manager Weed

ALASBO: Executive Director Carter
President Hulett
EFWG Chair Parrott

Juneau: School District Superintendent Hauser
Chief Financial Officer Herbert

From: youngman_anita
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Subject: Alaska"s Education System Is in Crisis — We Need Immediate Action
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:13:31 AM

You don't often get email from youngman_anita@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Members,

I am writing to you in a time of crisis for Alaska's public education system. Our schools are collapsing under the weight of chronic underfunding—and the consequences will be catastrophic, not just for our children, but for the future of our state.

Alaska's education system is no longer at risk; it is actively deteriorating. Class sizes are growing, teachers are leaving in droves, student needs are going unmet, and families are losing faith in a system meant to support them. We are no longer able to be proactive—we are now triaging a system in collapse.

I am an elementary school teacher, a mother of two recent Anchorage School District graduates, and a long-time community member. In the past few years, I've watched the value placed on education by our state leadership erode to a devastating low. Teachers are stretched beyond capacity, working without pensions, managing overwhelming classroom demands, and absorbing the emotional strain of unsupported families and rising student needs. Many of my colleagues are leaving—not because they want to, but because they feel they have no choice.

The repeated layoffs, staff shortages, and program cuts are not just numbers on a budget sheet. They are direct hits to the heart of our schools—and to the well-being of our children.

Alaska's future depends on strong public schools. Without urgent action and serious reinvestment in education, we are jeopardizing the stability, economy, and health of our communities for generations to come.

I am asking—pleading—for your advocacy and leadership. Please fight for the funding our schools so desperately need. Please use your voice to protect Alaska's future.

Sincerely,
Anita Youngman
Anchorage Teacher, Parent, and Community Member

Anita Youngman
MAT K-8
1st grade
Inlet View Elementary
1219 N St.
907-742-7630

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." William Butler Yeats

From:	Frank Hauser
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc:	Commissioner, DEED (EED sponsored); Morrison, Karen B (EED)
Subject:	Juneau Board of Education Resolution Opposing Proposed Local Contribution Regulation Change
Date:	Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:36:02 AM
Attachments:	JSD BOE Resolution No. 2025-02.pdf

You don't often get email from frank.hauser@juneauschools.org. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

On behalf of the Juneau Board of Education, I am submitting as public comment the attached resolution opposing the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's proposed regulation change related to local contribution and in-kind services.

The proposed regulation change would significantly and negatively impact essential educational services and non-instructional programs for Juneau students and students across Alaska.

We appreciate your consideration as you deliberate on this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions or require additional information. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have on the negative statewide impacts of the proposed regulation change.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Frank Hauser
Superintendent
Juneau School District
[redacted]

From: Lilly Goodman-Allwright
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); deed.stateboard@alaska.gov
Subject: Education funding regulation
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:38:57 AM

[You don't often get email from lgoodman@mtaonline.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear Department of Education,

I am writing to urge you not to take action that would limit the ability of municipalities to provide funds for school districts in our state.

I am terrified for the future of our state when education funding is being limited in every way. Lack of education funding has an outsized price tag that is impossible to forecast due to its impact on mental health, incarceration rates, ability to have an educated workforce etc etc.

Municipalities need to be given every tool possible to offset the irresponsible and impossible funding situation created by the governor.

With the feds now freezing funding, there is no argument for tying the hands of municipal leaders who want to try to foster sustainable communities.

Please make the responsible choice for Alaska and allow municipalities to provide funds to schools.

Sincerely,

Lilly Goodman-Allwright
Lgoodman@mtaonline.net

From: tkach_natalia
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: We do not want to lose our job!
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:10:38 PM

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We want our teachers and our children to be treated with respect! We want to educate the Alaskan kids. The kids want to learn in friendly and respectful atmosphere! They are the future of the country!
Stop cutting the funds for education!!!

Natalia Tkach
ELL Tutor
Get Outlook for Android

From: Janita Shillingford
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); noreply@asdk12.org; news@asdk12.org
Cc: The Love Of My Life; Eva Birotte; Kimberly Birotte
Subject: Re: Clarity in a Time of Crisis and Where We Go From Here
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:45:37 PM

You don't often get email from janitashillingford@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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This email is hilarious to me and exactly why I've opted to homeschool this year, and the years following, for my 5 kiddos.

The system has failed us all, not only our children, but also us parents who rely on them, not only because we are told it's the law and we have to, but because they are supposed to be professional teachers, and they spend the majority of the days with our children.

However, they do not get any special or mandated training on learning disabilities and developmental delays, so they cannot even notify parents of these signs and red flags, they cannot advise further testing, or anything. Instead they put the children who are experiencing these challenges into a "bad box" and ignore them, causing the child to fall further behind, lack self confidence, and hate school.

Since we, as parents, have the option to homeschool and/or find alternative schooling for our children, I will not let the school district/asd set my children up for continued life failures.

I will instill the values and lessons that my children need to know and have, like cursive writing, laws, psychology, budgeting and planning, public speaking, buying vs renting and new vs used, true history facts, etc. in order to live comfortably and be successful in life.

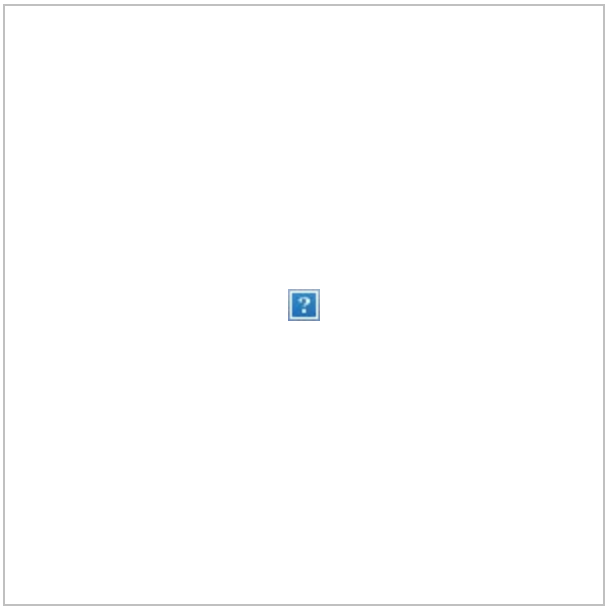
I opt to pass them the baton and let them finish the race, rather than have them all start at the start line of the race, and possibly never finish, like society really wants for them. I say that because America makes their money off human failures. That's why they focus on fixing what's not broken, rather than fix what is broken. They can specify all the problems but never think up a solution for them. They keep it a problem so that they can continue to profit off of them. For example, if nobody was getting sick, the Healthcare system wouldn't be booming right now. So America keeps us sick with chemicals in our foods, he'll fake food, medications, etc so they can stay rich. That's the MAGA way I guess, but I'm not with it and I'm not having it for me and my kiddos. I refuse! The system will no longer play my family or kids for fools like they have in the past. We are very woke, in my house.

I did not vote for Trump, just like I will not be making any calls or writing any emails on your behalf. Why would I want to help those who hurt us? God told me to be good and just, not nieve or anyone's punching bag.

Good luck!
Janita Shillingford
[redacted]

Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

On Tue, Jul 15, 2025 at 6:39 PM, Anchorage School District <noreply@asdk12.org> wrote:



Dear ASD Staff and Families,

This is not the kind of message I expected to send in mid-July. Just weeks before students return to school, we are being forced to issue layoff notices and reassignments across the Anchorage School District. This is happening only because public education in Alaska is being actively undermined by unstable decision-making, delayed funding, and systemic negligence.

Many in our community are only now learning how serious the situation has become. That is understandable. Summer in Alaska is short, and families rightfully take this time to rest, not monitor legislative backchannels. But while our community was enjoying the holiday weekend, **federal education funding was quietly frozen just before July 4**, leaving districts and students stranded without warning.

This letter is not just an update. **It is a warning, and a call to action.**

What Just Happened, and Why It's Alarming

On July 3, the U.S. Department of Education froze nearly **$46 million** in federal education grants statewide, including more than **$14 million** for ASD. These

funds were already budgeted to support **after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services**. Now, with the school year weeks away, we are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources.

At the state level, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding **twice**, after districts had already finalized their budgets. When the Legislature overrode his veto by a **46–14 vote**, the Governor **still slashed an additional $200 per student** without warning, creating a **$4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare.** A special session is now scheduled to give lawmakers a chance to override the veto.

The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to **cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools**—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like ours.

This is not a coincidence. It is a pattern. These decisions reflect a coordinated failure of leadership that disregards the will of Alaskans and jeopardizes the foundation of our public schools.

Standing with Courage and Thinking Beyond the Crisis

Some state and local leaders have had the courage to speak out. They have called this pattern what it is: reckless, short-sighted, and devastating to Alaska's students—our future. But speaking out is not enough. We must act. And we must hold ourselves accountable for what happens next.

We have to hold two truths at once:

- Yes, our schools need more funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions made in bad faith.
- Yes, we also need a long-term, coherent strategy to ensure every dollar is aligned to student needs and our shared values.

These truths are not in conflict. They are both essential. We must advocate and plan. Defend and lead. React and rebuild. That is what this moment requires.

What We Have Already Done, and Why It Was Not Enough

Earlier this year, ASD approved one of the leanest budgets in district history. We cut 42 central office positions. We reduced more than $30 million in salaries, benefits, and services. We drew down reserves below our policy minimum. After exhausting these options, we had to make agonizing decisions to increase class sizes, and pause enrichment programs. These decisions were

not made lightly. They were made to protect the classroom and preserve core services.

But even those deep cuts were not enough to absorb the shock of frozen federal funding and last-minute state reductions.

That is why **today, layoff notices and staff reassignments were issued**. These are not abstract policy outcomes. They are real people. These are real losses. And students will feel the difference when they walk into school in August.

This Is What Happens When Systems Fail Students

When school districts are blindsided by mid-year funding losses, school districts **cannot plan, cannot hire, and cannot deliver** the consistent services that students need. These disruptions weaken everything from after-school programming to counseling to special education.

We are being asked to run a modern school system with **unstable and unpredictable resources**. This is not sustainable, and this is not acceptable.

If we don't stop this trend now, it will continue. The proposed **cap on local education contributions** would make it harder for communities like Anchorage to invest in their own children. If approved by the State Board of Education, it could remove millions more from our schools in the years ahead.

What You Can Do Right Now

There is still time to act, but not much. Here's how you can choose to make a difference:

- **Submit public comment to the State Board of Education** at eed.stateboard@alaska.gov by 5:00 p.m. on July 25 regarding the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education.
- Contact your state legislators before August 2 to share your perspective ahead of the upcoming special session.
- Reach out to Alaska's congressional delegation to let them know how you feel about the federal funding freeze.
    - Senator Dan Sullivan
    - Senator Lisa Murkowski
    - Representative Nick Begich
- **Share this information with others** who may want to stay informed or participate in the process. We've created a frequently asked questions (FAQs) webpage with more information and details.

We Are Not Backing Down

To Team ASD: Thank you. Your commitment, even in the face of disruption and uncertainty, is extraordinary. You should not have to carry this burden.

To our families: Thank you for your trust and for your growing advocacy for excellent public schools for every child. We need your voice now more than ever.

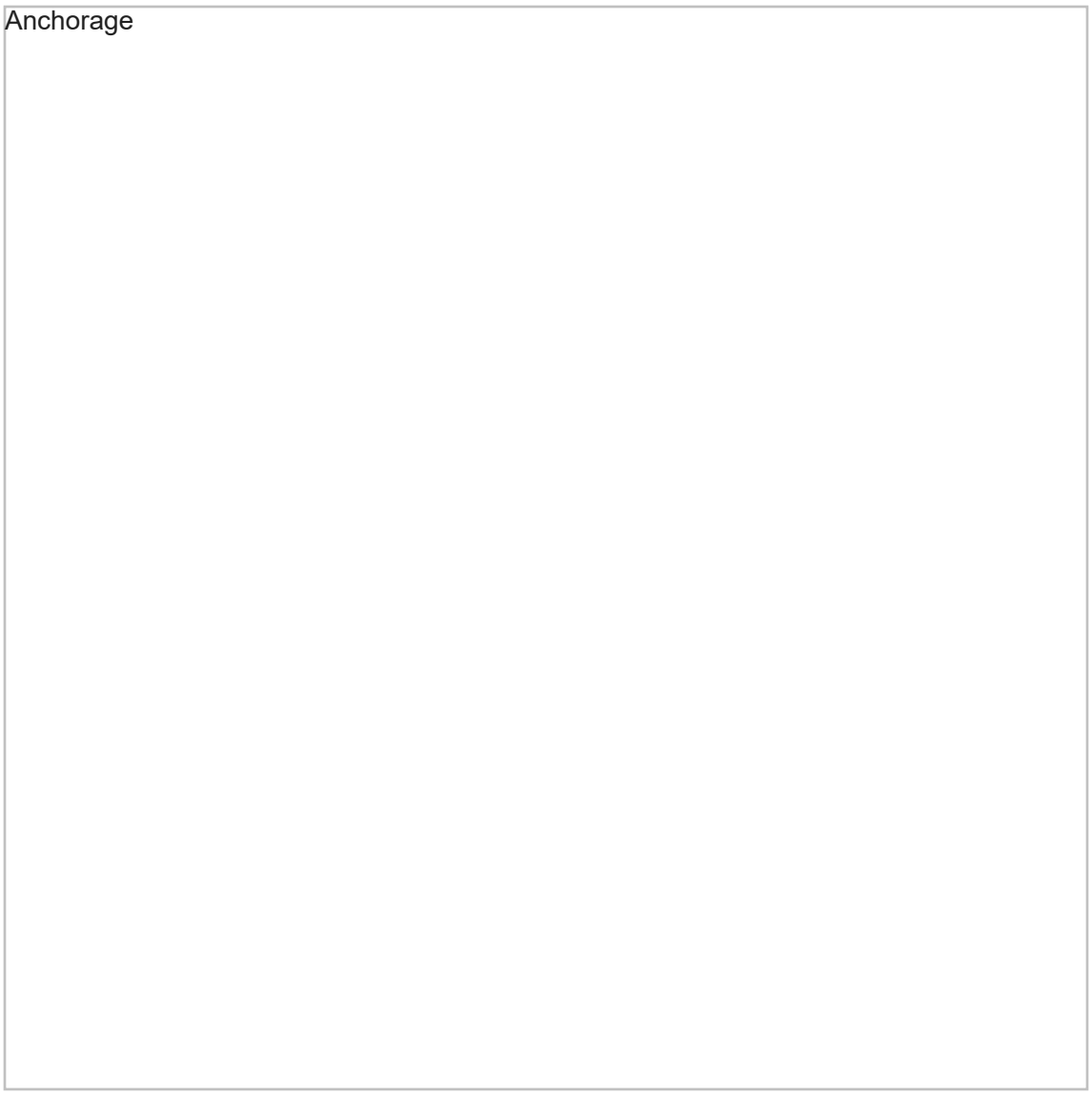
To our students: You deserve stability, opportunity, and a system that is worthy of your potential. This is not your fault, and we will not stop fighting for you.

We are not just managing a crisis. We are resisting the slow dismantling of public education in Alaska. And we are doing it with clarity, courage, and purpose.

When this moment passes, **Anchorage will still be standing**. That is because we will not be silent. We will not be passive. We will lead.

In solidarity and resolve,

Dr. Jharrett Bryantt
Superintendent, Anchorage School District



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Anchorage School District | 5530 E Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99504-3135

From: Laura Moore, MD
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: OPPOSITION to your proposed rule to limit community funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:56:28 PM

You don't often get email from lmoore@allergyalaska.com. Learn why this is important

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I don't often engage in politics, but what is being done to our public school systems by leadership in the state of Alaska is negligent and unacceptable, so I feel compelled to let my voice be heard. The DEED is well aware of the budget shortfalls facing every school district in this state, so any attempt on your part to further decrease school funding is equivalent to an active decision to dismantle our schools and damage our students. Alaska students rank at 49/50 in national competency based on a 2025 US News and World Report study. We are already struggling to effectively and efficiently educate our students, so why would you propose any rule or legislation that would further damage student education? It's unconscionable and unethical. Our students, families and state deserve to have the support of not only our state legislation, but more importantly, the Alaska DEED, and this attempt to undermine school funding only highlights your lack of interest in promoting any degree of quality education in our public schools. As a business owner and employer, I've watched our workforce shrink due to bad politics, a downturn in the economy, and the exodus of the oil industry. As a state, we can't afford to push families away, which is what defunding our public schools will do. I can personally attest to this, as I left the state of MT when my children were young because of their poor education system. Please revoke the proposed rule to limit community funding of local public schools, as it hurts students, families, students and our communities. If anything, our communities know best what to fund within their schools, and the Alaska Department of Education has no business dictating otherwise.

Respectfully,

Laura M. Moore, MD, FAAAAI, FACAAI, FAAP
Medical Director and Owner
[redacted]ogy Center of Alaska
[redacted]
[redacted]
www.allergyalaska.com

From: Tam Agosti-Gisler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: schoolboard@asdk12.org
Subject: Local education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:16:37 PM

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Dear Board of Education,

We are super voters in the State of Alaska. We are products of the Anchorage School District and we received an excellent education. We have children or grandchildren in attendance or who will be future attendees in the ASD. We are adamantly opposed to changing the rules concerning local education funding. The strangulation of funding for public education is a serious error and hurts our children. If anything, state and local funding needs to be increased NOT decreased! Please support our children's education.

Johann 'Hans' Gisler
Tam Agosti-Gisler
Genevieve Landes
Cody Landes
Luke Gisler
Ashley Gisler

From: carolyn tag
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Proposed Regulation!
Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 3:58:45 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a retired teacher, grandparent, and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we are able to provide for our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Tague

Anchorage

From: Ambria Saucier
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Changes on Local Contributions-Valdez
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 7:59:31 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

As a concerned parent, I urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city. These changes will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten programs that help our children thrive.

Our community relies on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control.

All students in Valdez deserve access to a quality education, safe transportation, nutrition services, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, support local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Ambria Saucier
Valdez City School Parent

From: Amanda Loomis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 3:11:01 PM

[You don't often get email from okayready@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Amanda Loomis
Parent

Sent from my iPhone

From: Norman & Toby Campbell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Protecting Sitka"s Local Support for Public Education
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 5:03:20 PM

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Hello State Board Members:

My name is Toby Campbell. I live in Sitka, Alaska ([redacted]). I am a retired elementary school teacher, primary literacy specialist, home school coordinator, and currently a literacy tutor.

I am writing today to let you know that education is very underfunded in our community and Sitka has already made significant cuts. Sitka wants and needs local control over how much our community is able to fund education. We, Sitkans, have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make our schools stronger. Our schools (our children and teachers!) desperately need the money that is at risk of being reduced!

This reduction of ability for local support will deeply undermine community partnerships and support in/of our schools. Please, please vote to override Governor Dunleavy's veto on education funding.

Thank you for your important consideration of this decision! It can make an enormously positive impact on our community and children!

Respectfully,
Toby W. Campbell
[redacted]

From: Norman & Toby Campbell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contributions to Education
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 5:09:55 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and a concerned citizen of Sitka. I strongly urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting financially and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our children. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Norman Campbell

[redacted]
Sitka, Alaska 99835

From: Stephen Morse
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Redefinition of "community support" comment
Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025 6:45:16 PM

You don't often get email from stephenmorse30@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The state school board has a proposal before it to redefine "community support" and I am writing to encourage you as a resident and former Sitka teacher NOT to do that. This action will add even more cuts to our bare bones school district budget and penalize the school by monetizing the benefits from those individuals and organizations who have volunteered their own time to contribute to the improvement of our schools, and subtracting that value from the money received by the state. I have watched with dismay as our governor has failed in his constitutional duty to appropriately fund education statewide. This seems to me to be adding insult to injury. The insult is that it limits local control of education and the injury is that our school district will have to further reduce its budget most likely by cutting more teachers. There have already been fourteen positions cut last year. If you value our children's quality of education and I know you do, don't let this happen. Please vote no to redefining "community support".

Sincerely,

Stephen D Morse PhD
[redacted]., Sitka,

Alaska 99835

[redacted]

From: Heidi McCroskey Heimerl
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject proposed regulation reducing local control and local funding for schools
Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 8:52:07 AM

You don't often get email from heidi.mccroskey@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent of three children in the public school system and a community member in Anchorage, Alaska. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation that would change local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a responsibility to act in the best interest of *all* children in our state. This proposal does not meet that responsibility. It takes a lowest-common-denominator approach to school funding, undermines local self-determination, and penalizes communities that choose to invest more in their students. It also introduces unnecessary complexity and uncertainty for districts and municipalities that are already struggling to meet basic student needs.

Our districts are under tremendous strain. As a school counselor, I see every day what chronic underfunding looks like -- larger class sizes, limited access to mental health and academic supports, and serious challenges in hiring and retaining qualified teachers and staff. Families and educators are doing everything they can to support students, but this regulation would make it even harder to give kids what they need to thrive.

Your decisions have real consequences for real families. We're already seeing record numbers of families leaving Alaska. Continuing to introduce policies that are not centered on students or families will only push more hardworking Alaskans away from this state we all love.

There are better, more thoughtful ways to address the issue at hand. I urge you to reject this harmful proposal, explore all available options, and choose a solution that strengthens our schools and puts Alaska's students first.

Sincerely,

Heidi Heimerl
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502

--
Heidi McCroskey Heimerl
heidi.mccroskey@gmail.com

"May we not just grieve, but give; May we not just ache, but act; May our signed right to bear arms, Never blind our sight from shared harm; May we choose our children over chaos. May another innocent never be lost. Maybe everything hurts, Our hearts

shadowed & strange, But only when everything hurts, May everything change."
-- Amanda Gorman, Hymn for the Hurting

From: Odile Meister
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please oppose a change to local contribution rules
Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 11:57:19 AM

You don't often get email from odile.meister@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Wrangell, Alaska I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Odile Meister and Ken Lewis

[redacted], Wrangell, AK 99929

From: emmcdonald28@gmail.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to New School Support Limits
Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 9:31:25 PM

[You don't often get email from emmcdonald28@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good Evening Board Members,

I am writing to strongly encourage you to REJECT any change in regulation that further limits community support for schools. As funding for Alaskan schools has seen inflationary cuts for years, my community of Sitka has consistently looked for every possible way to support our schools and mitigate the worst of this funding situation. The proposed regulation change is beyond belief. It will hurt not only our kids but the health of our entire community.

I hope you can find a way to lift up districts in greatest need rather than tear down what our community works so hard to provide- the largest cushion we can muster against the funding bombs the state keeps dropping on us.

Best,
Erin Clay
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kit and Jamie Winchester
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed DEED Regulation Changes to School Funding
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 11:10:11 AM

[You don't often get email from the.winchesters@live.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education Members:

As the parent of two young Valdez City Schools students, I am appalled at the proposal to prohibit local funding "outside the cap." This disingenuous approach serves only to further hurt Alaskan students already hovering just above the bottom of the barrel.

As the only state in the nation to use Impact Aid in place of state funding, we should already be ashamed. To further punish districts attempting to use local resources to better the odds of their students, without knowing whether it will even help in passing the disparity test (again, the only one required IN THE NATION), is simply unacceptable.

Please direct your efforts toward lobbying the state legislature to provide adequate funding for our children, and leave our districts alone to cobble together a free and appropriate public education.

Thank you for your time,
Jamie Winchester, parent
[redacted]

From: Katie Reilly
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: oppose changed regulations of DEED
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 4:28:25 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am the parent of a 1st grader in the Anchorage School District and I have read through your proposed changes to local contributions in the regulation of DEED and I strongly oppose it. This is just another example--baffling as it is--to our state's systematic unraveling of the public school system and I do not support it. Supporting public schools lifts everyone up. Our future workforce, for example. Our future politicians. Dismantling it helps no one. With less opportunity for well-supported educational opportunities that turn into job opportunities, watch crime rates rise. Watch economies fall.

I reiterate: I oppose your proposed change in regulation and I hope you withdraw it, for the betterment of our state.

Thank you,
Katie Reilly
Anchorage 99508 Resident

From: Stoney Creek Inn
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Connent on Proposed Changes to Local Contributions (4 AAC 09.985 & 4 X 09.990
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 4:59:06 PM

[You don't often get email from stay@stoneycreekinn.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern , In kind services such as building maintenance, grounds upkeep, snow plowing, utilities, etc are all part of a schools budget no matter where or whom is providing the services. This should not count against the funding cap! Funding includes all parts of education such as the facilities and their costs along with staff, materials, insurance, etc! How can you even look at these as separate parts of the education of our children and grandchildren. We are very concerned that the state of Alaska is FAILING OUR CHILDREN!

Sincerely,

Kent and Lisa Rininger
[redacted]
Seward, Ak 99664
[redacted]

From: Patricia Parsch
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation Change
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 5:07:14 PM

You don't often get email from patricia.parsch@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board,

I oppose the proposed regulation change regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula. Public schools need support from the governor and legislature. I feel the governor's consistent vetoing of funds for education is irresponsible and disparaging to Alaska's children, the state's future. Trying to make all schools charter schools eliminates choice for parents. Many parents are happy with their neighborhood school and regard it as a community hub. The current funding formula has worked in the past and money should be allocated for this upcoming school year. Making changes now and justifying it without current data is unnecessary. I strongly oppose this regulation change.

Sincerely,
Pat Parsch

From: Pgno9135
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed regulations changing local contribution rules
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 6:19:14 PM

You don't often get email from pgno9135@protonmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a community member in Ninilchik. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Lee Page

[redacted]

Ninilchik, AK 99639

From: Kyra Meyer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 7:58:46 PM

You don't often get email from kyrainvaldez@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent] of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:

- Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
- Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
- Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
- Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kyra Meyer
Parent

From: Adam Lewis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed regulation change 4 AAC 09
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 5:22:00 AM

You don't often get email from adam.m.lewis7@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Secretary,
As an Alaskan resident and parent of an ASD student, I couldn't be more against your proposal to change the way local contributions to schools are classified or limit them in any way. With the Governor's continued attacks on public schools, this change is unnecessary and hurtful to students.

We know who you are, and we are watching.

Regards, Adam Lewis

From: Victoria OConnell Curran
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose the change in definition of local and in-kind contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:40:52 AM

You don't often get email from victoria.oconnell@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Chair Stockhausen and Board Members,

I am strongly opposed to the proposed change in Dept of Education regulation redefining the definition of local contributions and in-kind donation for communities. I have lived in Sitka for 45 years. My children attended Sitka public schools and now my grandchildren do. One of the main reasons I raised my children here, and one of the reasons my daughter chose to raise her children here is because Sitka believes strongly in public education and has made every effort to make our schools stronger, providing a free public education to every student. I am proud that we have volunteered, voted, and contributed to this approach. As Phil Burdick so clearly stated in a recent letter to the editor in the Sitka Sentinel "Alaska failed the disparity test, not because of local contributions, but because of inadequate State funding. The school districts cited as the top 95% and bottom 5% don't even fund to the cap. This means that local contributions are not the source of the disparity; State funding is…. Instead of using the Impact Aid money to directly fund local communities that can't access the tax base of federal lands (like EVERY other state that receives Impact Aid), the Dunleavey administration is proposing to rewrite code to create (in)equity in communities that can raise revenue."

You will fail your mission of providing "an excellent education every day for every student" if this change occurs. It will be devastating to Sitka and every community in our State, whether they fund to the cap or not. This change would cost the community of Sitka alone 2 to 4 million dollars! It is a gutting assault on public education that Alaskans will not stand for! The most basic and important role of government is to provide its citizens with great public schools and education. It is mystifying to me why the Dunleavy administration has gone out of its way to dismantle Alaska public schools - families will leave our state in droves if this continues. Please do not make this change and instead work to provide public education funding to all communities and use the impact aid money to directly fund local communities that can not access the tax base of federal lands.
Thank you for considering my comments.

--
Tory O'Connell Curran
Grateful to live on Língit Aaní

From: Tauga Shiery
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:19:01 AM

[You don't often get email from taugamichelle@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent in Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Stay gold,

Tauga M. Shiery

From: Chris Walker
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose proposed education funding changes
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 11:02:22 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

Since the state of Alaska has shown it's absolute disregard for funding public education over the past years, I am writing as a concerned parent in Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Chris Walker, Valdez parent

Sent from my iPhone

From: R Shiery
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 12:06:34 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent & community member of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

WE REJECT ALL SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST POLICIES PROPOSED!

Sincerely,
Ray Shiery
Concerned parent.

From:	Rozlyn Grady-Wyche
To:	Stockhausen, Sally (EED); Fowley, James W (EED); Fields, James K (EED); McCollum, Kathryn G (EED); Bergey, Kimberly A (EED); Tyndall, Barbara (EED); EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Local Contribution Policy Harms Rural, Urban, and Military-Connected Students
Date:	Tuesday, July 15, 2025 12:19:30 PM

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Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche
Alaska Education Chair, NAACP Tri-State Area Conference (AK, OR, WA)
educationak@naacpaowsac.org | [redacted]

July 15, 2025

To: Chair and Co Chair, Commissioner Deena Bishop, and Members of the Alaska State Board of Education

As the Alaska Education Chair for the NAACP Tri-State Area Conference (Alaska, Oregon, Washington), I'm deeply concerned about ongoing conversations and proposals surrounding local contribution requirements for public education funding in Alaska.

Requiring increased local contributions shifts the constitutional responsibility of the state onto communities that are already overburdened and under-resourced. This is both inequitable and harmful to Alaska's most vulnerable children.

Alaska's rural communities disproportionately home to Alaska Native children lack the tax base or economic infrastructure to meet rising local contribution demands. Urban districts like Anchorage are facing population shifts, growing poverty rates, and chronic underfunding, all while trying to meet the needs of a highly diverse student population.

It is also important to highlight how increased local funding burdens would impact military-connected students. Alaska is home to thousands of military families stationed at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Fort Wainwright, Eielson Air Force Base, and other installations. These families serve our nation with honor and sacrifice and many choose to live on base, meaning they do not pay local property taxes. Requiring local communities to shoulder more of the education burden without adequate state support creates an unjust funding gap that punishes districts for welcoming military families. That is unacceptable and shortsighted.

When the state imposes additional financial responsibility on municipalities instead of fulfilling its constitutional obligation, the result is predictable: deeper disparities, more school closures, fewer staff, and an even greater equity gap for Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized students. This is dismantling public education at best!

As the NAACP, we are committed to protecting public education as a civil right. That includes calling out systemic decisions that would further disenfranchise communities of color, low-income families, and students with disabilities.

We urge the State Board to publicly reject any framework that increases dependence on local contributions, and instead advocate for a comprehensive, statewide solution to school funding that is equitable, stable, and adequate for all Alaska's children regardless of geography or zip code.

This is a moment for bold leadership. Our community is watching. Our children are watching. While I understand that each of you was appointed to serve on the State Board of Education, I urge you to take a moment to reflect on your *why,* what called you to this role, and what responsibility you felt to Alaska's children when you accepted it. Your decisions carry enormous weight, and right now, you still have time to choose a path that protects ALL of the children, families, and communities of Alaska. Leadership requires courage, especially when politics pressure you to forget the people you serve. Please remember your purpose.

Sincerely,
Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche
Alaska Education Chair, NAACP Tri-State Area Conference (AK, OR, WA)
educationak@naacpaowsac.org | [redacted]

From: Karen Lease
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Dunleavy hates kids.
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 1:58:00 PM

You don't often get email from knlease@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello State Education Board,

I have three kids in the Anchorage School District and am a former teacher (I've taught at both public schools and charter schools) and I urge you to reject Dunleavy regulations reducing local control and local funding for our school districts.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Karen Lease

From: Jenny Benda
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 2:24:59 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent and teacher in Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

I grew up in Valdez, and raised my family in Valdez because of the relationship between our schools and the city. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Benda
Parent, Teacher and long time Community Member

From: Timi Tullis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Jolin, Kathijo M (EED)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rule Change Regarding Impact Aid and the Disparity Test
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 4:44:46 PM

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July 15, 2025
From:
Timi Tullis
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801
timitullis@yahoo.com

To:
Alaska State Board of Education

Department of Education & Early Development (DEED)
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed regulatory change by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) that would limit local contributions to school districts in an attempt to meet the federal "disparity test" and preserve $81 million in Impact Aid.

While I understand the importance of complying with federal requirements to maintain access to critical Impact Aid funding, this proposed rule places an unfair burden on local communities and undermines their ability to support and invest in their own public schools. Limiting local contributions removes an essential tool districts use to address unique local needs, provide enrichment programs, maintain class sizes, and retain qualified educators—particularly in areas where the state allocation alone is insufficient.

Moreover, the suggestion that these limitations could be applied retroactively creates uncertainty and concern for school administrators and communities that have already committed local resources in good faith. This type of retroactive action is not only unjust but would disrupt district budgets and planning efforts already in progress.

Rather than reducing the ability of local communities to invest in education, I urge the Board and DEED to work collaboratively with the Legislature, school districts, and stakeholders to find an equitable and transparent solution that both preserves federal

funding and maintains local control and investment.

Failing the disparity test is a serious issue—but so is undermining the quality of education of children in all our communities. Alaska's students deserve better than a race to the bottom in school funding equity.

Please reconsider this approach and prioritize long-term, sustainable solutions that protect both our federal funding and the integrity of local educational investment.

Sincerely,

Timi Tullis
Juneau, AK

From: Merri Rowe
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:26:14 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I am a retired teacher and the parent of two teachers who are graduates of ASD. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does.

Maryann Rowe

[redacted]

Anchorage,AK 99508

Sent from my iPad

From: Joss Stewart
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: About the budget cuts
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:49:03 PM

You don't often get email from josslynnstewart7@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The national IQ average in America is critically low, one of the lowest compared to the other first world countries with school systems comparable(and often-times better) than ours. Alaska is the most diverse state in America, we home the country's most diverse school.

I am a student having to go through an alternative highschool. I was supposed to graduate last year yet I'm returning to school again this fall because the school system had failed me, and my brothers. We were in public school, in home school, in a private school, and even in extra educational programs all in hopes of staying up to speed and to succeed. There are significantly way more highschool drop outs I've personally noticed amongst my peers due to societal pressures and lack of resources for serious help found within schools.

I beg that the funds be unfrozen, and that schools be allowed to function in the sense that they are to protect and educate our youth. Private schools are highly inaccessible, public schools house the vast majority of our youth. You're seriously harming the next generation, those who are meant to take over the world's responsibilities next. I beg of you to reconsider.

From: jon tuttle
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:50:06 PM

You don't often get email from ak907r6@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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We stand by our Governor and his decisions in this matter.
The way in which the information was shared in such an obviously biased manner is unfortunate in our opinion , as it will most definitely create intentional devision and fear.
Kindest regards,
Tuttle family

From: Keira Brandon
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:52:05 PM

[You don't often get email from knbrandon23@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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As a senior student at Robert Service High school in Anchorage Alaska I am infuriated. Cutting school funding is not something that is a quick decision made by one person. School districts need money and forcing them to only give their students the bare minimum is truly an insane thing to do. I want and need an education, the students of Alaska and their communities want and need an education. You can’t only give student the bare minimum and call it a day.I am truly disappointed at what is going on in the legislation in Alaska.
~Keira Brandon

From: kelly rinck
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: The proposed cap on local education contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:54:20 PM

You don't often get email from krinck@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello, i would like to formally state that I do **NOT** support the proposed **cap on local education contributions.**

Thankyou, Kelly Rinck
Resident if Girdwood AK

Sent from my iPhone

From: nikki Agate
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Fundings
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:56:29 PM

[You don't often get email from nagate1989@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello, I am a parent of a student in Anchorage school district and I have been watching the news about all the cuts and slashing toward the school district. I am seeing our state representative acting like children and punishing the students at our school by their behavior. The student will suffer from this not the adults. My son struggles with school and needs the extra support so he is able to understand the work. If our state representative is allowed to continue there will be know more public school district for the kids. We need to put our kids first and stop allow the childish representation to continue for its destroying the district. Please put the kids first and please stop this before it's too late.
Think about the children future who can't afford private school we need a good public school. We need to protect the children of this state, please stand tall and help give them the voices they deserve and give the district the funding they need to support the children.
Thank you
Nichole Agate

From: Jane Banaszak
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: no cap on education contributions, schools and students need funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:56:54 PM

You don't often get email from janebanaszak@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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ASD obviously needs as much financial assistance as possible in this time of extreme financial cuts.

Jane Martinez
[redacted]
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99511

From: Светлана Попик
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Local Funding Cap Proposal
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6:57:42 PM

You don't often get email from popiksvetlana77@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,

My name is Svitlana, and I am a mother of an elementary school student at Trailside in Anchorage.

I am very concerned about the proposal to limit how much local communities can contribute to public education. Even though I don't know yet how this will affect our school, I'm worried for my daughter and for all students in Alaska. Schools need stable support, not more cuts or uncertainty.

Please do not take away more funding. Our children deserve a strong education and a safe, supportive place to learn.

Sincerely,

Svitlana Popik

Anchorage, AK

Mother of a Trailside Elementary student

From: andrea jones
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Public School Funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:03:15 PM

You don't often get email from andreajones@compliantoperations.com. Learn why this is important

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I vote NO for taking funding away from our public schools! Students need a lot of these programs. Restructure yes, but don't just cut off valuable programs before you know the value of them.

From: Mia Moore
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Anchorage students need funding resources, period.
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:05:37 PM

[You don't often get email from mpalkovitch@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The decisions to slash funding in Anchorage schools is NOT OKAY, nor is leadership not taking a stance of support and keeping our schools staffed, funded, and resourced. The kids of Anchorage deserve better. Do the jobs you are paid to do or we will find a way to cut your funding instead.

Mia Moore

From: Jenna Miller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposal to limit school funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:05:38 PM

You don't often get email from jennamiller87@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing in opposition to a proposal that would reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools. Limiting municipalities funding of public education will only further harm our school districts, and most importantly the students. Our school districts are already underfunded, and for our students to be successful in their public education that they are entitled to, they need to be funded appropriately.

It's wrong to keep attacking public education. Please do not limit a municipalities's funding for public schools.

Thank you.
Jenna Miller
Sent from my iPhone

From: Not your Average
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regarding the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education.
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:07:59 PM

You don't often get email from nirvanahgonzalez5@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing to you today with profound concern regarding the current state of public education funding in Alaska and, specifically, the alarming proposal to cap local community contributions to our public schools. As a deeply invested member of the Anchorage community, I am witnessing firsthand the devastating impact of unpredictable funding decisions and the active undermining of our school system.

The recent freeze of nearly $46 million in federal education grants statewide, including over $14 million for the Anchorage School District (ASD), and the Governor's repeated vetoes of bipartisan school funding, followed by an additional $200 per student cut, have created an unprecedented crisis. These actions have already forced ASD to issue layoff notices and reassignments, impacting vital programs such as after-school initiatives, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services—programs essential for the success and well-being of our children.

The proposal to cap local contributions is particularly egregious. This measure would directly strip more funding from urban districts like Anchorage, further hindering our ability to adequately support our students. Communities like ours should not be penalized for their commitment to investing in their children's education. This is not just a matter of financial constraint; it is a fundamental attack on local control and the ability of communities to prioritize their educational future.

The Anchorage School District has already demonstrated immense fiscal responsibility, implementing one of the leanest budgets in its history, cutting positions, reducing expenditures, and drawing down reserves. Despite these significant efforts, the sudden and drastic funding shortfalls have left our district with no viable options other than making agonizing decisions that directly impact students and dedicated staff.

We understand that you, as the State Board of Education, play a critical role in shaping education policy in Alaska. We urge you to consider the long-term consequences of these short-sighted decisions. Unstable and unpredictable funding, coupled with attempts to limit local investment, create an environment where school districts cannot plan, cannot hire, and cannot deliver the consistent, high-quality services that our students deserve. This is not sustainable, and it is certainly not acceptable.

We implore you to:

* Reject any proposal to cap local community contributions to public schools. This would be a detrimental blow to districts already struggling and would undermine the ability of communities to support their own children.
* Advocate for stable, predictable, and adequate state and federal funding for public education. Our schools need consistency to plan effectively and provide essential services.
* Recognize and support the critical role of local communities in funding their schools. Empowering communities to invest in education is vital for student success.

Our public schools are the bedrock of our communities and the future of our state. We must work collaboratively to ensure they are adequately funded and protected from decisions that

jeopardize the well-being and academic success of our students.
Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent matter.
Sincerely,
Nirvanah Gonzalez-Contreras
ASD 12th grade student
South Anchorage community

From: Katherine Ellison
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Cap on Local School Funding Contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:12:03 PM

You don't often get email from katherine.ellison1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing as a mother of three children within the Anchorage School District. I am also writing to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) Commissioner's recent proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools.

This proposed cap would have devastating consequences for urban districts like ours, which rely on local support to fill persistent gaps in state funding. Instead of empowering communities to invest in the success of their students, the cap would penalize them for doing so—undermining educational equity, local control, and the quality of education for thousands of students.

Local contributions are not a luxury—they are a necessity. They reflect a community's commitment to its children, and they are often used to support essential services like counseling, enrichment programs, and smaller class sizes. Removing or limiting this support risks dismantling the very foundation of our schools.

At a time when we should be working together to strengthen public education across Alaska, this proposal does the opposite. It removes flexibility, discourages investment, and disproportionately impacts the students who already face the greatest challenges.

I urge you to reject this harmful proposal and instead support policies that uphold local decision-making and ensure all students—regardless of their zip code—have access to a fully funded, high-quality education.

Thank you for your time and service to Alaska's students.

Katherine Ellison

From: Chelsea Logan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:26:47 PM

You don't often get email from c.martz77@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska Leadership and Federal Delegates,

What is happening to public education in Alaska is not just negligent—it's disgraceful.

You froze $46 million in federal education funds without warning. You vetoed bipartisan school funding—twice—after districts had already planned their budgets. You're pushing a proposal to cap how much our own communities can invest in our kids. What kind of leadership is this?

These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. These are educators. Counselors. Bus drivers. After-school mentors. These are children's futures. And right now, you're gutting them with short-sighted, reckless decision-making.

You are actively making it harder for our schools to function, harder for teachers to stay, and harder for kids to learn. And for what? A political game? A budget stunt? You are failing the very people you swore to serve.

We're not asking—we're demanding:

- Unfreeze the federal funds. Immediately.
- Restore full, predictable state education funding.
- Stop attacking local control over school contributions.
- And for the love of Alaska's future—start acting like our children

matter.

We will not sit quietly while you dismantle public education. We see you. And if you don't fix this, you will see us at every hearing, every inbox, every election, and every damn corner of this state.

Fund our schools. Period.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Logan

Anchorage Community Member / ASD Parent / Concerned Alaskan

From: Rosa Smallwood
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Urgent Concern Regarding Proposed Regulation on Local Funding Contributions for Alaska Schools
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:35:06 PM

You don't often get email from rosasmallwood@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Alaska Department of Education,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed regulation that could alter or reduce the local funding contributions to public education in Alaska. As an educator and advocate for equitable learning opportunities, I urge the Department of Education to reconsider any measures that would result in withholding or decreasing essential funds for our schools, students, and teachers.

Education is not only a fundamental right—it is the foundation of our communities and the future of our state. For students in Alaska, many of whom reside in rural and remote areas, access to quality education is already impacted by geographic, economic, and resource-based challenges. Reducing funding will only widen these gaps and exacerbate existing inequities.

Furthermore, our teachers—dedicated professionals who work tirelessly to support student learning—are already stretched thin. Withholding funds could lead to increased class sizes, reduced support services, and loss of vital educational programs. This not only affects academic outcomes but also student well-being and long-term success.

Local contributions are critical to ensuring our schools remain adequately staffed, equipped, and able to meet the unique needs of Alaskan students. Rather than limiting resources, we urge you to invest in our children and educators. Strong public schools are essential to a thriving future for

Alaska.

I respectfully ask the Department of Education to prioritize educational equity and opportunity by protecting and strengthening funding for our schools—not restricting it.

Thank you for your time and commitment to our students.

Sincerely,

Rosa Smallwood

First Grade Teacher with ASD

From: James Logan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Urgent: Educational Instability Hurting Military Families in Anchorage
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:36:47 PM

You don't often get email from james.logan.219@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Technical Sergeant James Logan and I proudly serve as a Technical Sergeant in the United States Air Force. My family is currently stationed in Anchorage at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, and I am writing to you as both a military service member and a concerned parent.

After reading the recent message from the Anchorage School District regarding unexpected staff layoffs and major funding shortfalls, I feel compelled to speak on behalf of military families like mine; families who serve this country but do not have the privilege of choosing where we live or how our children are educated.

The freeze of federal education funding and the late-stage vetoes and reductions at the state level are not abstract issues for us. They directly impact our children who already face a unique set of challenges due to frequent relocations, separations from deployed parents, and the emotional toll that comes with military life. When programs supporting special education, English language learners, Alaska Native services, and after-school care are cut, our kids are often the first to feel the consequences.

Unlike civilian families, we can't relocate to a different school district when things go wrong. We are required to go where duty calls, and we entrust local public schools to provide our children with the consistent, quality education they deserve. When that trust is broken due to unpredictable funding and policy instability, our children suffer.

I am especially concerned about the proposed cap on local educational contributions, which would strip urban districts like Anchorage of the ability to support their students, including thousands of military-connected children. It is difficult to see how this supports either educational equity or readiness for our armed forces.

I respectfully urge you to:

- Support full and timely federal education funding disbursements.
- Oppose state-level restrictions that reduce community investment in public schools.
- Prioritize policies that reflect the realities of military families and mobile students.

Military families like mine serve this country with pride. We ask only that our children not be forgotten in the decisions made by those in power. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to public service.

Respectfully,
James Stuart Logan Jr., TSgt, USAF
JBER, AK

From: Jeffrey Moore II
Cc: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding from a father
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:41:01 PM

[You don't often get email from jeffreynmoore2@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello!

My name is Jeff and I have 2 kiddos who attend/ will attend Aurora elementary school.

I want to say I'm sure you have worked hard to help our schools (hopefully). I want to say it is not enough. Hard decisions must be made. I grew up here and even then the school were ranked bottom 5 in the nation. That has not changed in the 20 years since I have been in school. There are some amazing teachers here helping kiddos but with no funds they will be even more burnt out than they currently are are. I have a degree in teaching and CHOSE to not teach when we moved here due to the state of ASD.
When you invest in a product you often get better quality the more you pay. The decision makers in this state are continually choosing to pay dollar store prices and expecting high end results.
It is just not possible.
You are ruining the best resource we have in young minds. I know so many families who are choosing to move out of the state due to the poor state of the Alaskan education system. The state has so much to offer but many are immediately turned away when they realize how poor the choices their kids will have.
I will happily pay more in taxes to support the kids of Alaska and I'm sure many others will as well.

I hope you all have a wonderful day.

Cheers

Jeff

From: Toni Riley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education in Alaska
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 7:41:14 PM

You don't often get email from triley5189@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the persistent underfunding of Alaska's public education system and the legislature's failure to meaningfully increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA). As an Alaskan resident and staunch advocate for quality education, I urge the Board to take a more vocal and active stance in advocating for sustainable, adequate funding that truly meets the needs of our students, educators, and school communities.

For over a decade, the BSA has remained largely stagnant, failing to keep pace with inflation, rising operating costs, and the growing demands placed on public schools. School districts across the state are now faced with untenable decisions—cutting vital programs, increasing class sizes, eliminating support staff, and in some cases, closing schools altogether. These consequences disproportionately impact our most vulnerable students, particularly those in rural communities and those requiring special services.

We cannot continue to expect our schools to do more with less. Our students deserve access to a well-rounded education that includes robust academic offerings, social-emotional supports, qualified staff, and safe, well-maintained learning environments. Our educators deserve competitive compensation, professional development, and the resources to meet the diverse needs of every child.

I respectfully urge the Alaska State Board of Education to publicly

advocate for a substantial and permanent increase to the BSA, and to champion the prioritization of education funding as a long-term investment in the future of our state. The decisions we make today will shape the opportunities available to Alaska's youth tomorrow.

Thank you for your attention and for your service to the people of Alaska. I remain hopeful that together we can reaffirm our collective commitment to a strong public education system.

Sincerely,

Toni Riley

From: Megan Sarnecki
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local education contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:03:31 PM

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To whom it may concern,

Please do not add yet another challenge to our school districts. Do NOT limit local contributions to school funding. If you're unsure put it on the ballot, you will then see the will of the people of the state of Alaska.

Sincerely

Megan Sarnecki MD
Robert Cummings PE

From: The Richey Family
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Immediate Action Needed: Halt to the Systematic Undermining of Alaska's Public Education
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:14:03 PM

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Dear Commissioner Bishop,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the current trajectory of public education in Alaska. As a parent, community member, and advocate for equitable education, I am alarmed by the combined impact of frozen federal grants, mid-year state funding cuts, and the proposed cap on local education contributions. These decisions are not isolated events. Together, they represent a pattern of destabilization that directly harms students and undermines our schools' ability to serve them effectively.

The recent freeze of nearly $46 million in federal education funding, without warning just weeks before the school year begins, has left districts scrambling to preserve critical supports like after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student programs. In Anchorage alone, $14 million in planned and budgeted support has been frozen.

Additionally, the Governor's repeated vetoes of bipartisan school funding, followed by an unexpected per-student cut, forced districts into impossible positions after budgets had already been finalized. These decisions have real consequences. Staff layoffs, reassignments, increased class sizes, and reduced services are not abstract policy outcomes. Families and students will feel these losses directly when school resumes in August.

I am particularly concerned about DEED's proposal to cap local contributions to education. Restricting how much our communities can invest in their own children not only undermines local control but also

removes millions more from school districts already facing funding shortages. Combined with the recent federal funding freeze and state cuts, this amounts to systemic negligence toward Alaska's public schools.

I urge you to reconsider and withdraw support for the proposed cap on local contributions. Instead, DEED should prioritize stabilizing education funding, protecting local investment, and collaborating with districts to remove barriers rather than create them.

Our students deserve better. They deserve stability, opportunity, and leadership that puts their future ahead of politics. I respectfully request that DEED take immediate action to:

1. Advocate for the release of frozen federal funds.
2. Oppose restrictions on local education contributions.
3. Work collaboratively with districts to create a stable and sustainable long-term funding strategy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Our state's children are watching. I hope YOU will choose to stand with them.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Richey

Parent of ASD student

And once the storm is over, you won't remember how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure, in fact, whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about.

~Hardline Muramaki~

From: Polly Carr
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject local contribution cap proposal
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:15:05 PM

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Dear State Board of Education members,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage, having lived here for almost 30 years. I have a daughter about to enter her freshman year at West High School.

I'm writing to ask you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

I can't even fathom why someone would think this is a good, helpful, or productive idea.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

For our future,

Polly Carr

[redacted]

Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Sent from my iPhone

From: Mark Strauss
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local school funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:15:52 PM

You don't often get email from markstrauss80@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing in support of allowing localities to financially support their local school districts. The State Board of Education should not limit money that communities can provide to their school districts.

Mark Strauss
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Robert Cummings
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution proposal
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:30:42 PM

You don't often get email from robertwcu@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

Your proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education is misguided. I understand the intent. And I'm sure you have made justifications to yourselves in order to be complicit with such an ill conceived regulation. The truth of it is, the proposed regulation on capping local funding contributions even further than it is already restricted, is intended to and will reduce the effectiveness of Alaska's public education system. This is Consistent with the governor's other actions. This is the only logical reason to propose such legislation at this time. In addition, there is no financial incentive for the state to take this action. It does not benefit the state in any way. It is clearly a malicious act.

Shame on you.

From: yung ha
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School budget
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:33:40 PM

You don't often get email from yungha13@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am concerned about the school budget being slashed. I am a medical provider and I work in public health for the Native hospital. i have 3 kids, all in public school. It has been extremely burdening that school funding has been cut so drastically that schools had to cut before care. I work 5 days a week, 8-5. I had to apply for a magnet school that has a breakfast club so that I can get to work on time and service the community. Now after school sports have been cut from middle school and high school. Please increase funding!!!

From: Caitlin B
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:38:06 PM

[You don't often get email from cbrady732@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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My name is Caitlin Brady. I am a nurse and mother of a 4yo in Ketchikan, Alaska.

I am appalled to see the decreases to school funding and the deterioration of our public school system. As the mother of a child just beginning their journey in education, the reduction in BSA by our governor and freezes to federal funding show our current government does not support education. How the federal and state government choose to spend or not spend money shows what is valued, and its clearly not the education of our children.

Already Alaska lags behind in reading and math compared to other states. I don’t see how reduced funding will improve these scores.

Privatizing education is not the answer. Education should be accessible to all students regardless of their background or income.

Stand up for your students and future Alaskans.

Decisions like these are why people are leaving the state and choosing to raise their familles else where.

Please reconsider your priorities.
Sincerely
Caitlin Brady

From: Jessica Bryant
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Budget cuts
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:38:07 PM

You don't often get email from hairjobak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Do you have excess buildings not being used that you can sell?

From: Adrienne Lindholm
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:48:11 PM

You don't often get email from hall_adrienne@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am against the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education. Now more than ever we need access to funds to keep Anchorage schools afloat. Please DO NOT cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools.

Thank you,
Adrienne Lindholm
Eagle River, AK

From: Jelena Anderson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Clarity in a Time of Crisis and Where We Go From Here
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:53:59 PM

You don't often get email from jeca2606@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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"This is not the kind of message I expected to send in mid-July. Just weeks before students return to school, we are being forced to issue layoff notices and reassignments across the Anchorage School District. This is happening only because public education in Alaska is being actively undermined by unstable decision-making, delayed funding, and systemic negligence.

Many in our community are only now learning how serious the situation has become. That is understandable. Summer in Alaska is short, and families rightfully take this time to rest, not monitor legislative backchannels. But while our community was enjoying the holiday weekend, **federal education funding was quietly frozen just before July 4**, leaving districts and students stranded without warning.

This letter is not just an update. **It is a warning, and a call to action.**

What Just Happened, and Why It's Alarming

On July 3, the U.S. Department of Education froze nearly **$46 million** in federal education grants statewide, including more than **$14 million** for ASD. These funds were already budgeted to support **after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services**. Now, with the school year weeks away, we are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources.

At the state level, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding **twice**, after districts had already finalized their budgets. When the Legislature overrode his veto by a **46–14 vote**, the Governor **still slashed an additional $200 per student** without warning, creating a **$4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare.** A special session is now scheduled to give lawmakers a chance to override the veto.

The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to **cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools**—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like ours.

This is not a coincidence. It is a pattern. These decisions reflect a coordinated failure of leadership that disregards the will of Alaskans and jeopardizes the foundation of our public schools.

Standing with Courage and Thinking Beyond the Crisis

Some state and local leaders have had the courage to speak out. They have called this pattern what it is: reckless, short-sighted, and devastating to Alaska's students—our future. But speaking out is not enough. We must act. And we must hold ourselves accountable for what happens next.

We have to hold two truths at once:

- Yes, our schools need more funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions made in bad faith.
- Yes, we also need a long-term, coherent strategy to ensure every dollar is aligned to student needs and our shared values.

These truths are not in conflict. They are both essential. We must advocate and plan. Defend and lead. React and rebuild. That is what this moment requires.

What We Have Already Done, and Why It Was Not Enough

Earlier this year, ASD approved one of the leanest budgets in district history. We cut 42 central office positions. We reduced more than $30 million in salaries, benefits, and services. We drew down reserves below our policy minimum. After exhausting these options, we had to make agonizing decisions to increase class sizes, and pause enrichment programs. These decisions were not made lightly. They were made to protect the classroom and preserve core services.

But even those deep cuts were not enough to absorb the shock of frozen federal funding and last-minute state reductions.

That is why **today, layoff notices and staff reassignments were issued**. These are not abstract policy outcomes. They are real people. These are real losses. And students will feel the difference when they walk into school in August.

This Is What Happens When Systems Fail Students

When school districts are blindsided by mid-year funding losses, school districts **cannot plan, cannot hire, and cannot deliver** the consistent services that students need. These disruptions weaken everything from after-school programming to counseling to special education.

We are being asked to run a modern school system with **unstable and unpredictable resources**. This is not sustainable, and this is not acceptable.

If we don't stop this trend now, it will continue. The proposed **cap on local education contributions** would make it harder for communities like Anchorage to invest in their own children. If approved by the State Board of Education, it could remove millions more from our schools in the years ahead."

Fix this!

Sincerely,

Concerning Parent

From: Alaura Perkins
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I am a student.
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 8:54:06 PM

You don't often get email from elorajohnson27@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am a student about to faze out of highschool. I already find it difficult at times to trust the school board to educate me, but with all of this mess it makes me worry about my younger family members, and also the children I will bring in. I have been able to form relationships with teachers that have made a huge impact on helping me become the person I am today, and I worry for them as well. These people do not deserve to be paid less. These people do not deserve to be overwhelmed with students. And they definitely do not deserve to be cut out of the jobs they love. These people deserve to be treated with the respect they worked so hard for. These people deserve to be given the recourses they need to help their students. The schools already struggle enough to teach what they need and honestly it just isn't enough. Students are struggling. Teachers aren't able to help all of them so students aren't learning anymore. They're using things like chat GPT and other AIs to get it done as quickly as possible because there's no other way to receive help. It's embarrassing that students are brought down to such a level and then told they will get even LESS help. I worry for our schools, For our teachers, Our students, my family, myself and also the new generations brought into this. Education is incredibly important to build any sort of future for Alaska, but no one can teach anything without the proper resources. I seriously hope we can figure this out as a state, or even a country, our children need to be taught, and our people need to be respected, and that's just not what I'm seeing.

From: Tony Bickert
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Cut the fat, not the heart
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:09:06 PM

You don't often get email from tony.bickert@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I golfed with a state school board member a few years ago, before I retired as an ASD special education teacher. We both agreed cuts needed to be made. The ASD headquarters had grown to the size of a small city. All those salaries to people who for the most part never see a student!

We agreed the head shed needed to be shrunk so students could benefit from more and better teachers.

But the gutting is quickly becoming an all out massacre of our teachers and students as well as admin. Special Education slashes especially break my heart.

I hope the board member I golfed with remembers what he once believed, that we need to support the teachers and students.

-Tony Bickert

From: Marlisa Springer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: A Call for Leadership and Accountability in Support of Alaska's Students
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:18:07 PM

You don't often get email from springer.marlisa@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my deep concern and heartbreak after reading the recent message from the Anchorage School District regarding layoffs, funding cuts, and the destabilizing decisions impacting our public schools. The situation described is not just alarming—it is unacceptable.

Our students, families, and educators are being left behind by a pattern of reckless governance, unpredictable funding, and systemic neglect. The decision to freeze nearly $46 million in federal education grants and to slash per-student funding—after budgets had already been finalized—is not just disruptive. It directly harms real people: students who rely on special education, after-school programs, Native student services, and language support.

This is not a matter of politics. This is about protecting the basic right to a stable, quality public education for every child in Alaska. When systems fail to deliver predictable support, school districts cannot plan, hire, or meet the needs of students. We are not asking for excess—we are asking for responsibility.

I urge the Board to act with urgency, transparency, and courage. This is the moment to prioritize Alaska's children over political gamesmanship. This is the time to correct course, restore trust, and ensure that no more students or educators are blindsided by budget decisions made in the dark.

Please remember: behind every funding line is a child, a classroom, and a very important future for each of these children. Help us help them create a world we all want to be in.

In the end, it is up to each of you to decide where Alaska stands. Will we fall in line with those who neglect and divide or will we rise to uphold and uplift the core values of unity, equity, and shared responsibility that define us as Alaskans? Your decision in this moment will speak volumes.

Sincerely,
Marlisa Springer

A concerned mother

From: Mary Hilcoske
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulatory Change to 4 AAC 09
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:23:25 PM

You don't often get email from mhilcoske@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Your proposed regulatory change to change the definition of "local contribution" to include services provided at no charge to a district by the city or borough would significantly reduce the amount of money that local governments can contribute to their school districts, exacerbating budget shortfalls created by the Governor's vetoes. This regulatory change would be detrimental to our public schools, and I strongly urge you to NOT go forward with this change.

Thank you.

Mary Hilcoske
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99501

From: Rachel Samuelson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do not cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:24:24 PM

You don't often get email from samuelson.rachel@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello State Board of Education,

Please do not cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. In a time of severe federal cuts and devastating state cuts to public education, do not cause more budget shortfalls by placing this cap. It is important for communities to be able to contribute to their own schools, both as a tool for empowerment and also maintaining essential services.

Sincerely,

Rachel Samuelson
Anchorage, AK 99502

From: Stephanie Hala
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding for Alaska's Public Schools
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:26:02 PM

You don't often get email from stephanie.hala@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Greetings,

I am writing to urge you to protect, prioritize, and stabilize funding for Alaska's public schools.

I am deeply concerned by the recent news that the Anchorage School District is issuing layoff notices and staff reassignments just weeks before school starts. The root of this crisis is not local mismanagement—it is systemic instability in state and federal education funding, vetoes of bipartisan funding measures, and sudden, last-minute cuts that make responsible planning impossible.

These decisions directly harm students, educators, and families across Alaska. They increase class sizes, reduce support for students with special needs, weaken after-school programs, and jeopardize services for English learners and Alaska Native students. Our schools cannot deliver the consistent, high-quality education our children deserve if they are forced to operate in a state of constant uncertainty and crisis.

I want to make my position clear: I strongly support adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding for Alaska's public schools.

- I oppose efforts to cap local communities' ability to invest in their own schools. Local control and investment are essential.
- I oppose vetoes of carefully negotiated, bipartisan education funding.
- I oppose any approach that treats public education as a bargaining chip

rather than an essential public good.

I urge you to do everything in your power to ensure our schools receive the funding they need—not only this year but in a reliable, long-term way that allows districts to plan responsibly. I also ask you to oppose any measure that would further limit local contributions to education or strip resources from urban districts that serve the greatest number of students.

Please prioritize Alaska's children. They deserve a stable, well-funded public education system that honors their potential and strengthens our future.

Thank you for your service to our state and for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hala

Chugiak, AK

From: austin cossio
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Federal Education Funds
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:32:25 PM

You don't often get email from cossioaustin@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please reconsider your proposed budget cuts in regards to education. As I am sure you are aware, our state is extremely low in terms of education throughout the nation. Going through with these budget cuts is not going to benefit our students and is extremely detrimental to their futures. We can and should do better. Our students depend on it. Thank you.

From: Shannon Kesting
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please Protect Education Funding for Anchorage
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:37:59 PM

You don't often get email from shannonkesting@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to urge you not to cut funding for education in Anchorage. If we don't invest in the next generation, what kind of future are we building for our community?

Strong education is the foundation of a strong society. Please prioritize our students and safeguard the future of Anchorage by maintaining—or better yet, increasing—funding for our schools.

Sincerely,

Shannon Kesting

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

From: Livia Munnlyn
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: As a Mother, I'm Speaking Up for ASD Students — They Deserve Better
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:43:47 PM

You don't often get email from liviamunnlyn@icloud.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing as a mother and as someone who cares deeply about the future of our children in the Anchorage School District. I am alarmed, heartbroken, and frankly outraged by the recent funding decisions that are putting our students and schools in crisis.

When federal education funds are frozen without warning, and state leaders repeatedly veto bipartisan school funding, the impact isn't felt by politicians—it's felt by children. My child, and thousands of others, will walk into schools this fall missing programs, trusted staff members, and vital support services. How is that acceptable?

Students with special needs, English language learners, and those who rely on after-school and enrichment programs are being hit the hardest. These are the students who already face challenges and deserve more support, not less.

Our teachers and staff are being asked to do the impossible: serve more students with fewer resources, while being blindsided by budget chaos. As a parent, I see the stress this places on everyone in our schools—and I fear what it means for my child's learning, growth, and mental health.

I strongly oppose the proposed cap on how much our local communities can invest in our schools. This is not the time to take away local control or remove millions more from Anchorage classrooms. Let us invest in our kids. Let us protect their future.

Please hear us. Please act. Fund our schools fairly. Stop the reckless cuts. And give our children the consistency and support they need to thrive.

Sincerely,

Livia Munnlyn

Mother and Advocate for ASD Students

From: Kimberly Buron
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support our Future
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:46:12 PM

[You don't often get email from kimberlyburon@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Alaskas future is determined by the children we raise and educate. Public school is the investment in our future --- to preserve AK as a high quality state to live in we must keep education high quality.

If we cut how much we put into the states future now, by ruining our children's education, the state will go down hill --- and we will be trying to clean up even more messes than we are now. But, with adults who can't think critically or be creative because the quality of education the next generation of adults we have leading the state will not have high quality skills for a better state.

Stop the squabbling and invest in Alaska's future.

Please and thank you, from a mom of three in ASD - elementary, middle and high school ages... One of which is in Life Skills and though this child may not contribute like my other two do to the state in the future - he matters. He deserves a quality education just as much as the next child who is typically developing.

Best,
Kim Buron

Sent from my iPhone

From: Joni Young
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please keep schools open and funded
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:49:20 PM

You don't often get email from joniyoung1019@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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From: Michelle Pili
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Regulation on Local Education Contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:16:54 PM

You don't often get email from michellepili44@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing as a concerned Alaskan and member of the Anchorage community to strongly oppose the proposed regulation that would cap how much local governments can contribute to public education.

This proposal would severely restrict our ability to invest in our children at the local level—at a time when both federal and state funding have proven to be unstable. For students with special needs, these funding cuts are especially devastating. They rely on consistent, individualized services that cannot simply be paused or replaced when budgets are slashed. These are real children with real needs, and their educational success—and dignity—depend on our collective commitment.

Capping local contributions would not only weaken the services available to all students but would disproportionately harm our most vulnerable. Local communities should be empowered—not restricted—from stepping in to protect these supports when other systems fall short.

I urge you to reject this proposal and take a stand for educational equity, local autonomy, and the well-being of all Alaska's students.

Sincerely,

Michelle Pili

Anchorage, AK

From: Elizabeth Williams
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Cap on Local Education Contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:18:15 PM

You don't often get email from elzabif@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing as a concerned Alaskan parent and community member to strongly oppose the proposed regulation that would cap how much local municipalities can contribute to public education.

This proposal comes at a time when our public schools are already in crisis—reeling from frozen federal funding, mid-year budget cuts, and repeated vetoes from state leadership. Our district, the Anchorage School District, is now forced to issue layoff notices and staff reassignments just weeks before school starts, leaving students without critical support services they rely on. These are not theoretical impacts—these are real consequences that directly affect our children, our educators, and our community.

Local contributions have helped keep our schools afloat in the face of unreliable state funding. Limiting our community's ability to support its own schools strips us of the right to invest in our children's future. This move would take away millions more from essential programs, disproportionately hurting students in urban districts, and undermining local control and accountability.

I urge you to reject this harmful regulation. We need leadership that strengthens public education, not one that further erodes it. Instead of creating more barriers, the State Board should be working alongside districts and communities to secure stable, adequate, and equitable funding for all Alaska students.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Williams

Anchorage, Alaska

Parent & Community Member

From: Breanna Bedwell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation on Local Funding Contributions for Education
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:25:40 PM

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As a mother of two Anchorage School District children I am categorically against this proposed regulation.

From: Watts_Christopher
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment Regarding Budget
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:52:24 PM

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This is a travesty! I am not a budget expert but to create this type of hardship after money was already allocated is maddening. What is the upside of withholding the money from the students and staff? What is the state gaining and providing in return?

Respectfully,

C.R.Watts

From: Abigail L
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Freeze is a Disaster
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 10:52:34 PM

You don't often get email from drryuunosuke@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The continual starvation of ASD and now the freezing of funds is nothing short of an absolute disgrace. Good to know that my child will have the worst education in Alaskan history. Even more glad to know that not only are children being robbed of what should be a birthright, but that once again another stupid decision has put more honest-working folk out of work due to mismanagement, neglect, and greed. My significant other being one of those people directly affected. This is not okay, and this is not what anyone voted for. Our government does not listen to it's people, but instead continues to displace and rob it's citizens at every turn using shady practices that directly combat our wishes.

From: Christine Burgess
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local control
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 11:02:54 PM

You don't often get email from christinetburg@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Fairbanks. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Christine St. Pierre

[redacted] Fairbanks, AK 99712

From: Crystal Morris
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Allow local funding of schools
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 11:07:28 PM

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Hello Board,

As new mother i have to decide where to raise my child to give him the best opportunity at life. The quality of education determines where we will raise our son.

Packing a cap on how much communities can contribute to education makes no sense. Why can't communities decide for ourselves? Schools need funding now more than ever.

If schools in Alaska continue to degrade i will have to move away. Please do not place a cap on local spending!

Respectfully
Crystal Berwick
Government Hill resident
Anchorage, AK

From: LUIS FELIX
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School cuts and Freezing funds
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 11:16:53 PM

You don't often get email from jf010307@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my profound disappointment and serious concern regarding the U.S. Department of Education's decision to freeze nearly $46 million in federal education grants to the State of Alaska—of which more than $14 million was designated for the Anchorage School District (ASD).

This action is not just troubling—it is devastating. Being parents of students that are currently and one former student!

These funds were already budgeted for programs that serve some of our most vulnerable student populations: after-school enrichment, special education services, English language learners, and Alaska Native students. To freeze this funding is to directly threaten the academic support, mental health services, and inclusive learning environments these students rely on. The damage will not be limited to a single group—it will ripple outward, affecting every classroom, every teacher, and every child in the communities we serve.

How did we get to a point where bureaucratic failure or miscommunication can result in the withholding of critical resources that were already allocated to support our youth? The loss of trust in our educational system grows when students are left to bear the burden of political or administrative breakdowns.

We demand immediate transparency and action. What is being done—right now—to resolve this issue? What assurances can you provide to families,

educators, and communities that this funding will be restored swiftly and without lasting harm?

Our students cannot afford delay. Our communities cannot afford silence. We expect a detailed public explanation and a recovery plan that ensures not a single dollar meant for student success is lost.

Sincerely,

Luis A Felix

Parent

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

From: Kade Evans
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:21:19 AM

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Please don’t cut our education

From: maria dali
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:53:58 AM

[You don't often get email from daliosmane.maria@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello, my name is Maria Dali Osmane. I am a junior at service high school. My school and my education has always been very important to me. I have always loved going to school and learning as well as participating in outside of school activities such as sports and extracurriculars funded by my high school. Recently though, I have been faced with extreme worry about the future of my high school career. As school funds are being frozen this causes losses for everyone in the anchorage school district community. Many extremely important resources are at risk of being lost for many in my community and many are at risk for loosing their jobs. Programs such as special needs and English learners are at risk of being cut of their funds which is especially important to me because these students already have to go through extra lengths to receive their education and budget cuts would impact them extremely negatively. As a student and a member of the Anchorage and Alaska community i am asking please dont refuse me and my school community of our very much needed funds. We are the future of your Alaska and our roots come from proper education.
Thank you.
Maria

From: Krista Howell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 4:35:50 AM

You don't often get email from kristadesay@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education Members,

As a concerned community member of Valdez, I urge you to reject the proposed regulatory changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes would:

- Limit local control over our community schools
- Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
- Reduce transportation options, increasing concerns about student safety
- Weaken the vital partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
- Create budget uncertainty through vague definitions and complex reporting requirements

Valdez has long depended on a strong partnership between our city and Valdez City Schools to support student success. Reclassifying city-supported services—such as the School Resource Officer or access to recreational facilities—as part of school funding erodes this relationship and strips our community of the ability to provide essential services.

These proposed regulations will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and jeopardize the very programs that help our children thrive.

Every student in Valdez deserves access to safe transportation, nutritious meals, enriching after-school programs, and strong community support. Please stand with our students, respect local control, and reject these harmful regulatory changes.

Sincerely,

Krista Howell

From: APRIL HOLLOWAY
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contributions reclassification opposition
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:18:12 AM

You don't often get email from cbtinerak@mtaonline.net. Learn why this is important

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Greetings—

I am writing to express my opposition to DEED's proposal to reclassify certain contributions by local governments to their school districts. DEED's reactive move in doing this is to address funding shortfalls that the state is already responsible for, making a bad situation worse. The state should fulfill its role in adequately funding school districts to the level that Federal Impact aid is used to enhance district budgets, not provide stopgap funding for state shortfalls.

Sincerely,

Clinton Holloway
Eagle River, AK

From: jennifer gessert
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Shelly Christopherson
Subject: Disgusted
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:35:12 AM

You don't often get email from j_gessert@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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To The State Board of Education,

I am dismayed and disgusted by the irresponsible management and funding of the paramount priority of our state's children's education. They are being catastrophically failed by many layers of government. It is your job to assure the functional educational resources to our youth, and you are simply not doing it. It is no mystery why families are leaving the state in droves, and it begs me to consider following them.
I implore you to get your act together and do the job you were hired for. Replenish the previous inadequate funding first, then dig in and strive for adequate funding. I support responsible use of those funds (no, not charter schools, yes BSA increase) and cutting of waste, so address that accordingly as well. Do not systematically gut education for all kids, disproportionately those in greatest need.
Please don't bother sending me your canned reply of excuses, I've already heard it all and I do not have a sympathetic ear. You are simply failing. End of story.
Sincerely,
Jen Gessert
Mother of 2 ASD students

From: Henry Munter
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation on Local Funding Contributions for Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:41:34 AM

You don't often get email from henrymunter@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would cap local community contributions to public schools. This proposal represents a fundamental attack on local control and community investment in education at a time when Alaska's schools are already facing unprecedented challenges.

I just received notice that the Anchorage School District, along with districts across Alaska, is currently issuing layoff notices and staff reassignments less than a month from the start of school. This is happening because $46 million in federal education grants were frozen statewide on July 3rd, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding twice then slashed an additional $200 per student, and districts are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources. In this context, proposing to further restrict local funding is not just misguided—it is harmful to Alaska's students and communities.

Communities that choose to invest additional resources in their schools should be celebrated and supported, not penalized. The proposed cap would strip millions of dollars from schools in communities willing to invest in their children's future, undermine local control and democratic decision-making, create a race to the bottom rather than encouraging excellence, and disproportionately harm urban districts that have demonstrated commitment to educational investment.

This regulation would directly harm students by reducing resources for after-school programs, counseling, and special education, increasing class sizes and reducing enrichment opportunities, making it harder to attract and retain quality teachers, and undermining the stability that students need to succeed.

This proposal is part of a troubling pattern of decisions that systematically undermine public education in Alaska through unstable and unpredictable funding decisions, last-minute budget cuts that make planning impossible, and policies that restrict rather than support local investment in schools. This kind of political brinksmanship is going to have a damaging and lasting impact on our kids and their futures.

I urge you to reject this proposed regulation entirely, focus on solutions that increase rather than decrease education funding, support local communities that want to invest in their schools, and work with the Legislature and Governor to create stable, predictable funding. Alaska's children deserve better than a system that punishes communities for caring about education. They deserve leaders who will fight for their future, not restrict the resources available to them.

The students walking into Alaska's schools this August are counting on you to make the right decision. Please stand with them, their families, and their communities by rejecting this harmful proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Henry Munter

[redacted], Girdwood, AK, 99587

[redacted]

From: Marion Lee
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 7:35:40 AM

You don't often get email from marion.lee76@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Good day, I am writing in vehement opposition to the DEED Commissioner's proposed cap on local education contributions. Local contributions are vital to Alaska school systems especially during this turbulent time. It is unconscionable that the Governor has twice vetoed an increase to school funding and that the Department of Education has frozen funding.

Our students, teachers and ASD Staff deserve better. We must do better.

Regards,

Marion Lee
Chugiak AK

From: Allison Koos Fox
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed cap on local spending in education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 7:55:30 AM

[You don't often get email from allison.koos.fox@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear School Board,
I am a parent of 2 children that attend ASD schools. Our schools are one of the most important resources we have in this state. Cutting funding, and certainly limiting how much money can be contributed to the school system is a terrible idea. All of your efforts should be directed to gathering means for our schools to give the best education they possibly can to our kids. This includes pressing lawmakers to pass legislation that gives more, not less resources to our schools.
It is outrageous that I even have to write this letter. I'm sick of writing messages and calling offices because some essential thing for our schools isn't being funded because of some passing political ideology. These kids need a solid base to grow on, not the shifting sands of political careers.

Allison Koos Fox

From: Annette Marley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose proposed cap on local funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 7:55:51 AM

[You don't often get email from marley.annette@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

Please oppose the commissioner's proposal to restrict funding from the local level for schools. I cannot fathom any reason for this other than spite and a genuine interest in breaking public education. Especially in these times of other federal and state funding cuts, districts will have to compensate at the local level. Please support public education in Alaska by voting against any attempt to curb funding at the local level.

Thank you,

Annette Marley
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99504

Sent from my iPhone

From: Zoe Styron
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Cap on Local Education Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:20:05 AM

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Dear Members of Alaska State Board of Education,

As a concerned parent and Alaskan, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would cap local contributions to public education.

This policy would severely undermine our already underfunded public schools and strip local communities of the ability to support their own students. It removes essential local control and forces municipalities like Anchorage to sit on the sidelines while our children's education suffers.

The proposal is short-sighted and damaging. It will exacerbate the current funding crisis, further destabilize school districts, and directly harm the quality of education our children receive. These decisions have long-term consequences. Families such as mine are already leaving Alaska in search of more stable and better-funded public education systems. If this regulation is adopted, that trend will only accelerate—hollowing out our state's future workforce, economy, and civic fabric.

We should be empowering local communities to invest in students—not tying their hands.

Please reject this harmful regulation and stand up for the future of public education in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Zoé Styron
[redacted], Anchorage, Alaska

Zoé Styron

[redacted]

From: Debbie Ferguson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:21:24 AM

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July 16th, 2025

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to you not only as a concerned parent of two children in the Anchorage School District, but as an ardent advocate for the future of Alaska—a future that hinges on the quality and accessibility of education we provide to our youth today. It is with urgency and deep concern that I address the proposed regulation regarding the local funding contribution for education.

Our children deserve the very best, and my own kids have been fortunate enough to benefit from special programs, sports, and enriching extracurricular activities. These experiences have been integral in shaping their educational journey, imbuing them with foundational skills and the confidence to strive towards meeting academic and personal benchmarks. It is these programs that our dedicated teachers pour their hearts and souls into, working tirelessly to mold the future leaders of our state.

To penalize them by reducing jobs and critical resources is not only shortsighted but is fundamentally a crime against the progress and development of our children. In a state such as ours, which is geographically isolated from many national resources, education stands as the beacon of hope and the most viable path to sustaining success.

Let us be clear: stripping away resources and limiting funding for education will only serve to undermine the very fabric of Alaska's future. It threatens to derail our potential to cultivate a generation of successful, creative, and bright-minded individuals—those who will inevitably become the pillars of our society, providing essential services and leadership as we ourselves transition into retirement.

As members of the State Board of Education, you hold the power to influence the trajectory of our state's future. Your decisions will directly impact not just the younger generations but will echo through time, affecting older generations as well. The prosperity of Alaska is intertwined with the strength of its educational system. A failure to support and nurture our youth is a failure that will reverberate through our community, our economy, and the very essence of our state.

It is imperative that we boost our educational resources, not limit them. Let us invest wisely in the future of our great state by empowering our educators and enriching the educational experiences of our children. I urge you to reconsider the proposed regulation, to reflect on the long-term impacts of your decision, and to act in the best interest of our children and Alaska’s future.

I hope you will make a decision that honors the legacy of Alaska and fosters a thriving future for all.

Sincerely,

Debbie Shroyer

From: Kevin Pike
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Limit on local funding is wrong
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:24:01 AM

You don't often get email from kevinwpike1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

A limit on local funding for schools is like shooting the patient to prevent death by neglect. The federal government may determine funding fails the disparity test, but that doesn't mean we must sacrifice the education of some children for others. Limiting my local communities ability to contribute to local education is by extension limiting my ability to contribute to local education. This is the opposite of local control.

--
Kevin Pike
[redacted]

From: carol suchland
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:36:34 AM

You don't often get email from csuchland58@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

Our schools have been underfunded for decades. This regulation will do further damage and limit the educational opportunities provided to the children of Alaska. Please remember that you are making decisions that will affect real children and not just dealing with numbers on a piece of paper

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools.

Please take the time and put forth the effort necessary to come up with a solution that will be clear and provide the best outcomes for the children of Alaska and our local communities.

Please reject this misguided proposal.

Sincerely,

Carol Suchland

[redacted]

North Pole, AK 99705

From: Lorinda Jensen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Regulation to Cap Local Funding Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:45:57 AM

You don't often get email from lorinda.jensen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would cap how much local communities are allowed to contribute to funding their public schools.

This proposal is deeply concerning because it effectively limits local communities' ability to invest in the education of their own children. In many districts—especially urban districts like ours—local contributions are critical to maintaining quality programs, retaining qualified educators, and providing the support that students need to succeed.

At a time when our schools are already grappling with inadequate state funding, imposing an artificial cap on local contributions would strip even more resources from classrooms. This move undermines local control, penalizes communities that are willing and able to invest in their students, and will only exacerbate inequities across Alaska.

I urge you to reject this regulation and instead support policies that empower communities to sustain and strengthen their schools. Our children deserve better than arbitrary funding constraints that will harm their education and future prospects.

Thank you for considering this comment.

Sincerely,

Lorinda Jensen
Anchorage School District Parent

From: Megan Peltier
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:48:00 AM

You don't often get email from mkpeltier@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board of Education and Early Development,

As a parent and concerned citizen of Alaska, I request that you oppose the proposed regulation changes regarding local contributions to public schools.

Part of your remit as the State Board of Education is to “develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system.” The very top of the DEED website says "Our Mission: An Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day." Limiting local contributions goes against this.

This proposed change is not in the best interest of the children of Alaska. Today's children and students are the future of Alaska; we must provide them with the opportunity of a strong education. This means adequately funding public education. Local communities deserve the opportunity to decide what adequate funding means. Allowing local communities to support their children through tax appropriations and in-kind contributions helps bring communities together and show kids that their neighbors and wider community care about them.

Please find another way to solve the "disparity test" issue.

Respectfully,
Megan Peltier
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: Dave Kuiper
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:10:10 AM

You don't often get email from kuiperdave907@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear

I just read a letter from Dr. Jharrett Bryantt, Superintendent, Anchorage School District, dated July 15, 2025. It outlines some frightening news about necessary cuts to the budget of the Anchorage School District, cuts that will require teacher and staff layoffs along with elimination of necessary educational programs, all of which will negatively impact students and families across Anchorage, and the balance of State as well.

Here are the events Dr. Bryantt cited that have left the ASD in this untenable situation:

> *On July 3, the U.S. Department of Education froze nearly $46 million in federal education grants statewide, including more than $14 million for ASD. These funds were already budgeted to support after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services. Now, with the school year weeks away, we are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources.*
>
> *At the state level, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding twice, after districts had already finalized their budgets. When the Legislature overrode his veto by a 46–14 vote, the Governor still slashed an additional $200 per student without warning, creating a $4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare. A special session is now scheduled to give lawmakers a chance to override the veto.*
>
> *The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like ours.*

I urge you to do all that you can to reverse the decisions that have led to this awful consequence and work together with other policy makers toward decisions that will provide our schools with more needed funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions that adversely impact the students and families of our community, with the full negative and lasting impact extending well into the future of Anchorage and the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dave Kuiper, Pastor Emeritus
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507
[redacted]

From: Katy Ruff Soden
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposed regulation
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:12:13 AM

You don't often get email from k7ruff@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent of school age children in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

This proposed regulation will harm thousands of students in Alaska by reducing local control and self-determination for communities. It will result in immediate budget cuts across districts. Our students are already being pushed to the brink with stagnant education funding - my second grader had 30 kids in her class last year - and further cuts will only do more damage to student outcomes.

Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katy Soden

From: Ellen DoupeMoras
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed DEED regulation re: Fed impact aid
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:13:26 AM

[You don't often get email from edoupemoras@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I do not agree with the top-down approach of the department to change regulations to now include non- instructional funding by communities to their local school districts in hope that this will help the state pass the "disparity" test to procure Federal Impact Aid. This move will certainly hurt school districts whose communities are able to help support local schools thru the taxes we pay and through varied in-kind services. Its not that I want schools to be inequitable, but the state should explore how to keep the federal funding without effectively penalizing schools fortunate enough to get local community support.
Sent from my iPhone

Ellen Doupe-Moras

From: Francis McLaughlin
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do no harm
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:19:24 AM

You don't often get email from francismclaughlin@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please do not take local funds away from the Anchorage School District. We need every cent that we can for public schools. Taking local funds away from school is the wrong decision. The majority of public school students live in urban school districts. The future of our State depends on educating these kids.

Thank you,

Francis McLaughlin

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Caitlin Stern
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose proposed changes to regulations on local contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:39:29 AM

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Dear members of the board,

I ask you to oppose the changes to regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution proposed by the Department of Education and Early Development.

I am a resident of Juneau, Alaska, and the parent of two children who attend public elementary school. I have witnessed firsthand the myriad, devastating effects of the chronic underfunding of Alaska's public schools. I strongly oppose the proposed changes to regulations because these changes would further reduce funding available for Alaskan children's education.

Please stand up for Alaska's children by opposing these proposed changes.

All the best,
Caitlin Stern

From: Amy Steele
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:48:48 AM

You don't often get email from amy.e.steele@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please help protect ASD's funding. The state's future depends on stable education for our students with teachers who stick around and aren't fearful of layoffs every summer. Help save our educational system.

Thank you,

Amy

From: Michelle Nesbett
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on Proposed Change to Local Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:51:50 AM

You don't often get email from mtschumper@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,
I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed change to 4 AAC 09 to change the definition of "appropriation" and "value of in-kind services." The wording is not the problem and is not being requested by the federal US Department of Education. The problem is the disparity between school districts, which is easily fixed with an increase to the BSA. What is the Department of Education and Early Development doing to ensure the legislature increases the BSA? The Department of Education and Early Development should be advocating for students, not changing regulations to further reduce funding to schools.
Thank you,
Michelle Nesbett

From: Eric Mees
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding Our Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:53:52 AM

You don't often get email from ericjmees@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

My name is Eric Mees. I am a pilot and member of the Air Force Reserves living in Anchorage with my wife and two sons, ages 7 and 4. After coming to Alaska nearly 10 years ago, my wife Jo and I quickly fell in love with the community, natural beauty, and unique experiences that living in the 49th state provide. We decided to finish my military career here and chose Anchorage as our forever home. We feel fortunate for the opportunity to raise our boys Roman and Sawyer in this amazing state: a place and community that will help shape them into independent, curious, and resilient young men.

Unfortunately, our concern for Roman and Sawyer's futures may ultimately pull our family away from the Alaska life we all love so much. Jo and I have been discussing with increasing frequency the only thing that would cause us to leave our home: our public schools. Roman will be a second grader in the fall. Over the last two years, our family has seen first hand how inadequate funding, fiscal uncertainty, and lack of long term commitment to our children's future have affected our neighborhood schools and the support they are now unable to provide.

Freezing Federal eduction funds, slashing per-student State funding, and proposing caps on local community contributions to school districts are all part of a pattern that fails our children. The lack of long term, reliable funding means that Anchorage School District and other districts in the state cannot effectively plan, educationally or administratively. Losing critical academic support resources, cancelling enrichment programs, and increasing class sizes have a direct and negative impact on our sons' learning and development of crucial skills. Inadequate funding for educator salaries means that Alaska is unable to recruit, develop, or retain the experienced and dedicated teachers our children deserve. What kind of community are we if we refuse to adequately support the people that play such an important role in our children's future?

Fiscal responsibility is important. Alaska does not have unlimited resources. Throughout my career, "do more with less" has been a consistent mantra as budgets, manning, and support functions have all dwindled. Creative problems solving and hard choices about where money should be allocated is essential. However, there are certain tasks and capabilities in any endeavor that are "mission critical." They lie at the core of what is most important to our overall objectives and represent a red line where failure is unacceptable. Our children's education is MISSION CRITICAL the success and future of Alaska. Our community must prioritize our limited resources accordingly.

The reckless and short-sighted fiscal pattern of failing to appropriately fund our schools endangers Roman and Sawyer's ability to be educated, informed, productive members of our community. My family loves Alaska. We want to call this place our home forever. But I need

to do what is best for my children. Our leaders must do the same.

Eric Mees

Anchorage, AK

From: Landon Messelheiser
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:58:50 AM

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Fund Alaska schools. Cut administration and support teachers. An educated society is successful and productive. It starts with our children and schools. If we don't have good schools families will not move here for jobs and to work.

Landon Messelheiser
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: Erin Laichak
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Fund education now
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:01:26 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Please fund public education now. Choices are being made so that you will eventually fund something, either education now or prisons later.

Make the choice that will effect you and everyone that you know in a positive way, fund education.

Respectfully,
Erin

From: Rose McLaughlin
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support urban public schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:06:35 AM

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Support urban public schools

Please do not limit local support for urban public schools. Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau need to continue helping public schools with things like snow plowing, SROs, and student nutrition. This is vital to urban public schools. Do not change the regulations to harm our schools.

Rose McLaughlin

Anchorage, AK

From: Kayla Newsom
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School budget cuts
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:16:32 AM

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Hello

As a mother in Alaska with a child going to their first grade year, I'm absolutely shocked and disappointed in this state for deciding to undercut our kids. They are our future and this state decided to remove important funds from ASD that is already struggling to make ends meet. You all did this while we were enjoying our summer vacation and should be ashamed to go after our kids future. I do not approve of you all doing this, and you all should be absolutely ashamed of yourselves for going after our kids in Alaska. This state has more than enough funds to provide our children what they need, and again they are the future and should be our primary investment. Put the funds back in, and take it from the oil or gas, that's our biggest income here. Again I'm appalled that you all still approved of going after Children's futures and you all should be absolutely ashamed and should immediately reassign funds back to our kids!

Thank you,
- a concerned mother for Alaskans Children's future

Kayla Newsom
Direct-(210)331-1855
Email-kaynewsom1@yahoo.com

From: Molly Hayes
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:24:40 AM

[You don't often get email from mollymul@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education members,

I am writing as a concern, citizen, parent, and teacher. Please do everything in your power to protect public education funding. Our schools are struggling and our students are suffering. We need to consider ALL students when decisions are made.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Molly Hayes

From: Katarina Godden
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed local funding restriction
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:25:33 AM

[You don't often get email from katarinagodden@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,

I am writing to express my vehement disagreement with the proposed local funding restriction for public schools. The school district is already in crisis and has been suffering from a pattern of inconsistent and chaotic decision making. I strongly oppose and measures that will add to the budget insecurity and take more money from our students.

Thank you,
Katarina a Naidoo

From: Bryan Vincent
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Changes to School Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:29:07 AM

You don't often get email from bvincent.ak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

My name is Bryan Vincent and I am writing to you as a parent, community member and school board member in Valdez. My reason for contacting you today is to voice my deep concerns and my opposition to the proposed changes to how public schools can receive funding, specifically funding outside of the cap.

I am writing to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community has worked for many years to develop strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. The City of Valdez has shown over and over again that its priority is putting the education of our children first. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Bryan Vincent
Valdez City School Board Member, Parent and Community Member

From: Jenah Coates
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Fight for Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:43:55 AM

You don't often get email from jenahcoates@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello

The federal government's freeze on $46 million for Alaskan children's education is simply unacceptable. This places an even greater burden on a state whose governor has done everything possible to withhold essential funds that are crucial for providing our students with a quality education.

As a parent of a child with a disability, the loss of federal funding is devastating. Without adequate resources, we face challenges in hiring sufficient staff (we are already short on paraprofessionals and teachers, but that's a separate issue), and the support and safety of these children diminish with every budget cut. My child deserves the right to attend school with her peers and to learn and grow just like any other child.

As a parent, I implore you to fight for what's right for these children. Alaskans children deserve top tier education, and with this loss of funds this simply won't be the case.

Jenah Coates- Parent of a child in ASD

From: Samantha Addler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:44:28 AM

You don't often get email from s.schaferk@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned faculty member of Valdez City Schools and community member of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Samantha Addler
Valdez High School Science Teacher
Parent, Community Member, etc.]

From: Katiera Rivera
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local funding cap for public schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:45:19 AM

[You don't often get email from katiera.rivera@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To Whom It May Concern:

The proposal to cap local funding for community public schools is not only ridiculous, but also immoral, anti-democratic, and counter productive to the goals of youth education which are to best prepare our community's youth to become educated, productive & contributing members of our communities. As our elected officials and community representatives, please reject this proposal.

Respectfully,

Katiera T Rivera, DO, MPH, BSN
MAJ USAR
Mother of 4 public school kids within the Anchorage School District
Katiera.rivera@gmail.com
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Randall Stevens
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: proposed regulation
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:50:07 AM

You don't often get email from rankat1980@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am opposed to the proposed regulation which may limit local funding of education. It is a complicated issue but appears to me to fundamentally relate to the lack of adequate state funding of our education system. I'm in favor of accountability but in my experience starving an operation of funding and expecting better performance doesn't work. An operation can be inefficiently over funded but in my opinion not increasing funding for many years to compensate for inflation cuts beyond removing inefficiencies.

From: Amanda Rackliff
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Concerned parent
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:05:55 AM

You don't often get email from ak_girlz_rock@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'm writing to you not as a policy expert or politician, but as a parent. My child is a student in the Anchorage School District, and like many families across Alaska, we are watching with increasing worry as our public schools are pushed closer to a breaking point.

In the past few weeks, things have taken a turn for the worse. ASD is being forced to issue layoff notices and staff reassignments right before the school year starts—not because of poor planning, but because our education system is being destabilized by delayed federal action, last-minute state funding cuts, and a new proposal that would limit our community's ability to invest in our own schools. You need to act now! Help our future, help our students!!

Sent from my iPhone

From: something innocuous
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education.
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:35:39 AM

You don't often get email from mowatree@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education will only make the inadequate, unstable and unpredictable funding situation worse. The current leadership appear to be deliberately defunding schools, worsening our individual and collective economic futures, including the future of my son. We need full funding from the state but, since Governor Dunleavy is set to ignore the will of the citizens of Alaska, we need the ability to supplement funding.
Amy Mowat

From: Casey Swanson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Subject: Enough is Enough – Stop Undermining Our Public Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:38:59 AM

You don't often get email from caseydperkins88@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing as a furious parent, community member, and proud supporter of public education. The continued assault on Alaska's public schools, through budget vetoes, last-minute funding cuts, and now a federal freeze that blindsided our districts, is absolutely shameful.

Let me be clear: *our children are not political pawns*, and neither are the educators who work tirelessly to support them. My children attend Anchorage public schools.. I've watched teachers stretch limited resources, sacrifice personal time, and fight for every bit of support they can give to students, *all while being disrespected and defunded by those in power.*

The recent decision to freeze **$46 million** in federal education funding, including over **$14 million** for ASD, just weeks before the school year starts, is more than irresponsible, it is negligent. And when you pair that with the Governor's repeated vetoes of bipartisan-supported education funding and the proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own schools, it's hard not to see this for what it is: a calculated attack on Alaska's public education system.

We've already endured massive budget cuts, increased class sizes, eliminated enrichment programs, and now, *layoffs and staff reassignments*. Do you know what that means for our kids? It means fewer counselors when mental health needs are rising. Fewer special education supports. Fewer programs for English learners and Alaska Native students. It means instability, chaos, and harm, harm that will last for years. .

Let me ask this: What kind of future are you building when you continuously gut the very institutions responsible for educating our children? What message are you sending to students when you tell them, through your actions, that their education doesn't matter?

These are not abstract policy choices. These are real consequences with real costs: to students, to teachers, to families, and to our communities. Enough is enough.

We will not stand by while our public schools are dismantled. I urge every legislator, board member, and federal official involved in these decisions to do better, *starting now.* Reverse the funding freeze. Reinstate the $200 per-student funding. Reject the cap on local contributions. And listen to the families, educators, and students who are being directly impacted by this crisis.

We are watching. We are organizing. And we are voting. If you continue down this path, you will be held accountable, for the damage done and the futures endangered.

Do your job. Fund public education.

In solidarity and resolve,
Casey Swanson
Parent of 2 children in Anchorage Public Schools
Anchorage, AK

From: Manderlink_Dylan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment from a Public School Teacher in Anchorage
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:45:51 AM

You don't often get email from manderlink_dylan@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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Hi,

My name is Dylan Manderlink - or Ms. M, as my students call me. I have been working in public education for 6 years now with this being my 2nd year in the Anchorage School District. I teach kindergarten at a Title I school and am deeply saddened and concerned by the freezing of federal funding which directly impacts our state and my school district. I am submitting a public comment today to strongly urge you to reconsider and think more critically and empathetically about what the proposed regulation would do to our state's students, school faculty and staff, and students' families. This proposed regulation will undoubtedly hurt my students who receive special education services and support as well as my ELL and Alaska Native students. At Williwaw, **more than half** of my class was comprised of ELL students who received crucial supports that I fear will go away with the funding we will not be receiving. I ask you to have empathy and compassion during this time. I'm sure you will be hearing many public comments - I have emailed and called friends and family across the United States to desperately ask for their support. I have taught in 3 states and Alaska on a state and department level , by far, has greatly disappointed me in how it shows up for its students. With proposed regulations like this, this further proves to me that this state and the people who are behind such grave, impactful decisions truly do not care to fight for *all* of our students and the public servants who dedicate their lives to such an important and meaningful profession. I go to work every day because I deeply care about the youth of this state and empowering our next generation to be a part of a compassionate, empathetic, intelligent, and civically engaged citizenry. By continually defunding, limiting funding, and making decisions like this that have no positive impact on staff and students, how can teachers show up like I do every day and do our jobs in the meaningful, impactful, and positive ways aforementioned? Please show up for our students like the teachers of this state do. We are hurting and this will just hurt us more. Please.

Thank you,

Dylan Manderlink
(she/her)

_____

Kindergarten Teacher
Williwaw Elementary

From: Benjamin Crawford
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:48:57 AM

You don't often get email from bencraw4d@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Members.

I am writing to ask that you reject the proposed regulation changes which would reduce funding for our schools. Our schools are struggling to just stay afloat, please don't willingly make the situation worse.

Our kids, which are the future of the state, deserve more. Not just bare minimums, if we want our state to prosper, invest in our kids.

Thank you,

--
Benjamin Crawford
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Kim Bailey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Don"t cap local communities!
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:51:03 AM

[You don't often get email from kimofalaska@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education,

I am strongly opposed to the proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. The state--who has already slashed education funding, leaving public schools and Alaska students in shambles--should NOT be dictating what local boroughs and cities can do as far as trying to come up with a way to help out their suffering schools. If these local governments want to raise/fund any amount of money to aid education, they should be able to do so without there being a cap on it. The state needs to stay out of it and let the local community governments make these sorts of decisions for the benefit of their area.

The state has already decimated public education in Alaska. This would only do more harm to our students, teachers, parents and schools!

Please do the right thing,
Kim Bailey

From: Ruth Dene
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:21:13 PM

[You don't often get email from ruthdene@me.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Please increase the BSA to a viable level. Please restore the state pension plans for educators to enable sustainable employment for our public school educators. Public education, the foundation of our democracy that ensures and a literate population, is at crisis point. The well being and future of our state is at risk
Sincerely,
Ruth Dene
Sent from my iPhone

From: Elisabeth Mack
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding cut
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:24:23 PM

You don't often get email from elisabethmack2026@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear the people. Ive recieved a email that is alarming becasue i have school aged children that recieve special education and im a single mom with a disability trying my best to raise good humans and I need the support of my community please think twice about the little guy..

From: Tamrit Howell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Regulation – Local Funding Contributions for Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:25:59 PM

You don't often get email from tamrithowell@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,

I'm writing as a mother of four Alaskan Native children, a community volunteer, a United Way board member, and a business professional to express my deep concern about the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education.

This proposal is disheartening and, frankly, feels like a failure to put Alaska's youth first. At a time when our children need stability, investment, and vision, shifting the financial burden onto local communities, many of which are already struggling, puts their futures at risk. Our students deserve a consistent and equitable education no matter where they live.

As a parent, I believe in preparing our kids to be the next leaders of Alaska. That starts with fully supporting the schools that shape their minds and potential. I urge you to reconsider this regulation and stand behind a strong, statewide commitment to public education.

Thank you for your time and service to Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

Tamrit Howell
[redacted]

From: Kortnie Horazdovsky
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public comment on local funding cap
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:48:07 PM

You don't often get email from kortnie.horazdovsky@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello education board,

I am a parent of four with three children in the Anchorage School District (the fourth is only 2). They participate in a school choice program that is our public language immersion program, a lottery program, not a charter school.

Please do not continue with the plan to further cap local contributions to education funding. This sounds like a governmental version of "teaching to the test" and further reducing the amount of funding going to local school districts. The state should fund its constitutional obligations in full and not rely on federal funds to fill what is the state's true obligation. I understand the fairness issue but the state shouldn't hobble local districts with means and huge numbers of students by making it impossible to fund more, they should raise the standard by funding the lower end more.

My struggling readers have made leaps and strides in reading when their in-classroom teachers have the time to give them one-on-one attention. Cuts have already taken two classroom teachers from our school for the coming year meaning class sizes will continue to go up. Especially in our neighborhood classes. This does not foster time for teacher attention and teacher communication as is required by the READS act.

When it comes to achievement, DEED should look at how our standardized tests have affected scores. I looked at test scores for third graders going back to 2000 and while we hit nearly 80% proficiency in both reading and math, looking at statewide data, proficiency dropped by nearly 40% in just one year, when the test changed, and another 10% in a year when the test changed yet again. Is it reasonable to have young elementary schoolers take computerized tests for three hours at a time? What is it about these tests that is/isn't working? (Notably, third graders had the highest performance four years after peak BSA funding, adjusted to 2025 dollars—- then the test changed).

Please do not funnel public funds away from public schools, or restrict solutions offered by local governments. Local schools should have local control.

Thank you,

Kortnie Horazdovsky
Chugiak

From: Neil Black
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Donna.Mears@akleg.gov; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: The ridiculousness of further squeezing our schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:04:41 PM

You don't often get email from goshrx@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education-

My name is Neil Black. For the last 27.5 years, I have gladly served as one of the Anchorage School District's two Senior Budget Analysts. I have worked for good Superintendents (Bob Christal, Carol Comeau, Ed Graff and Jharrett Bryantt come to mind), and one who now thinks that schools in Alaska have too much money. She, like the Governor, wishes to defund public education. But why?

What she and her boss fail to understand is that schools MUST, by law, educate everybody. It doesn't matter if students are rich, poor, white or brown, black, live on the hillside, live downtown, or live in a car. It makes no difference. What matters is that the services they need are provided. Right now, in Alaska, those services won't be provided to a great extent because of the unwillingness of this Governor and his lackeys to recognize that the costs of things in education go up. For example, when I started working for ASD back in October, 1997, my employer was paying less than $5,000/year for each full time employee's group medical insurance. That cost is now $24,600, a 392% increase, and that doesn't factor in that employees now contribute to their coverage through automatic payroll deductions, and are receiving fewer benefits.

The BSA when I started working for ASD was less than $3,900. 27.5 years later, the State Legislature lawfully approved a $700 increase to the BSA, bringing the current amount to $6,660. The Governor, who needs to be reminded that he is not above the law, said no and only funded it to $6,460 for FY2526. Think about that. **While the cost of providing medical insurance, a huge expense to all employers, has increased 392% over the last 27.5 years, the BSA has only increased 65.6%, and the Anchorage CPI-U has increased 86.8%. Literally hundreds of millions of dollars have been reshuffled throughout Alaska's school district budgets, because of this gap.** Is it any wonder that schools are not performing as well as they once did?

And now we have further reductions from the Federal level as grants are moronically held by the Trump administration.

AND we also have this new, last minute and COMPLETELY ABSURD proposal that Anchorage should further punish students by reducing the amount of local property tax revenue that can be collected for providing public education. Anchorage already

has a local tax cap as part of our Municipal Charter. We can't abide by that? Nope! That would help educate too many kids, and we can't have that, because.....well, why?

Every year, the AKDEED receives a report from each District that breaks out the new school year's spending in a format to match the AKDEED chart of accounts, including state function codes (which break out instructional costs from maintenance costs from transportation costs from administration costs, etc.). This report used to be used to determine whether the required percentage was being spent "in the classroom". Never have I heard from AKDEED that Anchorage isn't spending their education funds in a manner consistent with AKDEED requirements. NEVER. And now you want ASD to cut even more? In July? With school starting in just a few weeks?

Why?

What educational goal is being achieved by not funding schools? Why in the world should schools be forced to pay for the cost of having local police officers in schools (where a significant portion of the population spends their day)? Why on earth should that cost be borne by schools and not the city? Police work where the residents are, and there are a lot of residents in schools when school is in session.

This proposed regulation on local funding contributions is insanity.

What are you doing, and why are you doing this? Do you want Anchorage to turn into Detroit, or Philadelphia, or East St. Louis? I don't!

Please rescind this ridiculous proposal.

-Neil Black
[redacted].
Anchorage, AK 99504

From: Teri
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Override the Governor's Veto
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:09:04 PM

[You don't often get email from teri@gci.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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As a retired ASD teacher, I am writing this email to ask you to help the education funding in our state. Our governor has put too much weight on one report, "The Nation's Charter Report Card" when it comes to funding our schools. He has vetoed education funding twice; gutted bi partisan BSA funding twice and the list goes on. He is now asking you not to show up for the first five days of the special session he is calling. Unheard of and very disappointing.

Please vote to override the Governor's veto and STAND UP for AK Students and Teachers!

Teri Penn
[redacted]./Anchorage/AK
Teri@gci.net

Sent from my iPad

From: Brianna Cotter
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:13:47 PM

You don't often get email from briannacotter907@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing as a concerned parent, a working professional, and a lifelong Alaskan who cares deeply about the future of our children and communities.

My daughter is just entering the Anchorage School District. Like so many families, my husband and I both work full time. We pay our taxes, contribute to our local economy, and do our part to support a strong, healthy municipality. But what is unfolding right now in our public education system is deeply alarming—and simply not okay.

The proposed regulation to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools is not only shortsighted, it is harmful. It strips autonomy from the very communities who know their students best. It punishes cities like Anchorage for trying to step up when state and federal support fall short. And it sends a devastating message to families like mine: that our children's education is not a priority.

We are already facing unstable funding, program cuts, staff layoffs, and growing uncertainty just weeks before the new school year begins. We need solutions that stabilize and strengthen our schools—not regulations that tie our hands and reduce our ability to invest in our children's success.

I urge you to reject this proposal. Stand with Alaska's students, teachers, and families. Allow our communities to fund our public schools as we see fit. We deserve a system that supports—not undermines—the future of our state.

Sincerely,

Brianna Cotter

Anchorage, AK

Parent & Working Professional

From: annsant
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:16:49 PM

You don't often get email from anniesant@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education:

Thank you for your service in the State Board of Education. I just read a letter from Dr. Jharrett Bryantt, Superintendent, Anchorage School District, dated July 15, 2025. It outlines some frightening news about necessary cuts to the budget of the Anchorage School District, cuts that will require teacher and staff layoffs along with elimination of necessary educational programs, all of which will negatively impact students and families across Anchorage, and the balance of State as well.

Here are the events Dr. Bryantt cited that have left the ASD in this untenable situation:

> *On July 3, the U.S. Department of Education froze nearly $46 million in federal education grants statewide, including more than $14 million for ASD. These funds were already budgeted to support after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services. Now, with the school year weeks away, we are scrambling to preserve critical supports while losing staff and resources.*
>
> *At the state level, the Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding twice, after districts had already finalized their budgets. When the Legislature overrode his veto by a 46–14 vote, the Governor still slashed an additional $200 per student without warning, creating a $4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare. A special session is now scheduled to give lawmakers a chance to override the veto.*
>
> *The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like ours.*

I urge you to do all that you can to reverse the decisions that have led to this awful consequence and work together with other policy makers toward decisions that will provide our schools with more needed funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions that adversely impact the students and families of our community, with the full negative and lasting impact extending well into the future of Anchorage and the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Angela Santiago, APRN, FNP-C

Anchorage, AK. 99507

From: Regan Brooks
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Testimony: School Funding Desperately Needed
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:19:22 PM

You don't often get email from rsheltonbrooks@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I write this as a parent, a former educator, a community member, a social work student, and a spouse of an emergency medical professional.

From each of these perspectives, I see the enormous threat posed by the underfunding of our public education system. Young people in our schools are not receiving the support they need and, as a result, more potential will be lost, the mental health and suicide crisis will be amplified, crime rates will rise, and our communities will suffer.

While I understand that the crisis facing public education is not entirely in your hands, you do have power. Ans I urge you to do ALL you can to respond with compassion and action.

The harm that is being done now cannot entirely be prevented but it can be lessened if you take action and support our schools with the funding they desperately need.

This is an emergency.
Please take action.

Regan Brooks, she/her
[redacted]
rsheltonbrooks@gmail.com

Dena'inaq ełnen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu. (Dena'ina)
I live and work on the land of the Dena'ina. (English)

From: Glenn I
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:23:33 PM
Attachments: favicon.ico

You don't often get email from gandm.ivan@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please explain to the public how Alaska School districts lost out on education grant funding. If it is because we are not following federal guidelines for adhering to the DEI the public deserves to know about that. I can see that Anchorage school district is not in compliance.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement / Transgender Guidelines
asdk12.org

Glenn

From: Sterling-Elizabeth Arcadia
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment -education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:42:09 PM

You don't often get email from warren.gingerich@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

My name is Sterling Gingerich and I'm an Alaskan resident as well as a graduate of Alaskan public schools (West Anchorage, 2015). I'm already disappointed in the state of funding for our public schools, and believe our children deserve more resources, not fewer.

I strongly oppose the proposed cap on local contributions to education funding, and would like the State Board of Education to reject it.

Best,

Sterling Gingerich

From: Alysha Lee
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State and Federal Officials Subject: Immediate Action Needed to Protect Alaska's Public Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 1:49:36 PM

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Dear Elected Leaders,

I am writing to you not as a politician or a policymaker—but as a mother.

My children are students in Alaska's public schools. Like thousands of other parents across the state, I trust our schools to provide a safe, stable, and enriching environment where my kids can grow, learn, and thrive. But right now, that trust is being shaken—not because of the teachers, the staff, or the schools themselves, but because of the decisions being made at the state and federal levels.

What is happening to Alaska's public education system is not just disappointing—it is frightening.

The news that $46 million in federal education funds were frozen just days before the Fourth of July, including more than $14 million for the Anchorage School District alone, left me speechless. These funds were already budgeted to support special education, after-school programs, services for English learners, and Alaska Native students—children who need our support the most. Cutting off these resources so suddenly and without explanation is unconscionable.

And to make matters worse, the Governor has vetoed bipartisan school funding twice. Then, without warning, he slashed an additional $200 per student after school districts had finalized their budgets. As a mother, I see what this means: larger class sizes, fewer staff, reduced services, and schools forced to make impossible choices right before students return in August.

Now I've learned that the State Board of Education is considering a regulation that would cap how much local communities can contribute to their own schools. How can anyone justify blocking cities like Anchorage from investing in their children's futures?

This is not budget management. This is neglect. And our children are the ones paying the price.

I am asking you—pleading with you—as a mother: Please take immediate action to stop this.

Override the Governor's veto during the special session and restore school funding.

Reject the proposed cap on local education contributions that would strip even more resources from urban districts.

Demand answers and immediate resolution of the frozen federal education funds, and ensure this does not happen again.

Every child in Alaska deserves stability and opportunity. Every teacher deserves respect and support. And every parent deserves to know that our leaders are doing everything they can to protect public education—not tear it down.

I will not stay silent while my children's future is put at risk. I hope you won't either.

Sincerely,
Alysha Lee

From: Sandra Christopherson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regulation proposal
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:11:45 PM

You don't often get email from slchristopherson4@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Members of the State Board of Education:

Recently I learned that the funding for education for the state of Alaska has been frozen by the federal government. This federal freeze includes $14 million in grants to our particular district, negatively affecting critical programs that affect most of our students in some way.

I understand that the DEED Commissioner has proposed to the Board a cap for how much local communities could contribute to their own public schools. In this time of extreme shortages, both in federal and state monies, certainly this cap would be is very destructive.

Please do not support this proposal to limit local contribution.

Please support more funding for education in the state of Alaska.

Respectfully,
Sandra Christopherson
Anchorage, Alaska

From: Elizabeth Angasan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Support
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:15:26 PM

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To Whom it Concerns,
As a parent of an ASD student, it saddens me to learn that there isn't more financial support for our schools and students.
Each student within the Anchorage School District, as well as each student alive today, deserves to have a stable school environment, with teachers and staff who aren't burdened with the extra emotional load of a lack of job security. Being an educator today requires much; worrying about budget cuts shouldn't be one of those things. Students deserve opportunities to excel.
Communities deserve the right to support their students without a cap on support.
Please consider our future here in Alaska; the students and their respective families this lack of support will affect, and consider taking action to support our children and our future.
Thank you,
Elizabeth Angasan

From: Lauren Bogle
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regarding the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:20:13 PM

You don't often get email from lauren.j.bogle@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Good morning,

I am a single working mother of a bright, rambunctious seven-year-old, who will be entering second grade this fall. Though I have been guilty of ignoring notices regarding our state's education situation, I will be passive no longer.

Towards the end of this school year, my son repeatedly expressed how he and his classmates were very sad and angry that his teacher would be relocated to another school in the fall. I explained to him that it wouldn't affect them much because they'd have a new teacher anyway. I acknowledged that seeing her friendly, familiar face around the school would be missed, certainly, but I honestly didn't think it would be a big deal. Weeks passed, and the students became increasingly distressed. My son's negative emotions about his teacher "being forced to change schools by her boss's boss" permeated throughout all his school assignments. He was authentically upset.

It is apparent to me now that his teacher's situation is not a stand-alone occurrence, and, in fact, she is lucky to have retained employment at all with ASD. My heart goes out to the teachers, who are already underpaid and overworked. I feel awful for the children, as they are entirely oblivious to the decisions being made regarding their care and education. These are decisions that will profoundly affect their abilities to be happy, productive members of society. For many of the kids, school is the only constant in an otherwise volatile homelife.

I recognize that I am very fortunate, because my son will have a healthy education because of my *own* excellent education which led to a successful career and strong management of my finances. However, I also acknowledge that not everyone is in as comfortable a position. It is not fair to let others who rely on public education fall behind simply because they cannot afford to 1) take their children out of a failing school and put them in an expensive private school or 2) stop working so they can home school the children.

A shift to focusing on and funding good education would help our society get to the root of so many other issues we face. Armed with knowledge and social intelligence, the next generation could more easily tackle all sorts of things, from homelessness to environmental problems to infrastructure roadblocks. We must invest in our next generation NOW.

I will write to political leadership as well, but please let me know what else I can do to affect change. I truly want to help today's kids so we can work together for a better future.

Respectfully,

Lauren Bogle

From: CarolinAK
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I oppose regulation proposal 4AAC 09
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:21:58 PM

You don't often get email from alaskacarol7@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear EED Board,
Why are you proposing to take more money away from public schools? This is a bad idea. Do you have kids or grandkids? Do you know any Alaskan teachers or employees? Our communities are at stake.
Please, do not pass this regulation proposal 4AAC 09.
Thank you,
Carol DelValle
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From:	Meg Talbot
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Regulation change for local education contributions
Date:	Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:56:38 PM

[You don't often get email from meg_journal@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

My name is Meg Talbot; I'm a mother in Eagle River with two students in the Anchorage School District. Both of my kiddos need support from special education, and we've been very fortunate to have amazing teachers and support staff at Chugiak High School.

From a parent's perspective, it seems the state legislature, and by extension the state Board of Education, have some strange desire to NOT fund our schools properly. We are military and have seen our fair share of different school districts, but I have never seen anything like this elsewhere. I understand that the state budget is strapped for resources and the governor wants to see certain outcomes tied to funding — but there's no way our teachers and administrators can even attempt to bring up student scores without a good base of funding.

Instead of changing the definition of some words after failing the state disparity test, maybe you need to take a good look at how you are funding our schools. Instead of playing around with semantics to get the federal aid you're hoping for, maybe you should actually adjust your funding.

I'm truly appalled that ASD just had to lay off or reassign staff in mid-July. At my kids' school alone, I know of at least two teachers who left at the end of the year, with only one replacement coming this next year because the school doesn't have the funds to replace them both. And that was BEFORE the governor's vetoes and the federal government cancelling funds. This puts so many programs, like choir and art and even sports and after-school activities, at risk. School enrollment is going down year after year, and now I'm starting to understand why. There should be money for our students. I don't accept the answer that the money just isn't there this year, or any of the last five years we've lived here. Why not? What isn't working on a state level to bring in enough money for our schools? We certainly pay our fair share in our property taxes. Why are we not getting the revenue our residents need from oil resources and businesses on a state level?

Please do not hinder our districts' ability to get funds by capping local contributions. Given the current political climate, I doubt the federal government will be of any help, so it is up to you and state lawmakers to do what you can for our students.

With concern,
Meg Talbot

From: Wanda Brower
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:00:06 PM

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Our students of Alaska need the support and funding to continue to grow, learn, and thrive. They are the future of our great state, the future leaders, and community members. We all need to support them and help them grow and succeed. Please support and approve the vital funding for these children.

From: Kathryn Carr
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Regulation Redefining Local Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:00:32 PM

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Dear State Board of Education,

I'm writing to oppose the proposed regulation that would expand the definition of "local contributions" to include services currently provided outside the funding cap.

In Skagway, this change could reduce local education support by $500,000–$1 million and penalize our community for going above and beyond to support students through programs like maintenance, food services, athletics, and the arts.

This regulation threatens local control, undermines community partnerships, and punishes investment in our schools. Please reject it.

Sincerely,

Kathy Carr-Watson

Skagway, Alaska

From: tabitha trosper
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Save Public Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:00:35 PM

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Dear State Board Members,

I write to ask that you please stand up for Alaskan educators and children, the deliberate underfunding of public education is devastating for Alaskan's future and the economy.

I am a parent of two, our daughter has disabilities requiring support in a Life Skills Classroom and our son is in a regular classroom, but he too requires additional resource support. I have worked in our son's elementary school as a paraprofessional, and I am very involved in both our children's education journey. I have seen how hard our educators are working and I know as an advocate that there are many challenges in our schools which could be resolved if there were more resources and support. I am incredibly grateful for the public education system, but their resilience is forced by the lack of care from our leaders.

For the past year I have written countless letters, attended meetings, and testified, to the school board, my local representatives, and our state legislators asking that they please fund public education. For families like mine, Charter, Religious, and Private schools are not an option - even with the proposed voucher idea, we are not welcome. These types of institutions do not provide the resources for students with severe disabilities. Yes, even severely disabled students deserve an education and opportunity to contribute to society, they are still human beings.

It is hard to understand how politicians who are supposed to be "for the people" so easily turn against them to fill their own pockets, taking resources away from our most vulnerable populations first. That is exactly what our federal and state governments are doing, and it is an absolute abuse of power - freezing funding for essential teachers and staffing, programs, and resources; and Governor Dunleavy's defiance by vetoing funding multiple times is deplorable. What is their end game?

Politics should not rise above caring for our children.
Please stand up for education and don't let our politician's get away with becoming dictators.

Thank you,
Tabitha Voeller

[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502

From: Brad Thomas
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Anchorage School District Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:10:56 PM

You don't often get email from zbthomas@gci.net. Learn why this is important

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Hello.

Yesterday I received a "Call to Action" email from Dr. Jharrett Bryantt, Superintendent of the Anchorage School District. In the note, Dr. Bryant pledged to fight the recently imposed state budget cuts and asked all the recipients to contact the State Board of Education about the matter. I'm happy to do so.

HOLD THE LINE. Do not yield to the chirping for more money. According to most of those who evaluate such things, Alaska ranks in or near the top 10 in per pupil education funding among US states yet ranks at the very bottom (or in the bottom 5) in results. More money will not solve this. Fixing the broken system will.

Never has there been presented, than by this state education system, a stronger case for school choice. Competition introduced by choice will allow parents to direct their children to schools that produce quality education and for those schools that don't...they need to wither and disappear - or get better.

There is an entrenched mentality among the education-industrial complex that favors unions, administrations, and teachers. The kids, to those in the complex, are just the keys to the treasury. It must stop.

Brad Thomas
Anchorage, AK

From: Linda Kelly
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding Public Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:11:29 PM

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Please do NOT limit local funding contributions for education.
A community should be allowed to raise money to provide for public schools when the State Government and Federal Government limit their contributions.
There seems to be a War on Public Schools going on in our country. Do you visit our schools in Anchorage?

I do. My grandchildren attend Anchorage public schools. Public Schools are THE FOUNDATION of Democracy in this country. PLEASE help us keep our schools educating our children.

Linda Kelly, Alaska Voter

From: Justin Smith
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: The student of tomorrow
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:24:51 PM

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I cannot believe that the government which is sworn to protect our people, who serve at the pleasure of its constituents would have the audacity to not only freeze federal funds at such a critical time but then to take the knife a little bit deeper and prevent community from stepping up where the government falls short. I see what's happening- keep the people stupid, keep them as sheep that you can herd and control. No more! If we start defunding regulated public schools that teach a cohesive curriculum that's when history starts to get messy. If we don't teach them critical thinking you think they won't revolt- that's where we have it wrong because intelligence isn't confined to your school system, it will find a way. However we should not make it difficult for people to obtain the learning that's owed to them. You want a workforce, they need to be educated. Get our federal funding back and stop trying to implement measures keeping the people from stepping up and doing the job the government fumbles time and time again.

Thank you,

Justin Smith
[redacted]

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Kara Gustafson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding for Alaska
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:29:41 PM

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To whom it may concern:

Our family has been enraged to see how the state is handling education funding under the leadership of Governor Dunleavy. We are beginning our second year with a student in the Anchorage School District, and it's been disheartening to see our state (and national government) actively choose to not prioritize education - literally our future workforce and members of society. In our short year with a school-aged student, we've felt the impact of budget shortfalls and the uncertainty that comes with it. This uncertainty is not the learning environment we want for our kids - and yet public education is something our family values and will stick with as long as we can. We are asking our state leaders to please recognize that a bare bones education budget is NOT sustainable - not for the future of our kids, nor the future of our state. Please increase the base student allocation. Please work with lawmakers to make a budget that is in the interest of students. Ensuring that our kids have access to a quality education should NOT be a partisan issue.

With anger and concern,
Kara Gustafson, ASD parent

Sent from my iPhone

From: Melissa Krystal
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Educational funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:58:18 PM

You don't often get email from melihaynes@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing because I'm incredibly upset and angry about the recent news from the Anchorage School District. The layoffs and staff changes are going to deeply hurt my child, who has special needs.

My child needs specific help to do well in school. Things like special education, after-school programs, and counseling aren't just "nice to haves"—they are absolutely vital. The thought of losing staff who understand my child, or cutting these important programs, is truly unacceptable.

When our schools struggle, as the district admitted, it's always the most vulnerable kids who suffer the most. The unstable and unpredictable money decisions you've made are causing chaos for children like mine. They need a steady and supportive environment to succeed, and you're taking that away.

Please, remember the real kids and families affected by these budget choices. Our children's education should not be messed with because of political fights or sudden money problems.

Sincerely,
Melissa Haynes

From: Bridget Psarianos
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Funding Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 4:05:54 PM

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Hello,

I'm writing because of deep concerns about school funding. The federal funding freeze and vetos from Governor Dunleavy are making it impossible to fund our schools and ensure our teachers and kids are getting what they need. Anchorage School District is laying off teachers and it's terrifying.

The proposed cap on local education contributions will only make it harder for Anchorage and other communities to invest in our kids' education. If approved by the State Board of Education, it could remove millions more from our schools in the years ahead, and that is unacceptable.

This proposed cap should not move forward.

Thanks,
Bridget Psarianos
Anchorage, Alaska

--
Bridget Psarianos

From: Jordie Meehan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 5:15:31 PM

You don't often get email from meehan.jordie@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hi,

ASD has consistently requested additional funding each year despite seeing a decrease in enrollment, increase in class sizes, and a lower standard of learning. It appears that at the beginning of COVID the district has asked for more money but with less effort and care towards our children; with our children's education held hostage, parents have been subject to panic each fiscal year after the district is notified of no further budgetary increase. Once an increase in funds are received each year, parents have not seen their children's learning environment improve.

Instead, the ASD school environments have decreased in their care and approach to learning.

My daughter, who is enrolled in Indian Ed, does not receive services within the scope of the program.

My daughter, who struggles with an undiagnosed learning disability, does not qualify for services or special accommodations despite testing well below her grade level for 4 years straight. (It's because of Covid and all children are behind, or it's because we as parents do not do enough at home to teach our children despite not being professionals)

My daughter, who has been enrolled in her school's after tutoring program, does not receive tutoring applicable to her coursework and instead creates slime, does art projects, and otherwise does not receive 'tutoring' services.

My daughter, who excels in lower class sizes, is constantly going into the school year with an overflow of children and an under utilization of appropriate organizational staffing. Meaning, too much administrative staff, less teachers, and less classroom 1:1 time.

My daughter, who now gets out of school significantly earlier due to elementary time changes, now has to get after school care. Our family can't afford after school care.

So I ask this: what improvements have been made with each years fiscal budget raise? What improvements have been made for children and for parents?

Frankly speaking, funding should not be used as a tool to hold off impending crisis and I whole heartedly agree that increasing ASD'a budget will only be a bandaid solution to a larger problem of inadequate leadership and inappropriate educational culture we, as families, have come to experience.

Respectfully,

A concerned parent.

From: Nora Skeele
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 5:58:11 PM

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I'm a concerned citizen from Sitka emailing to oppose the regulation that would expand the definition of "local contributions" to include services and support currently provided outside the statutory funding cap.

I have several friends that are teachers and they have been complaining over the past few years about some of the significant budget cuts around schools in Sitka.

As a community Sitka wants local control over how our community funds education.

Sitkans have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make our schools stronger over the years and this regulation would set back an already weak school system. It could cause families to move away in search of better teacher wages, education resources and schools.

Please reconsider this regulation and do the right thing for our kids and teachers!

-Nora Skeele
Sitka, AK

From: Kate Hammer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please REJECT Proposed Regulations to Change Local Contribution Rates for Education Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:03:44 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a born and raised Alaskan and current parent and Anchorage resident. I strongly urge you to OPPOSE the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As State board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children in our state. The proposed regulations due to support this goal. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulations that will increase bureaucratic burden and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are already struggling and this regulation will only further limit educational support for our children. Please remember your actions and decisions impact real families trying to live the best life possible here in Alaska, families like mine. I received an excellent public education here in Anchorage (graduated 2002) and I will fight tooth and nail to give my own kids that same opportunity.

Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that causes the least amount of harm.

Thank you

Kate

Kate Hammer
10001 Zermatt Cir, Anch, AK 99507
907.306.6354
katewues@gmail.com

From: Vivian Dietz-Clark
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose the Proposed Cap on Local Education Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 6:11:53 PM

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To the Members of the State Board of Education and DEED Leadership,

As a parent, grandparent and Alaskan deeply committed to the success of our public schools, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would cap how much local communities can contribute to public education.

This proposal is deeply concerning. It comes at a time when school districts are already grappling with instability—federal education funds have been unexpectedly frozen, and last-minute state funding reductions have forced painful decisions in Anchorage and across Alaska. Our district is issuing layoffs and scrambling to protect student services just weeks before the school year begins.

Now, the idea of limiting the ability of local communities to invest in their own children adds yet another layer of uncertainty—and potential harm.

Capping local contributions would:

- Remove critical funding from districts that already operate lean budgets.
- Disempower municipalities that want to take ownership of their public schools.
- Disregard the unique needs of urban and diverse districts like Anchorage, where flexibility is essential to meet student needs.

Families want solutions that stabilize and strengthen education—not proposals that reduce resources and remove local control. If we truly care about outcomes for students, we must support communities in contributing what they can—not restrict them.

I urge you to reject this proposal and focus instead on building trust, restoring stability, and working in partnership with local school districts to support Alaska’s students.

Sincerely,

Vivian Dietz-Clark, Anchorage

[redacted]

Mother and grandmother to seven ASD Grads and Five Current Students

Sent from my iPad

From: Madeleine Grant
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do not take more $ away from schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:00:01 PM

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Hello

I am heartsick at the inadequate state funding of public schools already. Please do not change the rules limiting how much cities & boroughs can support education!
I was fortunate to have had an excellent public school education & know how that can make a great career & great citizens

Thanks for your work

Madeleine Grant MD

From: Peggy Kugel
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do NOT Cap Contributions from Local Communities
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:14:27 PM

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Why would you even think about capping the amount a local community may contribute to its schools? This is the worst idea I have heard in a long time, and there are a lot of terrible ideas floating around these days.

If a community cares about its students and its future enough to contribute funds to its public schools, that should be applauded, not prevented. It takes nothing from the state budget.

If this terrible proposed rule should be approved, it will tell the parents, students, grandparents, employers, and voters of Alaska how little the State Board of Education cares about educating our children. Please do your job and stand up for our public schools.

Margaret Kugel
Anchorage

From: Karen Ruud
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Change in regulation proposal
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:21:11 PM

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I am a parent-alum of the Anchorage School District. My 2 children are graduates of Betty Davis East Anchorage High School, the recipients of a strong education from our neighborhood public schools.
I write now to ask the board of education to oppose a proposal intended to reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools.
Respectfully,
Karen Ruud

From: Louis maurer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: public comment on DEED policy change proposal
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 9:36:17 PM

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I am writing in opposition to the proposed changes to local contributions in the regulations of the department of Educations and Early Development.

Our schools are already underfunded in order to meet the basic needs of our children and this new policy change will exacerbate that issue. I have 3 children currently in the Alaska education system and the current efforts by the governor to defund our schools are unacceptable, unlawful, and immoral. Every effort must be made to counteract the negative impacts of our children's future.

This policy proposal will negatively impact our children's future and I appose it.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Louis Maurer

[redacted]

Homer, AK 99603

[redacted]

From: Caroline Blom
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do better
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:02:48 PM

You don't often get email from carolinel614@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education

Sent from my iPhone

From: Lisa Thayer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to the US Department of Edication Freeze and AK Education Cuts!
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:16:49 PM

You don't often get email from lkthayer01@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am a worried mother, aunt, and severely disappointed citizen. The U.S. Department of Education freezing nearly **$46 million** in federal education grants statewide, including more than **$14 million** for ASD, is absolutely rediculous. The 2025 academic year is scheduled to be starting in just a few weeks. These funds were already budgeted to support **after-school programs, special education, English learner services, and Alaska Native student services**. Countless children, including my own, rely on these programs. This is a blatant disregard for the future of these students and the country as a whole.

Furthermore, Alaska's Governor vetoed bipartisan school funding not once but **twice**, after districts had already finalized their budgets. The Legislature overrode his veto by a **46–14 vote**, yet the Governor **still slashed an additional $200 per student** without warning, creating a **$4.3 million shortfall for ASD with no time to prepare.** This is a blatant abuse of power, and it does not support or represent the people of Alaska.

These decisions reflect a coordinated failure of leadership that disregards the will of Alaskans and jeopardizes the foundation of our public schools.

Please, do the right thing and think of the students and future of this state and country over your own pockets.

Regards,

Lisa Thayer

From: Barbara Burch
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NO to hijacking $15 million from the Anchorage School District
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:31:07 PM

You don't often get email from barbarajburch@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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What are you doing school board members??? Whose side are you on? I thought you were pro education and public schools and now you want to try AGAIN to pass some resolution that will change the amount of funds communities can give to local school districts.

Stop trying to destroy public school education!!

From: Kerri Raia
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Concern from Skagway
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:40:42 PM

You don't often get email from realkerrimccoy@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,

I'm writing to oppose the proposed regulation that would expand the definition of "local contributions" to include services currently provided outside the funding cap.

In Skagway, this change could reduce local education support by $500,000–$1 million and penalize our community for going above and beyond to support students through programs like maintenance, food services, athletics, and the arts.

This regulation threatens local control, undermines community partnerships, and punishes investment in our schools. Please reject it.

Sincerely,

Kerri Raia

Skagway, Alaska

From: Cecilia Miller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:57:53 PM

[You don't often get email from millercc@gci.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board Members,

I'm concerned about the efforts to redefine local contributions. This effort with the BSA reduction will hurt Alaskan's students. Please reconsider this effort.

Thank you,
Cecilia Miller

From: Stephanie Schulling
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No proposed limits
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 11:07:43 PM

[You don't often get email from stephschulling@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The proposed limits would severely hamstring public education in Anchorage, where a majority of our state's students live. Cuts will have to be made at a time when federal funding is frozen and drastic cuts have already been made. Our safety nets are quickly eroding under this President and Administration. School is one of the last safety nets for a large number of our students. Please don't let schools fail them too.

Thank you -
Stephanie Schulling
[redacted]
Eagle River, AK 99578
[redacted]

From: aynzli abad
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation on Local Funding
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 5:47:57 AM

You don't often get email from abad.aynzli60@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hi, my name is Aynzli Abad and I am truly disturbed at the proposed cap on how much communities can contribute to their public schools. With the seemingly growing lack of funding, support, and sympathy the Anchorage School District has received in this past year, I can not imagine why the DEED would choose to limit it anymore. While I can understand that public funding without a cap could increase the gap in education and opportunities for students from less affluent communities, I can't understand why you would make a choice that limits everyone's access. This August, students will return to classrooms with increased class sizes which have been shown to decrease student participation, teacher-student interactions, and have a negative impact on at-risk students. All of these factors will come together and decrease the quality of education provided to students, to add a cap on how much a community can and is willing to help shows a lack of compassion and understanding for today's students.

I deeply urge you to understand that this cap does not equalize any opportunities. Instead you will be limiting opportunities to all students. You will weaken the belief in education. You will make these students feel disrespected and unwanted. You will reinforce the lack of respect and compassion teachers are already feeling within the district. I urge you to not approve this funding cap as a student who once walked the halls and proudly played sports for ASD. I urge you to not approve this funding cap as an aspiring teacher who wants to grow up to become one of the teachers I looked up to while in your schools.

From: Karlie West
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I am against these budget cuts!
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:15:55 AM

You don't often get email from kmwest907@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the Esteemed Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget cuts for the upcoming academic year and to urge you to reconsider any decisions that will reduce funding for vital educational programs — particularly those related to before and after school care, and special education services.

As a parent in this district, my household relies heavily on the support provided by these programs. The before and after school programs are not a luxury for us, they are essential. They provide a safe, structured environment for my child while I fulfill my responsibilities at work. Without them, many working families like mine will be placed in extremely difficult positions, forced to choose between employment and childcare.

More critically, my family is directly impacted by the special education services provided through the school. These services have been instrumental in supporting my child's learning and emotional well-being. Reducing funding for special education not only threatens the progress that children like mine have made, but also undermines their right to an equitable education. For students who already face unique challenges, these cuts are not just numbers on a page, they represent lost opportunities, setbacks, and harm that could take years to repair.

We are living in a world that is already full of uncertainty and pressure. Education is supposed to be a place of stability, growth, and opportunity. Cutting educational funding sends a message to our children, the future leaders, innovators, and caretakers of our society, that their development is negotiable. It is not.

I urge you to explore every alternative before moving forward with any budget that sacrifices the most vulnerable parts of our school system. Our children deserve better. Our community deserves better.

Please, stand with families and students. Protect the programs that protect our future.

Thank you, a local Anchorage school district family.

From: Scott Hauser
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Rejecting the proposed cap on local community contributions to public schools
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:35:18 AM

You don't often get email from scottehauser@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Esteemed Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to you today with profound concern for the future of public education in Alaska. Our schools are vital institutions that shape the lives of our children, foster community development, and lay the groundwork for our state's prosperity. Ensuring that every student has access to a high-quality education is not merely an aspiration; it is a fundamental responsibility.

It has come to my attention that the current DEED Commissioner has presented a proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. This proposed change is deeply troubling and, if adopted, would have devastating consequences, particularly for urban districts like ours. It represents a significant step backward, threatening to strip even more critical funding from schools and undermining the essential principle of local control.

For many years, communities across Alaska, especially in urban areas, have made significant local investments to supplement state funding. These local contributions are not merely discretionary; they are often crucial for maintaining vital programs and services that go beyond basic state requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, specialized academic programs, extracurricular activities, essential support services for students with diverse needs, transportation, and even early childhood education initiatives. Capping these contributions would force urban districts to make drastic cuts, impacting student opportunities and potentially leading to a decline in educational quality.

While I understand the discussions surrounding federal Impact Aid and the disparity test, I firmly believe that limiting local investment is the wrong approach to achieving compliance. It penalizes communities that are committed to investing in their children's education and overlooks the unique needs and cost-of-living differences across our vast state. True equity should lift all schools, not diminish the resources of some.

I urge the Alaska State Board of Education to reject this proposal. Instead, we implore you to champion policies that:

- **Prioritize adequate and sustainable state funding:** A strong Base Student Allocation (BSA) that keeps pace with inflation and the actual costs of education is the cornerstone of a healthy public school system for all districts.
- **Preserve and encourage local autonomy:** Communities should have the ability to invest in their schools as they see fit, reflecting local values and priorities. This local commitment is a testament to the community's belief in its children's future.
- **Seek alternative solutions for federal compliance:** We encourage a collaborative approach to ensure Alaska meets federal requirements without sacrificing the financial

health and educational quality of our schools.

The decision before you is not just about a regulation change; it is about the future of our children and the strength of our communities. I trust that you, as stewards of Alaska's education system, will carefully consider the profound negative impact this proposal would have and choose to uphold the vital role of local support in our public schools.

Thank you for your dedication to Alaska's students. I am counting on your leadership to ensure that our public education system remains strong, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all

Sincerely,

Scott Hauser

[redacted] Anchorage Ak 99516

July 17, 2025

From: Elizabeth Schafer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No to spending caps for local communities to support their own school district
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:58:21 AM

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All,

No. Just vote No.
why on earth would the State of Alaska Board of Education put a limit on how much a local Community or school district could spend on their own schools? How is that providing for sustainable schools and education for our children state wide?
Please stop compounding the fiscal woes of education across Alaska that has been wrought by the 1: misguided MAGA president who just stripped $46 million dollars of pre planned $ from coming to Alaska , and 2: Governor Dunleavy two vetos in the Alaska state legislature overriding serious debate and good compromise to fund our state schools.

This is a regulation that should never have been brought up. Vote No. let communities help themselves while the feds and state try to destroy our schools.

Elizabeth Schafer
McCarthy Alaska 99588
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

From: lisa a
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do not CAP community contribution to Education
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 8:17:19 AM

You don't often get email from aklawwiley@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The DEED Commissioner presented a proposal to the State Board of Education to **cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools**—a move that would strip even more funding from urban districts like the district where I work, the ASD.

I cannot conceive WHY Ms. Bishop would propose this harmful limit.
Her reasons are only nefarious.

Please override this harmful proposal.
Sincerely,
Lisa Wiley
32+ plus Alaskan educator

From: Daisy Moser
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Schools Are in Crisis — We Need Your Leadership
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 8:31:09 AM

You don't often get email from moser.daisy@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Department of Education,

As a special education teacher in Anchorage for the past eight years, I'm writing to express my deep concern and frustration over the current state of public education funding in Alaska. The recent freeze of nearly $46 million in federal education grants, on top of multiple last-minute state-level funding cuts, is destabilizing our schools at the worst possible time—just weeks before students return.

These dollars aren't just numbers in a spreadsheet—they provide after-school care, classroom support, mental health resources, and essential services for English learners and students with disabilities. I have seen how these programs change lives. Now, with layoffs and reassignments already underway, our students are about to feel the loss directly.

What's happening isn't just a budgeting issue—it's a failure of leadership. Freezing funds without warning, vetoing bipartisan legislation, and now proposing to limit local investment in education all point to a deliberate effort to undermine public schools.

If we don't act, the long-term damage will be profound. As educators, we're being asked to do more with less—again. But our students deserve more, not less: more consistency, more opportunity, more belief in their future.

I urge you to:

- Oppose the proposed cap on local education funding
- Restore stability to school budgets by overriding the Governor's education vetoes
- Demand the immediate release of frozen federal funds

Public education is not a political game—it is the foundation of our state's future. Please stand up for Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

"You must always take care of those that are smaller and sweeter than you."
- Beasts of the Southern Wild

Chayla (Daisy) Moser
[redacted]
moser.daisy@gmail.com
chayla.moser@matsuk12.us

From: Kyndall Carey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Senator.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov; Representative.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov
Subject: Stop Undermining Alaska's Public Schools — Fund Education Now
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 9:44:00 AM

You don't often get email from kyndallb@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education and Representatives,

As a lifelong Alaskan, a proud graduate of the Anchorage School District, and now a parent of two children attending elementary school in ASD, I am writing to express my deep concern — and frankly, my outrage — over the devastating cuts to public education funding in our state.

What is happening right now is unacceptable. Schools are issuing layoff notices and scrambling to reorganize critical programs just weeks before students return. Why? Because of delayed, unpredictable, and politically motivated decisions that directly harm Alaska's children.

Let me be clear: this is not a budgeting issue — it is a leadership failure. The Governor's repeated vetoes of bipartisan education funding, followed by an unannounced per-student cut, have destabilized our entire public school system. And now, with the freeze of $46 million in federal grants — including more than $14 million meant for ASD — districts are being forced into crisis mode, slashing programs that serve students with the greatest need.

As a parent and Alaskan who cares about our economy, I am devastated. As a voter, I am paying attention.

You were elected or appointed to serve the public, and that includes every single student in this state. That means protecting after-school programs, special education, services for English learners, and supports for Alaska Native students. It means allowing local communities to invest in their own schools — not proposing arbitrary caps that strip away local control and funding.

This is not a sustainable path. These are not just policy decisions — they are real-life consequences that affect our kids, their teachers, and the future of our communities.

I am urging you to take immediate action to:

1. Fully restore and stabilize education funding at both the state and federal levels.
2. Reject any regulation that caps local contributions to public education.
3. Publicly support long-term, predictable funding strategies that allow districts to plan

responsibly and serve all students equitably.

Sincerely,
Kyndall Carey
[redacted] Anchorage, AK 99501
Parent, Anchorage School District
[redacted]

From: Erin Ball
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Regulation on Local Education Funding
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 10:58:25 AM

You don't often get email from eballahan@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would restrict or reduce the ability of local governments to contribute funding above the state-mandated minimum for public education.

This proposal undermines local control and threatens the quality of education our children receive. Communities that choose to invest more in their schools should be supported—not penalized—for stepping up where the state has fallen short. Local contributions help retain qualified teachers, reduce class sizes, and sustain critical programs and services that directly benefit students.

Limiting this support would only widen educational disparities and harm students across Alaska. Instead of restricting local efforts, the Board should be focused on increasing overall investment in education and partnering with communities to improve outcomes for all students.

Alaska's children deserve better. I urge you to reject this regulation and stand up for strong public schools in every corner of our state.

Sincerely,

Erin Callahan

Anchorage, AK

eballahan@gmail.com

From: Benson_Stephanie
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Issue regarding Funding
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 11:01:18 AM

You don't often get email from benson_stephanie@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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The publication of test scores for comparison does not look at one year compared to the other.

Teachers are working extremely hard and need all the help we can get for both behaviors and smaller group work in the classroom in the BEST of scenarios.

I believe you know this, cuts should not be happening to those on the front lines.

From: Dianne Mahaffey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Representative.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov
Subject: Funding of Education
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 11:50:06 AM

You don't often get email from mahaffeydj1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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We find it extremely short-sighted and disheartening how this administration is handling funding of education.

Education is the most important thing we can give children that will make them competent and contributing citizens as adults. Education includes not only reading, math, science and writing skills; it needs to include physical education and the arts, including music and art, as well as how government functions (civics).

It is difficult for school districts to function when they are continually fighting for adequate funding and, especially when the legislature can come up with a bipartisan plan and then the governor vetoes it after the legislative session is over!

Alaska should be at the top of the educational scale - as it was in the 60s and 70s - not at the bottom.

WE NEED YOU - THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - TO UPHOLD THE ALASKA CONSTITUTION AND PROVIDE THE FUNDING NEEDED FOR OUR CHILDREN - ALL CHILDREN OF THIS STATE!

From: Dianne Mahaffey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Representative.Ky.Holland@akleg.gov
Subject: Funding Education
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 11:57:04 AM

You don't often get email from mahaffeydj1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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It is difficult for school districts to function when they are continually fighting for adequate funding and, especially when the legislature can come up with a bipartisan plan and then the governor vetoes it after the legislative session is over!

Alaska should be at the top of the educational scale - as it was in the 60s and 70s - not at the bottom.

WE NEED YOU - THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - TO UPHOLD THE ALASKA CONSTITUTION AND PROVIDE THE FUNDING NEEDED FOR OUR CHILDREN - ALL CHILDREN OF THIS STATE!

Respectfully Submitted,

James and Dianne Mahaffey
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: Paula Kangis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Alaska Education Funding - Help Us!
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 12:23:15 PM

You don't often get email from pkangis@outlook.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello - I'm writing to ask for your help and support for funding Alaska's schools.

The U.S. Department of Education frozen nearly $46M in federal education grants statewide, including more than $14M for Anchorage School District. This proposed cap on local education contributions would make it extremely hard for Alaskan communities like mine, Anchorage, to invest in our children. Please help ensure it is NOT approved by the State Board of Education, as it would remove millions of dollars from Alaskan schools in the years ahead.

And our Governor Dunleavy vetoed bipartisan school funding TWICE. Please help him understand the dire situation he's putting ASD in and to work WITH our legislators to come to a consensus as soon as humanly possible. This continual back & forth is detrimental to our students and our teachers hoping they still have a job. I can't imagine the anxiety they must be feeling.

Our schools need more funding, greater predictability, and protection from decisions made in bad faith. We also need a long-term, coherent strategy to ensure every dollar is aligned to student needs and our shared values.

Please help us!

Paula Kangis
Anchorage ASD Parent

From: Jeremy Kopp
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposal to Limit Municipal Aid to Schools
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 12:39:40 PM

You don't often get email from jrkopp98@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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There is literally no reason for the state government to step in and tell local communities they must limit funding for their own schools. Schools are already struggling with funding thanks to efforts by the state and government and this would only exacerbate the issue. Dr. Deena Bishop should be ashamed for proposing this transparent government overreach.

Signed,
Jeremy Kopp

From: Dave Mayo-Kiely
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 1:11:08 PM

You don't often get email from dave.mayokiely@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing share my opposition to the proposal that would limit the amount of local contribution to school funding.

If our local elected officials want to contribute to our schools with both direct and indirect financial support, I believe they should be allowed to. In Anchorage there are many non-financial contributions that would potentially be at risk of the proposal is adopted. My three children all participated in sports that took part on land owned by the Municipality of Anchorage. Would that use be a part of the cap?

I believe this is another step in trying to limit the functionality of local schools and it should be rejected.

Thank you

Dave Mayo-Kiely
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: Iza Waszczylko
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment to proposed regulation
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 1:24:33 PM

You don't often get email from iza.waszczylko@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I would like express my negative opinion about proposed regulation.
I believe the regulation, if implemented, will negatively influence not only Alaska public School system but also will have implications on Alaska economy.
The Alaska schools are underfunded, schools are struggling with teacher shortages and more and more students are cramped into one class, early childhood education is in crisis. As still majority of population sends their children to public schools, bad school reputation and a lot of news coverage about budget cuts for schools will prevent young working families and young professionals to move to the State as well as will cause exodus of families caring for their children well-being.

Regards,
Izabela Waszczylko

From: Bret Connor
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD future
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 2:34:10 PM

You don't often get email from brethconnor@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Governor Dunleavy, senators Murkowski and Sullivan, and Deena Bishop,

Recently we received an email from the Anchorage School District superintendent explaining that our school district budget is under attack from three different angles. In fact, because of the decisions made by the federal government (including our US senators from Alaska), the Alaska governor, and the DEED commissioner, the ASD will be unable to operate in a way that fulfills all the needs of our students, families, and community.

This is extremely concerning to us as a family with children with disabilities. The Anchorage school district, in our experience has been the main lifeline offering our family the ability to function within some semblance of normalcy. This is not due to an excess of budget, it is due to the dedication, love, care, and commitment of the school teachers, staff, and paraprofessionals, creating a community of care that values every student, including ours that need much more support every single day.

This is happening with no real explanation of the rationality behind those decisions and subsequent budget cuts. If the reasoning is that some metric is somehow giving the indication that the school district is not performing well, wouldn't that indicate that it is in need of more resources? If the goal is to, for some reason dismantle what currently exists, would it not be reasonable to explain what you are hoping to build in its place? In a free and democratic society like ours, would it also be expected (and if necessary, demanded) that the public is involved in that process? That's not currently happening.

To those three agencies listed above: Federal government, local government, and DEED commissioner, please tell me, why are you doing this? What is your rationale, and what is your plan for the future of education and community for families like ours and for all families and individuals in our community? We deserve to know what the plan is to see if you may have forgotten to include some of us.

We happily pay taxes because we know that it goes to essential, basic needs of our community, much of that is education. Education is what sustains our communities, economy, and provides a shot at building an ever-bettering-future. Without quality education, that is not possible.

I went to school in the ASD. I did not witness any "radical left-wing programs". What I witnessed is an inclusion of all human beings in an environment that can foster the ability to learn, and function, and grow, and improve in our community, safely and with love, and with faith that the support from our elected leaders exists. Not radical… basic human decency.

Please explain to us what is happening in our government in relation to the future of education for our kids. Please explain why what you are currently doing is advisable, and please explain what the long term goals are and who they will benefit.

-Bret Connor
Anchorage Alaska

From: Michelle LeBeau
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 4:40:02 PM

You don't often get email from lebeau.michelle@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I do not support the State Board of Education's proposed regulation on limiting location funding contributions for education. The proposed changes seem detrimental to Alaska's public education and undermines local control.

Michelle LeBeau,
Alaska resident

--
Michelle LeBeau
[redacted]

From: intune.autumn
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposing Budget cuts for our Public schools
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:02:19 PM

You don't often get email from intune.autumn@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello! My name is Autumn Young and I was born and raised in Anchorage Alaska. I still live here with my family and we have all been in the public school system in this city that we love so much. I am submitting a public comment to STRONGLY oppose any budget cuts to public schools that are already decimating our education here in our glorious state. I cannot and will not allow the layoffs and cuts to staffing, after school programs, disability services, and alaska native services to go unnoticed. I am Native and my child is Native with learning disabilities that are not her fault and she should not be punished for them because of the failings of the government around her.

I want you to know that no one is letting this go unnoticed. We want better funding for our schools, not less. There should be NO cap on how much we can donate to our schools and teachers since they are the backbone to our society. Keeping kids in school and educated is the ONLY way our future is guaranteed to be a good one because these children ARE our future.

How will history look upon these cuts? It will be taught to children in a near future that the adults now wouldn't stand up for them or their right to a free and good education. Which side of history do you want to be on?

Thank you for your time.

A concerned parent

Sent from my Galaxy

From: pmdav1s@icloud.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: The current status of school funding for Anchorage School District.
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:43:08 PM

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My name is Patrick Davis. I live in anchorage with my wife & child. My child currently attends school in anchorage, where I myself work at an afterschool program caring for Alaskan youth.

in June of this year, Gov. Mike Dunleavy vetoed more than $122 million from Alaska's annual budget. Which included more than $50 million from the state's per-student funding for education, and tens of millions intended for major school maintenance projects. Additionally, on July 9th it was confirmed by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development that a federal spending freeze on education was taking place.

Now, there is a proposed cap on local education contributions. Which seems like an attack on parent involvement & local parent/teachers associations ability to contribute financially to their schools. Limiting ways that schools are able to collect money in times of financial stress is criminal. Please consider that limiting local contributions is a mistake.

From: Denise Bessette
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please save the schools!
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 5:39:18 AM

[You don't often get email from dbessette25@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good morning,
My niece, Dylan Manderlink, is a teacher in the public Anchorage school system. We are all across the nation appealing to the good and common sense of legislators and administrators to save the funding for public schools. There is a desperate and ongoing need for the programs provided for those most in need.
Please do the right thing, this country is growing more and more alarmingly isolationist and greedy.
Recognize what is humane and compassionate.
Thank you,
Denise Bessette
[redacted]
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567

Sent from my iPhone

From: Rosey Robards
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contributions to public education
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:13:59 AM

[You don't often get email from rosekapose@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Communities should have the freedom to contribute as much as they like to their public education programming.

I'm opposed to the proposal to cap local funding.

Communities should have the right to make their own decisions about what to do with their money.

Thank you,

E. Rosey Robards
Anchorage

From: Ellen Taylor
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Alaska Education Funding -Local Contribution Regulations
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:37:33 AM

You don't often get email from etaylorjessupmcdermott@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The State of Alaska needs to take responsibility for Alaska's future and fund Alaska's schools. Trying to shirk responsibility and use federal money better spent elsewhere so that the state can pass a disparity test limiting how much money is spent on schools is shameful. This kind of foolishness sends the message to students that they don't matter, the state is not investing in them, and increases the chance that families will want to leave the state to go somewhere with decent education. You want Alaskans able to contribute to an innovative economy? Fund public schools.

Do NOT approve the new local contribution rules.

Ellen Jessup McDermott
Chugiak

From: Aurora Cokerland
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment - Local Cap & In-kind
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:58:26 AM

You don't often get email from acokerland@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State School Board Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to DEED Commissioner Deena Bishop's proposal to cap local contributions and to revise the definition of in-kind support.

The justification for these changes appears to be the State's ongoing failure to meet the disparity test. However, a very important question remains unanswered: If the proposed changes are approved, will the State finally pass the disparity test? If not, there is no justification for making these changes — especially when they will significantly harm school districts' ability to educate students.

The State has not upheld its responsibility to adequately fund public education, and now, instead of addressing this shortfall, they are proposing to restrict local communities from stepping in to fill the gap. This is unacceptable.

Additionally, the proposed changes to the in-kind definition are too broad and would impose an excessive administrative burden on local governments and school districts. The time and resources required to track these changes would be better spent on directly supporting students and schools.

I do want to thank you for your decision not to approve the Commissioner's request as an emergency measure. This issue is far too important to rush. It deserves careful, deliberate consideration, and I appreciate your commitment to that process.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our schools and communities.

Sincerely,

Aurora Cokerland

From: Aurora Cokerland
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment - Local Cap & In-kind
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:58:26 AM

You don't often get email from acokerland@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Thank you for your time and for your service to our schools and communities.

Sincerely,

Aurora Cokerland

From: Janice Michael
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local support for public education
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 10:11:48 AM

You don't often get email from michaeljak79@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to you about the regulation that would expand the definition of local contributions. Education is underfunded and Sitka has already made significant cuts. Last year we cut our teaching staff again.. We no longer have any librarians working in any of our schools. Sitka wants local control over how our community funds education. Sitka citizens have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make our schools stronger. Please do not add this regulation.

Janice Michael
Sitka, Alaska

From: Joyce Cryan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Urgent Request For Education Funding
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 10:56:02 AM

[You don't often get email from joycecryanak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Greetings to Alaska Board of Education.

I am a mother of a 14 year old boy. My son is supposed to have a promising future in this beautiful state, yet I feel sad to have to write this letter to fight for his education which is a basic right for every American.

Education is the best solution that can solve most of the major problems we are currently facing in our modern society. Education can help a human being learn how to be a good citizen in a community. Education can teach a child to be curious, have compassion and empathy I believe will benefit the world. And it is our responsibility to provide that opportunity. However I am seeing that the Department of Education and our governor are against it. Why would you create a war against education? How can someone not value education and continue to slash the funding for it is beyond me.

I am urging you to take our children's future into consideration. The majority of Alaskan families have children is a public school. Let's not play tug of war for education funding. Alaska's natural beauty has the potential to attract people who want to raise their family here. Let's not discourage them by insufficient education funding and poor public school system.

Regards,

Joyce Cryan
Mother of a student in ASD school

From: Emily Forstner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local contribution formula funding
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 11:27:12 AM

You don't often get email from ef3942@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear AK State School Board:

I urge this body to make no change to the current local contribution formula found within the perimeters of the foundation formula for public school funding. I realize that this resolution is designed to off set the state's non-compliance with the federal impact funds. Alaska is the only state to not include impact funding with the overall budget. This is one reason the disparity test fails in Alaska. The resolution is an attempt to settle a problem particular to a few districts that negatively impacts the entire state. It is no secret that district budgets across the state are suffering from inflation, a flat BSA, and now the reduction in the base allocation with the Governor's veto pen, plus the loss of transportation funding. The resolution to count 'in kind' contributions against local contributions adds to this budget shortfall.

Granted, it is not the AK State School Board's responsibility to rectify districts budgets. However, it is the responsibility of the Board to follow process. The process for changing the funding formula is within the Legislative Body. That is where the discussion and debate should reside and it needs to include the district superintendents from across this most educationally diverse state. How the impact money is spent is perhaps more important to explore than by de facto reducing a district's budget.

It is not the fault of districts that the state distributes the impact funding separately. Perhaps the discussion should be on that policy rather than local contributions. The timing of the resolution is in conflict with the special session where education funding and policy is expected to be debated.

I urge you to take no action on this resolution.

Sincerely,

Emily Forstner

[redacted]

Palmer, AK

From: Kristin Wagner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regarding proposed regulations on local contributions to schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:30:13 PM

You don't often get email from kristin@duffsbackcountry.com. Learn why this is important

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To:
The Alaska State Board of Education & Early Learning Development

As a born and raised resident of Alaska, I've always been impressed at how communities support their students and school systems. My community of Skagway has been a supporter of our local K-12 that my child attends. I am saddened and angered to hear you were considering expanding the definition of local contributions that would essentially limit the funding available for our children's education. With the State underfunding education, this would be another devastating blow to Alaska's schools. The State of Alaska consistently ranks in the bottom half in K-12 education performance rankings in the USA. If the state won't fund Alaska's schools, communities should have the right and ability to ensure their kids receive a good education. I believe children given a strong education grow into adults with the skills and competence to compete in our world and make a stronger Alaska. Your proposed change would make an impact in Skagway and other Alaska communities. It hurts Alaska. I ask that you don't pass this regulation.

Sincerely, Kristin Wagner
Alaska Resident, business owner, child of 2 Alaskan children & voter

--
Kristin Wagner
Duff's Backcountry Outfitters, a division of Klothes Rush
[redacted]

From: Presley_Cody
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to public schools
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:42:03 PM

You don't often get email from presley_cody@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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Hello, given all the major cuts to public education recently I am deeply concerned at this proposal that will further place massive budgetary constraints on a system that is already suffering. Please take heed and do not enact this proposal for the sake of our school system.

_____

Cody Presley
PM Energy Conservation
Anchorage School District
[redacted]

Frank Kelty
Former Mayor and School Board Chair
Unalaska, Alaska

July 16, 2025

Kathijo Jolin, Executive Secretary to the Alaska Board of Education

PO Box 110500 333 Willoughby Ave 9th Floor

Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Ms. Jolin:

I am writing to you today as a former 50-year resident of Unalaska Alaska. I served the community as Mayor of Unalaska for 12 years, and as former Chair of the Unalaska City School District Board of Directors. I know first hand the danger that this regulation change would do to the Unalaska City School District and to the community of Unalaska that is why I am writing to you today in strong opposition to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) proposed changes to the State Regulations 4AAC 09. The Unalaska City School District is about as rural as a school district can get. It is located on Unalaska Island in the middle of Bering Sea 800 hundred miles west of Anchorage, off the road system, limited State Ferry service except during the summer months, air travel costs R/T $1,700-$2,000 just to Anchorage. Groceries' costs are extremely high, as are fuel and utilities costs, and the hiring staff for all sectors of the community not just teachers in this remote community.

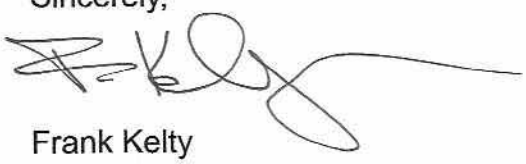
We are extremely concerned that this regulation change would do great harm to one of Alaska top rated school districts in the State of Alaska. That a few years ago the High school received national recognition as a Blue-Ribbon School award winner. That has a graduation rate at 96%. This regulation change would do great harm to the Unalaska City School District and to the community of Unalaska. The City of Unalaska is a successful community and one of the nations to commercial fishing ports we have used the City's resources to fund our school district at the state cap amount for at least forty years. We also take considerable pride in being able to fund outside of the cap amount with the Community Schools Program and other special funds we provide, for matintence costs for the district supporting the pool, school buildings, We help in funding for the preschool program, which has been tremendously successful especially for children that English is there second language. We provide part of the funding school lunch program. The above-mentioned City funding is critical to the Unalaska School District if regulations are changed. Major maintenance problems would be left unaddressed, causing safety issues for staff and students, student travel not just for sports but for the band and many other activities would surely be cut. Good luck, waiting for state funding from Juneau to address Capital projects and other needs, as we all know takes years.

Frank Kelty
Former Mayor and School Board Chair
Unalaska, Alaska

The Unalaska School Distinct, as we know it, if regulation is changed the district would have use their reserves to address emergency repairs or other needs for our two schools, the overall budget so those funds would be gone in a short period of time. I can tell you firsthand it would be difficult to hire staff and with an underfunded school district you would have to face spilt class, with large sizes, which is not a good environment for the students to learn. In my experience if you have poor schools or underfunded schools, the parents will not put up with it, they will pull their kids and make other arrangements for education, usually one or both parents will leave the community. Which decreases the school population, which reduces State and City funding levels. The parents and the community of Unalaska value good schools, it is an interwoven part of the excellent quality of life in the community of Unalaska. We urge the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to not change this regulation. We support the idea that funding of a school district above the cap amount to be at the discretion of the local government entity be City or Borough assembly and that if they have the resources available leave it up to them on how to appropriate their funds for their school districts .

In closing, I once again urge you not to change the regulations because it would have an extremely negative impact on the Unalaska City School District and many other rural school districts across the state. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



Frank Kelty

From: Bellamy_Margo
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Sullivan_America
Subject: Opposition to Proposal to Limit Local Support of Public Education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 4:34:26 PM

You don't often get email from bellamy_margo@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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July 16, 2025

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

We write to you today in strong opposition to the Commissioner's proposal to limit local contributions to public education. As longtime advocates for Alaska's children and families and leaders in public education governance, we are deeply concerned by this shortsighted and harmful measure.

At a time when public schools are already struggling under the enormous weight of chronic underfunding, teacher retention & recruitment challenges, and growing student needs, this proposal would further erode school district's ability to provide a stable, responsive, and high-quality education system. Local communities must retain the ability to invest in their students, schools, and futures. This is not just a matter of dollars—it is a matter of democratic control, educational equity, and access to opportunity.

Our specific concerns are:

- Loss of Local Control: Capping local contributions strips away the power of municipalities and school boards to

respond to their community's needs. It undermines the very principle of local governance.

- Worsening Inequities: Limiting local investment will have disproportionate impacts on urban, rural, and high-cost districts alike, especially those already struggling to meet basic educational needs.

- Contradiction to Legislative Progress: The Alaska State Legislature recently passed House Bill 57 with bipartisan support—an acknowledgment that increased and sustainable education funding is vital. This proposal runs counter to that progress.

- Community Trust and Partnership: Anchorage and communities across Alaska have demonstrated time and again their willingness to step up when the state does not. This proposal disregards these local efforts and breaks faith with voters and taxpayers.

Our Students Deserve Better! Alaska's children are counting on all of us to do more—not less. Limiting local contributions for public education would directly reduce funding for student support services and essential programs that help close opportunity and service gaps. Our students and families cannot afford, nor do the deserve, yet another disinvestment.

We urge the State Board to reject this proposal in its entirety. We should be working in partnership—state and local together—to strengthen public education, not restrict it. Instead of constraining communities, we must empower them.

Thank you for your service and for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Carl Jacobs, President, Anchorage School Board

Margo Bellamy, Vice President, Anchorage School Board

Margo Bellamy
Anchorage School Board

Dena'inaq ełnen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu. (Dena'ina)
I live and work on the land of the Dena’ina. (English)

VALDEZ CITY SCHOOLS BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2025-01
Resolution Opposing the Proposed Expansion of the Definition of "Local Contributions" and Erosion of Local Support for Public Education

WHEREAS, Valdez City Schools (VCS) benefits from strong local partnership and long-standing community investment in public education, made possible through both direct financial contributions and additional forms of support that reflect our community's values and commitment to student success; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has proposed regulatory changes under 4 AAC 09 that would expand the definition of 'local contributions' beyond its historical interpretation, capturing community supports that have long existed outside the statutory cap; and

WHEREAS, the proposed reclassification and expansion threaten to limit a community's ability to support its schools, disproportionately penalizing districts like Valdez that have cultivated collaborative partnerships with their municipality to enhance opportunities for their community's children; and

WHEREAS, the federal definition of 'current expenditures' under 20 U.S.C. 7713(4) has guided educational funding practices for decades and does not require the inclusion of all in-kind contributions or community supports within capped local contributions; and

WHEREAS, redefining in-kind contributions and non-instructional support as part of the capped local contribution could force reductions in these services or in instructional budgets to remain in compliance; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes are not mandated by federal law or requested by a federal agency but are instead a state-level policy choice, positioning Alaska as the only state actively pursuing regulatory strategies to offset its education funding responsibilities by redirecting federal Impact Aid dollars to itself first; and

WHEREAS, unlike the other 49 states, Alaska pursues a complex disparity test in an attempt to reduce state education funding by offsetting local contributions, rather than passing federal Impact Aid directly to school districts as true supplemental funding; and

WHEREAS, DEED has not demonstrated that the proposed regulatory changes will resolve Alaska's existing disparity test compliance issues, nor has it provided evidence that expanding the definition of local contributions will have any measurable impact on achieving the desired federal determination; and

WHEREAS, municipalities and community partners should be encouraged to support their local school districts through a wide variety of services and funding sources to enhance educational opportunities and lessen their dependence on fluctuating state and federal revenue streams; and

Draft

WHEREAS, these regulatory changes risk undermining community-driven solutions and essential supports that contribute to well-being and equity within the youngest generations of our community, particularly in a geographically unique and high-cost environment like Valdez; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdez owns the public school facilities within the community, and the proposed regulation change would impact the ability of local government to exercise responsible stewardship over its public assets, jeopardize long-term maintenance investments, and introduce fiscal uncertainty that threatens both property preservation and educational stability; and

WHEREAS, restricting the scope of allowable local contributions diminishes local control, limits a community's ability to safeguard public assets and infrastructure, and disregards the right of communities to invest in their educational priorities; and

WHEREAS, the sudden passage of such regulations, without meaningful collaboration or transition planning, disrupts responsible budget development; and

WHEREAS the proposed regulations introduce additional administrative and accounting burdens for districts, municipalities, and the state, likely increasing costs without providing clarity or resolving existing challenges transparently or equitably;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Valdez City School Board strongly opposes the proposed regulatory changes to 4 AAC 09 that would expand the definition of 'local contributions' in a manner that restricts community financial support, erodes local control, and reduces the overall resources available to Alaska's students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Valdez City School Board respectfully urges the Alaska State Board of Education and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to:

- Conduct a comprehensive fiscal analysis of the proposed regulatory changes, including the statewide impacts on school districts, municipalities, and education funding stability;
- Prioritize transparent, collaborative dialogue with school boards, superintendents, municipal leaders, and impacted stakeholders before adopting regulations with significant fiscal and operational consequences;
- Provide clear, timely guidance that preserves community-driven investments while meeting federal requirements;
- Engage in good-faith efforts to develop solutions that protect federal Impact Aid, maintain local authority, and recognize the unique needs of districts with strong community partnerships; and
- Encourage community financial support and partnerships between schools and municipalities, as well as other community partners.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Valdez City School Board authorizes the VCS Board President, VCS Superintendent, or an alternately assigned designee to communicate this

Draft

resolution to state and federal officials; advocate for policies that uphold educational excellence, equity, and local control; and support efforts to maintain responsible, community-driven support for Alaska's public schools.

Adopted this 14th day of July, 2025, by the Valdez City School Board.

Draft

From: Trisha Contreras
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding cuts
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 5:18:12 PM

You don't often get email from trishac420@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm writing to express my serious concerns about the recent staffing changes and layoffs. These decisions are particularly worrying because of their potential impact on my child, who has special needs.

Things like special education, after-school programs, and counseling are vital for my child's success. It's worrying to think these services, or the staff who provide them, might be cut.

Kids with special needs are often hit hardest when schools face budget problems. The current financial situation is creating an unstable environment, and my child needs stability to learn and grow.

Our children's education needs to be a top priority, without being messed with by money issues.

Sincerely,

Trisha Contreras

From: Parker, Dwight
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public education funding
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 5:34:24 PM

You don't often get email from daparker@southcentralfoundation.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To all board members,

I am a strong supporter and advocate for Alaska's children. As a pediatrician based here in Anchorage, as a father of three school-aged children in the Anchorage school district who attend Kincaid Elementary and Mears Middle School, and as a concerned citizen, I find it unconscionable and unacceptable that the Governor casts shade on our public education system while shamelessly trying to game our democratic system and avoid a veto override. I know that he would have us all believe that public education is bloated, wasteful and ineffective but it is the backbone of our state and our nation. It is the system by which the majority of America's children are educated but also cared for, stimulated, inspired and protected. He would have more dollars diverted to more exclusive and less accessible systems, which of course may demonstrate better outcomes when it comes to reading and math scores. Unfortunately, hundreds of families that I know here in Alaska do not have the time, money, or resources to take advantage of charter programs or support their children in home school programs. Our diverse state needs to invest more money in the public education sector, not less. How can we starve a child, and then blame it for not performing as well as it's peers? He has been slowly choking off funds to public education since he took office, but unfortunately, due to the dramatic and cruel actions of the current federal government, the effects of public education funding cuts are that much more painful this year. Please advocate for the children and families that we all know. Many of our kids rely on early childhood educators as reliable, stalwart examples in their lives. Many may not get a nutritious meal at home and rely on school breakfast and lunch programs. I care for hundreds of children that rely on individualized education plans and therapists due to learning disabilities or other impairments. My own kids should have access to quality public education, and so far, they have excelled and had a good experience but this year and going forward that is in question. I and many highly skilled professionals here in Alaska that I know are watching closely and hope you will stand by our children. I have no hope that the current governor will do what's best for kids, but the rest of us still can. Best,

Dr. Dwight Parker

From: Chanel Newsome
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD LAYOFFS
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 8:31:03 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Whom it May Concern,

I'm writing because I'm heartbroken and deeply concerned about the layoffs happening in the Anchorage School District. These layoffs and reassignments will hurt our kids, our teachers, and our entire community.

Our schools are already stretched thin. Cutting more funding and more layoffs means bigger class sizes, fewer teachers, and less support for students. It means losing programs that help kids learn, grow, and feel safe at school.

I live in Anchorage and I care deeply about our public schools. I want my community, and especially our children, to have a strong future. That starts with investing in education, not taking away from it.

Please do everything you can to stop these cuts, reassignments and layoffs. Please fully fund our public schools. Our kids are worth it.

Sincerely,

Chanel Newsome

Concerned parent

From: William Saltonstall
To: Holland, Hezekiah R (LEG); Giessel, Catherine (LEG); EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Special session, education
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 10:16:19 PM

You don't often get email from willsaltonstall@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I do NOT support the governor's regulation change proposals for education in Alaska. I don't like his methods. Alaska voters have said over and over we want to increase funding to schools which have been flat funded throughout his time in office. We have asked our legislators to increase funding. They have done so. He vetoed it. The voters asked our legislators to override his veto. They did. Now he line item vetoed the funding and called a special session while some legislators cannot be there and has asked other legislators to skip the session. It is underhanded. It's time for him to accept the will of the electorate. Personally I, who do not have children, would rather the State spend money on local schools than a PFD.

I think the governor's fascination with CMO charter schools is a mistake. Setting up charter schools out of control of local school boards will not serve the local population. Privatization of public school management is a recipe for bleeding state dollars into private hands. In my birth state of Massachusetts an analogous mistake was with hospitals in underserved areas. Hospitals were sold to Steward Health Systems. They sold the land the hospitals sat on to their own holding company and leased the property back to the hospitals at a profit, bled off the money to private equity and then went bankrupt, closing the hospitals.

I don't like the Governor's plan and I particularly don't like his methods.

William L. Saltonstall
[redacted]
Anchorage, Alaska
99516

From: derks_jennifer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No cap for local funding contributions for education.
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 9:42:03 AM

You don't often get email from derks_jennifer@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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I am a dedicated educator in the Anchorage School District, where I have had the privilege of serving as a classroom teacher for the past 13 years. I am also a parent of two children who attend public schools in this district. I write to you today out of deep concern regarding Governor Dunleavy and the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) Commissioner's decision to withhold critical funding from our public schools.

Education has long been recognized as the cornerstone of a thriving democracy. Since the founding of our nation, access to quality education has been understood as essential for cultivating informed citizens—individuals who can engage thoughtfully in civic life, vote responsibly, defend their rights and freedoms, and stand against tyranny and injustice. As the Center on Education Policy rightly states, "An educated citizenry could understand political and social issues and would participate in civic life, vote wisely, protect their rights and freedoms, and resist tyrants and demagogues."

The current administration's actions represent more than a budgetary decision—they are a direct threat to the democratic values we hold dear. These cuts disproportionately affect working-class families and marginalized communities, while wealthier families retain access to quality educational opportunities. This widening gap undermines equity and the promise of equal opportunity for all Alaskan children.

This is a pivotal moment—one that our children and grandchildren will read about in history books. When they ask what we did to stand up for public education and democracy, I hope you can say you took action.
I urge you to oppose any cap on how much local communities can contribute to their public schools, as proposed by the DEED Commissioner. And I strongly call on you to override Governor Dunleavy's veto—once again—and fully fund public education in accordance with the will of Alaskan voters.

Our students, our communities, and our democracy deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Derks

4th Grade Teacher
Girdwood School
[redacted]

From:	Weber, Jason
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Public Comment on Proposed Changes to Alaska"s Administrative Code
Date:	Thursday, July 17, 2025 10:22:19 AM
Attachments:	VALDEZ CITY SCHOOLS BOARD RESOLUTION NO.docx

You don't often get email from jweber@valdezcityschools.org. Learn why this is important

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Today I want to share with you my deep concern about DEEDs proposed changes to Alaska's administrative code (4 AAC 09).

The change in the code will have an immediate and negative impact on what we are able to offer Valdez kids (as part of an excellent educational opportunity). The impact on student activities will impact both brick and mortar students as well as home school students in the community of Valdez, who participate in our afterschool programs. These programs are open to all students in Valdez who are of the appropriate age.

DEEDs proposed language changes would negatively affect funding, services and support we receive from our municipality for transportation, food service, and student activities. This loss of support would be substantial and require us to immediately make additional cuts to programs and staffing at Valdez City Schools. In addition to restricting the municipality's ability to support our community's educational priorities, the proposed language would change language to include all "in-kind" funding schools receive from the city. The City of Valdez and the people of our community support our schools in so many different ways, the uncertainty of what is or is not included in the phrase "in kind" will have a chilling effect on what can be done. By way of example only, would building and maintaining a sledding hill for students be an "in kind" contribution? That chilling effect will require more administrative time and costs to review and determine and defend local decisions; all of this would increase administrative costs which would be true bureaucracy and reduction of dollars which would otherwise go to kids.

This change would greatly diminish our ability to work with the city, remove even more funding from our municipality and increase safety issues as would not be able to maintain our buildings at the current level without the support the owners of those buildings provide, including ensuring the roofs do not collapse under large snow loads, which are a common issue in Valdez. It's hard for me to understand the state school board enacting a regulation like this that would diminish the owners rights to maintain their building at a level that they see fit.

All the negative impacts noted here and by others need to be balanced against the goals of the proposed change. What is the goal? The need for this language change has not been articulated clearly by DEED. When I asked the commissioner directly if the change would guarantee the state would pass the disparity test, she said it would not. When I asked her if there had been a study completed to see how it would financially affect districts in the state, she said no. What is the net effect of the change? Has there been any study to determine the net effect system wide or on each district as to the change in dollars for education? What is the purpose of the proposed change? Is it just to allow the State of Alaska to claw back federal impact aid funds otherwise directed to impacted local school districts? If so, why is Alaska the only state that tries to do this? We as a state and you as a State Board of Education should, at a minimum, follow the old adage "look before you leap" – study the impact and the alternatives first. Do not be a proverbial rubber stamp.

It's important that local communities through their municipalities and school boards can determine what is best for their kids, these proposed changes diminish the community's ability to support their kids in the way they see fit. Local control is important. This proposal erodes this cornerstone of Alaska education. I am available to talk more about how these changes will affect the schools in Valdez. Also attached is a resolution that was adopted by our school board on Monday and will be transmitted to the state school board as part of the public comment period.

--

From: Nina Schwinghammer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding for Education
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 10:39:10 AM

You don't often get email from ndschwinghammer@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please bring back funding for schools in Alaska. My husband and I were born in Alaska and were educated by the public school system and now we are raising our kids here in the hopes they will have a good public school system.

For the first time in our lives, we are talking about leaving Alaska to find a better climate for education for our kids. Many of our Alaskan born friends have already done so, and we've talked to many friends who are teachers who are leaving education entirely because it just doesn't make sense economically for them.

Do you want to keep teachers in schools? Do you want to keep families in Alaska? Do you want an educated workforce in 20 years?

Please retain funding for public education. Ask congress to cut funding for military operations in Iran instead.

Nina Schwinghammer

From: Cassandra Gardner Raun
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please REJECT proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 12:43:46 PM

You don't often get email from cassandraraun@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to **oppose** the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a **duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state**. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. Frankly, **this proposal feels intentionally harmful**. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and **punishes community support for schools**. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Cassandra Gardner Raun

[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Clyde Carey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Senator.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov; Representative.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov
Subject: Anchorage School District Concerns
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 1:35:43 PM

You don't often get email from clyde@49thfreight.com. Learn why this is important

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All,

I am reaching out to share some personal thoughts and concerns regarding the current state of the Anchorage School District. As lifelong Alaskans, my wife and I have always cherished our community, having built our lives and careers here. We are both college-educated professionals (UAA graduates), business owners, and owners of multiple pieces of real estate. Anchorage has been a wonderful place for us.

However, the recent deterioration of the Anchorage School District has caused us significant concern. We have two young children, aged eight and ten, and we are deeply worried that they will not have the same educational opportunities that Anchorage once provided us. The quality of education is paramount for our children's future, and we are beginning to question whether Anchorage can still offer the necessary resources and environment for their growth and success.

We genuinely believe that moving to the lower 48 states may provide our children with the educational opportunities that we currently find lacking here in Anchorage. This is not a decision we take lightly, as our roots are deeply embedded in Alaska. Nevertheless, we feel that something needs to change very quickly within the Anchorage School District, or we will have no choice but to leave, just as many others have already done.

We hope that this message conveys our concerns and the urgency of the situation.

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Thank you,

Clyde Carey - Owner
49th Freight – Anchorage, AK
[redacted]

From: Kate Goudreau
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: In opposition to proposed changes of "In-Kind services" through DEED
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 2:26:03 PM

You don't often get email from kate.goudreau@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and educator in Valdez to respectfully urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These proposed changes would have serious negative consequences for our students and community. Specifically, they would:

- Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs. Our state is large, rural, and difficult to transit and athletics/music/Aca-deca/etc. open up opportunities for our kids to travel and meet others outside of Valdez. School activities and programs allow that engagement for ALL students, not just those in high socio-economic standings.

- Reduce transportation options, raising concerns about student safety. This is highly concerning ESPECIALLY during the winter months when Valdez can easily accumulate over 300 inches of snow in a season. School buses and provided transportations keep kids safe, warm, and showing up to school.

- Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools. We are in a unique and healthy position, each benefiting the other and providing so many assets to our school kids and the Valdez community. Hindering this partnership would hurt ALL the residents of Valdez.

- Create uncertainty in school budgets through vague definitions and reporting requirements.

The success of our students depends on the strong collaboration between the City of Valdez and our local schools. City-supported services—such as our School Resource Officer, shared recreational facilities, and other community resources—are vital to the well-being and development of our youth. Counting these contributions against allowable school funding not only threatens these services but also undermines local control and trust.

Students in Valdez deserve safe transportation, access to quality nutrition, enriching afterschool programs, and continued support from their community. I urge you to preserve these opportunities by opposing the proposed regulatory changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kate Goudreau
Concerned parent

[redacted] Valdez, AK 99686

From: Larisa Manewal
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Budget
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 7:29:33 PM

You don't often get email from 28fathom@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hi-

I wanted to express my concern over a proposed regulation that puts limits on community contributions towards education. We are in inflationary times, and already contend with a very underfunded education system. This lack of funding already requires teachers like myself to constantly fundraise for the basic needs of our students, an exhausting cycle to operate under.

Last year for example, I was tasked with teaching a new class-Yearbook and given three old cameras with mechanical issues for a class size of 15. I had to reach out to local entities like Sitka Rotary Club to secure funds to purchase a few cameras in order to make sure my whole class could be actively engaged and successful with the tasks at hand. With additional budget cuts this year, my class sizes go up again this fall, further stretching limited resources.

This proposed regulation would negatively impact our students, as even more essential services and programs would be cut as a result if the city funding counts against the state funding. Sikans deserve to retain local control in how we fund education. As a community we consistently vote to place a high value on the education of our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter,

Larisa Manewal
Sitka, Alaska

From: Gilson, Tracy
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025 11:09:39 PM

You don't often get email from tgilson@valdezcityschools.org. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education Members,
I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulatory changes under consideration by the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) that would reclassify outside-the-cap municipal funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by cities and towns.

These proposed changes would have a profoundly negative impact on communities like ours, which have long supported the educational needs through supplemental investments beyond the state’s required funding formula. Reclassifying these locally allocated funds and supports as “inside-the-cap” would unfairly penalize municipalities that go above and beyond to ensure high-quality education services for our children.

As a parent and educator of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local alliances, and threaten the very programs that support our children's well-being and help them thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Theresa Gilson
Concerned Community member and parent

From: Todd Hindman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Municipal Funding
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:20:20 AM

You don't often get email from thindman@alaska.net. Learn why this is important

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I would like to express my disapproval of the proposed limitation of municipal aid to their public schools. Aren't we all in favor of local control of our schools? While our public schools throughout Alaska, especially in rural areas need the support of state funding, decisions for schools should be left to the local government and its constituents. The AK State Board of Education needs to take a hands-off approach to these issues. Thank you for your consideration.

Todd Hindman
Homer, Alaska

From: Rosey Robards
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: Local contributions to public education
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 7:35:38 AM

You don't often get email from rosekapose@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'd like to clarify that I believe communities should be able to contribute as much as they want to enabling schools to providing additional education programming and community services beyond the traditional school day.

I believe some things should fall outside the cap and be fundable. This strengthens community for families, maximizes use of public spaces and provides services for younger children who would not typically be served.

E. Rosey Robards

> On Jul 18, 2025, at 7:13 AM, Rosey Robards <rosekapose@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> Communities should have the freedom to contribute as much as they like to their public education programming.
>
> I'm opposed to the proposal to cap local funding.
>
> Communities should have the right to make their own decisions about what to do with their money.
>
> Thank you,
>
> E. Rosey Robards
> Anchorage

From: Sarah Lindsey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Capping community contributions to public schools
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 9:10:54 AM

You don't often get email from alaskasarahbee@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my dismay and disapproval of Commissioner Bishop's proposal to the State Board of Education to cap the amount of money local communities can contribute to their own public schools. I am at a complete loss as to why such a proposal, which seems to be aimed only at further hobbling and defunding public education, would be proposed by someone charged with advocating for and facilitating better public education. Why in the world would we want to handicap communities from contributing to the experience and educational opportunities of their own children? I have two children in ASD and one recent graduate. Over the course of my time as a parent of school-age children, I have witnessed nothing but a constant decline in funding and investment in public education. To starve our schools of resources and then declare them failing is a disservice to the many average Alaska families that you are supposed to serve. I do not see any way in which this proposal is in the best interest of my children or my community. Especially if both state and federal funding are denied to our public schools, our communities should be allowed to step in where they can. I urge you to stand up for our children and oppose Commissioner Bishop's proposal.

Sincerely,
Sarah Lindsey

From: Verfaillie, Pamela
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to changes to outside of the cap funding
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 9:19:04 AM

You don't often get email from pverfaillie@valdezcityschools.org. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to express my opposition to changes in current rules regarding local contributions that are outside of the cap.

Alaska is an immense state with an incredible variety of opportunities and needs found within its school districts. A reduction in local control over spending for school budgets would unfairly and unequally impact students across the state. For example, a reduction in funds available for activity transportation would negatively impact student participation in rural schools much more than in schools located in a metropolitan area. When municipalities are limited in providing funds, school districts will be forced to make cuts in either programs or resources allocated to programs.

Smaller communities have a greater amount of shared spaces and resources, whether it be a joint community and school library, city sponsored events occurring in school buildings, school activities taking place in city owned buildings, or one of a myriad of other situations. Communities should be encouraged to work together to support their residents and taking away financial control will only hurt students and other residents.

I would also like to mention that this decision will affect more than just the schools. Some high paying jobs in Alaska are held by people who maintain residences elsewhere, leaving their families behind when they are 'on shift.' Reducing local control over how local taxpayer funds can be used to support local schools may make our schools less attractive, encouraging more shift workers to stay in temporary housing instead of relocating with their families. When our employees do not live and work in the same community, there is a ripple effect, hurting our schools in the short term, but leading to broader negative economic impacts for businesses who rely on people utilizing their services, shopping in their stores, or accepting employment in the community.

Local governments should have the right to set priorities for their communities, and our children are our future. They deserve to be a priority.

Finally, thank you for your service to the students and educators in Alaska. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Pamela Verfaillie
[redacted], Valdez, AK 99686

Mrs. Verfaillie, MLIS
AK Certified School Librarian
Valdez High School
[redacted]

.

Chapter Sponsor - National Senior Beta Club
Chapter Adviser - National Honor Society

#ValdezBucs

From: Kyle Evans
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding Cap Proposal
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 12:14:43 PM

You don't often get email from kwevans@alaska.edu. Learn why this is important

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Good afternoon,

After reading the DEED Commissioner's proposal to redefine and limit how boroughs contribute local funding to their education system, I was motivated to write this email. Such a proposal is moronic, it completely fails to capture the spirit or intent of rules surrounding budget allocation. As a product of public education in Alaska, I was taught how to think critically, rationalize, and defend my position. In this instance, my position is common sense. Alaskans are leaving. There is an exodus of talent and a lack of incentive for potential newcomers. Make no mistake, dismantling our education system further and violating the state's constitution regarding the amount of funding each child receives for schooling will worsen the moral crisis Alaskans with children already face when deciding whether it is in their family's best interest to continue living here. I humbly ask the commissioner to step down, as she is obviously incapable of exhibiting a modicum of intelligence and is incapable of fulfilling her primary roles and responsibilities as a fiduciary for our education system.

Respectfully,
Kyle Evans

From: Ginger Drais
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation 4AACO9
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 12:22:41 PM

[You don't often get email from gdrais2021@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To: Sally Stockhausen, Chair
& State Bd of Eduction members

I strongly am against the changes to regulations based on the allocation of monies which are based on local contributions. Please, please do not continue this horrible practice that negatively impacts both rural and urban schools that are already almost belly up. If children are our future, things are looking mighty meagre for this state!

Most sincerely,

Ginger Drais, MEd, Special Education
gdrais2021@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kayla Erickson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject Dunleavy
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 12:24:30 PM

You don't often get email from kaylajerickson@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am emailing as a concerned citizen of Juneau, Alaska.

Dunleavy's proposed budget cuts pose a great threat to public education and ultimately the children and future of Alaska.

Our schools are severely underfunded and understaffed. Reduction of funding will only result in larger class sizes, fewer qualified personnel, and a deepened educational gap. Alaskan students already rank painfully low in nationwide surveys. How much farther can we fall before someone stands up for public education in Alaska?

I urge you to reject Governor Dunleavy's regulation reducing local control and local funding for our school districts.

Thank you,
Kayla Erickson

From: Jennifer Kelly
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 12:36:09 PM

You don't often get email from jennieonthetide@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

Please reject the regulation changes that would reclassify "in-kind" contributions from our city. We are able to accomplish much with the generous support of the city and losing that support because of reclassification seems both unnecessary and counterproductive, especially in times of federal cuts to education.

I have taught at Valdez City Schools for 39 years and raised my two children in the VCS system. During that time, VCS has always striven to create spaces where every student can find their place of strength. These spaces include athletic programs and after-school enrichment opportunities which have made school a place to thrive for my own kids and many, many students.

The nutrition programs offered through the school have made a significant difference in student performance. The proposed changes will have an impact on the quality and variety of food available for students.

The proposed changes will make access to extracurriculars more difficult. Without transportation funding, many families will have to find alternative transportation or simply forego these programs. They will undermine the schools' strong partnership with the City of Valdez.

These proposals seem designed to create uncertainty in reporting, and makes budget planning more difficult. Our schools depends on community support and local control.

Please oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kelly
Parent of two former Valdez City Schools students, Alaska public school teacher

From: John Sisk
To: eed.contact (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: Public Comment on Limiting Local Funding of Schools
Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 9:12:12 AM

[You don't often get email from juansisk@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Just wondering about me previous inquiry, below?

> On Jul 7, 2025, at 8:17 AM, John Sisk <juansisk@icloud.com> wrote:
>
> Dear DEED:
>
> I read and heard on the radio that you have opened a public comment period on new regulations to change how municipalities account for
> local school expenditures and to limit what municipalities can spend on public education. However, I can find nothing on the DEED web site about this matter. Please share with me the status of the proposed change, the public comment opportunity, and anything directly related. Thank you very much,
>
> John Sisk
> juansisk@gmail.com
> [redacted]
>

From: Andy Cook
To: boardofeducation@kpbsd.k12.ak.us; Bert Stedman; Cal Fierro Allard, Jamie A (LEG); Tilton, Cathy (LEG); Harris, Robert H (LEG); Rep. Louise Stutes; Ruffridge, Justin H (LEG); Gary Stevens; Senator Mike Shower; Shelley Hughes; Frey, Glenn M (LEG); Jones B; Gray, Andrew T (LEG); Fields, Zack (LEG); Ruga, Charles M (LEG); Josephson, Andrew L (LEG); McCabe, Kevin J (LEG); Claman, Matt (LEG); Vance, Sarah (LEG)
Cc: Kirk Clark; Michelle Turner; Quana Liberty, Action Alt Eskimos; Commissioner, DFED (DFG sponsored); Schaffer, Jill C (DEC); Ed Kathy Radio Martin; House Judiciary@akleg.gov; House Finance
Subject: David Boyle: The more we spend, the less we get in Alaska"s public schools run by the Education Cartel - Must Read Alaska
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 11:55:33 PM

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Please forward this to the KPB assembly and mayor and everyone else who will benefit from this information.

Here's a good breakdown of public schools in anchorage which clearly shows more funding isn't the answer just like similar stats I've sent out in the kpbsd. I'm sure many school districts if not all of them have similar outcomes. In fact as is pointed out, more funding creates worse results! Imagine that! The only people making out with this present system is all the listed cartels (unions) who are benefiting from increased funding and it obviously isn't the student or teachers who get union raises less then inflation. As I pointed out before teachers. If you break ranks with the unions and vote for a full pfd you'll make a heck of a lot more even if you're single and a substantial amount more if you're married and have children. The choice is up to you. Wake up and start peering through the smoke screen the cartels have you in.

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmustreadalaska.com%2Fdavid-boyle-the-more-we-spend-the-less-we-get-in-alaskas-public-schools-run-by-the-education-cartel%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cdeed.commissioner%40alaska.gov%7Cbb5142eb579745a7b6aa69ddde89a11c%7C20030b6b7ad942f7927359ea83fcfa38%7C0%7C0%7C638685085331622685%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3dfeyJFbXB0eU1heGlsOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ZlRzwYvnRVuZiMtXUoyh2E%2FKL44VzvQ1XUM3%2BXOraHdI%3D&reserved=0

Keep looking up!!!!

Andy

From: Sharon
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose regulation proposal
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 1:16:13 PM

[You don't often get email from janibear@acsalaska.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The governor and Deena Bishop cooked up a proposal to regulate funding limits on what local governments can give to schools. With the feds limiting funding, our schools are hurting. This is a blatant attempt to further destroy public education.

As leaders, you must take action and vote no on any attempts to limit local government spending.

Both the governor and education commissioner should resign, as they have no concern for the children of Alaska, our greatest resource. Their incompetence reeks of failure.

Support public education!

Sharon and Richard Waisanen
[redacted]
Soldotna, 99669

Sent from my iPad

From: Kathleen Todd
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: local contribution
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 2:35:10 PM

You don't often get email from kathleengtodd@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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The proposed changes to the limits on local contributions and the way we determine what a local contribution is will be devastating to Alaska schools. When the state doesn't fully fund schools, as it does not in most states, local governments and other entities step forward to fill the gap so that our kids can have the education they deserve. Some entities only do the minimum, but we want and need that contribution from local sources. This is expected and is the reason that the federal government provides impact aid where there is decreased tax revenue generating ability locally because of federal lands and activities. Local contribution helps keep people engaged with their local schools. The proposed changes would penalize the districts that do tax themselves for better experiences for their students, decreasing the total money available for students overall.

Beyond that, the lack of clarity about what constitutes a local contribution will be at best a bookkeeper's nightmare and at worst a lawyer's dream. (Is it the incremental cost of plowing the road to the school or a proportion of the gas and maintenance for the plow or also part of the expenses of the departmental head and secretary and the city manager or what? How about if the snow plow operators come over every year to show the elementary kids how hard it is to see small children around the plow so they don't even think about playing where plows are working? Do we need to take the cost of that field trip out of our general funds? Where does it stop? And how can you tell the city not to shovel the buildings that it owns if the building needs help immediately and the school doesn't have the money?

Pulling everyone down is not guaranteed to fix the federal equity calculations but is guaranteed to pull down the experience of lots of kids: longer on the bus or farther to walk along icy roads to it; no school lunch or breakfast worth eating; fewer after school activities; larger class sizes, fewer electives as the number of personnel has to shrink to make up for the buses and activities that are the bare minimum. I'm sure that there is a different way to meet the federal requirement that doesn't steal from the rich to give to nobody. Do not pass this regulatory change.

Kathleen Todd MD
School Board member, Valdez
Mother of two previous students of Valdez City Schools

From: Robin McNeilley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Students at Risk
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 5:40:47 PM

You don't often get email from mcneilleyr@sitkaschools.org. Learn why this is important

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Hello State Board of Education,

I am trying to understand this upcoming regulation that would expand the definition of "local contributions" to include services and support currently provided outside the statuary funding cap.

I am told that it means that the things our community CHOOSES to support could be counted AGAINAT the city funding for education.

This type of nickel-diming funds away from our students is terrible.

I astutely oppose this egregious regulation.

We are already stretched so thin, and to undermine our community partnerships is a betrayal to our community, and to communities across Alaska.

Please recognize what is truly importantand make the best decision for our state, our students, and our future.

Thank you,

Robin McNeilley M.A., CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Sitka School District
[redacted]
I live and work on Tlingít Aaní.
Gunalchéesh, Háw'aa, Nt'oyaxsn,Thank you

From: Caitlin Sauer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation Opposition Request
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 4:31:10 AM

You don't often get email from cmsauer16@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Sauer

[redacted]
[redacted]
JBER, AK
99505

Get Outlook for Android

From: B Neff
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding for students in the ASD
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 7:22:44 AM

[You don't often get email from bneffer2@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,

Please support increased funding for eduction in Anchorage. The system is already underfunded and further cuts will continue to erode the ability of teachers to make positive inroads with students this fall.

I hope we can support the district together with a teacher first mentality, working down from there to the systems that support the teachers. This includes the infrastructure, administration and important programs that allow every student in the district an opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your consideration, this is a priority to me and I appreciate your consideration,

Life long Anchorage resident,
Ben Neff

From: Elayne Hunter
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: The greater good
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 10:42:25 AM

You don't often get email from ech2123@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Reducing educational spending will increase the cost of corrections and law enforcement. It will result in community members being victimized by adults and youth without the skills and knowledge to function as contributing adults.

Please explain to me your plan to prepare our children and youth to have the skills to support themselves and our communities in this competitive world?

My life experience has involved working in rural Alaska, schools, mental health centers, jails, youth detention centers. The trajectory of an poorly/uneducated, unsupported child, youth is disasterous and tragic.

Our community looses vital resources dealing with their problems and not having their potential and talents.

Your power and decisions far reaching consequences for individuals, families, our community and our country as well as the financial stability of our State. Needs and problems don't go away they reappear in other places and become destructive. I've seen this 1st hand repeatedly.

What are your plans to meet the educational and developmental needs of our children and youth to provide our community with positive contributing adults?

Sincerely,
Elayne Hunter

From: Marjorie Waggoner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation of Local Funding Contributions for Education
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 10:51:09 AM

You don't often get email from marjie.w51@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I have been an educator for 50 years, at least 35 years of that has been spent serving Alaskan students. I am currently working for two Alaskan school districts as their special education director. I am extremely concerned about the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education. Local funding should not be determined by the state, but by the local citizens affected by the decision.

This regulation does not make sense and usurps the power from the people who should have it. I encourage the members of the Board to reject this proposal in the interest of Alaska and education for Alaskan students.

Marjorie Waggoner
[redacted]
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

From: Kelsi Miller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Senator Dan Sullivan
Subject: Federal funding
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 12:01:02 PM

You don't often get email from blueroan96@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I have been vocal and involved in our community since I was a teenager. I grew up in Anchorage, I attended elementary school and high school here. I left our school system to graduate out of state, and then returned home. Even then, our school system was failing students, but I must admit that was nothing compared to what is happening now.

Cutting funding that directly supports special ED, our native and migrant students, and school programs that make sure that kids are fed, safe, and have somewhere to go after school is an attack on the health and future of our state. Increasing class sizes, letting teachers go, stopping communities from supporting their youth… these are not the actions of a first world country or a thriving community. We are failing our people. This will lead to deaths, to prison time, to drug use.

I urge you to fight back against the choices that are creating this environment. I urge you to fight back against legislature that thinks only to protect itself and the status quo. Our families, our children, and our entire community depends upon it.

Thoughtfully,

Kelsi Miller. Life-long Alaskan resident and royally pissed off.

From:	Eric Steinfort
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc:	m@marguerite.us; Briana Sullivan; Gary Steinfort; d.steinfort
Subject:	Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Alaska Students
Date:	Saturday, July 19, 2025 1:04:22 PM

[You don't often get email from ericstein4t@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city (Anchorage).

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities and enrichment programs.
• Reduce student learning. My middle school son is especially concerned that he might lose access to CTE and other career preparation activities.
• Reduction of library access. School library staff and books in our community are expected to be cut, and our children’s learning and joy of school will be less without these.
• increased reliance on computers in the classroom, leading to increased screen time and reduced focus.
• Reduce athletic programs. Sports participation has been instrumental for my daughter who has enjoyed leadership and social development that she needed because of school sports.
• Reduce English language learner supports. My high schooler is very concerned about our friends who are ELL and speak mostly Spanish. We are worried they won’t receive adequate education without ELL supports.
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Sincerely,
Eric Steinfort
Anchorage school district parent

From: Kelsey Coolidge Boardman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please oppose the new proposed emergency regulation
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 2:34:42 PM

You don't often get email from boardman.kelsey@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in the Anchorage area. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules to schools.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. This proposal would reduce funding for an estimated 70,000 Alaska students. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

School districts all across Alaska are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that puts the education of our children first.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Boardman

[redacted]., Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Carole Waters
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on proposed change to local contribution rules
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 5:23:44 PM

You don't often get email from carole.waters@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

My name is Carole, and I am the mom of a wonderful 9 year old who loves her elementary school in the Anchorage School District.

I am writing to ask that you reject the proposed regulation changes for the local contribution rules. These changes appear to be a blunt instrument that will cause great harm to our children by reducing their education funding, and yet may not even solve the problem of failing the federal "disparity test."

If you value local control of schools as an inherently conservative ideal (which is the argument Sen. Murkowski is currently making to try to get Federal education funds unfrozen), then reducing local control through these regulation changes is a move in the wrong direction. Additionally, Alaskan communities vary widely across the state - Fairbanks is not Anchorage, which is not Ketchikan, which is not Igiugig - and each community needs and deserves local self-determination with respect to their choices for school funding.

You have a complex job - thank you in advance for using strong critical thinking and good decision-making to find better options that are in the best interest of my daughter and the other children of our state.

Sincerely,

Carole Waters (Mom of Virginia, age 9)

Anchorage, AK

From: Kate Finn
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education money local, regional and statewide!!
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 7:23:04 PM

You don't often get email from hundredthmonk21@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Members,

Thanks you for serving on this board!

I urge the Board to OPPOSE the noticed adoption of a proposed regulation to limit municipal aid to local schools! I feel the proposed regulation is detrimental to Alaska's public education and undermines local control.

On the other hand Please 1- SUPPORT local control, 2-remove the federal impact deduction and 3- reaffirm your duty to foster a **strong** public school system in Alaska, THEREBY reaffirming that AK's school system is a key component to strong local economies locally, regionally and statewide!

We all know what it is like for students to be marginalized for what ever reason: hunger, lack of individualized teaching, lack of transportation, lack of non-academic but critical learning opportunities. these strongly effect students in the short term and the long term. Please do not initiate or perpetuate these unnecessary obstacles to full studentship and full citizenship!!

Thank You,
Kate Finn
48 year AK resident
Nurse Practitioner
School Nurse

From: Kate Finn
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State funding for schools
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 7:32:54 PM

You don't often get email from hundredthmonk21@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Members,

ThanT you for serving on this board!

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On the other hand Please 1- SUPPORT local control, 2-remove the federal impact deduction and 3- reaffirm your duty to foster a **strong** public school system in Alaska, THEREBY reaffirming that AK's school system is a key component to strong local economies locally, regionally and statewide!

We all know what it is like for students to be marginalized for what ever reason: hunger, lack of individualized teaching, lack of transportation, lack of non-academic but critical learning opportunities. These strongly effect students in the short term and the long term. Please do not initiate or perpetuate these unnecessary obstacles to full studentship and full citizenship!!

Thank You,
Kate Finn
48 year AK resident
Nurse Practitioner
School Nurse

From: Sandra Garity
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulations.
Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025 8:34:18 PM

You don't often get email from aksandy612@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I oppose changes to regulations on how school districts are funded based on local contributions.
I ask you to oppose the regulations.
Thank you
Sandra Garity RN,BSN,MSN

From: Jo Ann Asher
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding cap
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 8:20:37 AM

You don't often get email from jajaasher@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I urge you to vote against the cap to allow funding to local schools. The cap to local school funding is reckless, short-sighted, and will be devastating to Alaska's students. The future of our school system and the students is in your hands.

Jo Ann Asher

Anchorage, Alaska

jajaasher@gmail.com

From: Mark larsen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Support education!
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 11:01:28 AM

[You don't often get email from mrlarsenmark@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I fervently urge you to reconsider your plan to penalize schools in communities that support their schools. The state is grossly failing the kids of Alaska, and the communities that prioritize education should be able to support their schools without a reduction in state funding. Let's try doing what's right for the kids.

Mark Larsen
[redacted]
Skagway AK 99840
[redacted]

From:	Laurinda Marcello
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc:	representative.rebecca.himschoot@akleg.gov; Stedman, Bert K (LEG); lgarrison@aasb.org
Subject:	Reject Proposed Rule Change in 4 AAC 09 - Local Contributions
Date:	Sunday, July 20, 2025 2:17:56 PM

You don't often get email from laurinda.marcello@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education:

I oppose the proposed regulatory changes (4 AAC 09) that would count in-kind services and non-instructional maintenance of school facilities against the local contribution cap for education.

My community benefits from non-instructional funding to maintain school buildings. My son has enrolled in fee-based parks and rec classes located on school property including swimming lessons (at our middle school) and pre-K music classes (at two schools). He and I have been to private events that rented school gyms. My family has been spectators at several non-school related shows at the Performing Arts Center (at our high school). The notion that community-wide funding for the maintenance of public buildings would be counted as contributing to enrolled student education is ridiculous. Our city and individual citizens do and should absolutely continue to pay for our non-school uses of school buildings.

Furthermore, counting in-kind contributions like a visiting scientist or artists against school funding does nothing other than to rob kids of opportunity. The director of the Association of Alaska School Boards has indicated that Alaska is not facing pressure from the Federal Government to institute such a rule change.

Alaska's current failure to meet the federal disparity test rests solely on the repeated vetoes of legislature-approved education funding by Governor Dunleavy's executive branch. We had better funding when I was a K-12 student. Sadly, my son and his peers, entering kindergarten this fall, are left with crumbs from the state. In Moore. vs State of Alaska, settled in 2012, it was deemed that the state contribution to education was inadequate. Adjusting for inflation from that settlement, the BSA should be higher than it is today. **The solution here is for the state, specifically the Governor, to meet its constitutional obligation to provide adequate instructional funding to all schools. By doing so Alaska would easily pass the federal disparity test.**

Thank you,

Laurinda Marcello

Sitka High School Class of 2002

University of Alaska Fairbanks, M.S. in Fisheries 2011

cc: Representative Himschoot, Senator Stedman, AASB Executive Director Garrison

From: Rena Michaud
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on local funding contributions for Ed.
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 4:39:51 PM

[You don't often get email from renamae3501@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The state of education in Alaska is dire and we need every opportunity to support teachers and fund programs that directly affect student learning. The Governor has turned his back on public education, the Federal government is withholding funding, and now our Education Commissioner wants to cap local education contributions! You cannot decimate education funding and complain about outcomes. All these decisions are leading to more hardship for families of public education students and educators. We are losing qualified teachers by the hundreds. This is not sustainable and it will affect everyone in the State, not just those with children.

Please do not put a cap on local education contributions. Fund education fully, and put pressure on the Federal government to do the same.

-Rena Michaud
Anchorage, AK

From: Karen Wuestenfeld
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 5:17:23 PM

You don't often get email from karenwuestenfeld@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am strongly opposed to implementation of the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09, which would change regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution. This is a regressive, unnecessary adoption of a rule which takes away local decision making, and is sure to be one more action taken by the Dunleavy administration to seemingly take a deliberate course of action to diminish public education in our great state.

In specific:

It undermines local control. Each community is best situated to understand their needs. Don't intervene and preempt their decision-making rights.

This is not the way to solve the underlying problem of alignment with the Federal Impact Aid Program. The real issue is the state's practice of deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement.

It will exacerbate the already dire education funding issues faced by our public schools, especially the large urban districts (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula)

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Wuestenfeld
[redacted]
Homer, AK 99603

From: Charlotte A. Vanchura Candelaria
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Sitka Public Education
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 8:17:33 PM

[You don't often get email from charlotte.candelaria@att.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear Sirs:

We all know that education is currently underfunded. We in Sitka have already made significant cuts to have to "live within our means". I strongly encourage you to NOT change the regulation expanding the definition of "local contributions". Changing this regulation would severely restrict what our community currently chooses to support, to the benefit of both students and community members. The change being considered, would, as I understand it, further decrease education funds. Therefore, local citizens would have to shoulder even more local spending on education to be able to maintain our current levels of a quality education in Sitka.

Thank you.

Charlotte A. Vanchura Candelaria

From: Bill Wuestenfeld
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 10:26:00 PM

You don't often get email from billwuestenfeld@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am strongly opposed to implementation of the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09, which would change regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution. This is a regressive, unnecessary adoption of a rule which takes away local decision making, and is sure to be one more action taken by the Dunleavy administration to seemingly take a deliberate course of action to diminish public education in our great state.

I am a former member of the Anchorage School District Budget Advisory Committee, and have two children who each attended Anchorage public schools for 13 years.

My specific objections are as follows:

It undermines local control. Each community is best situated to understand their needs. Don't intervene and preempt their decision-making rights.

This is not the way to solve the underlying problem of alignment with the Federal Impact Aid Program. The real issue is the state's practice of deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement.

It will exacerbate the already dire education funding issues faced by our public schools, especially the large urban districts (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula)

Respectfully submitted,

William M. Wuestenfd
[redacted]
Homer, AK
99603

[redacted]

From: Bill Wuestenfeld
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 10:26:00 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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Respectfully submitted,

William M. Wuestenfd
[redacted]
Homer, AK
99603

[redacted]

From: Brenna
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Senator.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov; Representative.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov; Kameron Perez-Verdia
Subject: SAY NO THANK YOU - The DEED proposal to cap community spending (CHOICE)
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 9:45:43 AM

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To the State Education Board,

My husband and I are lifelong Alaskans, and our children are second generation Alaskans whom we are choosing to raise here in our community. We are business owners and community health workers, our roots run deep here and our sense of being Alaskan is strong. We are both products of the Anchorage School District, and have been successful we believe because of the public education and the opportunities we received as two highly-gifted students.

Our children rely on ASD services including for both highly-gifted and special needs. And so, between the illegal federal funding freeze from the Dept. of Education, as well as Gov. Dunleavy's efforts to undermine public education in this state with his vetoes against the people's voice (our state legislative body), these impacts weigh heavily on our family, and our community's decisions to continue supporting public schools and in how that community determines works best.

It is our right as citizens and Alaskans to have access to a well-supported public school infrastructure, this is a tremendously impactful benefit for our family but also our community.

This proposal from the DEED Commissioner to cap how much local communities can CHOOSE to contribute to their own public schools will be detrimental to the Anchorage School District, in which our children attend.

I am most certain that it is way beyond the powers of the state education board to dictate or direct any sort of community-based decision in this regard. And frankly, it is anti-Alaskan.

This arbitrary attempt to undermine a community and its public education, determining the use of tax dollars against or away from my family is taxation and life-altering decision making with representation. I do not see it as Alaskan for the government to determine and tell a community what they do with their own tax dollars.

I hope I have made myself clear, do not infringe on our Alaskan values, where communities have self-determination. Do not accept or adopt this DEED Commissioner proposal. Please consider and try to understand the consequences for our communities.

If this proposal does move forward, I plan to join any effort to counter this action whether that is in litigation or ballot measure.

This mama bear is on high alert and ready to fight for her cubs, and her community.

Thank you,

Brenna Simons-Petrusa
Anchorage, Alaska
[redacted]

Cc: My State/Community Representatives

Sen. Matt Claman
Rep. Mia Costello
Assemblymen: Kameron Perez-Verdia

From: Sally Donaldson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: please oppose
Date: Friday, July 18, 2025 5:13:27 PM

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Hello Alaska School Board Members,

Thank you for serving children, parents, and educators of our state. I am asking you to oppose the proposal to change EED regulation that would limit local contributions to school districts.Please preserve the $81 million in impact aid. Abolishing the funds would put Alaska communities in peril. As you know, state dollars are insufficient to support education services in so many Alaska communities. Please work with local school boards, legislators and the Governor to see that our future Alaskans receive a quality education. Their future is in your hands.

Thank you for reading my email requestl
Sincerely,
Sally Donaldson
Juneau

City of Seward
PO Box 167
Seward, Alaska 99664

City Manager's Office
Kat Sorensen, City Manager
Phone: (907) 224-4012
Email: ksorensen@cityofseward.net

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Email: eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

7/17/2025

Opposition to Proposed Local Contribution Changes

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

On behalf of the City of Seward, I am writing to express formal opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990, which would count in-kind services—such as snow removal, building maintenance, and utilities—toward the required local contribution to public education.

These in-kind services, currently provided by the City and Borough in addition to the required contribution, are fundamental to the daily operation of our schools. They are not optional add-ons—they are critical supports that ensure safe, functioning learning environments. In communities like Seward, these contributions are how our schools stay open, accessible, and responsive to local needs.

By counting in-kind services toward the funding cap, the proposed change would limit our ability to provide both direct financial support and essential services. It could compel local governments to reduce cash contributions or shift service costs onto schools already operating with constrained budgets. This would weaken—not strengthen—the cooperative efforts that keep Alaska's schools running, especially in smaller and rural communities.

We recognize the importance of compliance with federal impact aid requirements, including the disparity test. However, we urge the Board to pursue alternatives that do not diminish local capacity or penalize communities for investing in their students.

Flexibility in how local support is delivered—whether through funding or in-kind services—is critical to Alaska's diverse educational landscape. The City of Seward respectfully asks the Board to reconsider this proposal and protect the ability of local governments to meaningfully and responsibly support public education.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Kat Sorensen
City Manager, City of Seward

City of Seward
PO Box 167
Seward, Alaska 99664

City Manager's Office
Kat Sorensen, City Manager
Phone: (907) 224-4012
Email: ksorensen@cityofseward.net

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Email: eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

7/17/2025

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Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Kat Sorensen
City Manager, City of Seward

From: Daniel Schuler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution Definition Proposed Changes
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 10:20:56 AM

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Why are not the five districts most impacted listed in the FAQs? And shouldn't there be a listing of all the districts that will feel some impact? Finally, a review of audits will not disclose the potential impact on districts. For example, KGBSD would need to include in the Foundation Formula monies paid for by the Borough that benefit the district, which is not information shown in our annual audit report.

Thanks in advance for your consideration of these items.

Respectfully,

Daniel B. Schuler

Business & Operations Manager

Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District

Phone: 907-247-2116

"Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose, sometimes it rains. Think about that for a while." ~ Ebby Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh

2025 St. Louis Cardinals Fans: We need a dam to break and flood the field.

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ALASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Alaska Council of School Administrators
Leadership, Unity and Advocacy for Public Education

234 Gold Street • Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 586-9702 • Fax: (907) 364-3805
www.alaskaacsa.org

Dear Chair Stockhausen and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA), we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed changes to the regulations redefining "local contributions" to include all forms of municipal support, including in-kind services. This proposal is deeply concerning to Alaska's superintendents, principals and school business officials and education leaders across the state.

At a time when our public education system is already under immense fiscal pressure, this regulation would create even greater instability. Counting long-standing non-instructional services—such as transportation, maintenance, and community support—as part of the required local contribution effectively penalizes local governments for stepping up to support schools and students. These voluntary contributions have never been considered part of the local funding obligation under AS 14.17.410 and should remain outside that calculation.

This proposed change would reduce flexibility for local decision-making, diminish essential services, and deepen inequities between districts—especially between urban and rural communities.

This regulatory change also fails to address the true issue at hand: Alaska meeting the disparity standard. According to the July 14, 2025, letter from Counsel for DEED to the Impact Aid Program, "The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. **Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to the State meeting the disparity standard**."

We urge the Department to collaborate transparently with school districts, lawmakers, municipal leaders, and federal partners to develop a solution that upholds both equity and stability—without sacrificing essential support that our schools and students rely on daily.

ACSA strongly urges the State Board to reject this proposed regulation. We stand ready to work together on solutions that protect opportunities and funding for students, respect local partnerships, and move Alaska's public education system forward.

Regards,

Lisa A. Parady

Dr. Lisa Parady
ACSA Executive Director

From: Traci Baumgardner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on Proposed Changes to Local Contributions (4 AAC 09.985 & 4 AAC 09.990)
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 1:59:01 PM

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Dear State Board of Education and DEED,

I'm writing to request that you REJECT proposed changes to local contributions. With a decade or more of flat funding, our local schools in Seward are barely making it. We have lost more and more teachers over the years because of budget cuts/flat funding and we are struggling to ensure our students are able to graduate with the necessary requirements as more and more students have to take distance courses just to accumulate the necessary requirements. Our community has many resources and has worked with the schools to try to plug holes and fill gaps when funding hasn't been able to meet all of our schools' needs. This proposal would lead to even deeper cuts, not only counting local contributions against our funding but even costing the district more in some cases. For example, our school buildings are owned by the burrough which the burrough lets Seward schools use for no cost to the district. With these proposed cuts, it's possible that that contribution would count against our budget AND potentially cause the school district to PAY RENT to the burrough for those buildings.

Our family moved to Seward in 2011, and we love it here. We have a student entering high school this school year, I teach for KPC locally so that HS students are afforded another science elective and my husband owns and operates a very small, private medical practice as well as being the medical director and sole medical provider for the nursing home here in town. We want to stay here - Seward is our home - but if we can't meet our son's educational needs then we may be forced to move to another state that is more capable and interested in fully funding education.

Please - do not pass this proposal that would change how local contributions are counted in regard to district and state funding for schools. We've already been cut deeply enough. This change could do long lasting harm to local schools and their associated homeschool programs.

Thank you for your time,
Traci Baumgardner
Seward PTA VP, parent, KPC Adjunct faculty

From: Emily Ferry
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: A bright moment for Alaska and how local contributions helped make it happen
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 2:24:35 PM
Attachments: IMG_0066.JPEG

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To the State Board of Education,

Yesterday I watched my son, who will be a senior at Juneau Douglas Yadaa at Kale High School, compete in a robotics tournament against the team that won the world championship earlier this year. The Juneau team came in second. This is a truly remarkable achievement and the type of experience that will lay the foundation for a ready and capable workforce for Alaska.

It was made possible by the hard work of the coaches and their team who spent hundreds of hours fundraising by selling concessions at basketball games, raffle tickets, and seeking investments from local businesses. True, our most rural communities might struggle to access these same fundraising opportunities. However, I have also seen students from Naknek, Dillingham, Hoonah, and the Aleutians also participate in robotics tournaments by tapping into grants and other funding sources.

The point is that we should be working hard to make more of these opportunities available to more students, not limiting or taking away these types of opportunities.

I cannot understand why the State is promoting a regulation change to limit local contributions to schools unless the state's goal is to create chaos and undermine the stability and quality of public education for students in Alaska.

The proposed regulation change does not address the disparity test issue. Instead, it creates more problems than it solves by further reducing the already limited funding for schools and making the contribution rules less clear, more vague, and harder to follow.

Please do not advance this regulation change and instead pursue measures that would ensure that Alaska is funding education equitably. A good start would be to simply increase the Base Student Allocation.

Take care,
- Emily Ferry
[redacted]

IMG_0066.JPEG

From: Loreen Kramer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 12:33:17 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned grand parent of 2 students in Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city. We reside in and raised our family in the Copper Basin and our son chose to live in Valdez because they had more to offer for his children. My husband is a retired vocational education teacher and I am a retired business manager. I fully understand education funding and the necessity to continue to support the education of our children (no more cuts)!

These changes will:

• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs • Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns • Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools • Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements.

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive. All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,

Loreen Kramer

From: Jaylene Mosley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School Funding
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 1:55:56 PM

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To the State Board of Education,

As a resident of Sitka, Alaska, and a parent of children attending both our high school and elementary school, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the ongoing reductions in education funding across our state. These budget cuts have resulted in noticeably larger class sizes, diminishing opportunities for personalized instruction and support for students who need it most.

Programs have been eliminated, and elective options have been pared down to the bare minimum. Extracurricular sports—which are critical to the development of teamwork, discipline, and community engagement—have become an increasingly significant financial burden on families. The cumulative impact of these changes is a direct threat to the quality of education our children receive.

Alaska is already facing serious educational challenges. According to a recent study, we rank fourth-worst nationally in overall education quality. We are tied for second-lowest in graduation rates alongside Alabama, and we hold the fourth-lowest ranking in reading scores. While funding is not the sole issue, it is an undeniable factor—and without proactive intervention, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

Furthermore, any move to limit our ability to maintain local control over how Sitka funds and supports its schools risks jeopardizing vital community assets like our Performing Arts Center, school pool, and various extracurricular activities that enrich our students' educational experience. Sitkans have consistently demonstrated their commitment to strengthening our education system through voting, volunteering, and financial contributions.

I urge you to support policies that empower communities like ours to invest in education. Please do not undermine the strong partnerships that exist between our schools and community. We are asking for your help in preserving and improving the educational opportunities available to all of Sitka's children.

Sincerely,

Jaylene Mosley

Municipality of Skagway
GATEWAY TO THE KLONDIKE
P.O. BOX 415 SKAGWAY, ALASKA 99840
p: 907.983.2297 f: 907.983.2151
www.skagway.org

July 17, 2025

Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development
c/o Commissioner Deena Bishop
Department of Education and Early Development
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500

Re: Opposition to Proposed Changes to Local Contribution Statutes

Dear Commissioner Bishop and Members of the State Board of Education,

On behalf of the Municipality of Skagway, I write to express opposition to the proposed changes to Alaska's local contribution statutes currently under review by the State Board of Education and the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

Skagway is proud to be the highest-achieving public school district in Alaska – a distinction made possible through consistent local investment and strong community support. Our residents have long understood that local contributions are not merely financial obligations but purposeful commitments to student success, opportunity, and future prosperity.

The proposed changes would curtail local authority to fund education above the State's minimum threshold. This move runs counter to both the letter and spirit of Alaska's constitutional guarantee of a system of public education that serves the needs of all students. More concerning, it reflects a definition of "equity" that lowers the ceiling for high-achieving districts rather than lifting the floor for struggling ones. Equity should never be defined by the lowest common denominator. It should be about ensuring that every district has the *opportunity* to succeed—not by capping what's possible, but by investing in what works and replicating it.

Skagway's use of local funds directly supports the stated goals of DEED, this Board, and Governor Dunleavy: improving educational outcomes, expanding career and workforce readiness, and preparing all students for success beyond high school. Reducing our ability to make these strategic investments undercuts those shared priorities and penalizes communities that are striving—and succeeding—at delivering excellence.

Rather than restricting communities like ours, the State should work alongside municipalities to expand opportunity, incentivize innovation, and elevate all districts to the highest standards. We believe this is not only a more effective vision for public education, but also a more honest one.

We urge the Board to reject any changes that diminish local fiscal authority or limit the flexibility of communities to fund their schools as they see fit. Skagway stands ready to partner with the State in pursuit of improved student outcomes—but we cannot support policies that punish success, reduce local voice, and lower our collective ambitions for Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

Kate Kolodi, Mayor
mayor@skagway.org

From: Tyler Desjarlais
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Vote no on proposal to limit funding on local municipal aid
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 3:53:08 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I live in Eagle River and am writing this letter to speak out against the proposal by the state board of ed to limit municipal funding.

I have six kids that rely on services that are supported by the muni that would not be available otherwise without their aid.

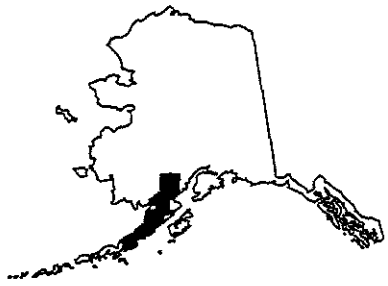
The muni of Anchorage has different needs and challenges that bring added costs that make it necessary to fund services like sros, plowing, using municipal pools etc. we are not rural Alaska who doesn't have those added costs. For us to be able to be at the same level we have to be able to mainting local control. We don't need the federal funding dropping our services when we decided as a city to help our community with more funds. We pay property taxes for it and vote for these taxes.

Please abandon the proposal to limit local municipal funding

THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive
King Salmon, AK 99613
907-313-3841

1617 S Industrial Way #1
Palmer, AK 99645
907-745-7090



July 21, 2025

Alaska State Board of Education
c/o Department of Education & Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Members of the State Board of Education and Department of Education & Early Development,

The Lake and Peninsula School District (LPSD) appreciates the opportunity to submit public comment on the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 09 regarding the calculation and treatment of local contributions. We also acknowledge the Department's recent efforts to provide additional information through the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page and other public outreach.

However, LPSD remains deeply concerned that the proposed regulation lacks critical clarity. Specifically, there has been no analysis or detailed explanation of how local contributions would be calculated differently under the new regulation compared to the current system. We strongly urge the Department to release concrete examples, side-by-side comparisons, or modeling scenarios to illustrate how the proposed calculation differs and what effects this may have on district funding.

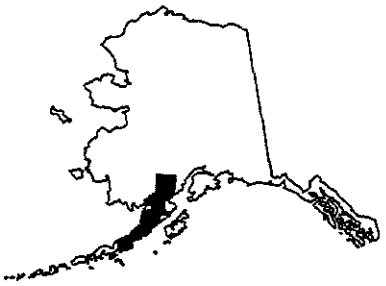
We continue to believe the existing regulations are both understandable and appropriate. If the proposed changes result in revised accounting or reporting requirements, these must be explicitly stated and formally incorporated into the Alaska State Chart of Accounts. Failure to do so may result in inconsistencies, confusion during audits, and challenges in maintaining compliance with standard governmental accounting practices.

Furthermore, we are concerned that this proposal may be inconsistent with both the Alaska State Chart of Accounts and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements. Before any regulation is finalized, it is essential that full alignment with established accounting standards be verified to prevent negative consequences for district financial operations.

THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive
King Salmon, AK 99613
907-313-3841

1617 S Industrial Way #1
Palmer, AK 99645
907-745-7090



- That the adoption of this regulation be delayed until a detailed analysis is made available showing how calculations will change under the proposal;
- That any resulting reporting changes be reflected and clearly documented in the Alaska State Chart of Accounts;
- That alignment with GASB and other applicable standards be confirmed and communicated.

We value the Department's engagement with stakeholders throughout this process and remain committed to supporting transparency and responsible fiscal policy that protects educational equity across Alaska's diverse school districts.

Respectfully,

Laura Hylton, 25 years serving LPSD Finance Department

Kasie Luke, Superintendent

From: Betsy Jumper
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Ending Municipal Aid
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 4:05:55 PM

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Please don’t do away with municipal aid to schools; it’s important to let schools have their own control.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Teresa Schellekens
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 4:12:13 PM

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Stop the constant cutting of our children's education for big money to have more tax breaks. You are taking away the next generation's future ... for what? So the rich get richer and the poor suffer. SHAME ON YOU!

From: S C
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: comments on Dept of Ed proposal
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 4:40:48 PM

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The proposal that would reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools will be harmful to Alaska students and families. Alaska is already rated very low in public education in the nation--this proposal will certainly not improve this. If we want to continue to attract businesses, recruit skilled workers and their families, and retain talented minds in the state, we must make an investment in our kids and their public education.

Stephanie Chen, MD
Child and Adolescent psychiatrist

From: Pamela Sebrey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 4:52:22 PM

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I am strongly opposed to implementation of the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09, which would change regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution. This is a regressive, unnecessary adoption of a rule which takes away local decision making, and is sure to be one more action taken by the Dunleavy administration to seemingly take a deliberate course of action to diminish public education in our great state.

In specific:

It undermines local control. Each community is best situated to understand their needs. Don't intervene and preempt their decision-making rights.

This is not the way to solve the underlying problem of alignment with the Federal Impact Aid Program. The real issue is the state's practice of deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement.

It will exacerbate the already dire education funding issues faced by our public schools, especially the large urban districts (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula)

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Sebrey
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99502

From: Rachael Posey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed local contribution regulation changes
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 5:13:36 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I was born and raised in Alaska, and after college and graduate school, I chose to return to Alaska to raise my family. Currently I have two students in the Anchorage School District. I am dismayed about the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations. This change would not be in the best interest of students or districts, and would negatively impact the quality of education across the state. With the proposed "in kind" contribution changes, would my time spent volunteering in my kids classroom be counted as a local contribution? Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. The proposed regulations are harmful, confusing, and not in the interest of our schools, students, or communities. Furthermore, there is no indication that this change would help Alaska pass the federal disparity test; nor that the federal government needs, or wants, Alaska to make this change. So please act in the interest of the students you are supposed to serve, and reject this misguided proposal.

Sincerely,
Rachael Posey
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502

From: Lance Smith
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09 regarding Local Contributions.
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 5:36:52 PM

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To the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09 regarding "Local Contributions." These changes, in my view, are a serious step in the wrong direction and could destabilize education across Alaska.

At a time when our schools are already under considerable financial strain, this proposal seems to make things worse. It reduces local control, undermines community efforts to support schools, and—let's be honest—doesn't help our students at all. When communities work hard to invest more in their kids' education, those efforts should be celebrated, not undermined by state policy.

The potential impact here is staggering: we're talking about a possible reduction in funding for around 70,000 Alaska students. And that's not just a number—it represents the futures of thousands of kids with hopes, dreams, and a desire to succeed. This proposal doesn't seem to be about creating fairness; it looks more like a way to take resources away from the students who need them most.

On top of that, there's a big question mark hanging over federal approval. We've seen no indication that this proposal will pass muster with the federal government, and if it doesn't, we could lose out on critical federal impact aid that many of our schools rely on. This uncertainty alone should give us all pause.

It's also worth noting that Alaska is the only state still using federal impact aid to offset state funding obligations—a practice that other states ditched long ago because it's too complicated and harms local control. Let's learn from their experience and move toward a system that genuinely supports local communities and ensures reliable funding for our schools.

I strongly urge the Department to reconsider these changes. Our focus should be on strengthening the financial foundation of our educational system, not making it more fragile. After all, our kids deserve more than a policy that feels like it was written in a meeting where nobody brought the coffee.

Sincerely,

Lance Smith

From: Joanna Marshall
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Allow local support for kids
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 6:40:53 PM

[You don't often get email from jo.marshall.78@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,
As the BSA has not kept up with inflation and my children's class sizes have grown while services and positions have been cut, the last thing we need is to restrict the way and amount our local communities can help to support our schools. This cap would only have negative effects on our children.
Please do not support the change to cap in-kind services provided by municipalities.
Thank you,
Joanna Marshall
Mother of two children attending public schools in Anchorage

From: Calisa Kastning
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please REJECT Dunleavy"s proposal!
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 8:30:43 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have REAL impacts on REAL families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Calisa Kastning

[redacted].

Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Sydney Mullen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject proposed regulation changing local contribution rules
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 11:33:29 PM

You don't often get email from sydneykmullen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent to three young children in Fairbanks, in the UPark school district. I'm asking you to please oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Respectfully,

Dr. Sydney Mullen
[redacted], Fairbanks, AK 99709

From: Orion Hanson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Changes to local and private contributions to schools
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 6:50:54 AM

[You don't often get email from orionhanson@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern,

I am strongly opposed to the proposed changes that DEED is considering that would count private and in-kind donations against the “cap” of what a local government can provide to their schools. Skagway has the best test scores in the state for several years in a row and our school is not only a source of community pride, the school is also our future. Private individuals and fraternal clubs, such as the Elks and the Eagles, give funds and time to the school to enrich the activities, curriculum and options for the students at the Skagway School. The Municipality of Skagway has historically funded the school to the maximum “cap” as allowed by the State, and will continue to do so. The highly successful burger volunteer feeds at the Fraternal Lodge of Elks #431 fund many of the school extra curricular activities and allows students to travel with-in the very remote areas of South East Alaska for sports, clubs and musical enrichment that would otherwise not be possible. The proposed changes to local contributions would drag the educational opportunities for hard working communities down to the lowest common denominator versus uplifting educational options. DEED should strive for policies that promotes excellence, not the minimum. Please do not change the process that would penalize robust community engagement.

Respectfully,

Orion Hanson
Skagway Assembly Member
Skagway Resident
Skagway Property Owner
Skagway Business Owner
(No Children)

From: Rebecca Bezdecny
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Funding To Schools
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 7:05:43 AM

You don't often get email from rebecca.bezdecny@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'm writing to express my displeasure with any notion of modifying how schools are funded on the municipal level.

Enough is enough. How many times has this governor said he thinks local boroughs/municipalities should fund schools and now he wants a say in it?

Nope. Hands off. Leave local funding decisions in the hands of the people whose taxes directly fund the schools. Not with a governor whose main goal is to salt the earth in terms of education.

Rebecca Bezdecny
[redacted].
Kenai, AK

From: Terry Snyder
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose change in local contribution
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 8:23:41 AM

You don't often get email from tisterryak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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State School Board Members:

Respectfully, I am strongly opposed to the proposed changes by DEED to alter the state regulation on local contributions to public education. I urge you not to carry out Governor Dunleavy's ongoing effort to weaken our public schools by finding new ways to withhold essential funding.

This governor has repeatedly used his position to advance a political agenda at the expense of public institutions—none more critically impacted than education. For generations, our communities have invested in their schools because they understand the long-term benefits for students, families, and the economy. Reducing that local commitment would only introduce new risks—undermining our schools' stability and shifting more control to the state while sidelining local voices.

I ask you to stand with Alaska's students, teachers, and communities by voting against this change. It would only deepen funding gaps, increase teacher burnout, and lead to more students falling behind. Public education deserves support, not sabotage.

Terry Snyder
Anchorage

From: michael rowcroft
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Limited local support for schools?
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:33:22 AM

You don't often get email from mmichael.rowcroft3@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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"The moral measure of a country (State, community or tribe) is based on how well they care for the wellbeing of their children and their elders." What is currently happening in Alaska and the rest of the USA is a moral spiritual decline when we sacrifice our children and their educational opportunities on some other measurement of value like "economics, social justice, political theory or just arrogant ignorance."

How will this era be judged, if not by how we return to providing the best for our children, regardless of how much we have to pay. I wonder how we could justify the way we place concern for children's future lives and disregard their current needs. Educational Rights are tangent to our whole society and our entire political system. The very fact that teacher salaries in Alaska have fallen from the top in the country to near the bottom demonstrates this decline in our State's ideals about our children's welfare and education. "Put your treasure where your heart is…" means to me that we have an obligation to be grateful for our freedom to chose where our funding goes and to fight for the higher ground of our Children's Future foundation in support of their educational programs.

Respect is earned, by our actions, please follow your heart and chose Wisely.

Michael Rowcroft

From: Emily Ferry
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: A bright moment for Alaska and how local contributions helped make it happen
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:38:22 AM
Attachments: IMG_0066.JPEG
IMG_0078.jpeg

You don't often get email from emily.ferry@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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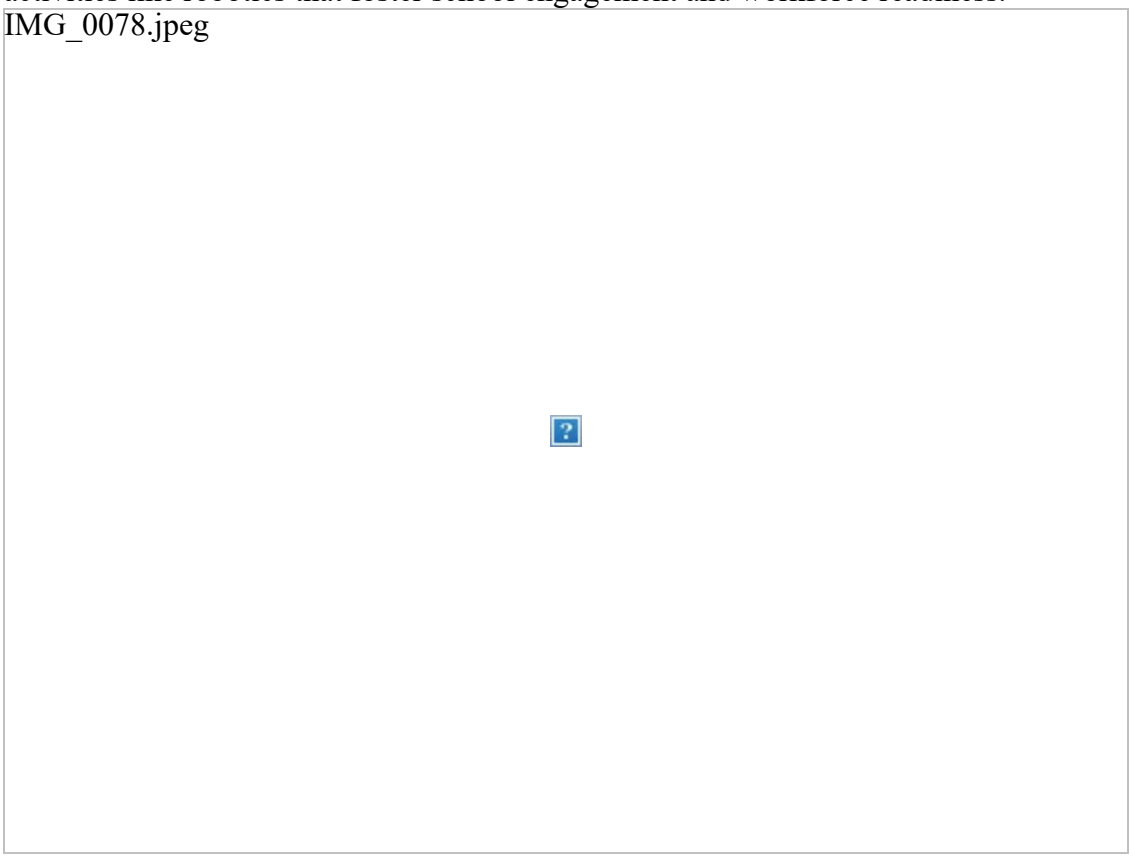
Good morning,

This is a follow-up from my email yesterday. The regulation change to limit local contributions would hinder the ability of the companies listed here to invest in clubs and activities like robotics that foster school engagement and workforce readiness.

IMG_0078.jpeg



Take care,
- Emily Ferry

On Mon, Jul 21, 2025 at 2:23 PM Emily Ferry <emily.ferry@gmail.com> wrote:

> To the State Board of Education,
>
> Yesterday I watched my son, who will be a senior at Juneau Douglas Yadaa at Kale High School, compete in a robotics tournament against the team that won the world championship earlier this year. The Juneau team came in second. This is a truly remarkable achievement and the type of experience that will lay the foundation for a ready and capable workforce for

Alaska.

It was made possible by the hard work of the coaches and their team who spent hundreds of hours fundraising by selling concessions at basketball games, raffle tickets, and seeking investments from local businesses. True, our most rural communities might struggle to access these same fundraising opportunities. However, I have also seen students from Naknek, Dillingham, Hoonah, and the Aleutians also participate in robotics tournaments by tapping into grants and other funding sources.

The point is that we should be working hard to make more of these opportunities available to more students, not limiting or taking away these types of opportunities.

I cannot understand why the State is promoting a regulation change to limit local contributions to schools unless the state's goal is to create chaos and undermine the stability and quality of public education for students in Alaska.

The proposed regulation change does not address the disparity test issue. Instead, it creates more problems than it solves by further reducing the already limited funding for schools and making the contribution rules less clear, more vague, and harder to follow.

Please do not advance this regulation change and instead pursue measures that would ensure that Alaska is funding education equitably. A good start would be to simply increase the Base Student Allocation.

Take care,
- Emily Ferry
[redacted]
IMG_0066.JPEG

From: Ashley Doss
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding Proposal Concerns
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:05:08 AM

You don't often get email from ashley.doss@outlook.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board o Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage, AK. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes the "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. These rules also reduce local self-determination and punish any community support for schools. This is contrary to the purpose of public schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities. A reduction in funding for an estimated 70,000 students is a significant amount of harm to a large population across our state.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide for our kids. When the districts are suffering - this has a direct impact on our students. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluation all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm. Ideally, select an approach that enhances and advances the goals of public schools, and educates our children appropriately.

Sincerely,
Ashley Doss

[redacted]
Eagle River, Ak

From: Cami Dalton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education requires support $$$
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:39:18 AM

You don't often get email from camihdalton@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent, grandparent and community member in Anchorage. I have lived in Alaska for 43 years and was a teacher in the ASD for 30! My 3 adult children received an excellent education in our public schools. I believe in and am passionate about public education.

I strongly urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of all the children of our state. This proposed regulation does not meet that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces a great deal of ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting. Many schools and programs are on life support and live in a shadow of uncertainty. When schools suffer, teachers, students and parents are all negatively impacted too. This regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on young families trying to make a good life in Alaska and making choices about whether or not to stay in Alaska. Why would you choose to live and work here if the education system is mediocre to sub par?

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm. remember your duty is to put the best interests of children first!!

Sincerely,

Cami Dalton

[redacted]

Anchorage 99517

From: Jolanda Wilsack
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Protect Schools
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 11:48:50 AM

[You don't often get email from jwilsack@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern,
I am an Alaskan parent who is concerned about the funding for our schools. Please do everything in your power to ensure there are NO MORE CUTS to school funding!

Thank you,
Jolanda Wilsack
[redacted]

From: Andrea Gardner
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: *Please Reject the Proposed Regulation Limiting Local School Support*
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 12:09:02 PM

You don't often get email from andrea.r.gardner@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I'm writing as a parent, former ASD classroom teacher, and long-time public education advocate to urge you to reject the proposed regulation that would restrict how much local communities can contribute to their public schools.

This proposal doesn't reflect the best interests of Alaska's children—it reduces local control, punishes communities for supporting their schools, and introduces uncertainty with no clear benefit. Even the administration has acknowledged there's no guarantee this will satisfy federal requirements. So why gamble with our children's education?

When I taught K/1 for ASD, I had as many as 35 students in one room. We made every dollar stretch, often relying on community support and donations to do what the state would not. And now, through my literacy work supporting families and educators across Alaska, I hear the same thing again and again: local effort is keeping schools afloat. Why would we cut that lifeline?

If this regulation passes, it won't just "equalize"—it will erode. It punishes generosity. It weakens communities. And it jeopardizes education for an estimated 70,000 students. It penalizes communities that go the extra mile to support their schools, strips away local control, and introduces confusion into a system that already feels overburdened. It's a race to the bottom at a time when our districts are already struggling to meet basic needs.

Please reject this proposal. Look for real, collaborative solutions that strengthen—not suppress—the ability of Alaskans to invest in their schools and their future.

Sincerely,
Andrea Gardner M.Ed.
Reading Specialist & Creator of The Readers Garden
[redacted]Anchorage, AK 99508

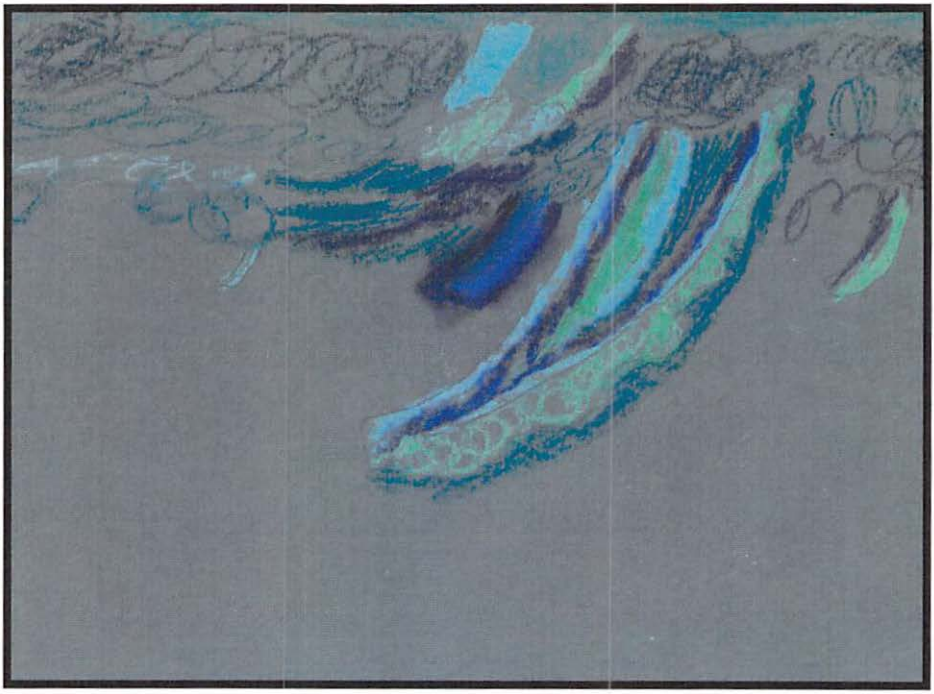
TO: Kimberly Bergey
Ak State Board of Education

I am writing to you with a request that you reject or oppose regulation 4AAC09 for the good of Alaskan schools and students.

I am a former Alaskan teacher and parent who is very concerned about the state of our schools financially. Students are not receiving a full education due to many cuts which are increasing. Education is power and we need to empower our youth in order to protect our future.

Please reject this regulation and use our federal assistance wisely.

Alison Vail Perea
BA degree
Presidential Awardee
Ak Math
Masters degree Science



Thank you for supporting

The Art Programs at

McNeil Canyon Elementary School

Artwork by Ryan Hopper, Grade 4

Alison Perea
37845 GREER RD
HOMER AK 99603

ALASKAN FRONTIER
995-997
19 JUL 2025 PM 1 L

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

Alaska Department of Ed
PO Box 110500
Juneau
AK 99811-0500

E1y-050000
Kim Bertley

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

July 18, 2025

Sally Stockhausen, Chair
Alaska State Board of Education

I am a Homer resident & I am asking you to oppose Regulation # AAC09.

The proposed change is not just a "technical adjustment," it is an attack on schools, communities, & the collaborative spirit that educators, administrators, & local officials have fostered to support students.

Please vote to oppose this regulations.

Respectfully,
Darby Gantz BSN, PNP

Strathmore

July 18, '25

ALASKAN FRONTIER

Dear Board,

Please oppose any changes to current state funding to education. This hurts local contributions.

Diane McBride

parent, grandparent,

58 yr. Alaska resident

USA postcard

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

JUL 22 2025

Executive Board secretary

Commissioner's Office

AK State Education

P.O. Box 110500

Juneau, AK

99811-0500

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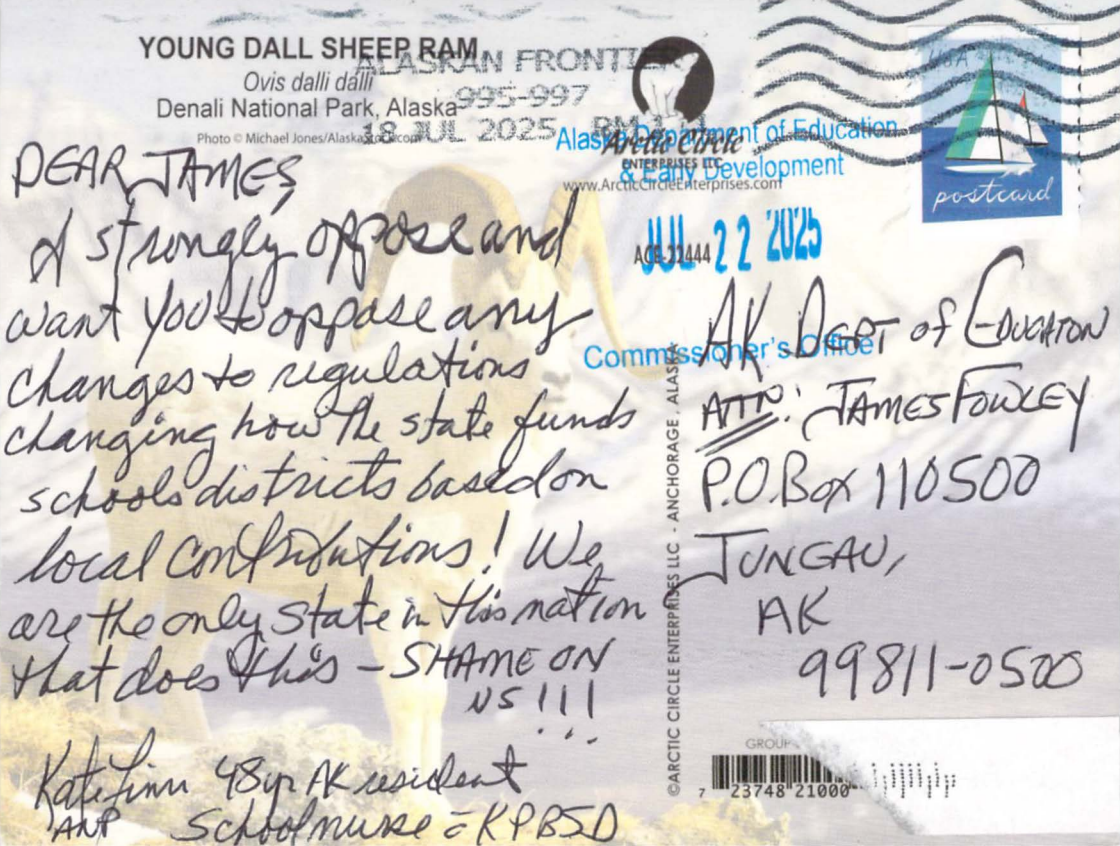
To: Sally Stockhausen, Chair
State Board of Education

From: GINGER DRAIS, MEd, Spec. Ed

Dear Ms. Stockhausen & Board,

As a long time teacher in Alaska who has worked in the Bush, in Anchorage & on the Kenai Peninsula for years I strongly oppose Regulation 4 AAC09. Please reject this regulation which will hit Alaskan schools where we are already bleeding & gasping for air. We need local community support, smaller or stable class sizes & fully trained & qualified educators. The Impact Aid Deduction should not penalize Districts! Please stand up for children, both rural & urban. Stand up to the decimation of quality education. Sincerely,

Ginger Drais


YOUNG DALL SHEEP RAM
Ovis dalli dalli
Denali National Park, Alaska
Photo © Michael Jones/AlaskaStockImages.com
ALASKAN FRONTIER
995-997
18 JUL 2025
Arctic Circle
ENTERPRISES LLC
www.ArcticCircleEnterprises.com
postcard
DEAR JAMES,
I strongly oppose and
want you to oppose any
changes to regulations
changing how the state funds
schools districts based on
local contributions! We
are the only state in this nation
that does this - SHAME ON
US!!!
Kate Linn 48yr AK resident
AND School nurse @ KPBSD
Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office
AK DEPT of EDUCATION
ATTN: JAMES FOWLEY
P.O. Box 110500
JUNEAU,
AK
99811-0500
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GROUP
7 23748 21000

Alaska

Strathmore

Dear Board Members,

I oppose any changes to regulations changing how the State funds school districts based on Local contributions.

Kate Spiss
Homer AK

ALASKA FRONTIER
99603-7597
18 JUL 2025 PM 1 L

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

AK Dept of Education
PO Box 110500
Juneau
AK 99811-0500

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99811-05[illegible]

Strathmore

7-18-25

Dear Board Members

I oppose AND don't vote to oppose any changes to regulations changing how the state funds school districts based on local contributions. We are the only state in the nation that does this! Stand ONE!

Kathleen Mayer
School Board
KPBSD

ALASKA FRONTIER
995297
PM 1 L

USA
Postcard

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development

JUL 22 2025

Commissioner's Office

AK. DEPT of EDUCATION
PO BOX 110500
JUNEAU
AK 99811-0500

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Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

P.O. Box 1969
Homer AK 99603

Ms Kathryn Bergey
AK State Board of Education

Re: proposed Reg 4aac 09

Dear Ms Bergey

Please oppose any changes to 4AC 09.85. The proposed regulation referenced above would be detrimental to our public education undermining local control.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely
Lynda Reed

P O Box 1969
Homer AK
99603

ALASKAN FRONTIER
995-997
18 JUL 2025 PM 1 L

Ms Kathy jo Bergey
AK State Board of
Education
PO Box 110500
Juneau AK 99811-0500

99811-050000

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

July 18, 2025
Alaska State Board of Education,
Sally Stoekhausen, Chair

I am writing to request that you oppose Regulation # AAC09.

I believe this undermines local control & community support.
Alaska public schools are facing severe funding challenges. This Regulation will siphon more money away from classrooms & students when they can least afford it.

Again, please reject this Regulation.

Sandra Garcia RN, BSN, MSN
Homer, AK.

ALASKAN FRONTIER
995-997
19 JUL 2025 PM 1 L

Alaska State Board of Education
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK
99811-0500

RECEIVE
JUL 22 2025
Department of [illegible] and Early [illegible]

99811-050000

July 18, 2025

Sally Stoodharsen, Chair
Alaska State Board of Education,

As a constituent, I am asking you to oppose Regulation 4 AAC 09.

I would request the Board to pursue supportive policies. Please pursue policies that genuinely support financial stability & local control of public schools, rather than consider mining them.

Sincerely,
Sandra Gantz

961 S. Larkspur Cir
Homer, AK 99603

ALASKAN FRONTIER
995-997
19 JUL 2025 PM 1 L

Alaska Department of Education
& Early Development
JUL 22 2025
Commissioner's Office

Sally Stockhausen, Chair
Alaska State Board of Education
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK
99811-0500

RECEIVED
JUL 22 2025
Department of Education and Early Development

From: Rosalind Worcester
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Alaska School funding changes
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 12:37:52 PM

You don't often get email from rosalind.gael@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the State School Board,

As a lifelong Alaskan, I am concerned by your proposal to limit and manage local aid to local schools. After leaving for college, I chose to return and settle in Alaska, ultimately becoming a teacher and raising my own children here, largely because I felt that they would have the best childhood and education they could ask for in this state. I went to public schools in Anchorage, which prepared me for a college education and provided me with a rich and strong foundation for a successful life.

However, I am concerned about the many ways public education is increasingly compromised and underfunded, and this proposed amendment is particularly harmful to Alaska's ability to support public education on a local level. The biggest issue is that your proposal erodes local control and penalizes local governments that try to support districts. This will siphon needed funds away from schools needlessly, and does not address the actual problem: that we should not be deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement.

The solution to the problem is for the state to work with local governments to best support the needs of students, families, and educators, which is a route of collaboration and long-sighted solutions leading to a stable budget. This proposed amendment will NOT provide that, and will instead create more restrictions and road blocks for local communities to effectively and efficiently support schools.

Please reject this amendment and show your support of the public school

model by seeking out long-term solutions to the disparity test that will serve our future Alaskans and ensure that they too want to settle down, work, and raise families in this state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rosalind Worcester

2-3 Teacher, Bowman Elementary

From: Ebulaong 459
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: Proposal to cap public school contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 3:45:41 PM

You don't often get email from echao459@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I do not agree with the proposed regulation to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. Why limit something that can only help and benefit our children and public education staff? There's been so many significant cuts already, why this too?

I don't think there should be a cap, but I do think the community contributions should be put together and distributed evenly amongst schools throughout the state, ensuring there aren't any schools that fall through the cracks because of areas of lower income demographics.

Our children and their education are so important and everyone should do what can be done to preserve it, along with quality programs that support it.

Sincerely,

Elaine Chao

From: Alexandria Weddell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to School/ municipalities Local Contribution Regulation
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 5:09:16 PM

You don't often get email from alexandriaweddell@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the proposed change to local contributions to our schools. Skagway takes pride in its school and students and the municipality always funds to the cap. Please do not change how our community can contribute and support our future generation.

Please, do not do this to our children.

Cautiously yours,

Alexandria Weddell
Skagway Alaska resident

From: Gemm Dust
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Stop Regulations
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 5:09:52 PM

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the state's Department of Education & Early Development is considering a regulation change that will change how our municipalities can contribute to their local school districts. It's a change for the worse. If passed, it would take a lot of local dollars out of our schools—dollars that pay for Pre-K, sports and other activities, and busses to get kids to school.

Please change the regulations and support our children and schools.

Melissa Morgan

From: Mary-Claire Bernstein
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulations for financing from local municipality
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 5:41:52 PM

[You don't often get email from maryclairetb@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I am writing to urge you to cancel the initiative to regulate the financing from municipalities for their school districts. This idea is not constructive or reasonable.
Our state's children need all of the resources they can get. The communities that provide for extra programs in and around the school day are enriching their
community in important ways. Sports activities, pre-kindergarten programs, and other activities build better citizens that will eventually contribute to their
community. Do you want to increase crime? broken families? economic decline? While we don't see direct links, contributing to children's overall activities and
experiences as children will make them more valuable to their community well-being as they become adults.

Don't be short-sighted. Invest in our children. They are our future adults!

Sincerely,
Mary-Claire Bernstein
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: marshall@xyz.net
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: proposed regulation to limit municipal aid to local schools
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 5:42:11 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education members,

As a concerned Alaskan resident, I am urging you to vote against the proposed regulation which would limit municipal aid to local schools.

Communities are invested in their school system and need to have local control of their school district. The proposed regulation undermines this local control. Local school board members and borough assembly members are the ones to maintain local control of their particular school district.

Please support local control by voting against this proposed regulation and demonstrate your duty to support a strong public school system in Alaska.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.
Karen Murdock
[redacted]
Homer, AK. 99603

From: Kathleen Easley BSN, RN, NCSN
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject regulation reducing control and local funding
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 6:48:52 PM

You don't often get email from katmandu26@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am emailing you, the State Board of Education to urge you all to reject a proposed Dunleavy regulation reducing local control and local funding for our school districts.

Gov. Dunleavy is fighting to deprive schools of state aid, he is also trying to push through new rules tightening limits on local support for schools and I am against this. The proposed regulation would reduce the amount of funding communities can contribute to support their schools and students, and would result in immediate budget cuts in many districts in our state. You have no assurance the regulations would even meet federal requirements or solve the problem at hand, notably that Alaska failed a federal 'disparity test.'

• This proposal reduces local control, weaponizes local support for our schools, and harms kids.

• This proposal would reduce funding for an estimated 70,000 Alaska students.

• We've been given no evidence this proposal will be acceptable to the federal government.

• Alaska is the last state using federal impact aid to offset state funding obligations, a practice abandoned elsewhere due to its complexity and negative impact on local control.

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Easley

7001 Viburnum Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-748-6076

Sent from my Galaxy

From: Linda Smith
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose regulation limiting local contribution
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 6:56:52 PM

You don't often get email from lindablumbergsmith@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

I do not believe voting for this proposed regulation meets your duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Linda Smith
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99507

From: Linda Kruger
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regulation change
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 8:30:06 PM

You don't often get email from lindalaska2003@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'm opposed to the regulation change that would change how municipalities contribute to school costs like Pre-K, sports, and other activities and bus transportation. This should be left up to local jurisdictions to decide.

Linda Kruger
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

lindalaska2003@gmail.com

From: Erin Schumacher
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:06:27 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska. I'm very disheartened to share my neighbors who are a young family have left Alaska in light of current education issues in the state.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,
Erin Schumacher
[redacted]
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

From: Anne Fuller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: comment on Local Contributions regulation
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:20:46 PM

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My comment on the proposed regulation takes the form of a question.

As I understand it, here in Juneau, currently the city and borough puts in money for school buses and we have been reporting that separately.
Under the new regulation, school bus expenses will be in the school district budget.

It seems like that means there will be less room in the district budget for other things (such salaries for teachers, aides, others, and administrators).

Why does your explanation say “would not remove” ?
"(19) How will the regulation impact budgeting for transportation, preschool, student meals, and after-school programs?
Districts will continue to determine how to allocate funds for these programs. The proposed regulation would not remove support for these services but focuses on consistent accounting practices associated with local contributions.”

I think I see that after-school programs can be considered community costs, not educational costs and so CBJ can fund them, but the pupil transportation part doesn’t fit that pattern.

If I’m right, the proposed regulation change will have a definite impact on our district budget.

Anne Fuller
[redacted]
Juneau AK 99801

From: Christine Krysinski
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:31:14 PM

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Hello education board,

I am a parent of two children in the Anchorage School District. They participate in a school choice program that is our public language immersion program, a lottery program, not a charter school.

Please do not continue with the plan to further cap local contributions to education funding. The state should fund its constitutional obligations in full and not rely on federal funds to fill what is the state's true obligation. If Anchorage has the means to provide more funding to schools, it should be able to do so. We live in a diverse city that draws people from all around the State and need to be able to step up to that challenge.

The class sizes have been getting larger. When I volunteered in the kindergarten classroom, I saw some students who tried to draw the teacher's attention from the rest of the class. There was an assistant who was able to help manage these kids and provide additional support so the other two dozen children could continue the lesson.

The continual cuts to funding and limiting increases is causing stress on schools and parents when we should be focusing on incremental steps for improvement and a long-term, sustainable plan.

Please do not take public funds away from public schools, or restrict solutions offered by local governments. Local schools should have local control.

Thank you
--
Christine Krysinski

From: Jessica Cochran
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: proposed local contributions regulations
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 9:49:52 PM

You don't often get email from jcochranak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board of Education members -

I am writing to oppose Governor Dunleavy's proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions by local communities.

This proposal would reduce funding for an estimated 70,000 Alaska students.

We’ve been given no evidence this proposal will be acceptable to the federal government.
Alaska is the last state using federal impact aid to offset state funding obligations, a practice abandoned elsewhere due to its complexity. Alaska needs to step up to support schools adequately, not find the way to spend the least amount on schools.

Thank you.

--
Jessica Cochran
[redacted]

From: Beth Leban
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No changes!!
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:25:09 PM

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As an Alaskan resident and Juneau homeowner, I am writing to object to any changes or limitations on how municipalities allocate funds to their local school districts.

Local municipality funding at current levels provides public schools with services such as bussing, athletics, and a host of other opportunities for our children that would not otherwise be available.

I strongly urge no changes to how Alaskan municipalities fund schools!
Beth Leban
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Scott Pryde
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: bellamy_margo@asdk12.org; lessens_kelly@asdk12.org; donley_dave@asdk12.org; holleman_andy@asdk12.org; higgins_pat@asdk12.org; Wilson_Dora@asdk12.org; jacobs_carl@asdk12.org; officeofthesuperintendent@asdk12.org
Subject: Public comment - AK education
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 6:11:43 AM

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COMMENTARY: Dunleavy and Bishop's Train Wreck of Education Mismanagement

By any reasonable standard, Governor Mike Dunleavy and Education Commissioner Deena Bishop have been a two-person wrecking crew when it comes to Alaska's public education system. What began as rhetoric about "fiscal responsibility" has devolved into a relentless pattern of budget cuts, funding freezes, and ideological posturing—all at the direct expense of Alaska's students, teachers, and communities.

Let's start with the facts: Since taking office, Dunleavy has consistently targeted education as a convenient line item to slash. In 2019, his proposed budget called for a staggering $269 million in cuts to K–12 and higher education—a number so outrageous even his own party members flinched. That year, the Alaska Legislature acted with rare bipartisan unity to override those cuts and preserve forward funding for schools. In response, Dunleavy dragged the state into a costly and pointless legal battle over whether he could veto future education funding. (He lost.)

Enter Deena Bishop—first as superintendent of the Anchorage School District and now, inexplicably, as the state's education commissioner. Bishop's tenure in Anchorage was marked by declining enrollment, low morale among educators, and contentious decisions that prioritized optics over outcomes. Now, as the state's top education official, she's the ideal partner for Dunleavy's ideological campaign to weaken public schools. Together, they've presided over years of stagnant Base Student Allocation

(BSA) funding while inflation and costs of living soar. The result? Fewer teachers, larger class sizes, and the steady erosion of educational quality.

And let's not forget the performative distractions. While rural schools struggle to keep their doors open and districts cut staff, Dunleavy and Bishop tout "parental choice" and charter school expansion—policies that benefit a small few while draining resources from the system the majority of Alaskan kids rely on. It's the classic political bait-and-switch: underfund public schools, watch them falter, and then point to the failure as justification for privatization.

If this is what "education leadership" looks like, Alaska should be terrified. The damage done under Dunleavy and Bishop is not just about dollars and cents—it's about trust, equity, and the long-term prosperity of an entire generation. Alaskans deserve a public education system that's robust, respected, and properly resourced. What we've gotten instead is a train wreck—and the passengers are our children.

Scott Pryde

Anchorage AK

Grant Facilitator - Mental Health & Student Support

Anchorage School District

Sent from my iPhone

From: Heather Lende
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Funding change
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 6:39:59 AM

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To Whom it May Concern :

Please, please do not change regulations in order to make it harder if not impossible for local school districts to help fund our schools. In other words to help our students succeed . In Haines we supplement student activities . The cost of travel alone is prohibitive. We also help maintain the buildings (we know how awful the state record is on that front.) I can't understand why the governor refuses to fund schools adequately but that's another letter. It seems malicious to both not fund rural districts fully and then not allow us to save our schools and educate are kids. What is the purpose ? The goal ?

Thank you ,
Heather Lende
Alaska Writer Laureate 2021-24,
Former Haines school board member and assembly member ,
Honorary PhD from UAA in Humane Letters, and grandmother of 5 Haines public school students and four Juneau ones.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Peter Sidmore
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on Local Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 7:12:20 AM

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Hello,

I write today to ask that you do not pass any amendments limiting local contributions to Alaska school districts. In a time of extreme financial hardship and instability in school funding around the state it would be incredibly detrimental to all of Alaska's students to attempt to enforce this kind of ruling and would set back student's education opportunities significantly (and likely permanently). This proposed amendment is not conducive to localized control of the districts of that state and does not actually go very far in increasing equity between districts.

As a young teacher in Alaska I see this proposed amendment as another symptom of a system that does not want to succeed, it does not want to retain high quality teachers or enable students to have access to meaningful education. It seems that in an effort to make things equitable this amendment is willing to sink the entire public education system in Alaska. This is a dangerous idea for the future of the state and I ask the board to reject any notion of it.

Thank you,
Peter Sidmore

From: Andrew E Campbell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools which would impact services
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 8:58:11 AM

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Board Members,

Please do not support the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools which would impact services such as school resource officers, student nutrition, transportation, snow plowing, and other uses of public amenities like swimming pools.

These services are essential and affect the health and development of Alaska's youth, which in term affect the health of Alaska's communities.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Campbell
Anchorage

From: John Sisk
To: eed.contact (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Limiting Local Funding of Schools
Date: Monday, July 7, 2025 8:17:53 AM

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Dear DEED:

I read and heard on the radio that you have opened a public comment period on new regulations to change how municipalities account for
local school expenditures and to limit what municipalities can spend on public education. However, I can find nothing on the DEED web site about this matter. Please share with me the status of the proposed change, the public comment opportunity, and anything directly related. Thank you very much,

John Sisk
juansisk@gmail.com
[redacted]

From: Mel Langdon
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: comments on proposed regulatory changes to 4 AAC 09.985
Date: Thursday, July 3, 2025 1:56:47 PM

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Regarding the proposed regulatory changes "4 AAC 09.985. Permissible local contribution appropriations and in-kind services"

In the public hearing announcing this proposed regulatory change, it became apparent that the federal government had not initiated this regulatory change and that, further, the comprehensive implications of the proposed regulation remained ambiguous.

The proposed change in the regulations disregards federal guidelines and will increase administrative burdens on school districts in Alaska. The change threatens to strip funds from classrooms. Most harmful is that it could redefine local contributions to include all in-kind services, potentially decimating vital community programs, such as school groups using municipal pools and park facilities or local transportation for before- and after-school programs.

There is a plain absence of evidence that the proposed regulatory changes will resolve the federal disparity issue. Do not concede essential funding for public education through these flawed proposed changes.

Sincerely, Mel Langdon

Kuspuk School District

Calillgutekluta Ciutmurrnaurtukut | Let's go forward, working together

Upper Kalskag | Lower Kalskag | Aniak | Crooked Creek | Chuathbaluk | Stony River | Sleetmute

July 4, 2025

To the Board of Education and Early Development,

Kuspuk School District strongly opposes the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09. Our district serves students in some of the most remote communities in Alaska. There is no borough, no tax base, and no way to generate local revenue. We rely entirely on state and federal funding to operate, and are precisely the type of district Impact Aid was designed to support.

Instead of addressing the actual funding gap between districts that receive local contributions and those like Kuspuk that rely on state and federal funding, the state is attempting to pass the disparity test through compliance by subtraction – limiting how much local contribution is counted in the formula for wealthier districts, rather than increasing support for the districts that have none. The result may satisfy a federal formula, but it changes nothing for students who are already being shortchanged.

Alaska's education system is already stretched to the breaking point. The Base Student Allocation (BSA) has failed to keep up with inflation, and many districts, including Kuspuk, are facing unmanageable deficits, school closures, and critical staff vacancies. These regulatory changes are not a solution, they only deepen the crisis. They do not move us toward equity, they are a redistribution of scarcity and do nothing to improve educational equity and everything to further entrench underfunding.

If Alaska truly wants to meet its obligations to students in federally impacted areas and pass the disparity test in both letter and spirit, then it must honor the intent of Impact Aid and increase support for districts that have no local means to contribute. The intent of Impact Aid is clear, and it was never meant to be a tool to balance a formula. It was meant to ensure students in districts like ours are not left behind. Educational opportunity should not be determined by ZIP code or tax base, and yet here we are, underfunded, overlooked, and now excluded from the very fix that is supposed to help us.

Raise the floor. Don't lower the ceiling.

We urge the Board of Education and Early Development to see these proposed regulatory changes for what they are, compliance by subtraction, and instead pursue a compliance strategy that ensures every Alaska student receives a fair and adequate education.

Dr. Madeline Aguillard
Superintendent
Kuspuk School District, REAA 5

From: Carole Bookless
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments for 4 AAC 09 amendment
Date: Saturday, July 5, 2025 3:27:22 AM

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I am sending comments in regard to proposed changes to Alaska Board of Education 4 AAC 09.

Both the state and federal statutes for this issue are complicated and convoluted.

In trying to get the background on this rule change, I was unable to find 34 CFR 222.16 (c)(2)(1) that is listed in the Board of Education amendment. The closest I found was 34 CFR 222.16 (b). I would appreciate an email with the exact wording of part (c)(2)(1).

However, Federal statute 20 USC 7713 (4) lists:

"administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities"

I did not find a list of services in Federal statute that is identical to the one in the proposed Alaska Board of Education rule: "INSURANCE, UTILITIES, ENERGY, AUDITS, AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES".

Putting the two sections together, I am assuming that "administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities" as well as "INSURANCE, UTILITIES, ENERGY, AUDITS, AND MAINTENANCE OF

FACILITIES" would be considered for the Impact payment. The first part is federal law and the second is BoE language. I found that the BoE language was not consistent with the federal language. My reading of the "emergency" was that the State language was inconsistent with the Federal language - but it is still inconsistent, so this change seems to NOT meet its goal.

From the media, I gather that the State feels that rural districts are being underfunded by local governments and larger districts are overfunded by local governments. It is incumbent on the Alaska State Board of Education (SEA) "to submit the rationale for the additional factors selected to identify generally comparable districts and describe how those factors affect the cost of educating students".

I can think of some factors right off the top of my head.

For small rural districts, some of the unique rural factors that affect the cost of educating students are energy costs, aging infrastructure, transportation costs for food and materials.

For larger districts, some of the unique larger district factors that affect the cost of educating students include bussing (several small districts have 0 cost), admin (small districts may only have one administrator doing everything), as well as every other factor being supersized in relation to a small school district. Larger districts also traditionally provide regional services such as regional juvenile offender, behavioral and health services. Some families relocate to urban centers to access the specialized services their children need. Larger districts also have larger numbers of families experiencing homelessness..

- "Statute: Section 8003(b)(1) of the Act contains the formula for determining an LEA's maximum payment amount, based in part on calculating each LEA's local contribution rate (LCR). The statute states that the LCR is to be determined under the procedures set forth in the Department's regulations as they were in effect on January 1, 1994.

Current Regulations: The current regulations in § 222.39-§ 222.41 provide that an LEA's LCR is determined by identifying generally comparable districts. Under § 222.40, for certain qualifying LEAs, the SEA may use additional factors in identifying the generally comparable LEAs for the purpose of calculating and certifying an LCR. Section 222.40(d) provides that if an SEA proposes to use a special additional factor to select a group of generally comparable districts (GCDs) to support a higher LCR for a specific LEA, it must be a generally accepted, objectively defined factor that affects the LEA's cost of educating its students.

Proposed Regulations: The proposed regulation would clarify that SEAs that wish to use special additional factors to identify GCDs for purposes of calculating a higher LCR for certain LEAs must provide a rationale and explain how the selected factor or factors affect the cost of education. The proposed regulation does not substantively alter the manner in which the LCRs are calculated.

Reasons: To determine GCDs for local contribution rate purposes, an SEA may use a special additional factor only if that factor has an impact on the cost of education for an LEA. In the past, the Department has had to contact the SEA to learn the rationale for a specific factor or factors after the GCD data were submitted. Requiring the rationale as part of the submission process would help ensure timely and accurate payments to the LEAs in the State."

Alaska certainly should be identifying those additional factors. I acknowledge that it must be challenging, but it is part of the Board of Education mandate to do so.

There also seems to be a factor relating to the numbers of students whose parents are working on Federal premises. Larger districts are also hubs for military and federal workers which also is part of the funding picture.

In conclusion, my take on the proposed amendment is that it does nothing to clarify the situation but in fact may make things worse and put federal funding in jeopardy. My read on what the federal agency wants is for the Board of Education to make a list of reasonable, defensible factors that affect Alaska districts with different circumstances and justify how those factors are relevant to defining which school districts are comparable and how they affect education funding in Alaska.

Carole Bookless, [redacted]

From: Christy McMurren
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regulations
Date: Saturday, July 5, 2025 7:33:50 AM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to express strong opposition to regulations limiting local government contributions to school districts. Now is not the time to put even more strain on a district's budget. This is nothing more than a veiled attempt to crush public schools.
Christy McMurren
Anchorage

From: Karen K
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Changes in Local Contributions
Date: Monday, July 7, 2025 12:58:15 PM

You don't often get email from kresh.karen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska Board of Education and Early Development,

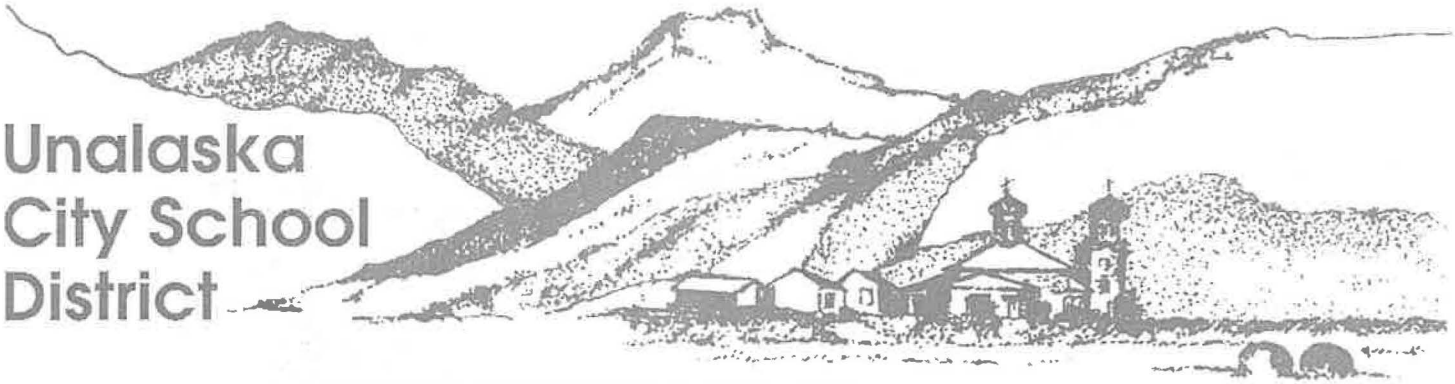
My name is Karen Kresh, and I am the parent of an incoming Kindergarten student in the Unalaska City School District. I am writing with a public comment opposing the proposed changes to local funding for schools. These changes would be devastating for our school and students. I can speak personally to the value of the school's preschool program, which has done so much to prepare my son for kindergarten. This program is amazingly affordable, thanks to financial support from our city. It's a resource that is accessible to all in our community, regardless of income level. It is a model of equity. And it would be jeopardized if these proposed changes are approved.

Our public school is the gem of our community, and I'm so grateful for the local support it receives. Despite the educational challenges and struggles around the state, we have found a way to make our school excellent. I am appalled that the state would consider taking away these resources, which are locally provided and prioritized by our community's elected officials. Our community has made education a priority and should not be penalized for that value.

I urge you to consider alternative solutions that would lift up the under-resourced school districts, rather than penalize the ones who are doing well. I respectfully ask that the Board of Education reject this proposal – it would hurt students in my community and across the state. Thanks for this opportunity to comment.

Karen Kresh
Unalaska

Unalaska City School District



RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION NO. 2025-01

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE DEFINITION OF "LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS" AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the Unalaska City School District (UCSD) receives significant local financial support from the City of Unalaska, which consistently funds the District to the statutory cap and provides additional special fund contributions such as community schools, pre-school, food service and student activities; and

WHEREAS, the City and Community Organizations of Unalaska provide several in-kind contributions including building use and major maintenance, PCR pool use, donations, and volunteerism; and

WHEREAS, the UCSD's FY26 budget request includes a maximum allowable general fund contribution of $4,398,965, alongside additional essential non-instructional and in-kind contributions, including approximately $975,000 for community schools (shared maintenance and utilities), $400,000 food service, 160,000 student activities, and $210,000 pre-school; and

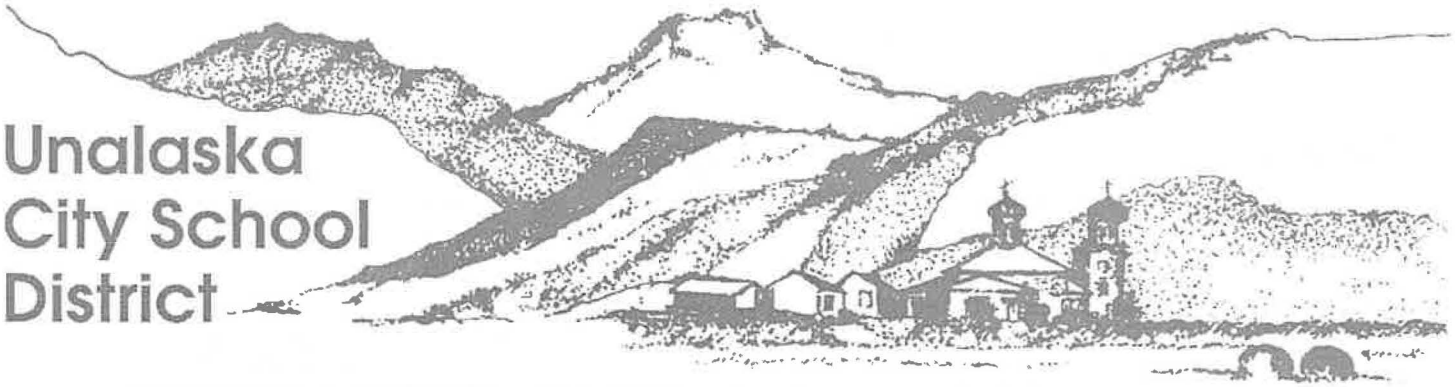
WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and Early Development is proposing new regulations expanding the definition of "local contribution" (4 AAC 09), beyond the federal definition of "current expenditures" used in the Impact Aid Program disparity test; and

WHEREAS the definition of the term "current expenditures", per 20 U.S.C. 7713(4), means expenditures for free public education, including expenditures for administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation services, operation and maintenance of plant, fixed charges, and net expenditures to cover deficits for food services and student body activities;

WHEREAS, this regulatory change may cause certain in-kind contributions and non-instructional financial support currently provided by the City of Unalaska to be classified as part of the capped local contribution, thereby potentially forcing reductions in these services or in the instructional budget to maintain compliance with the new definition; and

WHEREAS, such a reclassification would have a significant adverse financial impact on UCSD's FY26 budget and its ability to deliver quality education, as the District is already anticipating a substantial budget deficit of up to $1,000,000 without additional State funding; and

Unalaska City School District



WHEREAS, the UCSD School Board fully recognizes the importance of meeting federal compliance standards for the Impact Aid disparity test and the severe consequences of non-compliance for State funding, but believes that this regulatory change disproportionately harms districts like Unalaska that have longstanding, community-supported local partnerships and investments in education; and

WHEREAS the Federal Department of Education has NOT asked the State to solve this issue in this way nor required the option to utilize revenue as the Disparity criteria; and

WHEREAS this proposal is a direct assault on local control because the City and Community of Unalaska has taken on the responsibility of filling the funding gap due to inadequate state funding; and

WHEREAS the city and borough of Unalaska contributes a total of $6,143,965, not including fair market value of in-kind contributions; and

WHEREAS counting in-kind community support toward the local contribution cap undermines the strong partnerships that rural districts like Unalaska depend on, sending a message that volunteerism and local engagement are not valued; and

WHEREAS including student-led fundraisers in the calculation of local contributions undermines the spirit of community engagement and discourages students from working to support the extracurricular and enrichment activities that enhance their educational experience; and

WHEREAS other local contributors including, but not limited to, Ounalashka Corporation, Qawalangin Tribe, APIA and APICDA Grants funding sources may be considered additional in-kind services whose monetary value would count towards the 'cap'; and

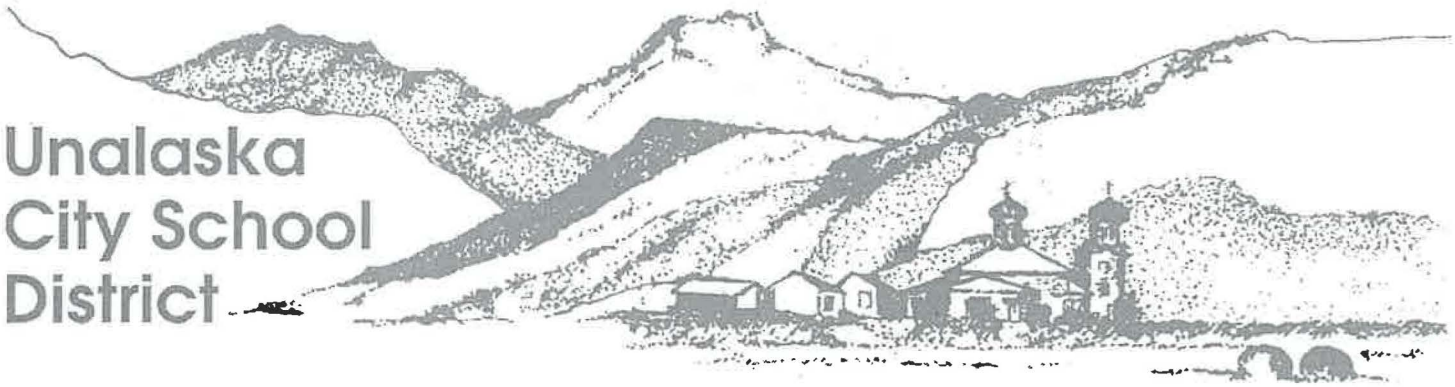
WHEREAS the new definition will impact the Unalaska City School District's budget by anywhere from $1,700,000 to more than $3,000,000 depending on final determination of "in kind donations" and how broadly defined local contribution is; and

WHEREAS, sudden implementation of this change without sufficient transition time jeopardizes UCSD's budget planning, local agreements developed in good faith with the City of Unalaska and other partners, its quality and variety of instructional and non-instructional programs, and the overall sense of community in Unalaska.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Unalaska City School Board respectfully urges the State Board of Education and Early Development and the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development to:

P.O. Box 570, Unalaska, Alaska 99685 • (907) 581-3151 • Fax (907) 581-3152 • www.ucsd.net
Kim Hanisch, Superintendent • Mark Alston, Principal • Riley Spetz, Principal

Unalaska City School District



1. Work with local municipalities, schoolboards and superintendents to address the root cause of any existing disparity between districts being the inadequate state funding of public education.
2. Work with the local municipalities, schoolboards and superintendents to protect local governance and allow for continued robust local support and collaboration;
3. Engage with school boards, superintendents, and municipal leaders across the state to ensure that future regulatory adjustments are transparent, predictable, and protect the educational opportunities of Alaska's students.
4. Provide clear guidance and flexibility in the treatment of longstanding in-kind contributions and shared services agreements that h**ave provided critical value to districts like Unalaska without** undermining compliance with federal requirements;
5. Conduct a cost analysis to determine if these changes are in effect that the State of Alaska would pass the disparity test, given that the top and bottom districts are REA and not receiving local contributions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UCSD School Board authorizes the Board President and Superintendent to communicate this resolution to State and federal officials, and to advocate for a balanced solution that preserves both local partnerships and the integrity of State and federal education funding.

Adopted this 7th day of July, 2025, by the Unalaska City School District Board.

David Gibson, President

P.O. Box 570, Unalaska, Alaska 99685 • (907) 581-3151 • Fax (907) 581-3152 • www.ucsd.net
Kim Hanisch, Superintendent • Mark Alston, Principal • Riley Spetz, Principal

From: Michelle Nakamura
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Change to Local Contributions
Date: Monday, July 7, 2025 2:07:17 PM

You don't often get email from michellenakamura907@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing from Juneau to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation change that would expand the definition of local contributions for public education.

As a parent with two children in the Juneau School District, I am already seeing the devastating effects of underfunded schools across our state. Class sizes are growing. Staff are stretched thin. Programs that support student learning, social-emotional needs, and enrichment are being cut year after year. Alaska's per-student funding has not kept up with inflation, and the consequences are piling up in real time.

Now, to suggest a regulation change that would penalize local communities for stepping up where the state has stepped back is completely unacceptable. Juneau voters have made intentional decisions to fund aspects of education that reflect the priorities of our community. These are not frivolous extras. They are essential supports that fill the gaps created by inadequate state funding.

If this change goes through, it would effectively punish communities for valuing education. It would tie the hands of local governments and take away the few tools we have left to protect our kids' learning environments. Instead of addressing the long-standing funding shortfalls, this regulation would further entrench them and discourage any efforts to do better.

I urge you in the strongest terms to reject this change. It will only compound the already serious challenges facing Alaska's public schools and send a clear message to families like mine that education is not a priority.

Sincerely,
Michelle Nakamura
Juneau, Alaska

From: Jim Steffen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contributions to school funding
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 3:44:32 PM

You don't often get email from 1norcoast@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a 45-year resident of Sitka, Alaska, writing to ask you to not impose a regulation that would expand the definition of local school contributions to include "services and support currently provided outside the statutory funding cap".

Such a decision would strip away the rights of our community to make up for the loss of state funding for our schools that has been caused by government dysfunction and politically motivated actions on the part of the governor. It would cause a drastic loss of education capacity in our city and our state.

Sitka takes pride in its solid support for our students. Education is underfunded at the state level. Local support of schools should be encouraged, not penalized. Do not impose this restriction on ANY community in the state of Alaska, and instead turn your efforts toward obtaining a realistic level of state support for education!

Jim Steffen
Sitka, Alaska

--
Jim Steffen, AMS
Norcoast Marine Surveyors, Inc.
cell [redacted]
www.marinesurveyor.com/norcoast/

From: Scott Hayden
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution rates
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:57:23 AM

You don't often get email from scotthayd@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Scott Hayden
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99515

From: Joel Jackson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to cuts to school funding
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:03:51 AM

[You don't often get email from president@kake-nsn.gov. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good morning I come from a small rural village and our school is already under funded. We need an increase to our school budget. Education is so important to us as a community. I urge you all to consider opposing the governor cuts to school funding
Sent from my iPhone

From: Katie Dawson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: New regulation for state funding of public schools to limit municipal aid
Date: Wednesday, July 2, 2025 4:47:22 PM

[You don't often get email from rag1smith@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Sent from my iPhone
Dear Alaska Board Of Education;

Please don't pass the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools. Public education is under stress as it is. School districts are best able to handle their unique financial needs without the government interfering in a ham-handed effort to deal with the Federal Impact Aid Program.
Trying to squeeze the unique local needs of school communities into a federal framework only stifles a community's efforts to adapt to the difficult financial situation public schools face. Thank-you.

Katie Dawson
[redacted]
Homer, Alaska 99603

From: Likka McCauley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Draft Regulations to Limit Local Contributions to School Funding
Date: Thursday, July 3, 2025 6:39:34 AM

You don't often get email from mccauley.likka@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I write to urge the state rescind the plan to limit local contributions to district funding as it will hurt many Alaska districts. Additionally, this timeline is untenable in light of unpredictable state funding, as well as current uncertainty around ESEA funds being delayed for state allocation.

I understand the stated rationale to prevent failing the funding disparity test again. However, Alaska funding and federal requirements are a complex issue, and this and other ideas require time and deep analysis to prevent unintended consequences. This year, local districts are well past a timeline in which it will be easy to pivot with additional restrictions when it comes to hiring, contracts, benefits, and more.

Please reject and abandon this regulation, at least for this coming year.

Thanks,
Likka McCauley

From: Maya Hammoud
Subject: Expanding Education & Inclusion for Neurodivergent Youth
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 4:31:06 AM

You don't often get email from mayahammoud393@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello!

I hope this message finds you well. My name is **Maya Hammoud**, and I'm a high school junior, autism activist, researcher, and the founder of *The Perception Foundation*—a nonprofit I launched in sixth grade to promote inclusion and expand access to sensory-friendly spaces for individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs).

My advocacy began even earlier, back in elementary school, after I befriended a classmate with autism and witnessed the daily challenges he faced in an environment not designed to support his needs. That experience continues to fuel my mission today.

To date, our work has reached over **365,000 individuals**, with a focus on underserved communities. Our initiatives include:

- Designing and building sensory rooms in schools and public spaces
- Leading educational sessions to promote understanding, empathy, and inclusion
- Empowering the next generation of student leaders through our national and international branches

In addition to my advocacy, I'm also a scientific researcher. I recently discovered what is believed to be the **first-ever treatment for neurodevelopmental disorders**, earning **first place globally** at the International Science and Engineering Fair and recognition as one of the **top 10 high school researchers in the world**.

Despite growing awareness, an estimated **300 million people worldwide** live with an NDD—and many still lack access to inclusive spaces or even basic understanding in their schools and communities.

To help close this gap, I've developed a comprehensive, age-appropriate curriculum focused on:

- Neurodevelopmental disorders and brain development
- Emotional regulation and mental health
- Creating inclusive and empathetic school environments

As a student myself, I would be honored to improve education and further expand this initiative—whether through legislation, a pilot program, or any pathway to help our state lead the nation in neurodiversity inclusion.

Thank you so much for your time and continued leadership. I look forward to the opportunity to connect and collaborate.

Link to the curriculum

Warm regards,

Maya Hammoud

Founder, The Perception Foundation

[redacted]

perceptionfoundation.com

From: Melody Reynolds Myers
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Protect local support of public education
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 6:48:09 AM

You don't often get email from melmel_myers@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the state school board,
The governor of the State of Alaska has chosen to underfund public education. School districts across the state have made significant cuts that are detrimental to Alaska's youth. In many Alaskan towns and villages their schools are a source of pride
and a gathering place for the community. Throughout the state, cities and boroughs are choosing to help their schools to provide opportunities that are important to the needs of the town. The cities and boroughs want, and should have, control over how their monies are spent. They are the ones who have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make their schools stronger! These people believe in the power of strong local education. They have a right to control how the money is spent.

Sincerely,
Melody Myers
Sitka, AK

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Judy Guthrie
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed change in language to "Local Contributions"
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 11:33:31 AM

You don't often get email from thunderwoman01@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I urge that no change be made to the current definition of "Local Contribution".

School districts are underfunded as it is, and we depend on local contributions through parent and community involvement and support.

Thank you,

Judy Leask Guthrie
[redacted]
Ketchikan, AK 99901

From: Helen Raschick
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contributions issue
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 11:48:40 AM

You don't often get email from hraschick@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Good afternoon, I am writing to state my opposition to your considering expanding the definition of "local contributions". My community of Sitka chooses to support the Performing Arts Center, the swimming pool, school activities etc. That value must NOT take away from actual education dollars we receive from the state. Education dollars are already stretched thin as they haven't kept up with inflation. Please do not deprive our students of the funding they deserve for the quality education they need!
Thank you for considering,
Sincerely, Helen Raschick, Sitka

From: Kealoha Harmon
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to changes in the definition of Local Contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 1:13:52 PM

You don't often get email from keaharmon@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,

We are strongly opposed to the proposed changes in the definition of local contributions. These changes would severely hurt the quality of our school district and eliminate services and support our district desperately needs to function. Sitkans have voted, volunteered, and contributed to make our schools strong. Please do not undermine the education of our youth.

Thank you,
Kealoha and Michael Harmon
(Parents of two Sitka High Graduates '22 and '25 and 1995 Alumni)
Sitka, Alaska

From: Kylee Miguel
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contributions regulation change
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 4:25:23 PM

You don't often get email from miguelkyyy@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Greetings board of education,

I am writing you today as a life long Sitkan, to urge you to oppose the regulation to expand the definition of "local contributions" to schools. This change would have a significant negative impact on our local public schools, as well as schools across Alaska.

Our schools and in turn our youth are already suffering from the senseless cuts education has already seen. Youth are truly our future and as it stands they are at risk at not receiving the education they deserve.

All the best,

Kylee Miguel
Sitka, Alaska

From: Jen Reid
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to new rules on local contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 5:29:11 PM

[You don't often get email from bluessirenjen@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good afternoon,

I am opposed to your idea of changing how local communities make choices in regards to supporting local schools.

Education is already grossly underfunded,

From: Jen Reid
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to changes to local contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 5:35:44 PM

[You don't often get email from bluessirenjen@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good afternoon,

I am opposed to your idea of changing how local communities support their schools.

Public Education is already grossly underfunded, let communities make their own choices!

Thank you,

Jennifer Reid
[redacted]
Sitka Ak 99835

From: Jen Reid
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to changes to local contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 5:35:58 PM

[You don't often get email from bluessirenjen@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good afternoon,

I am opposed to your idea of changing how local communities support their schools.

Public Education is already grossly underfunded, let communities make their own choices!

Thank you,

Jennifer Reid
[redacted]
Sitka Ak 99835

From: Bruno Grunau
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Proposed Regulation on Local School Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:12:49 AM

You don't often get email from alaskanclogger@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

As a parent and engaged member of the Fairbanks community, I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed changes to local contribution regulations.

This regulation fails to prioritize the best interests of Alaska's students. Instead of supporting equitable and sustainable funding, it sets a troubling precedent by penalizing communities that step up to support their schools. It strips away local control, discourages civic involvement, and introduces vague, bureaucratic hurdles that will only increase confusion and legal risk for districts and local governments.

At a time when many districts are already struggling, we should be looking for ways to strengthen—not weaken—their ability to provide quality education. These changes would do the opposite, and families across the state would feel the consequences.

I urge you to reject this proposal, explore more constructive solutions, and pursue an approach that protects students while respecting local efforts.

Sincerely,

Bruno Grunau

[redacted]

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

From: Kate Crowley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local control
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:18:23 AM

You don't often get email from katepcrowley@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Homer. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rule. As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Crowley

[redacted]

Homer, AK. 99603

From: Tamra Wear
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Our children deserve a quality education
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:22:44 AM

You don't often get email from tamra.wear@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear fellow Alaskans,

I am a parent and community member in Soldotna. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Tamra Wear

[redacted]

Soldotna

Sent from my iPhone

From: Sara Pock
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Governors Proposed Changes!!
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:24:00 AM

You don't often get email from sara.pock@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a DUTY to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Sara Pock

[redacted] Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Molly Krehlik
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 9:25:12 AM

You don't often get email from mollyannekrehlik@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Molly Tarby

From: Irene Bortnick
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Gray-Jackson, Elvi (LEG); Galvin, Alyse S (LEG)
Subject: Against proposal to limit local government contributions to schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:28:53 AM

You don't often get email from ibortnick@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I would like to record my opposition to the proposal to limit local government contributions to schools. Rather than lifting up those with the most need, this proposal will push all schools on a downward spiral. Schools across the state are in dire need of more funding but this is not the answer. The majority of Alaskan voters support increased funding but the governor keeps choosing to ignore their wishes. For the sake of the children, as well as the future of our state, please do not implement this proposal.

Respectfully,
Irene Bortnick

From: Aaron Majors
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: limit local governments' contributions to schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:19:56 AM

You don't often get email from aaron1017@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Concerning public services, we as a state have several populated areas that have enjoyed a free ride since the creation of said communities. This is where we need to start the conversation. Areas with a requirement for persistent policing, medical, fire protection, schooling, i.e... need to collect and contribute towards their usage as boroughs do. Maybe call it a state "service tax" where only the very basics are collected for and provided for.

Our state should be able to ear mark a small percentage of revenue per year to contribute to catastrophic situations or to help bond local communities that didn't plan well. Any funding outside of this is really creating further dependency as we've seen.

Our elderly and severely disabled have been disproportionately affected by rising property taxes and forced out by rising education prices. Meanwhile this targeted group has mostly raised their children or does not have children of their own. If we're going to continue raising their taxes and forcing them out, it's time for every household in the state to take a bite of that sandwich we have been so eager to pass around. This would raise the states revenue and ability to help those in need significantly.

Aaron Majors
North Pole AK 99705

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From: Tracy Brand
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No to reduced funding
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 7:52:01 AM

[You don't often get email from tracybrand@me.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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In a time where our schools are struggling, please do not make it worse by limiting funding from municipalities.

Teresa Brand
[redacted]
Fairbanks AK 99707
[redacted]

From: Geri McLeod
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education funding
Date: Saturday, June 21, 2025 5:58:08 PM

[You don't often get email from gerimcleod@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern,
I write this communication to you because I feel strongly that if we don't fund our schools forward with new money we will be damaging our future. We have a responsibility as a state to make sure our children have all the opportunities possible including training for new technology on order to prepare them to enter the workforce with appropriate skills. Our governor vetoed an increase in BSA which has been in arrears for years. The State Board of Education wants to stymy municipal school funding. How did we become a state that takes money from children? Our state legislators showed their support for kids in their budget plan for funding education.
Alaskan children, their parents and families, their communities, their educators, and businesses need to know that our state is willing to fund for education for our future workforce.
Thank you for your time.
Geri McLeod
Juneau , Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: Roger Schmidt
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: comments on reducing ability of local municipalities to support our schools and the services they provide to our communities
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 1:01:43 PM

You don't often get email from rschmidt@fineartscamp.org. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am strongly opposed to limiting what municipalities are able to contribute to schools which will impact the ability of our schools to share their valuable resources with our community. Schools work in tandem in communities to provide important services to families and children in and out of school. They are the hub of our communities in small Alaskan communities.

It is cynical and mean spirited to underfund the schools and then continue to impose more regulations that damage their ability to service. It is as if the administration hates schools, hates children, and hates Alaska. As a life-long Alaskan, who has worked in education for the last 30 years, I have seen the terrible toll underfunding the schools has cost our children and ultimately is costing the future of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Roger Schmidt
Director, Sitka Fine Arts Camp
Alaska Arts Southeast, Inc.
[redacted]
www.fineartscamp.org

From: Chris & Kathleen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education cuts & local contribution restrictions
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 11:54:49 AM

[You don't often get email from wcjones@mtaonline.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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As a retired teacher, administrator, and parent of adult children who were educated in what was once one of the top states for educational quality, I am appalled at the right wing negligence of our school system by the EED. To deliberately undercut the education of school age children in the state of Alaska is astonishing. Yet, that is exactly what you [EED] are doing and want to do. Our school system suffers not because of great teachers and administrators, but by a death through a 1000 cuts. Republican leadership over the last few decades have devastated our schools and then blamed it on teachers, administrators, and the federal government. Such hypocrisy! Stop the insane madness of destroying our schools so they can be taken over by conservative billionaires. This is a script taken from every fascist country and dictatorship in the world. Dumb down the populous, educate the rich, and rule over the weak. Shame, shame, shame on you! My word, what are you doing to our country? How dare you! Stop!! Please Stop!!! —Wayne Jones, Palmer, Ak [redacted]

Sent from Chris & Kathleen

From: Joan Diamond
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education regulatory change.
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 11:25:53 AM

You don't often get email from woody4jd@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am strongly opposed to a regulatory change on Education proposed by Dunleavy. Actually, I am actually opposed to any change that reduces any amount of funding for public education. Dunleavy has tried for all his time in the legislature and governorship to use public funds for private education.

Joan Diamond
Anchorage

From: Bennett Pearce
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Change to 4 AAC 09
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 11:10:10 AM

You don't often get email from bennettinak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

I would like to express my opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09 regarding the "Permissible local contribution appropriations and in-kind services". While I may be mis-understanding the intent or consequences of this change, it seems to me that this would seek to limit school funding by counting services provided to school by local government as part of the already limited school funding.

If you can provide a clear explanation of this change that would be greatly appreciated, but if the intent is to keep appropriated education funding out of reach of school districts, then my opposition stands.

Thanks for your time,
Bennett Pearce

From: Art Petersen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Your Draft Regulation
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 4:04:58 PM

You don't often get email from ampetersen@alaska.edu. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board Members,

I am writing to argue against your proposed regulation to change how town assistance of their public education facilities are accounted in education budgets. Your rationale for it is to assuage the federal disparity test. In normal times, this might be seen as not unreasonable. These times for education, though, are anything but normal. Counter to Article VII, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution, the legislature and particularly the governor for ten years running have consistently under maintained public education to the point of near collapse.

This year the governor has enacted another huge budget cut, so your regulation would impose yet another budget cut to further hamper operations and further demoralize faculty, staff, and administration. Talented, experienced faculty are retiring or resigning because of huge class sizes and other worsening working conditions. Desperate administrations are hiring teachers from outside the country instead of here to take their places because qualified teachers here are exiting Alaska for much better positions elsewhere.

….You may see this regulation as a way to refine accounting for financial auditing. But what it does on the ground where education is happening is further burden already overburdened administration to cut still more into basic needs for maintenance, contracts, and reasonable class sizes. Instead of authoring a regulation to cut education funding even more, don't you think the board should put emphasis first on advocating a lot more strongly than it has been to "maintain" funding for education as called for in Alaska's Constitution? Year after year, the education of children for whom you should be looking out are being hurt, not just at the moment, but for the rest of their lives.

If education funding were being maintained reasonably, maybe your regulation could be seen as appropriate to good administration. But funding is and has not been reasonably maintained. So why not set the proposed regulation aside until education has regained its financial health? Later might be providential; now would be another budget cut added to a disastrous budget cut.

Thank you for considering this point of view.

Art Petersen, Juneau

From: Michael Grisham
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Regulation Change
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:45:52 AM

[You don't often get email from little@gci.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I write to oppose the Department of Education and Early Development's proposed regulatory change to the definition of "local contribution" to include services provided at no charge to a district by a city or borough. The proposed changes are not necessary for any management purpose and have the potential to significantly undermine the ability of local governments to fund local schools.

Michael Grisham
Anchorage, AK

From: John Miller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Dunleavy attacks on public education
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 6:34:54 AM

[You don't often get email from akjtjkst411@msn.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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He is destroying all that is good. Please please fight him and his attempt to keep local governments from supporting our public schools.

John Miller
[redacted]
Anchorage Ak 99503
Sent from my iPhone

From: aktomn@gci.net
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Definition of "Local Contribution"
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 10:50:52 PM

[You don't often get email from aktomn@gci.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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We strongly oppose any action that would decrease the ability of local taxpayers to contribute to public education. Such a change in a statutory definition is foolish and would only be passed by groups or individuals opposed to public education and in favor of private, charter or religious schools. This attack on public schools must stop.

Tom and Martha Nelson
Anchorage, 99507

From: finley@ak.net
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation change regarding the definition of local contributions
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:59:50 PM

[You don't often get email from finley@ak.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I oppose this regulatory change as it would reduce the amount of money a city can give their public schools. This would exacerbate the shortage of funds already damaging the financially stressed schools in this State.

John C Finley MD,
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99508

From: Nick M
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Regulation Change and Statewide Education Funding Crisis
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 8:59:44 PM

You don't often get email from nick.r.marinelli@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I'm writing as an Alaskan deeply frustrated by the recent news that our state has failed the federal disparity test—jeopardizing $81 million in essential funding for our public schools. It is nothing short of enraging to learn that nearly a decade of inaction and mismanagement from state leadership has led us to this point. This is not just a policy failure—it is a betrayal of our children, our teachers, and our communities.

And yet, despite this crisis, the board's decision to advance an emergency resolution that prevents local communities from stepping in to make up for the state's shortfall only compounds the damage. Denying districts the ability to support their own students—especially in rural and underfunded areas—comes across not only as tone-deaf but as an active obstruction of local solutions during a time of crisis.

I urge you to reject this regulation change and instead focus on transparency, accountability, and solutions that reflect the will of Alaskan families. Every parent I've spoken with is baffled and outraged at the obvious ploy to cover your own butts at the expense of our children. This isn't just bad policy—it's morally wrong. And if leadership cannot act in the best interest of our children, then leadership must change. You all should feel shame for the current state of Alaskas schools, and we the people of Alaska will remember you and Gov Dunleavy as responsible for costing our children 81 MILLION dollars worth of educational opportunities.

Nick Marinelli

From: d.sallee
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal to limit local contributions to schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 8:03:13 PM

You don't often get email from d.sallee@ak.net. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to urge the Alaska Department of Education to abandon the proposal to limit local governments' contributions to schools. This proposal would put $15 million of next year's already-approved budget at risk for the Anchorage School District.

The emergency regulation will have no impact on the state's ability to meet federal disparity and will have severe impacts on local communities ability to support after school activities.

Thank you.

From: Cheyenne Cuellar
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No to changing local contributions
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 6:27:23 PM

You don't often get email from cheyennecuellar@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing in opposition to the proposed change to local contributions to public school districts. Local contributions are needed to maintain non-instructional services. Busing, after school child care and other vital community programs are funding through these contributions.

Cheyenne Cuellar

From:	M Boyer
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc:	Michael Boyer
Subject:	Against Changes to 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code, regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula, limiting local contributions.
Date:	Wednesday, June 25, 2025 5:17:44 PM

You don't often get email from mboyer.ak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To: AK Board of Education and Early Development

RE: Regulation changes in 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code, regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula.

Date: 6/25/25

Dear Board Members,

I would be **opposed to any changes (below) to 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code limiting local contributions to school districts** as a means for meeting the Federal Department of Education Disparity Test for two primary reasons, one is factual and the second based on policy and common sense.

First, the schools are community resources and the contributions local government make to non-instructional activities support this reality and should not count against them in any funding formula. I live above Juneau Douglas High School Yadda.at Kale, and I walk around the school a few times a week. And I have first hand testimony that this building is a center of community events, day and night, seven days a week. Through the Community Schools Program (https://www.juneauschools.org/en-US/community-schools-95f9a1c4) organizations and individuals can reserve our school facilities for arts, sports, culture, and other events. And JDHS is booked. With the largest and most appropriate auditorium for local events, you will find the school used for plays, dance recitals, musicals, symphony concerts, and a menagerie of visiting local artists from nationally known (David Sedaris recently) to our local theater troupes. The local delegation may hold meetings in the commons and The Lion's Club Gold Medal Basketball fills the gym and commons with festivities for the entire Spring Break. In fact, I have often remarked (having lived in Texas, Wyoming , Oregon, and California) that if you saw lights on in a high school and people in costumes moving things in and out the doors late Sunday night, you might call the police. Here in Juneau—it is the norm—day and night. In fact, it is rare to see the lights off and the parking lot empty before 10 PM. With the high costs of hotels, students in Southeast even sleep in the buildings during activities. The building gets so much use, it would take many pages to list all the events the community uses and non-instructional activities our school buildings are used for, and I think this is much the case all around Alaska where the infrastructure is still catching up to the lower 48 and our school buildings are the most appropriate, available and accessible facilities for community gatherings. So limiting "in kind" funding for a local government covering items such as building costs, overhead and other activities should be allowed based on the central roles of school buildings in Alaska culture and practice. **The local governments can and should be able to fund these non-educational costs simply because the buildings also function as community resources and community**

assets that get an abnormal level of non-instructional usage —beyond education. This could be documented and shared in a hearing if Alaska is cited for failing the disparity tester our federal funding at risk. The same is true for non-instructional services and extra-curricular activities (like sports, music, drama and more) which have hight costs and are highly valued parts of the fabric of our communities in Alaska, providing activities and entertainment and recreation with benefits accruing to communities and justifying local contributions that should not count against districts receiving local contributions above the cap. Whether you are watching a packed house moved by the local production of *Man of La Mancha* in the auditorium or in a full gym rocking with a close Ketchikan v.s. Juneau basketball game, the culture and community lives largely in our school buildings in Alaska—and the local contributions for non-instructional activities are the financial expression of this life line in our state.

Second, consider the policy landscape before making changes to meet any Federal Department of Education guidelines or tests, especially in light of the fact the Trump administration has chosen Linda McMahon WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment matriarch) as **the Secretary of Education with the express, stated goal of eliminating the agency** (widely cited in the press and recorded in many media). Therefore, moving to change our state funding formula to meet a Federal DOE test when the agency and its mission may be eliminated or in flux **would not be a wise policy decision**. One could easily see much of the agency's authority, legislation and guidelines eliminated, transferred to other agencies, or left to the states. So Alaska moving to adhere with a disparity test of a federal agency the President has tasked the Secretary to eliminate might be premature. The rule we are trying to follow seems to be the exact type of federal intervention into state education the entire Trump administration is looking to repeal. So we could find we are changing our funding formula for a test that is not even applicable to the state by the time we make the change or shortly after. Or with DOGE budget cuts, there may be no federal staff to even enforce or respond to queries about the relevant test or policy, obviating any need to change in this administration. Trying to adhere to a policy of an agency that may have an uncertain future or direction seems misguided at this time. Furthermore, our own Governor froze new regulations (Executive Order No. 358), so we are asking for an exemption to our own governor's freeze on new regulations to propose something to meet a federal guideline that may not exist? This is difficult to reconcile as a rational policy and unless funding were actually threatened immediately, the board may want to pause at this time to see the future direction of the Federal Department of Education and its mandates before taking action.

Thanks for Your Service.

Mike Boyer

[redacted]

Juneau, Alaska

The Board of Education and Early Development proposes to adopt regulation changes in 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code, regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula, including the following:

(1) 4 AAC 09.985 is proposed to be added to require that all local contributions be consistent with federal impact aid laws.

(2) 4 AAC 09.990(b). is proposed to be changed as follows: repeal or amend the definitions of "appropriation" and "value of in-kind services," as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990, to clarify budgeting language for school districts.

From: johngoodman90767
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal to limit local governments funding of public schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 2:17:27 PM

You don't often get email from johngoodman90767@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I have been a resident of Alaska for 58 years. I went to public school in Anchorage starting in 1972. I attended Roger's Park Elementary, Wendler Jr high-school, and East Anchorage high-school.
I absolutely disagree with this proposal as it will limit smaller schools funding and allow larger schools to have advantages over their smaller peers.
I now live in Fairbanks and the cuts to schools here have caused numerous closures and impacted students and the educational community as a whole.
Please do not cut funding to more schools of smaller stature as the effects to rural and village communities will be devastating.
Please feel free to contact me by email or phone#[redacted].
Respectfully, John Robert Goodman

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy A13 5G,an AT&T 5G smartphone

From: wildirisorganic@icloud.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I oppose limiting municipal funding for public schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 1:18:54 PM

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"The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development has opened public comment on a proposal that would reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools."

To the Alaska State Board of Education,
This proposal is wrong on so many levels. The assumption that public education can improve or adequately educate the public with less funding is not based on any peer reviewed valid research or any viable educational models. Limiting municipalities funding of public education's sole purpose is to undermining the brick and mortar public school system and force people into homeschooling or private schools. It won't make public education any better. It will make it worse.

How about examining a very successful public school system. Finland. Finland has the highest academic outcomes in the world. Why? 1) they do NOT allow homeschools or private schools 2) as a result everyone supports adequately funding for their public schools. Outcome: high academic achievements. This formula can be applied to any country and any public school system. It takes making public school education a priority and funding it properly.

Here in Alaska we are doing the opposite and expecting the same outcomes.

The reality is that the Alaskan republicans sole purpose in the legislature is to protect the tax credits of the oil companies. Government and public school funding must be cut in order to reduce the pressure to fund government services with oil tax dollars

Who do the republicans really represent? The oil companies. Certainly not the people of Alaska.

It's wrong. Please do not limit a municipalities's funding for public schools. And, please increase the states per student contribution to public education. And please repeal the oil tax credits so that all of Alaska can benefit instead of just the wealthy CEOs and stockholders of the big oil companies.

Thank you.
Jacqueline Fowler
[redacted]
Juneau, ALASKA
99801

Municipal Clerk's Office
Approved
Date: June 24, 2025

Submitted by: Assembly Members Baldwin Day, Johnson and Silvers
Prepared by: Legislative Services
Reviewed by: Assembly Counsel
For reading: June 24, 2025

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2025-202

A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY AUTHORIZING THE ASSEMBLY CHAIR TO SIGN A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY AND THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE STATE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION'S PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENTS TO 4 AAC CHAPTER 09 REGARDING THE FINANCING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE REQUIRED LOCAL CONTRIBUTION, AND RELATED MATTERS.

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly and the Anchorage School Board meet in joint meetings on a quarterly basis to discuss issues of mutual concern including educational funding, school bond debt, and educational programming; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly and the Anchorage School District have a mutual interest in meeting the needs of the public school students within the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly and the School Board met on June 6, 2025 and discussed the recent State Board of Education's proposal to amend regulations regarding funding required to be within the definition of local contribution, and formed a work group to jointly craft a resolution in opposition to submit during the 30-day public comment period for the proposed regulation; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage School Board unanimously passed the joint resolution at their June 12, 2025, school board meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:

Section 1. The Anchorage Assembly Chair is authorized to sign the attached joint resolution of the Anchorage School Board and the Anchorage Assembly expressing:

- Strong opposition to the State proposal to amend regulations in 4 AAC 09 to restrict permissible local contributions to those "appropriations and in-kind services that are consistent with" federal Impact Aid program funding.
- Urge the State to reject any policy or regulatory change that reduces local authority or limits local investment in public schools.
- Support for the Commissioner of Education to challenge the federal Department of Education's determination the state failed the Federal Impact Aid Disparity test.

Section 2. The Municipal Clerk's office is directed to attach the final signed joint resolution to this resolution.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 24th day of June, 2025.

Chair

ATTEST:

Municipal Clerk

JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2024/25-02

ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY & ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

A joint resolution of the Anchorage Municipal Assembly and the Anchorage School Board expressing opposition to the Commissioner of Education's June 2, 2025 request that the State Board of Education approve proposed emergency regulation amendments to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution at its June 4, 2025 meeting as unlawful, inadequately noticed, and unjustified, as well as opposition to the State Board of Education's determination to consider the Commissioner's request at the end of a 30-day public comment period.

WHEREAS, Alaska statutes 14.03.010, 14.07.020, 14.07.075, 14.07.168, 14.07.145, and 14.07.150 establish that "a system of public schools" shall "be administered and maintained" by a Department of Education and Early Development, for which a State Board shall appoint a Commissioner, but clarify that the State Board of Education is required to "develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system;" and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska's Foundation Formula is the statutory mechanism for funding Alaska's system of public schools and is based on multiplying a district's actual student count by a series of factors to adjust for differences between districts (including a school size factor and district cost factors, as well as block grants for special education and career and technical education), at which point the formula incorporates correspondence students in order to arrive at an adjusted student count, which is then multiplied by the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to arrive at Basic Need, which is then paid through a combination of a Required Local Contribution (RLC), deductible Federal Impact Aid, and State funds; and

WHEREAS, a borough or municipality may, under AS 14.17.410(c), provide an additional local contribution to a district in excess of its required local contribution, subject to a cap; and

WHEREAS, a city or borough school district is required to report as a local contribution the value of in-kind contributions provided at no charge to the district by the city or borough for specific items defined in 4 AAC 09.990(b), subject to the cap; and

WHEREAS, a borough or municipality may, under the definitions of 4 AAC 09.990(b), make lawful supplemental contributions to a district that are not subject to the statutory cap, so long as the appropriation is made to other funds for designated purposes the municipality deems appropriate and in the best interest of the local community; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage School District is fortunate to have a community that is very supportive of public education and has consistently provided tax appropriations either equal to the maximum allowed under State law, calculated as twenty-three percent of the total of Basic Need, the Quality Schools Grant, and other supplemental funds provided outside of the Foundation Formula (if applicable), or the maximum allowed under the Anchorage municipal tax cap; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage has appropriated supplemental contributions to the Anchorage School District's Transportation Fund to prevent the reduction in transportation services within the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage appropriates funds for Early Childhood Education & Prevention grants to support expanded preschool and early learning services provided to Anchorage families, of which the Anchorage School District is a current grantee; and

WHEREAS, the District benefits from a variety of municipal services, the fair market value of which does not go against the statutory cap, including but not limited to, street maintenance leading to schools, bus passes, guest instructors, emergency operations coordination, School Resource Officers, and school/student use of municipal facilities or equipment; and

WHEREAS, the District has historically received funds classified as local revenues not subject to the cap, including but not limited to, interest earnings, school fundraisers, food sales, activities fees, jury duty pay, P-card rebates, local donations, PTA donations, and local grants received by charter schools, for which it does not have an aggregate estimate of overall cost; andt; and

WHEREAS, the current definitions of a "local contribution" in both AS 14.17.990 and in 4 AAC 09 support a district's receipt of these additional revenues without being subject to the statutory cap, which in turn supports local control by providing for the lawful appropriation of supplemental designated contributions which maintain public services that benefit citizens' well-being, quality of life, and the local economy; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality's additional local contribution to the District to fund core instructional needs remains critical to maintaining a system of free and open public schools in Anchorage and the surrounding areas, particularly given the deteriorating value of the statutory BSA when factoring in inflation; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality's ability to make investments in services that are not adequately funded by the State nor provided for through the State's determination of Anchorage's "Basic Need," but that benefit its citizens, communities, and economy–such as in the case of pupil transportation and pre-kindergarten educational opportunities–is a matter of local control; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's municipalities often collaborate with school districts to provide or supplement public services by leveraging existing infrastructure, staffing, and expertise to provide services to citizens in the most cost effective and efficient manner; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Education and Early Development is pursuing a proposed regulation change to the provisions of 4 AAC 09 that would dramatically decrease the amount of local revenues city and borough school districts would be able to receive; and

WHEREAS, as recently as the Wednesday, May 14, 2025 Senate Education Committee hearing, the Commissioner of Education outlined the intent of the Department to request an exemption from the Governor's recent freeze on all new regulations so as to enable the State Board of

Education to receive public comment regarding a new regulation on local contributions, and with the effective date of July 1, 2026, at the July 2025 State Board of Education meeting; and

WHEREAS, less than three weeks later, on Monday, June 2, 2025, the Commissioner or staff working on behalf of the Commissioner posted documents in advance of the Alaska State Board of Education's meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 4, 2025, dated Wednesday, June 4, 2025, asking the Board to "approve proposed emergency regulation amendments to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution" at the Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 4, 2025, but failed to notify Superintendents or other key stakeholders about the "emergency" regulation changes the Commissioner was proposing or provide evidence that the Governor had approved an exemption to his freeze on new regulations; and

WHEREAS, passage of the recommended emergency regulations by the State Board of Education would have severely limited the amount of local funding that municipalities would have been permitted to contribute to a local district's public education system for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, the 2025-26 fiscal year (starting July 1, 2025), and for future fiscal years, including funds contributed by the Municipality of Anchorage to the Anchorage School District; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner identified the U.S. Department of Education's May 16, 2025 notification of the State of Alaska's failure to pass the Federal Impact Aid Disparity test as a rationale for enacting the emergency regulations, but had not yet attempted to appeal that failure to the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS, the State's failure to pass the Federal Impact Aid Disparity test using FY 24 data was neither related to the Anchorage School District's reliance on the Anchorage Municipality's supplemental contribution to be able to cover its transportation expenses nor its pre-kindergarten grant, nor to any Alaska district's supplemental contributions; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education letter to the Commissioner dated May 16, 2025 stated the disparity test failure was due to the fact that "for the first time" in the history of Alaska's disparity test, "the State improperly excluded transfers between each LEA's general fund and its special revenue fund for transportation, and improperly included transfers from the transportation fund to the general fund as a revenue" for FY 24; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage School District Superintendent advised the State Board of Education during public testimony on Wednesday, June 4, 2025 that their approval of the emergency regulation would have immediately put a minimum of $15 million in local funding at risk within the Anchorage School District;

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education responded to extensive public testimony shared during its June 4, 2025 meeting by disallowing the emergency designation by moving to "open a period of public comment on proposed regulation amendments to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public school and local contributions" for 30 days, but did not reject the Commissioner's findings or recommendation; and

WHEREAS, any immediate reduction in Anchorage's ability to invest in local public education for the remainder of FY 25 or for FY 26 would result in larger class sizes, reduced programs and services, loss of staff, and further strain on already underfunded special education and support services for the forthcoming school year; and

WHEREAS, Anchorage's students deserve equitable opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive, and any policy that restricts local investment in their diverse and varied needs threatens that promise; and

WHEREAS, approval of the proposed regulations would create additional uncertainty and financial hardship for districts, erode local control, increase administrative burdens on both school districts and municipalities, all while damaging public trust without a robust public process at a time when collaboration between the State and local governments should enhance, not hinder, the ability to provide a strong public education system and the effective provision of public services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage School District and the Anchorage Assembly jointly express strong opposition to the Commissioner of Education and Early Development's request that the State Board of Education amend 4 AAC 09 via emergency or regular processes so as to define "Permissible local contribution appropriations and in-kind services" as "consistent with 20 U.S.C. 7713(4) or 34 C.F.R. 222.161(c)(1)" and 4 AAC 09.099(b) so as to redefine either "appropriations" or the "value of in-kind services" within the definition of "local contribution" in AS 13.17.900; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Anchorage School District and Anchorage Assembly urge the Governor, the Alaska Legislature, and the State Board of Education to reject any policy or regulatory change that reduces local authority or limits local investment in public schools and communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Anchorage School District and Anchorage Assembly jointly express strong support for the Commissioner of Education to challenge Alaska's recent failure of the Federal Impact Aid Disparity test prior to the expiration of the 60-day period.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage School Board this 12th day of June, 2025.

Carl Jacobs, School Board President

Margo Bellamy
Kelly Lessens
Dave Donley
Andy Holleman
Dora Wilson
Pat Higgins

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 24th day of June, 2025.

Christopher Constant, Assembly Chair

Anna Brawley
Scott Myers
Kameron Perez-Verdia
Felix Rivera
Yarrow Silvers
Keith McCormick
Jared Goecker
Daniel Volland
Erin Baldwin Day
George Martinez
Zac Johnson

From: Bill Tremblay
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Raise BSA, don"t penalize local contributions
Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 8:05:38 AM

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Dear Board Members,

I oppose your proposal to reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools. These local contributions contribute to the overall health of our schools and our community.

The failing of the "disparity test" speaks more to the lack of support by the State of Alaska than a local issue. The Governor continues to ignore the need to raise the Base Student Allocation to keep up with rising costs. The also ignores the significant backlog of maintenance that threatens the health and safety of students.

If the state would address these needs and issues, it's likely the disparity would be reduced significantly. The knee-jerk reaction by the Board to make this an emergency action was ill advised.

Bill Tremblay
[redacted]
Petersburg, AK 99833
[redacted]

From: Peggy and Alex
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation Change Local Contributions
Date: Monday, June 30, 2025 11:25:00 AM

You don't often get email from alaskawerts@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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We are opposed to the proposed regulation change broadening the definition of what constitutes "local Contribution." This regulation change would adversely impact funding available for instructional activity, at a time when the public schools are in a funding crisis due to long-term stagnation of base student funding from the State of Alaska. You should be supportive of adequate funding for our public schools, not taking actions that are detrimental to the educational opportunities that they can provide. These non-instructional funds have NOT been a problem for the "cap" disparity comparisons. You should be advocating for that precedent, rather than saying we are worried about it so we will "proactively" include non-instructional expenses such as student transportation in the cap. The action you proposed will continue the downward spiral of our public schools, causing further reduction in staff, increasing student:teacher ratios, closing of schools, and reduction or loss of extra-curricular sports and other activities. Please stand up for our children, don't knock them down!

Sincerely,
Alex and Margaret Wertheimer
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Chris & Kathleen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: Education cuts & local contribution restrictions
Date: Sunday, June 29, 2025 8:32:04 PM

[You don't often get email from wcjones@mtaonline.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Confirmed. -Wayne Jones, Palmer, Ak [redacted]
Sent from Chris & Kathleen

> On Jun 26, 2025, at 11:54 AM, Chris & Kathleen <wcjones@mtaonline.net> wrote:
>
> As a retired teacher, administrator, and parent of adult children who were educated in what was once one of the top states for educational quality, I am appalled at the right wing negligence of our school system by the EED. To deliberately undercut the education of school age children in the state of Alaska is astonishing. Yet, that is exactly what you [EED] are doing and want to do. Our school system suffers not because of great teachers and administrators, but by a death through a 1000 cuts. Republican leadership over the last few decades have devastated our schools and then blamed it on teachers, administrators, and the federal government. Such hypocrisy! Stop the insane madness of destroying our schools so they can be taken over by conservative billionaires. This is a script taken from every fascist country and dictatorship in the world. Dumb down the populous, educate the rich, and rule over the weak. Shame, shame, shame on you! My word, what are you doing to our country? How dare you! Stop!! Please Stop!!! —Wayne Jones, Palmer, Ak [redacted]
>
> Sent from Chris & Kathleen
>

From: John Duffy
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed regulation
Date: Sunday, June 29, 2025 12:14:42 PM

You don't often get email from jjduffy@alaska.edu. Learn why this is important

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I am opposed to the proposed regulation to limit local government contributions to their respective school district.

From: Patricia Stark
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools
Date: Saturday, June 28, 2025 5:31:43 PM

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Dear State Board,

- The proposed change limits a community's ability to support its schools in ways it deems appropriate.
- Local communities and school districts are best equipped to understand and address their unique educational needs and financial realities. This regulation stifles local innovation and dedication to education.
- It's an act of government overreach.

  The federal Impact Aid Program's disparity test does not adequately consider the unique and vital local contributions made by Alaska communities. Applying a federal framework blindly to state funding mechanisms creates a significant disconnect. Alaska is the *only state* required to pass this specific disparity test. This highlights a fundamental issue with how Alaska utilizes Impact Aid.

  The core issue is the state's practice of *deducting Impact Aid*from the state aid entitlement. (This means if a local school district is eligible for federal aid, the state deducts it from their share of state education funding. Alaska is the only state in the country that does this. This deduction should be re-evaluated, not further complicated by regulatory alignment that penalizes local contributions.

  The entire problem could be solved by the state removing *the Impact Aid deduction* from the public education funding formula. This would

be a direct solution without imposing burdens or constricting local efforts.

Please reject this amendment and pursue supportive policies.

Sincerely,

Patricia Stark, Fairbanks

-
-
-

From: Jacqueline Muehlbauer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public comment for proposed DEED regulations
Date: Saturday, June 28, 2025 8:36:08 AM

You don't often get email from naturegal64@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I strongly oppose the proposed regulations by the State Board of Education that would restrict how school districts can utilize funding from the Required Local Contribution (RLC). Local governments and property taxpayers provide these funds with the intention of supporting the full spectrum of educational needs in their communities, including essential fixed costs such as energy, insurance, and deferred maintenance. Limiting the flexibility of local districts to allocate funds where they are most needed is not only short-sighted but also harmful to the stability and quality of our public education system.

In the face of the Governor's recent vetoes to education funding, the efforts of local governments—like the Fairbanks North Star Borough's additional $2.7 million investment—have been crucial in mitigating budget deficits and preserving core services. Penalizing these efforts with restrictive regulations undermines local authority and puts unnecessary strain on already stretched resources.

I urge the State Board of Education to reconsider these proposed changes and prioritize collaboration with local entities to ensure that Alaska's students and schools are supported, not further burdened.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jacqueline Muehlbauer

From: Stephen Cleary
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please reject the proposal to limit local governments' contributions to schools
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 12:21:44 PM

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Dear EED State Board:

I am writing to urge you to reject that proposal that would limit local governments and their ability to assist schools with needed services. Local governments and school districts oppose this new rule - and so do I.

As the parent of a student entering his last year in high school, I know that it is incumbent on all of us to work together to both fund and support public education. This proposal does not do that and needs to be rejected.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Steve Cleary
[redacted]
Anchorage AK 99508
[redacted]

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE DEFINITION OF "LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS" AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) provides substantial and consistent local financial support to the Sitka School District (SSD), which includes not only funding to the statutory cap but also in-kind contributions vital to the operation of schools, such as maintenance, Performing Arts Center (PAC) support, student activity funding, and other essential services; and

WHEREAS, for FY26, the CBS has budgeted the maximum allowable general fund contribution of $7,972,424.04, in addition to critical non-instructional and in-kind contributions including approximately $67,000 for PAC utilities, $125,000 for PAC contracts, $134,600 for student activities, and significant ongoing support for facility maintenance and Blatchley Pool operations; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and Early Development has proposed new regulations to expand the definition of "local contribution" under 4 AAC 09, beyond the federal definition of "current expenditures" used for the Impact Aid Program disparity test; and

WHEREAS, the federal definition of "current expenditures," as outlined in 20 U.S.C. 7713(4), includes spending for administration, instruction, attendance and health services, pupil transportation, plant operation and maintenance, fixed charges, and net expenditures for food services and student body activities, but does not encompass all in-kind or non-instructional contributions; and

WHEREAS, redefining in-kind contributions and non-instructional support as part of the capped local contribution could force reductions in these services or in instructional budgets in order to remain in compliance; and

WHEREAS, such a reclassification would have a significant adverse financial impact on SSD's FY26 budget, which is now facing a deficit of $441,181 due to the Governor's reduction of BSA funding; and

WHEREAS, the new definition could affect anywhere from $2 million to over $4 million in current and anticipated contributions, depending on how broadly the State classifies in-kind and local support; and

WHEREAS, the CBS contributes a total of $9,731,906.04 in financial and in-kind support, including marijuana tax revenue of $300,000 in FY24, $350,000 in FY25, and $360,000 in FY26 earmarked for student activity travel, as approved by a 2022 local ballot initiative; and

WHEREAS, Sitka voters also approved a seasonal sales tax in 2023 dedicated to school facility maintenance, generating $772,942 in FY24; and

WHEREAS, other local and community contributors—including, but not limited to, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka Sound Science Center, and Charitable Trust grants—offer significant in-kind support that could be at risk under the proposed regulatory definition; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Department of Education has not requested this regulatory change, nor has it mandated this approach for resolving the disparity test compliance issue; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka School Board recognizes the need for federal compliance but believes the proposed solution disproportionately penalizes districts like Sitka with strong community partnerships and supplemental local investments; and

WHEREAS, sudden implementation of such a change without adequate transition time undermines budget planning and longstanding agreements developed in good faith between CBS and SSD.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka respectfully urges the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development and the Department of Education & Early Development to:

1. Provide clear guidance and flexibility regarding the treatment of long-established in-kind contributions and shared services agreements, so as not to compromise compliance with federal requirements;
2. Collaborate with local school boards and superintendents to develop Impact Aid disparity test solutions that do not unintentionally penalize districts with robust local support and community engagement;
3. Engage in transparent and proactive consultation with school boards, superintendents, and municipal leaders prior to implementing regulatory changes that affect education funding and local control.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka authorizes the Mayor and Municipal Administrator to communicate this resolution to State and federal officials, and to advocate for a balanced solution that protects both local partnerships and the integrity of education funding in Alaska.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska this 24th day of June, 2025.

Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st and final reading: 06/24/2025

Sponsors: Eisenbeisz / Pike

From: Ella Doud
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: The risks of inconsistency
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 5:50:01 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a secondary science teacher who moved to Alaska because it is a beautiful area and my partner has roots for his life and career here. I have worked in two different districts over the course of three years and I recieved my contract at the later than other non-tenured teachers twice. My first year, I ended up getting a contract in May. In that span of time, I considered moving back to the lower 48. This year, I wondered if it would be a similar situation, but instead recieved my termination letter the last week of school. The frustrating part of this is that teaching is a seasonal job since schools post positions in April/May, and hire by mid June. If I am waiting for a contract, then I miss the opportunity to be hired elsewhere.

Teaching science to Alaskan kids is my calling and my passion. I've been waiting it out, but to be honest, I shouldn't be. Teaching is a hard job that doesn't pay as well compared to other Masters-level science positions. Alaska isn't as competative salary or benefit wise with other states anymore. I attended an AK teacher fair in Minnesota and that was my first warning sign. Not only was I the only one who attended the whole 4 hour fair, I walked through protesters in the parking lot who were handing out flyers that read "friends don't let friends teach in Alaska." Their purpose was social security issues that I'm not as concerned about since I am early in my career. But I need job security. Experienced teachers aren't coming to Alaska due to social security/retirement issues and new teachers aren't coming because of this instability. If we don't support our teachers, who can afford to be a teacher here anymore?

Thank you for your time and for listening to my perspective. I appreciate the opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,
Ella Doud

From: Carolyn Stone
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: How does the Board want public comment?
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 3:09:28 PM

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Greetings Kathijo Jolin,

I'm reaching out to find out how the Board would like public comments for the rule change about local school district funding? And what is the deadline?

Thank you,
Carolyn Stone

From: Stephen Springer Jr
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 4:42:33 PM

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Secretary to the Board, Kathijo Jolin,

Hello, and thank you for considering my comments on the proposed changes to regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution. I am disappointed that the state is trying to control local governments' funding of our public schools, especially since the state doesn't adequately fund them to begin with. In fact, I would not mind if my property taxes went up to pay for the local increase in spending.

This is blatant state overreach in local affairs.

The Board of Education and Early Development proposes to adopt regulation changes in 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code, regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula, including the following:

(1) 4 AAC 09.985 is proposed to be added to require that all local contributions be consistent with federal impact aid laws.

(2) 4 AAC 09.990(b). is proposed to be changed as follows: repeal or amend the definitions of “appropriation” and “value of in-kind services,” as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990, to clarify budgeting language for school districts.

I am writing in opposition to both of the above regulation changes.

Thank you for considering my opposition,

Stephen K. Springer

[redacted]

Fairbanks, AK 99709

From: Laura Talpey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Do not restrict funding on school districts
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 3:56:42 PM

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Dear DEED members,

As an Alaskan resident, I am struggling to understand the purpose behind further restricting the funding that local municipalities can allocate to their school districts. What is the goal of this proposed regulation? Given that any recent attempts to raise the BSA have been blocked, and that the BSA is no longer keeping up with inflation and thus is effectively dropping with each passing year, local municipalities have little left to work with. With dwindling state funding and restricted local funding, how exactly are we supposed to keep our schools afloat? Alaska is already ranked the 49th state in education, and this doesn't seem likely to help.

My partner and I are considering starting a family in the next few years, but I have serious concerns about raising children in Alaska given the lack of support for public education. What is the vision for keeping families in Alaska and raising young people who will help steer our state's future? And how does this regulation work towards achieving the state's five education goals set in 2016? The logic is difficult to follow.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Laura Talpey
[redacted]

From: Gary Miller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Story, Andrea (LEG); Sara Hannan; Jesse Kiehl
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 3:00:13 PM

You don't often get email from gmiller.juneauak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I understand there are proposed changes to include bussing and other costs as part of the limit that communities can contribute to our schools.

Bussing should not be considered. Look at all the small communities where the kids can walk to and from school. Snow removal has nothing to do with classes being taught. Neither does janitorial services. I think the board should only consider the teacher and staff, classroom materials and the cost of heat, water, sewer etc. Because some small communities can't contribute as much money to their schools as large cities, it makes no sense to me to restrict communities who can and WANT to.

Thank you.

Gary Miller
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801-8211
[redacted]

From: lyndsey zeller
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed change for local contributions in education
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 12:32:11 PM

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I am 100% OPPOSED to this!! I am born and raised in Juneau, and the only way we have been able to educate our students is with the City & Borough filling in what the State has not funded. With the flat funding since the early 2000's, the State is failing its obligation to educate our kids. Governor Dunleavy's lust for religious education and home schooling taking funds away from public schools is a disgrace and against the Constitution.
DO NOT PASS THIS!!!!!!

Lyndsey Zeller
Juneau, AK

From: Rebecca King
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on municipal aid to local schools
Date: Wednesday, July 2, 2025 11:40:44 AM

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Dear State Board of Education,

I'm writing to express my concern over the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools to address the disparity test issue. I've learned that Alaska is the ONLY state that deducts municipal contributions from federal fund disbursements. It is like a local community is being punished for caring about and investing in their own local kids. To share municipal facilities and services with municipality schools should not be to a community's detriment. This problem could be solved instead by the state removing the Impact Aid deduction from the public school funding formula.

It feels like the state is currently hoping for public school failure. We are already severely underfunding and facing larger class sizes, less mental health support, and less activities for our students, as well as facility safety issues. This is just another method to reduce possible financial support for schools and kids. Please do not cut this money. Public schools are for our all of our community's kids. Please support them!

Sincerely,
Rebecca King
Anchorage, Alaska

From: D L
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Board of Education and Early Development proposes to adopt regulation changes in 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code
Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 6:43:59 PM

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Dear Board of Education

I am writing in opposition to this regulation. The board of education should not be limiting local contributions innsuch a manner. The board should instead be advocating for more monet lly in our education system. Vote down this proposal.

Sincerely

Don Larson

From: Bruno Grunau
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Limiting Local Support for Schools
Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 2:33:14 PM

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation that would count in-kind services — such as snow plowing, use of public libraries, or other municipal support — toward the cap on local government contributions to school districts.

This proposal comes at a time when our public schools are already severely underfunded. We are seeing school closures, staffing shortages, and families leaving Alaska in search of more stable educational opportunities elsewhere. Local governments have stepped up to fill critical gaps, and this regulation would effectively penalize them for doing so.

While I understand the need to comply with federal guidelines like the disparity test, this proposed approach risks doing more harm than good. It discourages local communities from supporting their schools, undermines local control, and places even more pressure on districts that are already stretched thin.

I urge you to reconsider this proposal and work toward solutions that preserve essential local contributions while meeting federal requirements. Our students deserve better, and our communities should be empowered — not restricted — in their efforts to support education.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bruno Grunau

Fairbanks, Alaska

From: Joseph Springer
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: DONT LIMIT CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCHOOLS
Date: Monday, June 30, 2025 11:54:15 PM

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Alaska is already poorly ranked for education, the last thing we need is less budget for education

From: Anna Petersen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on DEED proposed changes/local contributions
Date: Monday, June 30, 2025 1:55:27 PM

You don't often get email from petersenak@aol.com. Learn why this is important

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I would like to go on record as opposing the Department of Education and Early Development proposed changes to regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution.

This policy change would be short sighted and harmful. Why penalize districts for seeking out creative solutions and supporting our communities? Especially when our schools in Alaska are chronically under funded and have been for many years? Trying to solve the disparity issue with federal funding with this method is only going to further shortchange our students and fails to address the actual problem.

Anna Stensland Petersen
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: Carolyn Stone
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Changes to 4 AAC 09 Regarding Financing of Public Schools and Required Local Contribution
Date: Sunday, June 29, 2025 2:49:00 PM

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June 29, 2025

My name is Carolyn Stone. I am a parent with two kids in the Anchorage School District. Some highlights for my son have been middle school cross-country running and cross-country skiing. My daughter hopes to do the same in the coming years. I am commenting on the Commissioner of Education's June 2nd proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public schools and local contributions to school districts.

We all know the context of this conversation. Fourteen years of decreased and flat funding for education in Alaska, while the Alaska Department of Corrections has received significant increases in funding (Great Alaska Schools, 2025). My 14-year-old son is watching political ping-pong at the state level, reading news articles about the vetoes and the veto override. This spring he requested that I take him to two town hall meetings so far. The refrain is layoffs, larger class sizes and program cuts. My neighbor is a retired teacher with great concern for current teachers' workloads and unstable funding. Four of my kids' beloved teachers have left public education sooner than they had planned. As a parent, I wonder what seeds we are planting?

When the Commissioner of Education rushed the proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 regarding the financing of public schools and required local contribution on June 2nd for the June 4th board meeting, it was met with close to two hours of unanimous public testimony opposing the change (Brooks, 2025), as well as a joint resolution from the Anchorage Assembly and Anchorage School District opposing the change and timeline, stating that it is "unlawful, inadequately noticed and unjustified" (Anchorage Municipal Assembly & Anchorage School Board, 2025).

As I gathered information to make sense of this, I learned that Alaska is the only state in the country that uses the federal loophole to reduce state aid payments to school districts (Maguire, 2024). If Alaska did what all other states do, and added state funds to the federal funds for school districts, Alaska would not be subject to the disparity test. That said, the disparity test is a measure of how equally the money is distributed to the different school districts across the state (Maguire, 2024). If we boosted funding for lower funded school districts, we would have more equality statewide, therefore passing the test (Brooks, 2025). Another avenue forward is for the Commissioner of Education to challenge Alaska's recent failure of the disparity test (Anchorage Municipal Assembly & Anchorage School Board, 2025). Any of these options would be a move in the direction of stabilizing our deteriorating educational system.

Unfortunately, the Commissioner's proposed regulation change would do the opposite. It would further reduce educational funding. This time it would not just be the state deciding not to fund our schools. This proposed regulation would be the state limiting what local governments can invest in schools. If enacted, the Anchorage School district, which educates about one third of Alaska's children (*Our district / overview,* 2025), (The Institute of Education Sciences, 2025), would lose $11 million dollars in instructional funding (Mcguire, 2024). Juneau and other districts would also lose large amounts of funding. The formula for this funding limit would be written into code and continue to damage our school systems even if the federal government changed its regulations. How does this de-funding align with the Board's mission of "An excellent education for every student every day" (State of Alaska, n.d.)?

I know the Board does not have control over every aspect of the current challenging situation. However, the Board's decisions will shift the direction of education in our State, and I would like to request three things:

1) That the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development reject the Commissioner's proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 and reject any proposed policy change limiting local authority to invest in public schools
2) That the Board support the Commissioner to challenge Alaska's recent failure of the Federal Impact Aid Disparity Test before the 60-day period expires
3) That the Board model and uphold transparency and collaboration between educational stakeholders.

Our children are watching and learning from us all. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Stone

Anchorage, AK 99508

References

Anchorage Municipal Assembly & Anchorage School Board. (2025, June 12). Joint Resolution NO. 2024/25-02. https://go.boarddocs.com/ak/asdk12/Board.nsf/files/DHL4880A47FC/$file/25.6.10%20Joint%20Resolution.pdf

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From: Deidre Jenson
To: Commissioner, DEED (EED sponsored); Morrison, Karen B (EED)
Subject: public comment on local contributions?
Date: Monday, June 16, 2025 9:17:13 AM

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Happy Monday,

I'm just wondering if the 30-day window for public comment for the proposed changes to the regulations on the local contributions has been announced yet. This has been a common question that I have been asked from my municipality, community members, educators, and school board members. Any information you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you!

Gunalchéesh, Háw'aa,Thank you,

Deidre Jenson, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Sitka School District
[redacted]

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From: finley@ak.net
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Cease and Desist!
Date: Saturday, June 28, 2025 1:54:46 PM

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The reckless defunding of public education in the State of Alaska is a public disaster.

John C Finley MD

From: Connie Kreiss
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Sitka schools and kids need your help
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:20:10 AM

You don't often get email from conniekreiss@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the State Board of Education:

I'm not an expert on school funding or education. But I have lived in Sitka for 37 years, have raised two sons who attended Sitka public schools, have volunteered in the schools, and know many current teachers and students. And one doesn't have to be an expert to see that public schools in Alaska are being hurt badly year after year after year by the State of Alaska.

Because we know the BSA has not kept up with inflation, because we know many of our friends and neighbors have been "pink-slipped", we as a town have done our best to help the schools financially by funding extracurricular activities and travel through extra taxes and private donations, and by funding maintenance, our pool, and our Performing Arts Center through city moneys.

To learn that our city's contribution might now be used Against us in terms of getting state funding is wrong. We are trying to do our best because we care about our kids and teachers and schools. Our state has failed us. We are trying to help where the state has not.

Please do not expand the definition of "local contributions" to include city support and services currently provided outside the statutory funding cap.

It is my understanding that Alaska is the only state in the country where the federal "impact aid" money is a replacement for state education funding, instead of an additive. I fail to understand the reasoning. If this were changed, we would not have to pass the "disparity test". So I hope you and the governor are working on making this change as well.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Connie Kreiss, M.D.

From: Chelsea Ambrose
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please Reject the Proposal to Limit Local Aid to Local Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:24:48 AM

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I write to you with great **concern over the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools. Please reject this amendment in favor of continuing to allow local support of our schools.**

My name is Chelsea Ambrose and I am a teacher at Kincaid and Gladys Wood Elementary Schools in Anchorage, Alaska. I was drawn to Alaska by the spectacular outdoor experiences but **what has kept me here is its uniquely tight community**. I love living here. My husband and I bought a house here. We hope to start a family here.

What makes me question the sustainability of our life in Alaska: the unstable support of public education in this state. The lack of funding and support for public education makes me uneasy about the feasibility of my career as a public educator and my future childrens' access to quality public education.

We are losing educators in droves. When educators leave, they cite the lack of support and funding as the main cause-- class sizes are too large (last year I had 35 fifth graders in one class, **30 Kindergarteners** in another) and districts are being forced to cut positions and services that provide much needed support. High turnover and unmanageable learning environments lead to poor learning outcomes. If we want our students to succeed-- if we indeed want to increase test scores-- we need to provide them with the funds that create at least a baseline sufficient learning environment. **35 fifth graders in a class is not that.**

Budget crises in districts around the state have already negatively impacted our students. The impact aid deduction will only take more money away from our students and their learning. If indeed the Alaska State Board of Education cares about the wellbeing and success of our students, why would you agree to exacerbate the existing budget crises? Alaskans take care of one another. We lift each other up. We thrive together because of our strong communities. Let's allow communities, who know their schools and needs best, to support schools however they can. I think of the number of times our schools have collaborated with local community members and parents. For example, this past year, students participated in an interdisciplinary and collaborative Art lesson run by a local cartooning artist. These experiences enrich the lives of our students and build a vibrant community that not only keeps folks in Alaska but draws them to this incredible state. Why should our students be penalized

by enrichment opportunities? Why would we want to get in the way of community building? Let's avoid government overreach and instead work together to offer any and all support to every student instead of limiting that support.

I **urge the board to reject the amendment.** Instead, I ask you to pursue policies that *genuinely* support financial stability and local control of our schools instead of undermining them.

Thank you for your work and consideration,
Chelsea Ambrose
Elementary Educator
Kincaid and Gladys Wood Elementary Schools, Anchorage Alaska

From: Heidi James Frost
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed changes to local contribution
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:55:13 AM

You don't often get email from heidi.j.frost@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,

I strongly urge you to vote NO on the proposed Emergency Changes to Regulation 4ACC09. The changes harm children and school districts for the benefit of the State of Alaska pocketbook. This is DEED's mess – the local school districts and the children shouldn't have to foot the bill. This is a mean proposal that seems to punish the students because of poor management by DEED.

DEED and the State Board of Education – if they push this through – are making it harder for communities to come together. In a state where options are already limited, this proposed regulation will put handcuffs on local districts – especially considering how close to the new school year this proposal is being made! I don't understand how local districts are supposed to operate when DEED keeps pulling the financial rug from under them; that's what this proposal does especially with it applying retroactively! How does the board see that working for local districts.

DEED could've done the work – meeting with the local districts, elected officials at the state and local levels, and other stakeholders – but didn't. It shows how poorly run this department is – because there could've been a workaround to make this proposal something palatable. Instead, this administration was clumsy, slow, and closeminded about other solutions which only adds to the frustration felt by local officials, school administrators and staff, parents, students and community members.

I thought DEED was there to support the development of well-rounded future adults. Apparently, in this age of MAGA, it seems the federal Education Department and indeed our own little DEED is there to destroy to create a voucher system that works for some, but not all. Shame on the governor, his administration, and the board for deciding that public education should be slowly destroyed so vouchers become a viable option. We see you and your cruelty towards the vulnerable.

Heidi James Frost
She/them
Diversity is key!!!

From: Sandra Garity
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Resolution
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 11:23:52 AM

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I am asking you to oppose the proposed resolution on school funding.
Please reject it.
Respectfully,
Devry Garity. RN,PNP
Homer, AK

From: Lisa X'unyéil Worl
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Change of municipalities contribution
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 12:11:45 PM

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To Alaska State Board of Education,

I'm writing to oppose the regulation change that limit municipality contribution for education funding.

As someone who has spent 20+ years volunteering, working, and serving on our local school board which included providing input to our school budget as parent and then elected school board member, I can say that with utmost confidence and appreciation that our schools effectively utilize any and all education funding.

If the idea is to create some equitable levels of funding, then the State of Alaska should consider increasing our rural funding levels to close any perceived gaps rather than decrease funding to the lowest common denominator.

Contrary to some beliefs, our public schools do a great deal to support our students who struggle academically. The successes are often the result of the braiding of local, state, federal, and community funds and partnerships.

Please do not erode the additional funds that our schools use to cover budgetary gaps in transportation and support programs such as free and reduced lunches for all students.

Respectfully,

Lisa

Lillian "Lisa" Worl
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Liz Rawlins
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Municipal Aid
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 12:33:29 PM

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Members of the board, my name is Liz Rawlins. I am an educator and a parent of two public school students. The flat funding of education by the state, along with the withholding of federal funds has left our school districts in a crisis. Mutual Aid has proven itself to be necessary when times are not so dire, and more so now with the dire circumstances we are facing. I urge you to reject the proposal to limit municipal aid to school districts.
Thank you for your time.
Liz Rawlins
Sent from my iPhone

From: Quincy Hansell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution rule
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 1:41:39 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent of two elementary students in Anchorage at Chugach Optional Elementary. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. The proposed regulation does not meet that goal. It takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Quincy Arms
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Bruce Jamieson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Date: Saturday, June 28, 2025 11:49:31 AM

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To: State Board of Education:
Re: Potential New RCL Funding Regs

It is irresponsible for the state board education to be considering limitations on how school districts can spend funds they receive from local governments and property taxpayers. I urge you not to adopt this type of legislation!

Sincerely,

Bruce Jamieson
[redacted]
Fairbanks, AK 99709

new regulations proposed by the State Board of Education would limit how funding received from the Required Local Contribution (RLC) could be used by school districts. Specifically, it would limit the use of RLC funds for deferred maintenance, energy costs, insurance, and other fixed costs of the school district. Following the Governor's veto, it is irresponsible for the state board of education to be considering limitations on how school districts can spend funds they receive from local governments and property taxpayers.

I would encourage anyone who is concerned with the status of education funding to provide public comment on this proposed regulation. The public comment period is from now until Wednesday July 23 at 5:00 p.m. To submit written testimony, you can email Board of Education Executive Secretary Kathijo Jolin at eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

From: Jennifer Waisanen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Limiting Aid to Local Schools
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 2:18:30 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing as both a mother of a high school student and a middle school teacher to strongly oppose the proposal to limit municipal aid to our public schools.

These cuts threaten the very foundation of education in our communities. My daughter is already afraid she will lose access to sports and the Spanish Immersion program that has been a core part of her learning. Last year, she had to take Marine Biology online because there weren't enough teachers available to teach it in person — a deeply disappointing experience for a student who plans to go to college to become a marine biologist.

In my own classroom, I see firsthand how these proposed cuts are already affecting our students' mental focus and well-being. Just this past school year, my students were supposed to be writing essays, but many were too anxious to concentrate. They were distracted by the fear of losing **middle school sports** this upcoming year — a loss that would deeply impact their development, motivation, and sense of school community.

One student stayed after school to work on his writing, but all he could talk about was how he might lose the **Spanish Immersion class** he's been looking forward to since **kindergarten**. He told me it was a promise — that he would be learning *español* through this program, and now that promise may be broken.

We must remember: our **students are Alaska's most precious resource**. Investing in them is not optional — it is our **obligation**. If we want a strong, thriving state, we must **prioritize and protect public education**, not chip away at it piece by piece.

Please listen to the voices of families, teachers, and — most importantly — students. **Do not approve this proposal**. Our children's future depends on your decision.

Sincerely,
[Your Full Name]
[City or School District]
Mother of a High School Student & Middle School Teacher

From: Melissa Tholl
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please don"t limit local support
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 2:30:20 PM

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Dear board members,

As an Alaskan for the past 27 years, I have long believed in the benefits of investing in our schools. Now that I have a child in 1st grade in a language immersion school, I am even more convinced that the future of our state depends on an adequate education. Our schools are already suffering from the Governor's budget vetoes and federal funding freezes. The proposal to limit local support for our schools will only further cripple them. The solution to reducing disparities should be to adequately fund underfunded school districts, not to just make all of them underfunded. Please vote no on this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,

Melissa Tholl
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502

From: Becky Hauser
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Another sad and concerned parent
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 2:44:17 PM

You don't often get email from beckysteerhauser@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please add my concerns and my name to the list of parents who are dumbfounded by the poorly timed decisions and budgets that are resulting in crisis for public education. I spent 13 years (k-12) as a student in ASD and classroom sizes, resources, funding, and extracurricular sports have always been threatened. Now, as a parent of 2 ASD students (Goldenview and South) I am outraged by the last minute vetoes and political gaming resulting in lay offs and potential axing of the programs that make our public schools excellent. Stop this nonsense. If things are to change, have a plan and do it with infrastructure and options in place so that education and life-skills can continue to be gained for our kids. I'm including a form letter below with a less passionate and emotional plea but getting at the same message.
I want to live in a community that values public education.

July 22, 2025

Members of the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development,

Subject: Rejecting the Proposed Cap on Local Community Contributions to Public Schools

Dear Esteemed Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing to you today with profound concern for the future of public education in Alaska. Our schools are vital institutions that shape the lives of our children, foster community development, and lay the groundwork for our state's prosperity. Ensuring that every student has access to a high-quality education is not merely an aspiration; it is a fundamental responsibility.

It has come to our attention that the current DEED Commissioner has presented a proposal to cap how much local communities can contribute to their own public schools. This proposed change is deeply troubling and, if adopted, would have devastating consequences, particularly for urban districts like ours. It represents a significant step backward, threatening to strip even more critical funding from schools and undermining the essential principle of local control.

For many years, communities across Alaska, especially in urban areas, have made significant local investments to supplement state funding. These local contributions are not merely discretionary; they are often crucial for maintaining vital programs and services that go beyond basic state requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, specialized academic programs, extracurricular activities, essential support services for students with diverse needs, transportation, and even early childhood education initiatives. Capping these contributions would force urban districts to make drastic cuts, impacting student opportunities and

potentially leading to a decline in educational quality.

While we understand the discussions surrounding federal Impact Aid and the disparity test, we firmly believe that limiting local investment is the wrong approach to achieving compliance. It penalizes communities that are committed to investing in their children's education and overlooks the unique needs and cost-of-living differences across our vast state. True equity should lift all schools, not diminish the resources of some.

We urge the Alaska State Board of Education to reject this proposal. Instead, we implore you to champion policies that:

- **Prioritize adequate and sustainable state funding:** A strong Base Student Allocation (BSA) that keeps pace with inflation and the actual costs of education is the cornerstone of a healthy public school system for all districts.
- **Preserve and encourage local autonomy:** Communities should have the ability to invest in their schools as they see fit, reflecting local values and priorities. This local commitment is a testament to the community's belief in its children's future.
- **Seek alternative solutions for federal compliance:** We encourage a collaborative approach to ensure Alaska meets federal requirements without sacrificing the financial health and educational quality of our schools.

The decision before you is not just about a regulation change; it is about the future of our children and the strength of our communities. We trust that you, as stewards of Alaska's education system, will carefully consider the profound negative impact this proposal would have and choose to uphold the vital role of local support in our public schools.

Thank you for your dedication to Alaska's students. We are counting on your leadership to ensure that our public education system remains strong, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all Alaskans.

Becky Hauser
[redacted]

From: Sarah Baumeister
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulation Changes in 4 AAC 09
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 2:57:53 PM

You don't often get email from sarahbaumeister@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State School Board Members,

My name is Sarah Baumeister, I was born and raised in Alaska, graduated from West Anchorage High School and the University of Alaska Southeast, and have worked for the Anchorage School District as a teacher and as an occupational therapist.

I am writing in opposition to the proposed regulation changes in 4 AAC 09. The proposed change to the definitions of local contribution will hurt students, schools, and communities. It is a premature proposal with unclear outcomes that may yield unintended consequences and could set the stage for lowering the quality of public education in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Baumeister OTD, OTR/L

From: Mary Corcoran
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation changes in 4 AAC 09
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 3:00:26 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To State of Alaska Board of Education Members,

I strongly urge you to NOT approve the proposed regulation 4 AAC 09.985. Permissible local contribution appropriations and in-kind services.

I am a retired Alaska teacher with experience ranging from K-12 to college, a mother and grandmother. I also served for years as a parent volunteer. In-kind service exhibits a community's support for their own public schools and is based on need, resources and altruism. To monetize these efforts that are only meant to enhance student learning seems to take away rather than recognize that support.

Please also consider the accounting burden of assessing fair market value for these services. For example, how much money would be placed on a volunteer listening to students read individually in small groups (time spent, per student?).

The intent of this proposal looks petty. A school district actually loses funding when volunteers help out? This discourages use of public facilities, special performances access, programs and more. Think field trips to local fire stations, farms, etc. The proposal seems backwards to the whole intent of in-kind services—enriching student experiences—at a cost to the district.

Thank you for your attention. Please do not approve these changes. Communities need to be encouraged not discouraged from helping their kids.

Sincerely,

Mary Corcoran
Delta Junction, AK

From: Stephanie and Kalen Meek
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regarding Proposed Changes to Local Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 3:11:49 PM

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Members of the State School Board:

The current proposed change to the definitions of local contributions will unequivocally hurt students, schools, and communities. It is a premature proposal with unclear outcomes and will yield unintended consequences. It will set the stage for further lowering the quality of public education in our state.

At a time when the state has consistently underfunded public education, and federal funding for education is actively being withheld and grants are being canceled, further restricting funding through these new changes to local contributions will pour more salt on a very open wound. Giving a dollar value to “in-kind” services will count *against* local funding contributions to school districts and discourage the community from supporting schools in this manner.

Local municipalities should not be further restricted from providing community resources for Alaska's children. The long held notion that it takes a village to raise a child and the devotion to community that has been a cornerstone value of our state is being completely disregarded with this proposal.

The children of our state deserve better.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Stephanie Meek

From: Aurora Sweeney
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 3:22:46 PM

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Hello,

Coming from a student in a rural Alaskan community, my school district is struggling to provide students with their basic education needs. My district suffers from poverty, and threatening any more loss to funding is putting my classmates into harms way. This isn't just about giving students high quality technology or providing expensive trips, but rather giving hungry children the meals they don't receive at home. Giving children the power of education, and the only hope at escaping the harsh life they have become accustomed to at home. This shouldn't even be a debate, but rather common sense.

Please don't put us at risk anymore.

Aurora Sweeney
Kotzebue, Alaska

From: Jennifer Waisanen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Strongly Opposing the Proposal to Limit Municipal Aid - Please use this testimony and not the testimony from a previous email
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 3:39:24 PM

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I am writing as both a mother of a high school student and a 27-year veteran teacher to strongly oppose the proposal to limit municipal aid to our local schools.

These cuts threaten the very foundation of education in our communities. My daughter, a senior, is already worried that she will lose access to after-school sports and the Spanish Immersion program that have been a core part of her learning and growth. Last year, she had to take Marine Biology online because there weren't enough allocated teaching positions available for a teacher to teach the class in person — a deeply disappointing experience for a student who plans to go to college to become a marine biologist.

In my classroom, I see firsthand how cuts to education are already affecting our students' mental focus and well-being. Just this past school year, my students were supposed to be writing essays, but many were too anxious to concentrate on their writing. They were talking amongst themselves, distracted by the fear of losing middle school sports this upcoming year — a loss that would deeply impact their development, motivation, and sense of school community.

One student stayed after school to work on his writing, but all he could talk about was how he might lose the Spanish Immersion class he's been looking forward to since kindergarten. He told me it was a promise — that he would be learning E*spañol* through this program, and now that promise may be broken.

While I recognize that the challenges my daughter and my students face stem from previous state-level funding choices to underfund public education, further restricting municipal aid—which helps provide essential services like student nutrition, snow removal, and transportation—only accelerates the decline of our local schools.

We must remember: our students are Alaska's most precious resource. Investing in them is not optional — it is our obligation. If we want a strong, thriving state, we must prioritize and protect local schools, not chip away at it piece by piece.

Please listen to the voices of families, teachers, and — most importantly — students. **Do not approve this proposal**. Our children's future depends on your decision.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Waisanen

Chugiak, Alaska

Mother of a High School Student & Educator

From: Aiko Pyziak
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NO to the PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 4:21:16 PM

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Dear Alaska Board of Education,

It is the state's duty to provide basic services to foster and educate Alaskan children. In light of the budget cuts and frozen federal grants, capping municipal aid is not the answer. Alaska has consistently ranked at the bottom in national assessment results, AP exam performance, and student to teacher ratio compared to the rest of the nation. This proposal will only contribute to the deterioration of our public schools. You are the Alaska Board of Education. We look to you and your leadership to improve the system and as a fellow Alaskan implore you to not pass this proposal.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Aiko Pyziak
Chugiak High School Parent

From: Brian Krauklis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution input
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 4:32:20 PM

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Dear Board Members,

My wife and I would like to voice our opposition to changing the local contribution regulations. Our school district was able to avoid closing Sterling Elementary this year due to the strong support we have from our Kenai Borough Assembly. Their funding has saved so much over the years as schools have had to deal with the constant education budget vetoes. If changing the regulations were to limit our borough funding, this would end up in more budget cuts. Our district has already had to cut too much. These changes would not benefit students and that is who we should be thinking about.

Thank you,

Brian and Teresa Krauklis

From: Fran March
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: In-kind services limiting local decisions
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 5:26:55 PM

You don't often get email from marchfran02@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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The proposal to decrease the amount of local contribution from a city or borough to decrease the amount of local money given to districts for in-kind services is like "kicking someone when they are down". Our schools are struggling because they have not be properly funded for a decade or more. Educating children should be the priority for all entities because it makes us healthier as a state and a nation. There is nothing more important than educating a child. Our future depends on it.

Educating our youth is an "all hands on deck" initiative. It takes teamwork from the federal, state, local governments, school districts, and families to build a system that works for everyone. How local governments fund schools is a local issue, and should remain that way. The state limiting contributions of local government forms a bureaucracy which slows down the process of building a successful program to meet the needs of ALL children. This process of decreasing educational funding by local government adds yet, another layer of obstacles that get in the way of our mission of educating our youth.

In-kind local limitations are driven by how we value the contribution of the services. Snowplowing is based on an unknown. Last year we had a very light year for snow compared to the previous year in Anchorage. Funding for plowing is unpredictable. The amount decreased for in-kind snowplowing impacts the services needed for educating our youth. From the past, we know that bus transportation depends on the amount of drivers and working buses. Funding for schools need to be predictable and sustainable. We lose good educators and families when it is not.

Businesses are for profit. The profit from a good education is sometimes not recognized for many years. For example, my son's classmates are my dentist, doctors, insurance agent, hair dresser, and the police who make our communities safe. The effort of investing in education pays off in a better and healthier community.

Yes, there are problems we need to work on to make our schools better. Let's work together rather than divide each other by seeking a way other than just continually cutting school budgets. Fully fund education by coming together to make our schools a place where all students can achieve.

From: Heidi Drygas
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 5:50:47 PM

You don't often get email from hdrygas@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To the members of the State Education Board:

The purpose of rulemaking is to thoroughly vet proposals for both positive and negative consequences to ensure that policymakers have as much information as possible prior to making a final decision on whether or not to promulgate new rules.

I urge the Board and DEED to listen to local leaders and members of the public, like myself, who foresee the far-reaching negative consequences of enacting the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09. If we truly want what's best for our kids, this regulation falls far short. The matter of education funding is complicated on its best day. Local leaders are all but unanimous in their opposition to these proposed regulations. I urge you to take a pause, engage the public and local and state lawmakers before enacting a regulation with such enormous consequences to the finances of local districts.

Thanks for your attention.

Heidi Drygas
Kaxdigoowu Heen Elementary Parent

From: Ashley Van
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No changes to local contributions to school funding
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 6:24:13 PM

[You don't often get email from ashvan7@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear Board of Education,

I urge you to not make changes to the way local communities can fund schools. School districts are losing funding from the state and federal governments, and to limit one more funding source is an unnecessary and cruel move. Please do not make changes that will ultimately lead to less funding for local schools.

Thank you,
Ashley Van Hemert

From: walter@alaska.net
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation on Local Funding Contributions for Education (4 AAC 09.985 & 4 AAC 09.990(b))
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 6:30:38 PM

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

This letter is to express my opposition to the proposed regulation changes regarding local funding contributions for education, specifically the addition of 4 AAC 09.985 and the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.990(b) of the Alaska Administrative Code.

My name is Walter Featherly. I am 59-year Alaska resident, a graduate of East Anchorage High School, a father of children who attended Anchorage public schools K-12, a former Anchorage School Board member and president, the general counsel of Calista Corporation, which has thousands of shareholders attending public schools throughout the state, and an active member of a number of civic organizations.

I urge the Board of Education to reject this proposed regulation because it would result in large reductions in the funding available to local school districts. This would have devastating consequences, especially for districts like Anchorage and Juneau, which rely on these local contributions to supplement state funding and provide critical services, according to school administrators.

The proposed regulation, if adopted, would disproportionately affect schools already struggling with budgetary constraints, potentially leading to cuts in essential services like transportation, extracurricular activities, and student support programs. Further reducing funding would exacerbate existing challenges and make it harder to attract and retain qualified teachers and staff.

The proposed regulation seems to be driven by the goal of complying with the federal disparity test, which measures the funding gap between the richest and poorest school districts. However, instead of penalizing local communities for supporting their schools, the state should address the root cause of this disparity by providing adequate state funding for all districts. If the Base Student Allocation (BSA) were adequately funded, compliance with the federal disparity test would not be an issue.

Changing the regulations to restrict the ways that local governments fund schools is a misguided notion that will ultimately undermine the quality of education for all Alaskan students. I urge you, instead, to adequately fund Alaska's schools. Overriding the governor's recent vetoes of funding for Alaska's public schools would be a good first step.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Walter Tutiq Featherly
[redacted]
Anchorage, Alaska 99511
[redacted]
[redacted]

From: Cheryl & Mark Lovegreen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Preserve local education
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 8:02:13 PM

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Dear board members,

The governor's proposed regulation changing local contribution rules would effectively decrease local control of school districts. It would reduce funding for an estimated 70,000 students at a time when school budget cuts have already cut districts to the bone. This would be a step back, not an improvement, for our current system.

Please vote against this proposal.

Thanks for your time,

Cheryl Lovegreen
Anchorage

From: Matthew Wuestenfeld
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 8:50:13 PM

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I am strongly opposed to implementation of the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09, which would change regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution. This is a regressive, unnecessary adoption of a rule which takes away local decision making, and is sure to be one more action taken by the Dunleavy administration to seemingly take a deliberate course of action to diminish public education in our great state.

In specific:

It undermines local control. Each community is best situated to understand their needs. Don't intervene and preempt their decision-making rights.

This is not the way to solve the underlying problem of alignment with the Federal Impact Aid Program. The real issue is the state's practice of deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement.

It will exacerbate the already dire education funding issues faced by our public schools, especially the large urban districts (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula)

Respectfully submitted,

Matt wuestenfeld

[redacted]
Anchorage
Sent from my iPhone

From: Laura Buchheit
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject proposed regulation to reduce municipal contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:20:56 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Juneau, with two children who have grown up in the Alaska school system. Our family is strongly against the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules. I urge you to oppose this proposal. This proposal hurts our children and our communities.

Reducing local contributions would result in reducing services, sports and other activities, negatively impacting our children's growth and opportunities. Restricting local municipal contributions to their schools is destructive.

While the stated objective of restricting municipal contributions is for the state to meet the disparity test for federal funding, there has been no statement of certainty that this strategy will work. There is no certainty that this proposal will succeed in meeting the disparity test. The only certainty is that this proposal will fail Alaskan children.

Alaska is the last state to use federal impact aid to offset state funding obligations. This is embarrassing. Alaska should be the top state in supporting our children's education.

If the state had permanently raised the Base Student Allocation (BSA), the disparity test would not be an issue. Please turn your attention and energy to truly supporting Alaskan children by raising the BSA.

Sincerely,
Laura Buchheit

[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Aren Buchheit
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NO Limit to Local School Funding Contributions
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:23:45 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am an 18 year old resident of Juneau, Alaska and former student of Gustavus Public School in Gustavus, Alaska. As a recent student and involved community member, I implore you to reject the limit to local school funding contributions.

Growing up in rural Alaska, I observed just how hard it was to run our schools and just how tight the budget was. This proposal would result in immediate budget cuts, which would very much harm our children and communities. Our community in Gustavus cared—and did the best it could to support its children and their future, and subsequently the future of our community. Taking away this agency of our communities to do what we can to support the future of our children is despicable, and I am extremely opposed to it.

This proposed regulation would include services such as city plowing of school areas and school usage of public libraries or pools in the cap to local contribution to schools, which I strongly oppose. I cannot fathom our schools and children put into a position where they cannot afford to plow a place for families or teachers to park, or to use the neighboring public library.

Not only will this measure negatively impact schools and communities, it is not by any stretch a guaranteed solution to the issue of failing the federal disparity test. There has been no statement of certainty from the federal government that this permanent change will solve this year's problem. What is certain, however, is that this proposed regulation will negatively impact our schools, communities, children, and future for years to come.

This proposed regulation will not help our children, their future, or the future of our state. I implore you to reject this regulation for the sake of our communities and young Alaskans like me.

Thank you,
Aren Buchheit

[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: Christine Burgess
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution rules
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 8:00:40 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Fairbanks. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Christine St Pierre

[redacted] Fairbanks, AK 99712

From: Erica L. Chenoweth
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State Board of Education Letter
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:02:05 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Anchorage, Alaska. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Erica Chenoweth
[redacted]. Anchorage, AK 99517

--
Erica L. Chenoweth (she/her)

Multipassionate | Collaborative Biologist | Participatory Science Enthusiast | Mothering | Fractal Lover | aspiring surfer ♀

[redacted]

I live and work on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Alaska Native peoples, primarily Dena'ina Ełnena. This awareness brings with it many levels of responsibility, humbleness, transparency and collaborative possibilities…[thank you Bronwyn Preece]

From: Nathan Coutsoubos
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: do not change local contribution rules
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:20:09 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a proud parent and community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

kind regards,

Nathan Coutsoubos

[redacted]

Anchorage, AK 99504

From: Sue Ervin
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School education!!
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 4:48:33 AM

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Let's call this what it is:

The state screwed up—and now they want local communities to pay the price.

Alaska failed a federal test that protects equity in school funding. That failure? Squarely on the state.

How and why the state failed the equity test

Alaska stumbled not because local municipalities underfunded schools, but due to internal misallocation of funds within DEED's own reporting. Specifically, the state included extraneous interfund transfers—like moving general fund dollars into transportation accounts—in its disparity test calculations. Federal officials flagged these transfers as improper, which widened the per-pupil funding gap beyond the allowed 25% threshold .

In effect, DEED tried to game the system by juggling accounting lines. Instead, they failed the federal disparity test, putting $81 million in Impact Aid at risk—not because local communities skimped, but because the state bungled its internal bookkeeping and now wants to make locals shoulder the fallout.

So instead of owning up and increasing their share, the state's education department is proposing a rule that would punish school districts by cutting what local governments are allowed to contribute.

Right now, cities and boroughs across Alaska step up where the state falls short—plowing school parking lots, opening public pools to students, offering essential services that keep schools running and kids safe. Under this proposal, those in-kind services would now count against the cap on local contributions. That means local governments would have to cut cash support if they keep helping in these ways.

This isn't about compliance. It's about control.

If DEED gets its way, municipalities will be legally barred from making up the difference when the state underfunds schools. Local communities will be forced to treat education with the same lack of respect and investment the state currently shows—not because they want to, but because the law will now forbid them from doing better.

They're not fixing the problem.
They're making sure no one else can either.

What the state is proposing

• Counting in-kind services as “local contributions”

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) wants to change the definition of “local contribution” under state law. They propose that not just cash, but also services provided by municipalities—like snow-plowing school parking lots, or allowing use of public pools or libraries—would now count against the local funding cap for school districts .

—

Why now? The federal “disparity test”

• Alaska failed a federal equity test

Alaska is one of the few states that offsets its state school funding with federal “impact aid,” which compensates for nontaxable federal lands. To do that, it must pass a federal “disparity test” ensuring per-pupil funding gaps aren’t too wide. Alaska recently failed this test—risking about $81 million in funding .

• DEED’s goal: align with federal rules

DEED argues that by tightening the local contributions definition, they can reduce disparities and stay compliant—avoiding federal penalties—without needing to increase overall state funding .

—

Backlash & procedural concerns

• Emergency rule to bypass delays

DEED pushed for an “emergency regulation” to make this change immediately—retroactive to the current fiscal year, ending June 30—to avoid further testing in 2027 .

• Strong opposition from districts & lawmakers

Anchorage, Juneau, and other districts warned this could slash tens of millions from their budgets—affecting meals, transportation, preschool, after-school programs, and more . Legal concerns were raised: many believe this move doesn’t meet the legal definition of an emergency and could be unlawful .

—

Current status: Public comment & delay

• 30-day public comment period

Amid heavy pushback, the Alaska State Board of Education unanimously declined to fast-track the proposal, opting instead to open a 30-day public comment period, running through

July 23 .

• Decision postponed till October

After comments are collected, DEED will revisit the proposal before year's end—likely October or December—before any final vote .

Bottom line:

Before

Services like plowing or pool access were not counted toward funding caps

After proposal

These services would reduce how much municipalities can contribute

The stated reason: align with federal rules to protect needed impact aid

The real-world impact: significant cuts to district services and local control, raising concerns of rushed process and possible legal issues

—

Let's be clear: This isn't about fairness. It's about sabotage.

Commissioner Deena Bishop—yes, the same Deena Bishop who oversaw chronic underperformance and chaos in Anchorage School District—now wants to lock local communities out of helping their kids.

And Governor Mike Dunleavy, whose entire administration has made it a sport to underfund public education, is standing behind it. They're using a federal technicality as cover to strip boroughs and municipalities of their right to protect their own students.

This isn't fixing school funding.
It's kneecapping anyone who dares to care more than they do.

The result? Fewer meals, fewer activities, fewer safe spaces. And not because your local government doesn't want to help—but because the state is trying to make it illegal for them to do so.

Call it what it is: a top-down assault on local control, educational equity, and common sense.

Thank-you,
Sue Ervin
[redacted]
Cordova Alaska
99574

From: Melissa Chouinard
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Help our students!
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:42:21 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a parent and community member in Eagle River . I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide our kids. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chouinard
[redacted]
Eagle River AK 99577

From: D 907808dream
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed regulation on local contributions
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:44:49 AM

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I am opposed to the current proposal to change the determination of 'local contributions'.

The State of Alaska constitution mandates education funding. The State of Alaska 'encouraged' local areas to establish Boroughs for administration of public services.

Not all Alaska communities are set up as cities or boroughs that allow a tax to be levied. Only city and borough school districts are required to pay a local contribution.

I understand that the State must show that the amount of per-student revenues in its highest-funded districts is no more than 25 percent greater than in its lowest-funded districts

The statutory definition for local contribution is "appropriations and the value of in-kind services made by a district."

The current regulatory definition limits local contributions to only appropriations and certain in-kind services reported in a school district's operating fund.

REAA districts do not have taxing authority they are not required to make a local contribution, so they would not be impacted directly by the proposed regulation. Similarly, rural school districts whose municipalities may have limited tax bases, or other municipalities that choose not to fund to the additional local contribution maximum, would not be directly impacted.

Is the State Board of Education 'encouraging' municipalities to disband and become REAAs? This would put the full burden of funding on the State!

A better option would be to craft legislation and supply funding to allow ALL districts to raise contributions to within 25% of the highest funding rate rather than the lowest!

Our current administration is overseeing the worst State funding for education in Alaska's history. Please do not exacerbate this crisis with poorly developed policy.

Doug Gregg [redacted]
[redacted]
Ketchikan, AK 99901

From: Matthew Blakeslee
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Testimony Opposing Proposed Limits on Local School Funding
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 1:58:49 PM

You don't often get email from m.w.blakeslee@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed regulation that would restrict the amount of funding local governments can contribute to public schools, including the inclusion of in-kind services, against the state-imposed funding cap.

I appreciate that the Board has removed the emergency regulation and opened a public comment period. That was the right decision—one that recognizes the importance of transparency and community voice in decisions that deeply affect our students. Now, I urge you to take the next step and **withdraw the proposal entirely.**

Why This Rule is Harmful

1. **It Punishes Communities That Step Up**
   When the State of Alaska consistently underfunds public education, local governments fill the gap to support essential school programs. This rule would penalize that support, counting shared services like snow plowing, public pool access, or library use against the funding cap. That's not fiscal responsibility—it's political interference.

2. **There Is No Educational Benefit**
   There is no evidence this rule would improve student outcomes. On the contrary, districts are warning of steep cuts to programs, staffing, and services if the regulation is adopted. Schools in Anchorage, Juneau, Sitka, and other communities would lose millions of dollars already budgeted and relied upon. Less funding means fewer opportunities for students.

3. **It Undermines Local Control and Public Trust**
   Local taxpayers willingly invest in their schools. This proposal strips the local authority while offering no solution to the state's ongoing funding shortfall. If the goal is to comply with federal disparity tests, the solution should be **increased state investment**, not reduced local support.

4. **This Is a Political Attack on Public Education**
   The public sees this for what it is: another step in the slow dismantling of Alaska's public schools. We've watched as the state has cut education funding and then blamed districts for the consequences. Now, limiting local help adds insult to injury. This is not good governance—it's sabotage.

My Request to the Board

You have heard the outrage from families, educators, legislators, school boards, and municipal

leaders across the state. You have opened the public comment period. Now I ask you to listen —and to act.

Reject this proposal. Protect local funding. And focus on real solutions that strengthen public education in Alaska.

-Matt Blakeslee

From: Jeff Clay
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Regulation proposal
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 2:15:33 PM

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Greetings Alaska State Board of Education,

I have taught in Alaska for 25 years and in Sitka for the past 11. It has been disheartening to witness the defunding of public education that has taken place recently.

Communities throughout the state have faced school closures, staffing uncertainties, and cuts to programs that benefit students, families, and the communities as a whole.

Here in Sitka, we have no middle school art teacher, no middle school librarian, and have significantly cut elective options and an annual "Discover Your Potential" community outreach and career/art exploration week…and this is at only one of our five schools!

The current regulation proposal to expand the definition of "local contribution" to include maintenance, Performing Arts, pool, etc. would count against the city funding for education and would lead to an additional $ 2-4 million loss of local support for our schools - schools our community have supported willingly and consistently over the years. This regulation would drastically reduce our community's local control of how we spend our city funds. Our schools are stronger because of this local control.

I urge you to oppose this regulation and seek to find other ways to meet the disparity test required for impact aid.

Thank you for your time and your service,

Jeff Clay
Sitka

Sent from my iPhone

From: Cornelius Eastman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Cease and Desist!
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 4:08:51 PM

You don't often get email from cubelesscorny@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Any funding decrease to any Alaskan school is an abomination!! The defunding only ensures that a majority of Alaskan students will only be qualified for the most menial jobs, as the State has to recruit from outside where education is important. Businesses will also have trouble recruiting as employees see the states strive driving Alaska to the worst education support.
Sincerely,
Cornelius Eastman
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99516-2814

From: Elizabeth Will
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NO to regulations restricting local contributions
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 4:41:02 PM

You don't often get email from elizwill01@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the State Board of Education,

The community of Sitka strongly supports the education of our children. We give time, energy, and resources to make sure that each of our students has a meaningful education. We (and you) know that the funding currently allotted to school districts does not cover the cost of a quality education for each student. The community of Sitka has stepped up to supplement the education of children since state and federal funding is not adequate.

If the additional grass-roots community-based support is taken away through this proposed regulation change, it will devastate the quality of education for many learners across the state. It will sever the community, place-based ties that are critical to the education of our children, the connection they have to their communities and the collaborative partnerships formed through caring for and educating our children.

For example, my daughter, who has a doctorate in science and is currently working with the World Wildlife Fund, collaborates with the Sitka Science Center to teach a seabird unit to kindergarteners every spring. If these types of activities must be included in the cap, students will lose valuable, hands-on, place-based learning experiences. My daughter in her capacity as a research scientist also does in-school teaching in other rural districts around the state. This will undermine her ability to go into schools.

We are struggling to educate our students in the face of limited funds. We are creatively finding ways to supplement the lack of state and federal funding. Do not take away important avenues of supplementing our children's learning experiences.

Elizabeth Will

From: Tamra Wear
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Borough in-kind contributions to school district
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 5:22:20 PM

You don't often get email from tamra.wear@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

I'm writing because I don't agree with the changes on local contributions that you are proposing. The state and local governments are already woefully underfunding our children's education. I'm not sure what my 8-year-old has done to incur your ire but he deserves the quality education that Alaska is constitutionally obligated to give him. You should want that too. For the strength of this state and for its future. Quality schools make Alaska more appealing to everyone. Strangling school districts and then demanding to know why they are choking is ridiculous.

Please reconsider this proposal. Thank you for your time,
Tamra Wear
Soldotna, AK
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

From: PATRICIA MOORE
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: DEED regulation changes proposal
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 5:47:36 PM

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I write as a resident of Anchorage, a grandmother, and an elementary school volunteer in opposition to the change in Alaska's local contribution regulations. The proposed changes will have a devastating effect on public education —not only in Anchorage but in other parts of the state as well, The State Board should reject the proposed changes and instead do what they can to improve public education in Alaska. I urge you to vote no on these proposed changes.

Patricia Moore
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Suzanne B
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local contribution from local municipalities
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 5:47:47 PM

You don't often get email from szannebishop@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear State Board of Education,
I write to express concerns about upcoming changes about local contributions. From what I understand this proposal lacks a clear rationale and will only harm Alaskan students, schools, and communities. The proposed change to the definitions of local contributions needs to be stopped because the outcomes are unclear and will yield negative consequences.
Sincerely,
Suzanne Bishop
[redacted]
Fritz Creek, Alaska 99603

From: Cheryl Silcox
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Local Contribution Regulations
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 6:12:00 PM

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To the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am writing as an Alaskan resident concerned about the direction of public education funding and the proposed changes to regulations around local contributions.

While aligning with federal law is important, I am deeply concerned that these changes do not account for the unstable future of federal support, especially Impact Aid. If these funds are reduced or eliminated—as has been suggested by recent political movements—districts that serve rural, tribal, and low-income communities will face devastating losses.

This regulation may unintentionally lock Alaska into a funding formula that works only while federal support is strong. If the U.S. Department of Education is dismantled or Impact Aid is cut, we will see:

-Teachers and staff leave the state or the profession
-Schools in Native and rural areas shutter or collapse
-Entire communities lose vital educational and cultural lifelines

Moreover, current education policies in Alaska favor a shift toward privatization, benefiting families who already have resources while leaving others behind. We need a state funding model that protects public education for all, not just for those who can opt out.

Please revise the proposed regulations to:

-Ensure flexibility if federal laws or funding change
-Prioritize stable, equitable funding for rural and underserved communities
-Support a long-term vision of strong public schools for every Alaskan child

Thank you for your attention and service.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Silcox
Anchorage, Alaska
educator, parent, student, & community member

From: Lila Lee Little
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Undermining Local School Funding
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 12:33:05 AM

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To the Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation change related to local contributions and the calculation of public school funding. This change is not a minor adjustment—it is a detrimental shift that undermines local control, weakens community support for education, and fails to address the root cause of the issue. It is a shortsighted attempt to solve a state-created problem that should instead be tackled through meaningful collaboration and policy reform.

Undermining Local Control and Community Support

This regulation would severely restrict a community's ability to support its schools in the ways it sees fit. Local communities and school districts are best equipped to understand their unique needs and respond accordingly. From managing operational costs to sustaining vital student programs, local contributions are a cornerstone of Alaskan education. To limit them is not only government overreach, but also a disservice to the deep commitment Alaskans have toward their schools and students.

Misaligned with Federal Impact Aid Program

This proposal stems from a flawed attempt to comply with the federal Impact Aid Program's disparity test, which does not account for the distinctive ways Alaskan communities contribute to education. Applying this test to local funding efforts is fundamentally disconnected from the realities of our state. It's also important to note that Alaska is the only state required to pass this particular test, further emphasizing that the problem lies not with local contributions, but with how the state handles federal aid.

The Root Problem: The Impact Aid Deduction

At the heart of this issue is Alaska's practice of deducting federal Impact Aid from state education funding—a practice no other state employs. This policy effectively punishes districts that receive federal aid and negates the benefits it's intended to provide. Instead of making things worse with new restrictive regulations, the state should remove the Impact Aid deduction altogether. That would offer a direct and fair solution without undermining local support systems.

Harmful Consequences for Students and Schools

This regulation would only exacerbate existing funding challenges. Alaska's schools are already under financial pressure, and this change would siphon more resources away from

classrooms, teachers, and students. Worse, there's no clear evidence that this would even solve the disparity test issue. Moving forward with such a drastic measure without a guaranteed solution is irresponsible and harmful.

An Attack on Collaboration and Innovation

This is more than a regulatory change—it is an attack on the creative partnerships that districts and local governments have developed to provide the best possible education. In many places, communities find innovative ways to offset transportation costs, cover student nutrition programs, or support extracurricular activities. This regulation would undermine those partnerships and penalize the very spirit of collaboration that helps our schools thrive.

There Are Better Alternatives

Rather than rushing to implement this harmful change, DEED should return to the collaborative approach used in 2023, working with federal officials to prevent negative financial impacts on districts. Common-sense alternatives exist, such as seeking waivers for student nutrition and transportation, and working within federal guidelines without sacrificing local flexibility or student success.

Call to Action

I urge the State Board of Education to reject the proposed regulation change. Instead, please pursue policies that genuinely support local control, community engagement, and financial stability for Alaska's schools.

Here in Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, we've seen firsthand how local support helps sustain vital programs like [insert example—e.g., music, sports, after-school tutoring, student meals, or busing for rural students]. This regulation threatens those efforts, and ultimately, it is our students who will pay the price.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Alaska's public education system. Please do the right thing and stand with students, educators, and communities by opposing this harmful change.

Sincerely,

Lila Johnson
Parent and educator

From: Cheryl Silcox
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Confronting Systemic Racism in Alaska Education Policy
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 6:15:22 PM

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Alaska's Education Policy Is Leaving Native and Rural Students Behind

To the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development:

I'm writing to raise urgent concern about the systematic and disproportionate harm being caused to Alaska Native and rural communities by Governor Mike Dunleavy's education policies.
While these policies may not be explicitly racist in language, their outcomes clearly reflect systemic racism — producing deep and predictable inequities that disproportionately affect Native students, low-income families, and rural communities across Alaska.
1. Funding Cuts that Target the Most Vulnerable
Governor Dunleavy has repeatedly proposed flat or reduced funding for public schools, despite rising inflation and urgent rural infrastructure needs. Districts that rely on state and federal funds — like those in Native villages — are being pushed toward collapse. These communities often cannot raise local taxes, and yet the state is demanding they do more with less.
2. Public Funds Diverted to Private Options
Policies that allow homeschool reimbursements for private and religious instruction are not neutral — they benefit urban, resourced families while leaving rural and Native students behind. These programs pull public funds away from the very districts that are already underfunded and struggling to survive.
3. Cultural Erasure Through Curriculum Control
There's growing pressure from this administration and its appointees to remove or restrict culturally responsive, inclusive education. Indigenous knowledge, racial justice, gender identity, and decolonial history are framed as "divisive" — when in reality, they are essential for healing and belonging.
4. No Tribal Consultation, No Justice
Despite widespread calls from Alaska Native communities for greater tribal control of education, Dunleavy's administration has consistently failed to meaningfully consult with Indigenous leaders. This silence continues a long, painful history of colonial extraction — where education is done to Native children, not with their communities.
These decisions are not isolated — they form a system of exclusion. If Alaska is serious about racial equity, we must name this pattern clearly:
This is systemic racism.
I urge the Alaska State Legislature, Department of Education, and State Board to:
Restore full and equitable funding to rural schools

Reject privatization models that siphon public dollars

Protect inclusive and culturally rooted curriculum

Engage in direct partnership with tribal education leaders

Every child deserves a fully funded, liberatory education — especially in the communities that have long borne the cost of underinvestment.
Sincerely,
Cheryl Silcox
Educator, Parent, & Community Member
Anchorage, AK

From:	Brad Owens
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Proposed changes to 4 AAC 09 re school financing and local contribution
Date:	Thursday, July 24, 2025 6:35:30 PM

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I oppose the adoption of these proposed regs because there is little explanation why these changes are needed at this time, the basis for the proposed changes and why they are submitted in a fast-track fashion. DEED should provide additional information to explain and support the need for these changes.

1. What are the requirements established under the federal impact aid laws? When were these requirements established under federal law? Is Alaska required to adopt regs
consistent with federal impact aid laws? If so, what is there a time limitation in doing so? Does current Alaska law comply with these federal laws?

2. Why do the current definitions of “appropriations” and “value of in-kind services” need to be repealed or amended? Do these terms as currently used in the definition of “local contribution” comply with federal impact aid laws? If not, why not? If not, how long has this situation existed?

3. How do these proposed changes clarify the budgeting language for school districts? Why is clarification necessary or appropriate at this time?

4. What are the expected or projected impact of potential costs to private persons of complying with these proposed changes? What studies or data exist showing these cost impacts?

Until further info is provided by the DEED to explain and support the need for these prosed changes, I oppose the adoption of these changes.

From: Connie Markis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I strongly oppose the $15million cut
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 6:40:05 PM

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Isn't it enough that there hasn't been an inflation adjustment for over a decade for schools, that our schools especially in the rural areas are uninhabitable, that teachers are being let go because of a lack of funds making the teachers that are left having a higher burden of students to teach all while Governor Dunleavy and his followers want to increase the academic outcomes of students is sad. This is especially confusing because the bills introduced from the legislature were bipartisan. Please do not deny our students the education they deserve. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Constance Markis
Anchorage, Alaska

From: Andreana
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Education
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 7:41:36 PM

You don't often get email from midoriayi@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello, i'm an Andreana DePeel, a student from Highland Academy Charter School.

Why are we letting our education turn out like this? Why did you guys put hiring signs all over when you could've had the same people you laid off come back to work.

Shouldn't every single board member have a voice in this?! Im almost 16, and I dont really understand how this all works. However I think every board member in this education system should have a voice. Students should have a voice, since it effects us the greatest.

Im beyond worried about how our education will be like when I go back to school. I shouldn't have to worry about my education, I should be worrying about frivolous stuff. Yet here I am, emailing the ASD staff because im worried.

Thank you,

Andreana D.

From: rfbutera@icloud.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 8:25:39 PM

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Dear Ms Jolin,

I strongly object to the change proposed to 4 AAC 09.990(b). This change would repeal or amend the definitions of “appropriation” and “value of in-kind services,” as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution” and will limit the amount of local funding that municipalities may contribute to a local district's public education system.

Our schools need all the funding they can get! Local community investment in community in public schools should not be limited.

Bob Butera

From: amy bethka
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: NO FUNDING CAP
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 8:35:41 PM

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Please do not cap the amount of money a local community can give to their school district!

Our schools are already in a funding crisis. Please do not vote to limit any more potential funds.

My daughter's school is already down to one teacher per grade, causing extremly high class sizes, all because of state and federal deficits. Please do not add to this crisis.

Amy Bethka
[redacted]
99508

From: Bs Bs
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Say no to limit local funding for education
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 8:38:52 PM

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Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education:

I am writing to you to oppose the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools.

Currently school districts are receiving less in education funding than they did last year, despite costs of running schools continuing to go up. I know the value of homes will go down if we don't keep our public schools strong. Additionally, this proposal could hurt an estimated 70,000 Alaska students.

Students benefit from the services of this aid in the form of nutrition, transportation, safe and clear sidewalks in the winter and the use of public amenities, like pools.

This proposed change will hurt our students, our schools and our communities.

I feel that this proposal and its impact hasn't been communicated clearly to our school districts or our communities and therefore should not be considered.

Sincerely,
Katherine Simpler

From: jeffreyraun@gmail.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please reject regulatory change to local contribution
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 9:04:22 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am the parent of three Anchorage School District students. In 2020, we moved back to Alaska after living Outside for a few years. We expected to return to the place where our daughters were born and raise them amongst leaders that understood the value of investing in and supporting public schools. Unfortunately, we are now reconsidering that decision, as this proposed regulation to limit local control and hampering local districts is the latest in a long list of attempts to erode the fabric of our communities: local schools.

I urge you to reject the proposed regulation change to Local Contribution. Separately, I would request that this Board work with the Legislature to re-evaluate the totality of school funding structures, establish a case for eliminating the cap on local contributions (why are we limiting a communities abilities to contribute to the success of its local schools?), and move away from the disparity test/impact funding formula (we're the only state still doing this!). Local districts should get their full allotment of state funding and any available federal funds should be additive, along with local contributions (uncapped).

While I fundamentally disagree that your Board should have the authority to change regulations, I urge you to use your powers for the benefit of the 70,000 students that are counting on you to enable their educational futures and not erode it.

Respectfully,

Jeff Raun

Midtown Anchorage

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jennifer Grant
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Changes to Definition of "Local Contributions"
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 9:28:17 PM

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Dear Alaska Department of Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to the definition of "local contributions" in public education funding.

Education in Alaska is already critically underfunded, and communities like Sitka are feeling the effects. Our district has made numerous painful cuts, resulting in the loss of valuable programs and increased class sizes. These changes directly impact the quality of education our children receive and threaten the future of our community.

Sitkans have consistently demonstrated their commitment to strong public schools—through voting to support education, volunteering in classrooms, and contributing financially. We value our ability to make local decisions about how to support and sustain our schools. Redefining "local contributions" in a way that reduces local control or penalizes community support undermines that commitment.

I urge you to reconsider these proposed changes. Let communities like Sitka continue to invest in our children's future without fear that our contributions will be offset by reductions in state support. Strong schools build strong communities—and that requires both state and local partnership, not restriction.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Grant
[redacted]
Sitka, AK 99835

From: suzan mullane
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Special Session should require an intervention for the Governor
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 9:28:24 PM

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What is proposed in this special session to sabotage public education is nothing short of criminal.
I'm deeply ashamed of what appears to be: "my career future over students' well-being."
ff one truly wants to exasperate teacher shortages and have more families move to the lower forty-eight, then support this convoluted thinking Governor and his agenda. Then try to sleep at night after the short-sighted destruction and collateral damage to Alaska's economy.

Suzan Mullane, MS.ED
[redacted]
Anchorage, Ak. 99516

From: Jessica Glass
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposal to reduce municipal governments' ability to assist local public schools
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 10:26:08 PM

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Dear Alaska Department of Education,

I am very opposed to your measure to limit or reduce municipal governments' abilities to assist local public schools. The answer to the disparity test is not to limit local districts from investing in their schools, it is to provide more funding and support to districts that are falling behind. The governor's veto on education funding, which continues now for multiple years, is one example for which increased assistance for local schools at the municipal level - in light of limited state and now federal support - is so critical. I live in Fairbanks, which is already having to go through massive school closures and budget cuts. Why would you ever a limit a municipality from investing more in its schools? The proposal is completely senseless and a short-sighted patch that fails to address the long-term solution: invest more at ALL levels in early childhood education, particularly districts that are falling behind.

Sincerely,
Jessica Glass

From: Brian Smith
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on proposed changes to the local contribution regulations
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 9:57:20 PM

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Hello Board Members,

I just want to comment that changes to decrease allowable local contributions should be made in conjunction with increases in state-provided contributions so that schools remain supported. Unfortunately it appears that we are potentially in the opposite circumstance.

I agree with the concept of leveling the playing field so that relatively wealthy communities in our state don't end up with better education funding and opportunities and outcomes than less advantaged communities. But to hamstring any community that is trying to support their local education system in a time like we find ourselves where education is woefully underfunded isn't right either.

I hope you can use your positions of decision making influence to improve state education contributions if you're going to move this forward.

Thank you,
Brian Smith
Petersburg

From: Nancy Pease
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposal to limit local contributions to school districts
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 10:00:42 PM

You don't often get email from nancypease2@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To: Board of Education and Early Development

Regarding: proposed regulation changes in 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code

I categorically oppose the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09 that would limit the local governmental contribution to public education and reject the option of inkind services outside of the local contribution cap.

Communities that value public education should not be constrained from compensating for the grossly inadequate State Base Allocation.

. The Governor's education vetoes are draining our public education system and cheating our kids out of their potential. Don't thwart Municipalities from trying to keep their schools thriving or at least surviving.

Kids are our future—when did the Governor forget that? Let us invest in Alaska kids' educations. Board members: vote against the restrictions on local contributions.

Nancy Pease, Alaska public school graduate

Sent from my iPad

Nancy Pease

From: Ann Rappoport
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to the Local Contribution Regulations
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:00:00 PM

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Dear State Board of Education -

I was appalled to learn at my community council meeting tonight about these proposed changes to the Local Contribution Regulations. At a time when our schools have been severely stressed with budget cuts, this proposal which could further impact the already measly funding our state is providing to educate our children, our future, is misguided and untimely. I have read through the FAQs and understand and support the need to be equitable and fair in how all of our school districts and rural areas receive funding for schools. However it would be better to look for creative and innovative ways to maintain all the funding our school districts receive, as well as options for beefing up rural areas that may not have the same sources of tax revenue as do larger towns and cities in Alaska.

From what I understand, the Anchorage School District stands to lose an additional $4 million in funding if the proposed regulations are adopted! This is unconscionable when piled on top of the budget cuts the Governor has implemented in vetoing a significant portion of the increase to the Base Student Allocation that the Legislature overwhelmingly approved. Increasing class sizes will not help bring our students' test scores up. Granted this funding allocation affects other school costs than teachers and instruction, but a stress and reduction in funding for one part of the system (e.g., transportation services) will ultimately affect other parts of the system (e.g., numbers of teachers, class sizes, and course offerings.

I urge you to pause this process at least until we have the final funding picture for the coming year (e.g., after the Legislature's Special Session), and while we work with all the school districts to find creative ways to protect the funding that is there, in compliance with the federal Impact Aid and other rules, while looking for other sources of funding that may be needed to equalize funding around our state. Then you can consider what regulation changes may be needed that fully protect school funding and allow districts and rural areas to implement creative options for obtaining additional funding.

I am fortunate in that my children graduated from ASD in 2008 and 2011 under the amazingly wonderful leadership of Anchorage School District Superintendent Carol Comeau and when there was a wealth of course offerings and smaller class sizes. I worry so much about the kids in our schools now who have been stressed by the COVID years and who now are in larger classes, have much fewer enrichment course opportunities, lack many sports options, and other diminishments that have been placed on their schools. It's time to stop the cuts, the changes, and instead to stabilize and then increase funding for our schools.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Ann Rappoport
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Kate Johnson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: No more cuts to our schools, please.
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:03:07 PM

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Dear Alaska Department of Education and Early Development,

I'm writing with great concern over DEED's proposed cuts to local education funding. Schools in my community are already profoundly hurting from long-term BSA stagnation, and reducing the ability of local governments to provide financial assistance would make matters much worse. While I appreciate DEED's recent appeal of the federal disparity test results and hope for a good outcome, I also ask that this agency take any proposals that concern a reduction in local funding off the table.

Sincerely,
Kate Johnson
Sitka, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: Patricia Dick
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Creative Community Education Funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 12:29:15 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a grandparent, retired teacher and community member in Sitka.. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules. It is hard for me to believe that I am having to write this letter due to our Governor trying to change the definition of the difference between an "in kind donation" and a "local contribution" in the state statute. **BUT HERE WE ARE!** Dunleavy is the absolute worst governor that we have ever had in the State of Alaska for education EVER! It is heartbreaking to see the decline in education in our state since he took office. His cuts continue to violate our state constitution's mandate to provide a good education to all Alaska students year after year. Teachers have left due to lack of retirement, inadequate salaries, overcrowded schools, lay offs, and lack of support by the state. Treasured neighborhood schools are closing and kids are getting bused to overcrowded schools with teachers that have no choice in the subject or grade level they teach!

So what are we to do? Here in Sitka, my vote for our city assembly members, along with other folks here, depends on the candidate's stand on education! Consequently our City of Sitka Assembly have come up with creative ideas of how we can support our schools and teachers. When times are hard and you have a governor and a state legislature that fails to support education year after year, isn't that what you would expect communities to do and to be glad when they do it? But this vote on changing this definition of an in kind donation and a local contribution will be another hard blow to our Alaska education and penalize communities for rising up to support their local education. Why would you do that? Now is the time for the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development to stand up to Dunleavy's direct attack on our local governance and vote against this definition change. We are desperately hoping this next Dunleavy veto will be voted down and we can start the long process of repairing education in the State of Alaska!

Gunalcheesh for all your support for our Alaska children's education! We are preparing our children for a very uncertain future so we must step up for them!

Patricia Lee Dick

From: Carrie Mercier
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Not that you care
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 6:28:43 AM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned teacher of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:
• Undermine student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
• Reduce transportation options, increasing student safety concerns
• Erode the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
• Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, afterschool opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Carrie Mercier
12 year community member of Valdez who won’t have children because of political moves like this.

From: Jessica Pyatt
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Impact Aid and Local Contributions
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 7:07:37 AM

You don't often get email from jkpyatt2@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom it May Concern -
I am writing about local contributions that have been forced on communities due to the lack of state funding for education. I oppose the proposed policy of limiting local contributions. The fact that the state surplants impact aid for state funding is an embarrassment for our state. We should be funding education to the maximum that we can as a state and use impact aid on top of that for needed communities, like every other state in the country does. Not try to get around the fact that Alaska is not filling its obligation to a free and open public education for all. If this was done the local contributions would not be forced on communities and thus not be an issue. We need to find new ways to fund education, not cut more. There would be no reason for a cap on education funding if we did not use impact aid in this way. We should be embarrassed and ashamed at how we are funding education.

I am sorry for whatever happened to Gov Dunleavy when he worked in education. Whatever it was in his work that made him bitter and angry at the system, I am sorry. But do not let this crusade for revenge on the education system impact our future as a state. This is the future of the young children who will forever be impacted by the current lack of funding and who will in no doubt exit our state in droves as they come of age.

Thank you for your time.
Jessica Pyatt PT, DPT, WCS, CLT

From: Nick Van Lith
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: ASD Budget concerns
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:31:21 AM

You don't often get email from nvanl0075@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I'm writing about my concern for the present and future public education in Alaska.

I'm a product of public education and know what a tremendous positive impact it has on individuals and the community. I'm also proud to have my kids enrolled in public education.

However not only does our Governor continue to espouse anti education policies but so now too is our federal government.

Eroding public education erodes the community, a rising tide raises all ships and without funding public education will not be able to function let alone improve our community.

When school districts are blindsided by mid-year funding losses, school districts **cannot plan, cannot hire, and cannot deliver** the consistent services that students need. These disruptions weaken everything from after-school programming to counseling to special education.

We are being asked to run a modern school system with **unstable and unpredictable resources**. This is not sustainable, and this is not acceptable.

If we don't stop this trend now, it will continue. The proposed **cap on local education contributions** would make it harder for communities like Anchorage to invest in their own children. If approved by the State Board of Education, it could remove millions more from our schools in the years ahead.

Sabotaging a system to claim a system is failing is operating in bad faith.

I humbly urge you to work to help establish stable funding sources for education, so we don't lose staff that we have and are able to recruit well qualified new teachers and staff and ensure our children get high quality education.

Having good schools helps recruit with economy as workers want a better life for their families and quality education is a large part of that equation.

Thanks

Nicholas Van Lith

From: Phyllis Mulligan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School Funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:46:27 AM

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My grandkids go to high school in Sitka,Ak. and I care about the quality of education they receive.
Expanding the definition of " local contributions" to include services and support currently provided outside the statutory funding cap will take away what Sitkan's choose to support and maintain. This includes, Performing Arts, pool and activities,to name a few.
Sitka wants local control over how our community funds education. Sitkans have voted,volunteered,and contributed to make our schools stronger. Sitka has made significant cuts already to education. We don't need more cuts.
Thanks for your time,
Phyllis Mulligan
Sitka,Ak.

From: Anna Breuninger
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding regulations
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 9:55:30 AM

You don't often get email from avocet03@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Good morning,
Please do not enact the proposed regulation changes in 4AAC 90 of the Alaska administrative Code. I see no reason for the changes and no benefit to the people and children of Alaska. I do foresee a serious problem emerging for our school district here in Anchorage where I live and teach. I had 20 year long career in geology and the environmental sciences before I decided to devote myself to education. The teachers, staff and administrators I now work with are struggling to teach our students, tomorrow's citizens of Alaska. The funding has not been inflation proofed and these changes to the administrative code make planning even more tenuous. Please hold off on them until you can provide the Alaskan people with a comprehensive and persuasive resin to make changes. Sincerely,
Anna Breuninger

Anna B Breuninger
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kelly Buxton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); schoolboard@sitkaschools.org
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Change – In Support of Sitka's Local Response
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 9:11:30 PM

You don't often get email from kellybux@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

Firstly, I'd like to thank you all for serving on behalf of Alaska's Students and Educators. I appreciate the opportunity to address the current educational proposals, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulation change that would restrict how local communities support their public schools. I submit this letter in full support of the Sitka School District School Board and the City of Sitka Assembly's response to this amendment. This proposed change is not simply a technical adjustment—it is a detrimental policy shift that undermines local control, harms students, and threatens the stability of Alaska's public education system.

Undermining Local Control and Community Support

This regulation limits our community's ability to provide for our schools in ways that best fit local needs. Sitka, like many Alaskan communities, has a long history of creatively and collaboratively supporting public education through local contributions, innovation, and shared commitment. This change disregards that legacy and represents unwarranted government overreach into decisions that should remain at the community level.

Misalignment with Federal Impact Aid

The proposed alignment with the federal Impact Aid disparity test fails to reflect the unique realities of Alaska's educational funding. The test does not adequately account for critical local contributions to non-instructional services—contributions that directly support student learning and wellbeing. It's worth noting that Alaska is the only state required to meet this specific test, underscoring the mismatch between federal metrics and local practice.

The Real Issue: Impact Aid Deduction

The core issue is the State's continued practice of deducting federal Impact Aid from state education funding—an approach no other state uses. Rather than constraining local support, the State should remove this deduction from the funding formula entirely. Doing so would resolve the disparity issue without undermining local collaboration and would be a far more effective and just solution.

Worsening an Existing Funding Crisis

Alaska's schools are already operating under extreme financial pressure. In Sitka, further

reductions in funding could lead to devastating impacts: larger class sizes, reduced programming, and compromised student services like transportation and nutrition. There is no clear evidence that this regulation will even fix the disparity test problem—yet the harm to districts would be immediate and severe.

Undermining Innovation and Partnerships

This regulation disregards the creative partnerships that districts like Sitka have developed with city and borough governments. These partnerships help offset non-instructional costs so that limited instructional funding can stay in the classroom. Penalizing this kind of innovation is counterproductive and harmful to our collective mission of supporting students.

A Better Path Forward

Instead of pursuing this amendment, I urge DEED and the State Board to re-engage in the type of collaborative, solution-focused work that occurred in 2023. That work prevented harm to districts and centered on Alaska's educational realities. Seeking waivers for student transportation and nutrition, for instance, is a common-sense step that avoids this harmful overcorrection.

I'd like to ask the State Board to reject the proposed regulation amendment. I call upon the Board to pursue policies that support financial stability and local control, rather than restricting it.

This proposal would harm Sitka's students, educators, and community. Our locally driven solutions should be supported, not penalized.

Sincerely,
Kelly Buxton, M.Ed.
STEAM Specialist
Sitka School District
In support of the Sitka School Board and the City of Sitka Assembly

From: Bonnie Chaney
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed change to local contributions calculation
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:12:02 AM

You don't often get email from saginawchannel@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I am against changing how the local contribution cap is calculated. Schools are already struggling with providing a quality education to students at the current funding levels. Unless the BSA is dramatically increased a change in the local contribution cap will only make matters much, much worse.

Sincerely,
Bonnie Chaney

From: mrbojangles@alaskan.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose Regulation to Change Local Contribution Rules
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:47:53 AM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development:

I am a grandparent of two students who are enrolled in school in the Anchorage School District. Their Dad also attended kindergarten through high school and graduated here. We are committed
Alaskans and want to see the state board make decisions that are in the best interest of Alaskan students and schools. As such, I urge you all to oppose the proposed regulation that would change
local contribution rules. School Districts across the state are struggling financially, and this proposed regulation would further limit what we can provide our students. There are multiple other ways to
solve the current problems, and I urge you all to reject this proposed regulation that would change local contribution rules. Evaluate other options and proceed in a way that provides the most benefit
while minimizing the most harm.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sheri Whitethorn
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99508

From:	carol race
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Jesse Kiehl; Sara Hannan; Representative.Andi.Story@akleg.gov
Subject:	New Regulation on distributions of funds for education
Date:	Friday, July 25, 2025 10:51:48 AM

[You don't often get email from racecarol@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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My name is Carol Race and I live in Juneau Alaska. I am writing to oppose the new proposed regulations that would hurt all local school district's funding. Our kids education is being hit from all directions and this purposed regulation will further limit education for our children. Please vote No.
Thank you
Sent from my iPhone

From: Chris Richardson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.990(b)
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:07:49 AM

[You don't often get email from richardson@gci.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,

This email is to register my opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.990(b), particularly as they relate to the limits and definition of "local contributions." Our schools are facing an existential funding crisis at both the state and federal levels.

It is absurd to limit the amount of funds that can be contributed by communities who value education and would like better outcomes for their children. It is even more absurd to treat non-cash contributions as counting toward the absurd limit on local contributions.

Thanks,

Chris Richardson
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99502-4223

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jan Caulfield
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: OPPOSE Proposed Regs on Local Contributions, changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:12:55 AM

You don't often get email from janiceacaulfield@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development

I am writing to OPPOSE the proposed changes on local contributions in the regulations (4 AAC 09) of the Department of Education and Early Development.

I am a 45 year resident of Alaska, retired small business owner, parent of two adults who were educated from K-12 in the Juneau School District, and former member of the Harborview Elementary School Site Council in Juneau.

Alaska's schools are in financial crisis, due to years of inaction by the Alaska Legislature to raise the base student allocation (BSA) to keep up with inflation — and now the recent veto by Gov. Dunleavy of the modest $700 BSA increase adopted by a bipartisan vote of the Legislature in 2025.

To further financially starve Alaska's public schools by adopting this regulation change is unconscionable.

Because schools have not received an adequate BSA for many years, disparities among districts may be rising as districts try to meet students' educational needs through local contributions (funding to the cap), partnerships, and in-kind services.

The ANSWER TO DISPARITY IS TO INCREASE THE BSA, so it is a higher proportion of each district's budget. This will "raise all boats" and will benefit Alaska's children, families, communities, economy and workforce.

Conversely, this proposed regulation change will drive all districts down to a "lowest common denominator" by counting additional expenditures and in-kind services against the local funding cap.

I concur with the Juneau School Board and Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) in their opposition to this regulation change.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments,

Janice Caulfield
Juneau, Alaska 99801
[redacted]

From: David Howell
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment for 4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990(b)
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:23:37 AM

You don't often get email from jhowell222@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

Thank you for taking comments on this important issue. Alaska's school funding has not come close to keeping up with inflation and implementing this policy would put schools further behind.

We don't expect other state or federal institutions to continue providing the same services with flat funding year after year. By flat funding schools it is an annual budget cut due to the impacts of inflation so they are really being asked to do the same or more with less.

The state of Alaska should use federal impact aid dollars like every other state in the nation and use it to fund districts that it's actually meant for. This of course would cost the state more money because they would have to come up with the BSA dollars that they are currently back filling with federal money. This would not be a bad thing though as it would enable districts to do things like raise teacher pay, fix an endless backlog of maintenance issues, and provide teachers with an actual retirement plan not just TRS III.

In short this proposal should be rejected as it would further hurt schools in an attempt to save the state money.

Best,
David

David Howell
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Kent Runion
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:30:10 AM

You don't often get email from krunion1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned teacher and resident of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine "in-kind" contributions provided by our city.

These changes will:

- Limit student access to after-school activities, athletics, and enrichment programs
- Affect the essential partnership between the City of Valdez and our schools
- Create uncertainty in school budgets with vague definitions and reporting requirements

Our community depends on strong partnerships between the City of Valdez and Valdez City Schools to support students. Counting city-supported services, like our School Resource Officer or recreational facilities, against allowable school funding erodes this partnership and diminishes local control. These regulatory proposals will harm students, weaken local partnerships, and threaten the very programs that help our children thrive.

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe and effective schools. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,
Kent Runion

From: Thomas Paul
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: OPPOSE Proposed Regs on Local Contributions, changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:43:04 AM

You don't often get email from tompaulak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development

I am writing to OPPOSE the proposed changes on local contributions in the regulations (4 AAC 09) of the Department of Education and Early Development.

I am a 52 year resident of Alaska, retired from state government, as well as a commercial fisherman, pipeline worker, sawmill worker, journalist, and parent of two children who were educated from K-12 in the Juneau School District.

Alaska's schools are in financial crisis, due to years of inaction by the Alaska Legislature to raise the base student allocation (BSA) to keep up with inflation — along with repeated vetos of increased school funding by Gov. Dunleavy including the most recent modest $700 BSA increase adopted by a bipartisan vote of the Legislature in 2025.

Disparities in funding among school districts is a direct result of this failure to adequately fund education in Alaska. The ANSWER TO DISPARITY IS TO INCREASE THE BSA, so it is a higher proportion of each district's budget. This will "raise all boats" and will benefit Alaska's children, families, communities, economy and workforce.

The proposed regulation changes will only further financially starve Alaska's public schools and is a wrong-headed solution to the issue of disparity in district funding. It is not only the wrong approach it is unconscionable!

Because schools have not received an adequate BSA for many years, disparities among districts may be rising as districts try to meet students' educational needs through local contributions (funding to the cap), partnerships, and in-kind services.

The proposed regulation change will drive all districts down to a "lowest common denominator" by counting additional expenditures and in-kind services against the local funding cap. It is frankly a blatant effort by the current state administration to cover up its mismanagement of state education and funding by hiding the disparities their policies have caused.

I urge you not to adopt the proposed change regarding local contributions to schools.

I concur with the Juneau School Board and Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) in their opposition to this regulation change.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments,

Thomas Paul
Juneau, Alaska 99801

[redacted]

From: Joshua Warren
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: 4 AAC 09 Public Comment
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 12:40:06 PM

You don't often get email from savvyleprechaun@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it concerns;

The State of Alaska should not go forward with these regulatory changes as they will further damage our schools abilities to fund the education needs of Alaska. These schools are already suffering with budget austerity more than is reasonable. To try to help with those dollar pinches local municipalities have been helping where legally allowed.

Reducing the amount of money they can legally help with could lead to even further educational collapse. As that constitutional requirement continues to falter it will also greatly damage Alaska's already faltering economy. Families and those thinking of starting families that are an important pillar of the economy will go to other states where they have more confidence in the education of their children.

As to the other states we could avoid this and all other disparity test regulations if we just followed in the footsteps of every single other state and used this aid funding as a supplement instead of a supplanting of state spending.

So we should refuse this new regulation and craft regulations to use the aid funds properly allowing municipalities to fund schools to the level they and their voters decide.

Josh Warren

From: Cheryl Stromme
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Oppose the DEED plan
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 1:16:24 PM

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To the State Board of Education

I oppose the plan to further limit funding from municipalities to their local schools. I believe that communities have the right to offer the best eduction they can to their students.

Please listen to Alaskans. Government exits to support its people.

Cheryl Stromme

From: Sharon Clawson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Impact Aid Reduction and local contributions
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 7:56:12 PM

[You don't often get email from sharonrandevu@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Board Members:

Please get off the Catch 22 merry go round the State's Impact Aid Reduction puts our school districts and the Board on. Allow districts to keep federal funds without penal t which then leads to more required federal regulations, leading to local districts not being free to support their own student needs.

Eliminate or amend effectively the Impact Aid Reduction and give Alaskans and yourselves a break from this mess that interferes with local schools unnecessarily and unproductively.

Sharon Clawson
Anchorage resident since 1970
Sent from my iPad

From: Vines, Leslie A (DOL)
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment – Equity and Support for Anchorage Students
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 1:30:19 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Dear Alaska State Board of Education,

As a Black woman and lifelong Anchorage resident, I am writing as both a parent and grandmother with deep concerns about the disparities in education within the Anchorage School District (ASD). I have three daughters—one of whom is half Alaska Native—and two grandchildren, all born and raised here. Their futures, along with the futures of thousands of other minority students, depend on the quality and equity of our schools.

While ASD is recognized as one of the most diverse school districts in the nation, this diversity is not reflected in equitable outcomes. Recent data shows that **Black and Alaska Native students in Anchorage score only around 21–25% proficiency in core subjects like math and reading—nearly half the rate of White students.** English learners and economically disadvantaged students also face similar struggles.

We cannot accept these gaps as normal. These disparities are not just numbers—they represent the challenges that my daughters and grandchildren face every day. When funding is cut or municipal aid is restricted, it is these very students who lose access to transportation, nutritious meals, safe school environments, and opportunities for enrichment.

I strongly urge the State Board of Education to:

- **Reject any policies or proposals that would further limit municipal aid or local resources for schools.**
- **Prioritize funding and initiatives that close achievement gaps for minority students and Alaska Native children.**
- **Ensure programs like work experience, tutoring, and supportive services are strengthened, not reduced.**

Our children deserve a school system that values every student, regardless of race, background, or income. As a mother and grandmother, I ask you to stand with families like mine who are fighting for equity and opportunity in Anchorage schools.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Vines, B.S., MAM
Statewide Program Coordinator, WIOA Youth/Opportunity Youth
Department of Labor and Workforce Development: Alaska Workforce Investment Board
[redacted]

“Opportunity in Action: Shaping Alaska’s Future, One Youth at a Time”

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

RESOLUTION #25-33

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA, OPPOSING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DEFINTION OF LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN TITLE 4 CHAPTER 9 OF ALASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development has proposed regulatory changes under 4 AAC 09 that would expand the definition of 'local contributions' beyond its historical interpretation, capturing community supports that have long existed outside the statutory cap; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has consistently failed to provide adequate education funding to school districts within incorporated communities, which has driven a need for municipal governments to support local school districts through providing additional services and funding sources to enhance educational opportunities and lessen dependence on fluctuating state and federal revenue streams; and

WHEREAS, due to a lack of state support and a commitment to continued student success, the City of Valdez has a long-standing practice of partnering with Valdez City Schools to invest in a robust public education system by providing support to our local schools through both direct financial contributions and additional forms of support that reflect our community's values; and

WHEREAS, the proposed reclassification will severely limit the ability of municipal governments to support local schools, disproportionately penalizing districts like Valdez that have cultivated collaborative partnerships with their municipality to enhance opportunities for their community's children; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdez owns the public school facilities in Valdez, and the proposed regulation would inappropriately hinder the city's ability to maintain and improve our own buildings and maintain flexible community programing in the facilities; and

WHEREAS, if adopted, the proposed regulatory change will adversely impact all families in Valdez, including families who choose to home school their children, since it will threaten existing funding for extracurricular activities and community schools programing; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes are not mandated by federal law or requested by a federal agency but are instead a state-level policy choice, positioning Alaska as the only state actively pursuing regulatory strategies to offset its education funding responsibilities by redirecting federal Impact Aid dollars to itself first; and

WHEREAS, the state has not demonstrated that the proposed regulatory changes will resolve Alaska's existing disparity test compliance issues, nor has it provided evidence that expanding the definition of local contributions will have any measurable impact on achieving the desired federal determination; and

WHEREAS the proposed regulations introduce additional administrative and accounting burdens for districts, municipalities, and the state, likely increasing costs without providing clarity or resolving existing challenges transparently or equitably; and

WHEREAS, restricting the scope of allowable local contributions diminishes local control, limits a community's ability to safeguard public assets and infrastructure, and disregards the right of communities to invest in their educational priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Valdez City Council strongly opposes the proposed regulatory changes to 4 AAC 09 that would expand the definition of 'local contributions' in a manner that restricts community financial support, erodes local control, and reduces the overall resources available to Alaska's students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA, that:

Section 1. The City of Valdez urges the state to prioritize open dialogue with school and municipal leaders before adopting regulations with significant fiscal and operational consequences and to work collaboratively to protect federal Impact Aid, maintain local authority, and recognize the unique needs of districts with strong community partnerships.

Section 2. The Mayor (or Mayor Pro Tempore), and the City Manager (or his designee) are authorized to advocate on behalf of the City of Valdez in opposition to this proposed regulatory change and in favor of policies that uphold educational excellence, equity, and local control and support while maintaining responsible, community-driven support for Alaska's public schools.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA, this 15th day of July, 2025.

City of Valdez, Alaska

Dennis Fleming, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheri L. Pierce, MMC, City Clerk

SEAL OF THE CITY INC. 1901 VALDEZ, ALASKA

Comments regarding Proposed changes on Local Contributions in the Regulations of the Department of Education and Early Development: 4 AAC 09.985 & 4 AAC 09.990 (b)

Please accept my comments to the proposed changes.
I have tried to read both the pros and the cons of these changes. I also read the Opinion piece that Gov Dunleavy and Commissioner Bishop published.

I oppose adopting these proposed changes for so many reasons. Foremost is the "reasons to pass them", that Gov Dunleavy and Commissioner Bishop publish. Mississippi?? Their regs are the lowest in the Nation. Outperform Alaska students? They don't test their homeschoolers. No set curriculum to follow. Harvard Study? That was debunked when the professor spoke to the legislators years ago. If we pass these regs we are dumbing down many of our students.

Not recognized is that so many public-school students are excelling and succeeding. Millions of dollars in scholarships are handed down in high schools. Public Schools are for the public. Equal access for wealthy families and poor families. Just like a community. Equal access for students with two parents and students with one, or being raised by someone else. What happens to the kids with no transportation? Do we become school districts of the haves and have nots? Yes, we need to adapt and change to accommodate family needs, but we also need to have standards of completion.

By not funding education properly over the years and keeping up with inflation, schools have suffered and believe me the Majority of Alaskan's know exactly what has happened.

Please except my comments as being <u>against passing these regulations</u>. Thank you.

Susan Wilken, 7 decades in Fairbanks; Former State Board of Education Member (our group developed State Outcomes for Education and visited every district in Alaska. We represented the four judicial districts and rural Alaska.) Former Fairbanks School Board President. B.S. Social Sciences, Oregon State University; had Alaska Teaching Certificate years ago, Masters in Education, UAF, Curriculum and Instruction; raised four children, attended Fairbanks Public Schools.

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Resolution 25-26-1

A Resolution of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Opposing the Commissioner of Education's Proposed Amendments to 4 AAC Chapter 09 Regarding the Financing of Public Schools and Required Local Contributions

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) is committed to providing a high-quality public education to all students across its vast and diverse region; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska's Foundation Formula determines funding for public schools through a combination of the Base Student Allocation (BSA), student count adjustments, and required local and federal contributions; and

WHEREAS, Alaska statute permits boroughs and municipalities to contribute additional funding to support their local school districts, beyond the required local contribution, subject to a statutory cap; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough has a longstanding history of funding KPBSD near or at the maximum allowable contribution under state law, demonstrating a strong local commitment to education; and WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development has proposed changes to 4 AAC Chapter 09 that would redefine which local appropriations and in-kind services are considered permissible under the local contribution cap;

WHEREAS, these proposed changes would significantly limit the ability of boroughs like the Kenai Peninsula Borough to make supplemental investments in their public schools; and

WHEREAS, these changes may also significantly restrict the ability of tribal entities and community organizations to make supplemental investments in schools or school programs; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulation would include in the state-imposed cap all local revenues, such as fundraising, food service income, donations, and other community supports, disincentivizing municipal and community investment in schools; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes were initially submitted as emergency regulations with inadequate notice and without a clear showing of justification or coordination with local education stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, restricting the definition of local contributions would undermine local governance, reduce funding flexibility, and increase the risk of program reductions, staffing losses, and service disruptions for KPBSD students and families; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's failure to pass the federal Impact Aid Disparity Test for FY26 was not due to districts receiving lawful local contributions, but rather due to technical accounting issues-issues which should be addressed and appealed prior to making regulatory changes that would harm students; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Impact Aid Program has stated that it neither asked nor recommended that DEED change its state regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Impact Aid Program has stated that "State regulations are not within the Impact Aid Program's interest or purview";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education opposes the proposed amendments to 4 AAC Chapter 09 and any regulatory or policy changes that restrict lawful local contributions and reduce local authority to invest in education;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District urges the Alaska State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, and the Governor to reject these regulatory amendments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District supports the State of Alaska pursuing an appeal of the federal Impact Aid Disparity Test results, rather than enacting changes that would undermine Alaska's public school system and local partnerships.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education this 7th day of JULY, 2025.

Zen Kelly, President

Board of Education

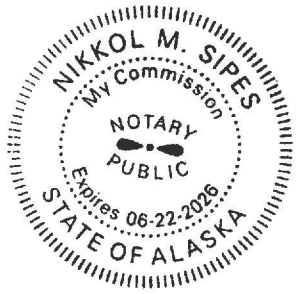
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Attest:

Nikkol Sipes

Notary Public, State of Alaska

My Commission Expires 06/22/2026



Board Members:

- Zen Kelly, President
- Jason Tauriainen, Vice President
- Virginia Morgan, Clerk
- Penny Vadla, Treasurer
- Tim Daugharty, Member
- Patti Truesdell, Member
- Sarah Douthit, Member
- Kelley Cizek, Member
- Dianne MacRae, Member

SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

July 23, 2025

Chair Sally Stockhausen
State Board of Education & Early Development
333 Willoughby Ave, 9th Floor
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chair Stockhausen and Board Members:

I write today to urge the Board of Education & Early Development to disapprove the regulation change that would change the long-understood Alaska definition of local contribution. The change is unneeded, poorly written, a gross overreach of executive branch authority, and would not accomplish its stated goals.

When presenting this regulation change at the last state board meeting, one of the reasons cited was to make the definitions in statute clearer for school districts. If that were true, the department would not have presented such a vague and confusing proposal—one that lends itself only to more misunderstandings.

The proposal references federal statute without any context, replacing a two-line regulation with multiple paragraphs of oblique federal code and regulations. It also removes a clear, specific list of items that are considered in-kind services and replaces it with the vague umbrella term "services." Thus it neither simplifies nor clarifies.

Indeed, no one in the state fully understands the impact this could have to schools. This reg, as written, isn't even explicit in who it applies to. The definition of "local contribution" has no explicit reference to funds from municipalities. It could easily be read to apply to funding from Tribes or nonprofits. Aside from the obvious issue—that if these entities want to help educate children, we ought not stop them—it is also problematic, since the statute this regulation draws authority from is AS 14.17.410, which deals with state, municipal, and federal funding for public schools. Any regulation that applies more broadly than that exceeds the Executive Branch's authority—and this one very much does.

As best I can tell, the department has not done the work to reach out to school districts and get their expert opinions on the reg since sharing the very first draft. That prompted multiple contacts from many districts and professional associations. Their concerns and questions are still not addressed. So when I say no one understands the full implication of this regulation, I include the very people pushing for it. That's irresponsible and poor policy work.

ALASKA SENATE
STATE CAPITOL ● JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801 ● (907) 465-4947 ● FAX (907) 465-2108
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Because of the lack of real groundwork done on this regulation package, even assuming EED later does the work necessary to educate school districts on how this would impact their budgets, districts would be budgeting on complete guesswork for at least the first budget cycle after this is implemented. In fact, one budget cycle is a generous estimate. In all likelihood, school districts would go years without understanding what, exactly, they're supposed to be doing to comply with state regs. I respectfully ask the board not to muddy the waters by considering this reg. After all, one of the department's stated reasons for the change is to clarify.

Furthermore, this proposal is both unnecessary and destructive. In its justification for the reg, the department references the federal disparity test and the potential for Alaska to fail it without changing how we have, for decades, defined local contribution. That's interesting, since Commissioner Bishop said on the record she does not believe Alaska has, in fact, failed the disparity test. On this, we agree. I applaud her for filing an appeal with the federal government arguing that very thing. In fact, in a July 14th letter of this year to the United States Department of Education, the state says "Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026." That's correct. So what is the purpose of the proposed change?

If the concern is that we might fail the disparity test in the future, this is an extremely poor way to handle that concern. In the past, when Alaska has appealed to the feds, they have granted an exemption that takes into account Alaska's unique circumstances in providing free, appropriate public education. That's why, today, the state does not have to consider the state funding for pupil transportation in the calculation of disparity. When that exemption was granted, however, EED did not ask to apply the same exemption to municipal pupil transportation dollars. The department could and should have.

That change alone would make a significant difference in future disparity test calculations, with zero negative impact on school district budgets. The department even acknowledges that possibility in the July 14th letter, which belatedly pitches that money school districts put into pupil transportation fund "qualif[ies] as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts." In this, too, the department is correct. So why would the board put those funds under the cap 'to comply with the disparity test?'

In addition, with an increase in the base student allocation, the chances of failing the disparity test in the future are slim. With more state dollars in the calculation, there's no need to permanently throttle local education dollars. Which brings us back the essential question: what is the purpose of this poorly written, poorly understood reg?

ALASKA SENATE
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SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

Another reason from the Commissioner is to "increase equity." This implies the current regs disadvantage REAAs. But in the most recent federal disparity test there were 7 REAAs in the top 5 percent of pupils. And the regulation as proposed would not touch the funding at the Alaska school district that spends the most—by a huge margin—per student. If EED is looking to improve funding equity, this reg will not accomplish it. In fact it will do the opposite by not touching funding at those high spending REAAs. Restricting one kind of funding and not another is just not equitable.

I question, too, whether achieving an undefined funding equity is a statutory duty of the department. Nothing in the proposal cites a state statute that gives the department or your board the authority to do that.

Finally, the commissioner has claimed multiple times that this regulation is simply to clarify legislative intent. The only inference I can draw is that she argues a change is needed to properly implement what the legislature wanted all along: to pass the disparity test no matter the impact to children and teachers. That is false. I have worked in the Capitol since SB 36 was signed in 1998 (with the exception of some time staffing your board in 1999 & 2000.). The legislators who wrote our current formula never raised an objection to finding some non-classroom expenditures outside the cap. They were well aware districts have done so for decades. Neither did any legislator or governor introduce a change like this. The proposal is an executive branch overreach disguised as a housekeeping measure.

Not only does the reg override the legislature's enactments, it overrides local governments' powers of local control. Duly elected members of borough assemblies and city councils are in office to make local funding decisions. By disallowing these elected officials from appropriating money to feed their kids, send them to compete in sports, or transport them to and from school, you would disenfranchise Alaska voters. If a community agrees they want to fund their public schools under the law, why create a reg that won't let them?

In the absence of local funding, there is only one entity that can fill that funding gap: the State of Alaska's general fund. This regulation will cost shift current public school programs from the municipality onto the state at a time when the general fund is strapped for cash. What possible reason is there to do that, when there is no failure of the disparity test, no change in state law, and the change will only result in chaos and confusion?

Lacking a rational explanation, a valid public purpose, statutory authority, or a clear, effective proposal, I urge you to disapprove this regulation.

ALASKA SENATE
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SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

Sincerely,

Sen. Jesse Kiehl

ALASKA SENATE

STATE CAPITOL • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801 • (907) 465-4947 • FAX (907) 465-2108

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ANCHORAGE CHAMBER of COMMERCE

1016 West Sixth Avenue, Suite 303
Anchorage, AK 99501

July 24, 2025

Board of Education and Early Development
Attn: Executive Secretary to the Board, Kathijo Jolin
P. O. Box 110500, 333 Willoughby Avenue, 9th Floor, Juneau, AK 99811
Electronically submitted to eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

Re: Support for Alaska Public Education

To the esteemed members of the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development,

As one of the largest business organizations in Alaska, the mission at the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce is to advance a successful business climate. For over 100 years we have served as a resource where members can gain business knowledge, strength, and insight, and we are motivated to support growth and success for our members, strengthening the economy for Anchorage and ultimately for all of Alaska.

This letter is expressing opposition to the proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 of the Alaska Administrative Code, regarding the local contribution in the public education funding formula

The proposed changes to local contributions in the regulations of the Department of Education & Early Development referenced in AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990(b) defining local contributions would have demonstrable negative downstream consequences to Alaska school districts, significantly reducing resources available to students.

Further constraints on the Anchorage School District will degrade the long-term economic health of Anchorage and, as the largest community and economic hub of Alaska, will have ripple effects statewide. In the current Alaska revenue environment, all students need support from every community willing and able to provide it. Local municipalities supporting the success of their students should not be burdened with additional regulation slowing down the process, nor held back from establishing mutually-beneficial partnerships. ASD projects a regulation such as this would risk $15 million in local funding.

Anchorage School District is Alaska's largest, most diverse school district and our nation's 115th largest school district in the 3rd least populous state. The sheer size and scale of the Anchorage School District relative to our population requires extra attention.

Alaska has a robust history of innovative education solutions. The Commissioner's own interventions during her tenure as ASD Superintendent into Alaska Middle College School have been embraced by the community, and beloved by students and families seeking to launch at an accelerated pace. The Academies of Anchorage are already showing impact with freshman metrics on-track to graduation, demonstrating the positive effects the context of career and life readiness

ANCHORAGE CHAMBER of COMMERCE
1016 West Sixth Avenue, Suite 303
Anchorage, AK 99501

have to students, as well as the external support from business relative to workforce development. Alaska charter schools have been studied as best in the nation, and Anchorage is home to more than one-third of these Alaska charter school students.

However, with the pervasive outmigration across Anchorage and Alaska, we won't get the chance for additional transformative solutions such as these without the trust of families. We must demonstrate that we believe in their students' success and are willing to fund their education, including the support of local municipalities.

The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce opposes the proposed regulations, and encourages the Alaska School Board to vote against their adoption. We believe these regulations will offer significantly more harm than benefit to the Alaska ecosystem. We urge you to consider alternatives to this intervention to maintain local funding and meet policy goals.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing the business environment across our great state.

Sincerely,

Kathleen McArdle

Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
President & CEO

From: Kathleen McArdle
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Anchorage Chamber opposition to proposed changes on local contributions 4 AAC 09
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 12:03:37 PM
Attachments: Anchorage Chamber Supports Alaska Public Education 072425.pdf

You don't often get email from kathleen@anchoragechamber.org. Learn why this is important

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July 24, 2025

Board of Education and Early Development
Attn: Executive Secretary to the Board, Kathijo Jolin
P. O. Box 110500, 333 Willoughby Avenue, 9th Floor, Juneau, AK 99811
Electronically submitted to eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

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Thank you for your commitment to advancing the business environment across our great state.

Sincerely,

Kathleen McArdle, PMP
Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
President & CEO

[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99501
[redacted]

COALITION FOR EDUCATION EQUITY OF ALASKA

July 25, 2025

Dear Board Chair Stockhausen and esteemed Board Members,

CEE appreciates that you opened the proposed regulation change on Local Contribution in 4 AAC 09 to receive public comments and further consideration.

As you have now heard from multiple individuals and organizations, this proposed regulation change is not required, and thus the proposal itself is confounding.

We are glad that we waited until this week to submit this testimon, as new information has become available that is quite literally opposite of why DEED has put forward the regulation change, and the information comes directly from the DEED appeal to the DOE.

On July 14th the Bruman Group filed an appeal letter to the federal DOE on behalf of DEED. In the appeal letter, DEED contends that specific funds, such as those for food service and pupil transportation, are designated for specific services and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction. DEED further claims that the specific funding for food service and pupil transportation should be considered "special cost differentials" and thereby must be excluded from the disparity test calculations. DOE included the funding in the most recent disparity test calculations, yet in previous disparity tests, the funding for pupil transportation etc. was not considered.

We are asking that the board acknowledge arguments made in the DEED appeal letter are opposite to the arguments put forward as justification for the proposal to change Alaska's local contribution regulations. DEED claims the state is already in compliance and thus if that's true, then the regulation change is not needed. Furthermore, if food and transportation money should not be considered in determining disparity, why is DEED seeking to change the local contribution regulations to cover that (and other) funding? The appeal filed by the Bruman Group undermines the claim that the proposed local contribution regulation change was put forward to ensure compliance with the disparity test.

It is critically important to note that DOE never asked DEED to change regulations, and the proposed regulation change is not mentioned at all in the letter appealing the disparity test ruling. It is even more important to note that if the SOA was adequately funding the public education system in its entirety there would not be a disparity test failure.

Sincerely,

Jamie Burgess
Board President

Caroline Storm
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Jamie Burgess
President

Patrick Mayer
Vice President

Terri Walker
Secretary

Andrew Anderson
Treasurer

Scott Ballard
Member at Large

Caroline Storm
Executive Director

Members

Alaska Gateway School District

Anchorage School District

Chugach School District

Juneau School District

Kake City School District

Kashunamiut School District

Kuspuk School District

Lower Kuskokwim School District

Nome Public Schools

Northwest Arctic Borough School District

Petersburg School District

Unalaska City School District

Yupiit School District

NEA Alaska

Coalition for Education Equity • P.O. Box 90791 Anchorage, Alaska 99509-0791
(907) 399-0582 • www.ceequity.org • director@ceequity.org

Nome Public Schools

PO Box 131~Nome, Alaska 99762
Phone: (907) 443-2231~Fax: (907) 443-5144

July 24, 2025

Alaska State Board of Education
Juneau AK

Dear Chairman Stockhausen and Esteemed Members of the Board:

I write on behalf of Nome Public Schools and the Board of Education to oppose the proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 Local Contributions.

Nome Public Schools currently is not funded to the maximum (cap) by the City of Nome and thus would see no immediate impact; however, this proposed change will still require some additional labor intensive work to ensure a value is placed on all in-kind aspects provided by the City, both currently and for any conceivable future service. For example, any periodic assistance we receive with snow-plowing, the cost of the City providing bus stop shelters and associated upkeep, etc. However, should the funding situation change in the future, the proposed regulation could hamper the desire of the City Council to provide additional services and contributions to support Nome Public Schools. As such, we must oppose such regulatory changes which could at some point be harmful to our district and the education of our children.

In addition, other districts across the State of Alaska who are currently well-funded by their local municipality will experience unnecessary cuts in funding in a time where funding for education is under assault by not only our own Governor but the current administration in Washington DC. The reason for this change in regulation is also unnecessary, given the current justification that it is needed to meet the federal disparity guidelines for Impact Aid. The USDOE has not requested this change, and DEED also asserts that Alaska is in compliance, leaving those of us who are responsible for dealing directly with the day to day financial actions in our districts wondering why there is any need for the proposed regulatory change.

Finally, there is concern that other local organizations' contributions (cash or in-kind) could potentially be impacted by this regulation; Nome Public Schools receives contributions and has robust collaborations with a variety of these organizations such as Sitnasuak Native Corporation, Norton Sound Economic Development Council, Bering Strait Native Corporation, Nome Eskimo Community, Kawerak and many others; all of these choose to invest in some way in the education of the children of Nome, much of which is focused on providing culturally affirming and appropriate educational opportunities.

Alaska highly prizes local control and minimal governmental interference; the proposed change reduces the ability of each community to decide how best to educate their children, and interferes with long-standing community partnerships which provided much needed programs and services to school districts. The proposed change would bring about adverse financial impact on districts that are already struggling with deficits, and are denied needed funding by both Alaska's own Governor and the current government in Washington.

We urge the State Board of Education to vote down this proposed change. We fully support any efforts by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to work with school boards and superintendents to pursue Impact Aid compliance solutions which do not penalize robust local support and collaboration.

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of our comments and concerns.

Jamie Burgess
Superintendent
Nome Public Schools

THE BRUMAN GROUP PLLC

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July 14, 2025

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
Faatimah Muhammad, Director
Impact Aid Program
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

ELECTRONIC MAIL DELIVERY
Faatimah.Muhammad@ed.gov

RE: Request for a Hearing Pursuant to Sections 7009 and 7011(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 7709, 7711(a)) Regarding Alaska's FY2026 Equalization Determination

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Dear Director Muhammad:

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development ("Alaska" or "the State") received the U.S. Department of Education ("Department") Report for the Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 (State Fiscal Year 2026) under Section 7009(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 ("Determination") on May 16, 2025.

Alaska hereby appeals the Determination of the Department pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a). *Codified at* 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3). Specifically, Alaska disputes the certification denial under Section 7009 for fiscal year (FY) 2026. This denial prevents Alaska from taking into consideration Impact Aid payments when calculating state aid to districts for FY2026. A copy of the Determination is attached.

I. This Appeal is Timely Submitted Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1).

Determination appeals submitted by State Education Agencies ("SEAs") must be received in writing "within 60 days of receipt of the determination." 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1). Alaska received its initial Determination refusing certification on May 16, 2025. This appeal is submitted by U.S. Mail and e-mail, in accordance with the Determination's letter of instruction, on July 14, 2025, which is within 60 days of the receipt date. The Department of Education and Early Development (the SEA) is furnishing a copy of this request to all Local Education Agencies ("LEAs") in the State in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3).

II. Factual Background

Alaska submitted its disparity submission of state fiscal year 2024 data used for fiscal year 2026 certification of its state aid program as equalizing expenditures on March 3, 2025. With that submission, Alaska provided formal notice of its intent to consider a portion of Impact Aid payments when allocating state aid to schools for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, as permitted by Section 7009(c)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA").

The Department requested descriptions for several items over the following weeks and confirmed receipt of all necessary material on May 2, 2025. The Department also notified LEAs of their right to a hearing in accordance with ESEA Section 7009(c)(2) on March 25, 2025. No LEAs requested a hearing. On May 16, 2025, the Department issued its Determination.

In its Determination, the Department found the State's disparity to be 26.88%, which is greater than the 25% disparity permitted by statute, and denied Alaska's certification for FY2026. The Department's decision largely rests on its analysis of Alaska's consideration of LEA transfers between funds and the related finding that such transfers do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Alaska disputes this finding and the underlying rationale.

III. Statement of Disputed Issues of Fact and Law

A. The Department Erred in Fact and Law When Finding That the State Did Not Meet the Disparity Test as Presented for Certification.

The Department questioned Alaska's consideration and treatment of LEA transfers between funds in its FY2026 disparity submission; however, the State's interpretation aligns with established federal direction and national accounting standards. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds. Accordingly, Alaska disputes the Department's finding.

Alaska also disputes the Department's finding that amounts transferred between funds do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Specific funds such as food service and pupil transportation, for example, are earmarked for specific services and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction. When amounts are added to such funds, including through transfers, those revenues are restricted to supporting specific costs that easily meet the definition of special cost differentials. For example, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to funds LEAs transferred into a specific fund for transportation, which qualify as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs (*e.g.*, daily airplane rides) arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska recognized those revenues as associated with special cost differentials and excluded them from total revenues.

B. Even if the Department's Underlying Findings Are Upheld, Alaska Must be Certified if Deemed to Meet the Disparity Test Under an Alternate Method.

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026 based on its original submission since, as detailed above, the Department erred in its initial determination. However, if the tribunal upholds the Department's determination (dated May 16, 2025), the State should be permitted the opportunity to resubmit its request. The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to

the State meeting the disparity standard. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Alaska notes that the method used in its FY2026 disparity submission was selected, at least in part, to comply with a legal position the Department took in its initial FY2022 certification determination report for Alaska, with which Alaska disagrees. Specifically, Alaska disagrees with the Department's position that the State must include transportation-related revenues and expenses in the disparity test under 34 C.F.R. § 222.162. Alaska's pupil transportation funding system is not a part of Alaska's program of state aid for free public education and was recognized as such by the Department in previous years. Accordingly, pupil transportation revenues and expenditures should not qualify as revenue for current expenditures. Alaska put forth its position on this issue in its request for a hearing of that determination in 2021, has continuously preserved this position, and again restates that position and disputed issue of law herein.

C. The Department is Estopped from Refusing Certification for the Proffered Reasons.

Based on the Department's prior conduct in working with Alaska regarding its disparity submissions, the Department is estopped from denying Alaska's certification based on Alaska's inclusion of pupil transportation funds or recognition of transfer adjustments.

D. Failure to Certify Alaska for FY2026 Would Harm the Federal Interest

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026; failure to do so would result in harm to the federal interest. Even if the specific findings at issue in the Determination are upheld, to the extent Alaska can demonstrate it meets the disparity standard under any allowable methodology, Alaska should be certified and permitted to consider Impact Aid payments in disbursing its state aid to districts for FY2026. Failure to do so would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Moreover, the Department's current position would require Alaska to upend its state aid program for public education and have the unintended result of forcing the State to issue state aid for free public education in a manner that significantly dis-equalizes education funding. Consequently, maintaining the Department's determination would create an identifiable harm, rather than resolve one. If the Department's determination is not reversed, Alaska would lose $80 million dollars that would otherwise be available for public school funding in the state. Given Alaska's equalized state aid system, this would impact districts inequitably. Such a result is inconsistent with the legislative intent and federal purpose to provide a statutory exception to states that equalize their school finance formula across all school districts in the state and permit such states to account for Impact Aid within that formula. *See generally Tangipahoa Par. Sch. Bd. v. U.S. Dep't of Educ.*, 821 F.2d 1022, 1030 (5th Cir. 1987) (applying equitable factors to the Department's enforcement actions and questioning the appropriateness of enforcement when legislative intent was met). The Determination is contrary to the purpose of the ESEA and thus in error.

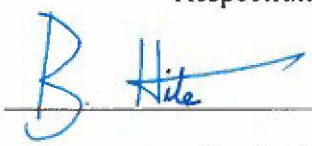
In addition to its inconsistency with the legislative intent of Impact Aid to provide a statutory exception in states that equalize their school finance formulas across all school districts, the Determination is also inconsistent with the Department's stated policy priority of returning

education to the states. *See* Proposed Priorities and Definitions, 90 Fed. Reg. 21,710, 21,712 (proposed May 21, 2025). Alaska designed and operates its program of state aid for free public education as an equalized system within this framework. Determining Alaska meets the disparity test does not impact the Department's Impact Aid allocation to Alaska school districts; rather, the impact affects only the State's funding and allocations, allowing the State to operate its own State aid program for free public education as designed. Federal decertification, on the other hand, would upend Alaska's State aid program for public education, resulting in unintended inequity for Alaska school districts, and could force Alaska to cut essential services or redirect instructional funds—undermining the very students Impact Aid is meant to support, especially in rural and Alaska Native communities.

II. Conclusion

Alaska respectfully requests a hearing before the Office of Hearings and Appeals pursuant to Section 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a) of the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 222.165. The State further requests that the assigned Administrative Law Judge permit an oral briefing to assist with the resolution of disputed material facts. *Id.* at § 222.165(g)(2). Alaska does not waive its right to seek other resolutions for this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer S. Mauskapf, Esq.
Bonnie Graham, Esq.
Blake Hite, Esq.
The Bruman Group, PLLC
Counsel for the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature

Alaska State Board of Education
Attn: Secretary Kathijo Jolin
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811

July 25, 2025

Via email: eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

RE: Proposed Regulation Change (4 AAC 09)

Dear State Board of Education,

Thank you for your service to our children and their education. I am writing to sincerely ask that you reject the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations and diligently work with stakeholders for a well-vetted solution on how to address disparity concerns.

It is critical to know the rationale that the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) provided in its recently applied for waiver of the FY26 federal disparity submission. In its July 14, 2025, letter (enclosed) to the U.S. Department of Education's Impact Aid Program, the Bruman Group, counsel for DEED, stressed that transportation costs and nutrition should not be counted in the disparity test due to great geographic cost differentials of those expenditures by region in our state. Specifically, the appeal states:

> "Consistent with long standing guidance…Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds…Specific funds such as food service and pupil transportation, for example, are earmarked for specific purposes and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction…For example, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to funds LEAs transferred into a specific fund for transportation, which qualify as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs (e.g., daily airplane rides) arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts.
>
> Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to the State meeting the disparity standard [emphasis added]. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest."

The proposed local contribution regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 would limit these exemptions currently being requested in the waiver to the federal government. These two actions contradict each other and do not make sense that the State Board would want to adopt them in regulations now.

Contact
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th St Juneau, AK 99801

907-465-3744
rep.andi.story@akleg.gov

Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature

All of Alaska's children face a very uncertain fiscal future for their education and potential loss of educational opportunities. I am urging the Board to work with stakeholders to ensure that their local funding capabilities are not disrupted by changes to well-established regulations that would have negative impacts on all children, rural and urban. Rural, REAA and urban districts are in the top 95 percent that are removed before computing the disparity test. These proposed changes will not fix equity issues. The federal Department of Education states that the disparity test does not guarantee equity between districts as it is a very complex issue.

I ask that you reject these proposed local contribution regulation changes and instead work with stakeholders to collaboratively understand the issues and identify solutions.

I believe all the levels of governance that address education policy and funding of our children and adults' education in our state need to be working well together. I am committed to this.

Thank you for considering my comments. I sincerely appreciate the work that you do.

Respectfully,

Andi Story

Representative Andi Story
House District 3

Enclosure

Contact
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th St Juneau, AK 99801

907-465-3744
rep.andi.story@akleg.gov

From: Kim Bailey
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 4:44:21 PM

[You don't often get email from kimofalaska@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing in opposition to the proposal to limit municipal aid to local schools, mainly because this proposed change is detrimental to Alaska's public education, undermines local control, and is a shortsighted attempt to address a state-created problem.

First of all, this proposal undermines local control and community support. It limits a community's ability to support its schools in ways it deems appropriate. Local communities and school districts are best equipped to understand and address their unique educational needs and financial realities. This regulation stifles local innovation and dedication to education. Also, the proposal is an act of government overreach.

Secondly, this proposal is in flawed alignment with Federal Impact Aid Program. The Federal Impact Aid Program's disparity test does not adequately consider the unique and vital local contributions made by Alaska communities. Applying a federal framework blindly to state funding mechanisms creates a significant disconnect. Alaska is the only state required to pass this specific disparity test. This highlights a fundamental issue with how Alaska utilizes Impact Aid.

The root problem of this proposal is the Impact Aid Deduction, not local contributions. The core issue is the state's practice of deducting Impact Aid from the state aid entitlement. (This means if a local school district is eligible for federal aid, the state deducts it from their share of state education funding.) Alaska is the only state in the country that does this. This deduction should be re-evaluated, not further complicated by regulatory alignment that penalizes local contributions. The entire problem could be solved by the state removing the Impact Aid deduction from the public education funding formula. This would be a direct solution without imposing burdens or constricting local efforts.

Next, the proposal exacerbates existing funding challenges. Alaska's public schools are facing severe funding challenges. This regulation will siphon more money away from classrooms and students when they can least afford it. It is unclear that this change will even fix the disparity test problem. Enacting such a draconian measure without assurance of a solution is extremely shortsighted and could cause entirely avoidable harm to districts.

This proposal also attacks collaboration and innovation. The proposed change is not just a "technical adjustment." It's an attack on schools, communities, and the collaborative spirit that educators, administrators, and local officials have fostered to support students. School districts and local governments work creatively to offset non-instructional costs to provide the best educational environments. This regulation undermines those efforts.

Finally, it is important to know that alternative, collaborative solutions already exist. Instead of this regulation, DEED should emulate the collaborative approach taken in 2023 by working with the Director of the Federal Impact Aid Program to prevent negative budgetary impacts. The State Board should explore all available options, including seeking waivers for student nutrition and transportation. This is a common-sense solution that avoids detrimental impacts on local systems of equity and demonstrates good faith in protecting districts from federal regulations that don't fit Alaska's unique landscape.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Kimberly Bailey

Anchorage

Alaska State Legislature

Official Business

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska
99801-1182

July 25, 2025

Sally Stockhausen, Chair
Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
333 Willoughby Ave, 9th Floor
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Chair Stockhausen,

We are writing today to express our concerns about the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations. The proposed changes will adversely impact the ability of local communities to support public education and other community initiatives. We request that the State Board of Education and Early Development set the proposed regulatory package aside until a more thorough discussion and collaborative solution with stakeholders is reached.

The proposed regulation changes are so broad and encompassing that their full impact is unclear and may have severe negative consequences for low-income students, students attending public schools on military bases, and students with special needs. It is also unclear what facts and circumstances justify the proposed regulation change.

In recognition of the Commissioner of Education and Early Development's concerns over fairness and compliance with federal disparity, the legislature recently approved a Task Force on Education Funding to analyze public education funding in Alaska and recommend changes to the Alaska State Legislature by the start of the 35th Alaska State Legislature in January 2027. The proposed regulation changes should be set aside in favor of solutions derived from a vigorous legislative process that is public and well-informed.

Thank you for considering this public testimony, which we hope effectively conveys both the urgency of our request and the seriousness with which we approach this matter.

Sincerely,

Sen. Löki Gale Tobin
Chair, Senate Education Committee

Sen. Gary Stevens
Senate President

Sen. Donald Olson
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Sen. Cathy Giessel
Chair, Senate Resources Committee

Sen. Kelly Merrick
Chair, Senate Community and
Regional Affairs Committee

Sen. Scott Kawasaki
Chair, Senate State Affairs Committee

Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson
Chair, Legislative Budget and Audit
Committee

Sen. Matt Claman
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

CC: DEED Commissioner Deena Bishop
James Fields, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
James Fowley, Military Advisory, Alaska Board of Education & Early Development
Pamela Dupras, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Barbara Tyndall, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Kimberly Bergey, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Kathryn McCollum, member, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
Rep. Bryce Edgmon, Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives
Rep. Rebecca Himschoot, co-chair, House Education Committee
Rep. Andi Story, co-chair, House Education Committee
Jordan Shilling, Legislative Director, Gov. Mike Dunleavy
Tyson Gallagher, Chief of Staff, Gov. Mike Dunleavy
Dr. Lisa Parady, Executive Director, Alaska Council of School Administrators
Lon Garrison, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards
Nils Andreassen, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League

From: Michael Mason
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public comments from Senators re: local contribution regulation change
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:23:44 AM
Attachments: 2025.07.25 Senators Public Comments - Local Contribution Regulations - Final.pdf

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Good morning,
Attached is a letter signed by eight members of the Alaska State Senate, which serves as public comments on the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations under consideration by the Alaska Board of Education and Early Development. Please let me know if you need anything. My cellphone number is [redacted].
Be safe out there,

Mike Mason
Staff to Sen. Löki Gale Tobin
[redacted]

ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

ONE SEALASKA PLAZA, SUITE 302 • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
TEL (907) 586-1325 • FAX (907) 463-5480 • WWW.AKML.ORG
Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

July 25, 2025

RE: AML Comments on Proposed Regulatory Change

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

Thank you again for your service to the state, public education, and students. We commend to you the following observations as it relates to the proposal to change how the local contribution is calculated.

As we weigh the impact of this proposal, it's worth highlighting your statutory obligations as trustees, essentially, and stewards of good governance. In determining whether the Board is making decisions consistent with statute, then, we would look to AS 14.07.165 that focuses on your duties, and (1) which requires statewide goals, but also local goals that are consistent with local needs.

I'm struck by references in AS 14.075 that while focused on assessment standards, where "the department shall review state education laws and regulations to identify unnecessary laws or regulations and areas where the laws or regulations may be changed to provide school districts with greater control over public education policy."

As you consider, then, the proposed regulations, it is worth looking at your decision through this legal lens – what is expected of you by Alaska Statutes and is your decision consistent with law?

It's also worth highlighting the Board's bylaws (required by statute), which commit board members to delivering, "An excellent education for every student every day." Will your decision about these regulations help you to meet this mission? Will the impact of these regulations positively contribute to an excellent education for every student, or do they run the risk of having the opposite effect?

We want to focus our remarks on a practical approach to meeting your obligations under law, the responsibilities of local governments and school districts, and the needs of students.

First, AML recognizes that the State has an obligation in statute to limit the local contribution to 23 percent of a district's basic need, or the equivalent of a two-mill tax levy on taxable property in the district, whichever is greater.

To effectively determine how the local contribution intersects with this cap the State must determine what goes into basic need. Essentially, the State board in its evaluation should determine what factors that the State Legislature utilizes to determine the BSA, which is the determining element of basic need. It is this number that represents what it costs to provide a basic education for every student. The only way to be confident in these basic numbers is through an adequacy study, which hasn't been completed as part of this process, nor recently.

So, to implement the law as DEED proposes, this very basic step has to be completed. The next step would be to evaluate the variables that go into determining adequacy. Essentially, what costs are counted as part of determining basic need. Then to implement the cap, as intended in statute, the board would establish what expenses of a district, or contributions to the district by the local government, count toward the cap.

If, for instance, the determination of the BSA does not take into account free lunch programs, or after school programs, or pool maintenance, then the cap on the local contribution does not apply. These very fundamental assumptions have to be addressed as part of your next steps.

It's probably not necessary to point out that we should also be sure to apply the cap carefully, and consistent with law. To be clear, we should ensure that DEED is accounting for the basic need established in law, based on the base student allocation adopted in law by the Legislature. Thus, the cap applies to what is lawfully considered BSA, and not the amount of funding that is actually distributed if funding is not appropriated consistent with law. In this way, it is possible that the State may fail the federal disparity test due to the executive branch's reduction in actual funding, while the local contributions remain under the cap based on legislative action. We encourage the board to review those numbers and keep this in mind, and continue to advocate for sufficient actual funding to help you meet your mission.

Next, AML would argue that DEED and the Board of Education have no authority over local government decisions related to provision of funding related to what should technically be considered community services, and local contributions that aren't for educational purposes shouldn't count against a school, let alone a community. Statutes focus the Board's roles and responsibilities on educational attainment, and the local contribution cap related to "basic" need for public education. That's very different than a local government's Constitutional and statutory obligations to implement maximum local self-government, with a liberal construction thereto. Local governments have responsibilities to provide for public safety and well-being, as well as any other service that is determined to meet the needs of local taxpayers and residents. They can do so through many kinds of mechanisms, including in cooperation with school districts. This is entirely separate from basic need, the cap, and the board's duties.

Here is a draft list of education-adjacent or community service-related costs that local governments might reasonably cover, which fall *outside* the scope of "basic public education" as defined by state funding formulas or constitutional mandates. These categories can help the Board of Education delineate the line between required educational expenses and optional, community-enhancing contributions. Not only does the Board lack the authority to restrict these investments in community by communities, but these appropriately fall outside the calculation of the local contribution cap.

Facilities and Infrastructure - These may support education but are not strictly necessary for instructional delivery:

- Facility upgrades beyond adequacy (e.g., aesthetic enhancements, LEED certification)
- Multipurpose community spaces in school buildings (used for senior centers, voting, after-hours events)
- Joint-use agreements for recreational facilities (swimming pools, sports fields)
- Capital projects unrelated to enrollment (e.g., school garden spaces, maker labs)
- Construction of housing for teachers or staff (if not mandated by the school district)

Technology and Digital Access - Local governments may support digital equity initiatives that serve students *and* the broader public:

- Broadband infrastructure investments (especially for rural areas)
- Community Wi-Fi hotspots
- Public access computer labs or co-working spaces
- Local support for digital literacy programs
- Technology upgrades beyond district minimums (e.g., tablets for every student vs. shared devices)

Health, Wellness, and Nutrition - These support the well-being of students but shouldn't necessarily be classified as basic education:

- Free meals beyond federal reimbursements (e.g., universal lunch or dinner programs)
- School-based health clinics
- Mental health counselors not covered by the district
- Youth substance abuse prevention programs
- After-school recreation or sports leagues funded by municipal parks and rec

Transportation and Access - Beyond legally required student transportation, local governments may choose to provide:

- Public transit passes for students
- Crosswalk safety patrols
- Bus service to extracurriculars or afterschool programs
- Weekend or summer youth transportation

Enrichment, Programs, and Staffing - May include support for educational quality or extracurricular access, and which can fall outside basic need:

- Local grants for STEM, arts, or cultural enrichment
- Funding for community liaisons or family engagement specialists
- Teacher recruitment incentives not funded by the district
- Non-mandatory Pre-K or early childhood programs
- Internship coordination or workforce development partnerships

Libraries and Learning Resources - Separate from or to augment school district libraries, local governments may choose to provide:

- Public library resources tailored for students
- Shared funding of makerspaces or innovation hubs
- Support for adult education and GED programs

Community and Cultural Services - These support place-based learning or identity development, beyond basic education, and can include:

- Civic education programs sponsored by the municipality
- Support for youth leadership councils
- Integration of Indigenous knowledge or language programming
- Support for field trips or cultural experiences not part of the school curriculum

<u>Next Steps</u>

AML will continue to advocate for the release of Impact Aid to school districts. Its purpose is to supplement what would otherwise be a strong tax base, a tax base that if not for federal land ownership would enhance the ability of local governments to contribute to public education. These funds truly are local. Does that have implications for the State, and its budget? Yes – but that's the State's obligation to address.

There are clearly issues related to basic need, adequacy, and State law that the Board will want to bring to the Legislature to address. AML can see an important role for the Board of Education to participate actively in the Legislature's education task force, and to spend time with the legislative branch to develop the metrics that will be used to assess and then adequately fund basic need.

At the same time, we do believe there are next steps. Wanting to understand how accounts are used and what should be included or excluded is a common goal that will take time and discussion. This is important not just to assess adequacy, but also to inform the State's approach to equity. It isn't as cut and dry as a regulatory change – we have to take the time to work together and make sure that we have the accountability and clarity necessary to understand the fundamental need for education and local

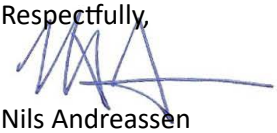
support beyond the definition. Local governments would benefit from this as much as the Department, Board, and school districts. A collaborative approach to understanding what goes into public education – which local governments share a responsibility with the State for, as critical funding partners – and what comes out (which for us is just as important), will help to remove some of the challenges currently experienced in an ongoing debate about how to meet our mandate.

This is an area where instead of new and challenging regulations, the Board of Education could initiate a process of engaging with the governing bodies of school districts to develop goals for these standards that meet the State's interests and reflect local needs, as required by statute. The Board should also direct the Commissioner and staff to work with organizations like the Alaska Association of School Business Officials and Alaska Government Finance Officers Association to unpack what's currently in place and come to consensus on how these processes are structured, how we all benefit from a common understanding, and how to assign educational expenses vs non-educational expenses that are based on local needs. We hope you'll include the Alaska Municipal League in that collaboration, such that we can contribute to the clarity of purpose and administration in future implementation of any action by the Board, and provide input into the determination of community services.

Ultimately, any action that you take that has the effect of reducing school district funding further will negatively impact students in Alaska. I know how much weight you must give to that consideration, and how important it is to board members in carrying out your duties, including to mitigate the harm that comes thereof.

With that in mind, we recommend setting aside these proposed regulations and focus this next year on these parallel paths – engage with the Legislature on adequacy, and engage with districts and finance officers on operationalizing goals we have in common. Your next steps should be consistent with law, and contribute to the Board's ability to truly deliver an excellent education for all students. Alaskans are counting on you in this.

Respectfully,



Nils Andreassen
Executive Director

From: Sarah Cronick
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Alaska's Education Policy Is Leaving Native and Rural Students Behind
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 3:43:02 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Subject: Confronting Systemic Racism in Alaska Education Policy

To the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development:
I'm writing to raise urgent concern about the systematic and disproportionate harm being caused to Alaska Native and rural communities by Governor Mike Dunleavy's education policies.
While these policies may not be explicitly racist in language, their outcomes clearly reflect systemic racism — producing deep and predictable inequities that disproportionately affect Native students, low-income families, and rural communities across Alaska.

1. Funding Cuts that Target the Most Vulnerable

Governor Dunleavy has repeatedly proposed flat or reduced funding for public schools, despite rising inflation and urgent rural infrastructure needs. Districts that rely on state and federal funds — like those in Native villages — are being pushed toward collapse. These communities often cannot raise local taxes, and yet the state is demanding they do more with less.

2. Public Funds Diverted to Private Options

Policies that allow homeschool reimbursements for private and religious instruction are not neutral — they benefit urban, resourced families while leaving rural and Native students behind. These programs pull public funds away from the very districts that are already underfunded and struggling to survive.

3. Cultural Erasure Through Curriculum Control

There's growing pressure from this administration and its appointees to remove or restrict culturally responsive, inclusive education. Indigenous knowledge, racial justice, gender identity, and decolonial history are framed as "divisive" — when in reality, they are essential for healing and belonging.

4. No Tribal Consultation, No Justice

Despite widespread calls from Alaska Native communities for greater tribal control of education, Dunleavy's administration has consistently failed to meaningfully consult with Indigenous leaders. This silence continues a long, painful history of colonial extraction — where education is done to Native children, not with their communities.
These decisions are not isolated — they form a system of exclusion. If Alaska is serious about racial equity, we must name this pattern clearly:
This is systemic racism.
I urge the Alaska State Legislature, Department of Education, and State Board to:
-Restore full and equitable funding to rural schools
-Reject privatization models that siphon public dollars
-Protect inclusive and culturally rooted curriculum
-Engage in direct partnership with tribal education leaders

Every child deserves a fully funded, liberatory education — especially in the communities that

have long borne the cost of underinvestment.

Sincerely,
Sarah Cronick
hearthkyn Founder, Teacher Tales Creator

hearthkyn
Teacher Tales
[redacted]

I acknowledge that I live on the unceded lands of the Dena'ina People.

Office of the Mayor
155 Heritage Way
Juneau, Alaska 99801
PHONE: (907) 586-5240
FAX: (907) 586-5385
Beth.Weldon@juneau.gov

Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development
P.O. Box 110203
Juneau, AK 99811-0203

Delivered via email: eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

Thank you for your commitment to the education of Alaska's youth. There are many paths to growing educated and responsible Alaskan citizens, and I know each one of you is committed to ensuring the best future possible for our young people. They are our future.

The City and Borough of Juneau is deeply concerned with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's proposed regulation changes redefining "local contribution" and "in-kind services" for school funding in Alaska. These changes threaten our community's ability to provide transportation to and from school, healthy meals, sports, and extracurricular activities that are part of the well-rounded development of our children.

Nevertheless, the City and Borough of Juneau understands the severity of the notice provided by the United States Department of Education that Alaska is failing the disparity test; tens of millions of dollars of federal Impact Aid are at stake. We appreciate that you are taking this issue seriously. However, the regulations as written don't ensure the best outcome for our children and do not acknowledge the unique geographical challenges in Alaska.

The City and Borough of Juneau asks that you consider measures to mitigate the impact on Alaskan students while ensuring the State meets Federal guidelines. For example:

1) Include in the regulations all possible exceptions to AS.14.17.410(b), such as Food Service.

2) Clarify that the definition of local contribution is only applicable to municipal taxpayer dollars, which allows for funding from non-profits, donations, and receipts for services.

3) Make current outside the cap funding from the State, such as transportation, reimbursable to ensure that funds are spent consistently with State and Federal law.

Like the State, local municipalities have a responsibility to fund education. We also provide the buildings, help with the extracurricular activities, and make sure gaps in transportation funding allow all children access to education. Taking away our ability to fund these non-instructional services does not serve our children.

Thank you for your service to this great state.

Sincerely,

Mayor Beth Weldon
City and Borough of Juneau

SKAGWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development
c/o Commissioner Deena Bishop
Department of Education and Early Development
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500

Re: Opposition to Proposed Changes to Local Contribution Statutes

Dear Commissioner Bishop and Members of the State Board of Education,

As members of the Skagway School Board, we write to express our firm opposition to the proposed changes to Alaska's local contribution statutes currently under consideration by the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and the State Board of Education.

The Skagway School District is the highest-achieving district in the state. That success is no accident—it is the direct result of a dedicated school board, outstanding educators, strong community support, and consistent local funding that exceeds the State's minimum contribution requirements. We choose to invest locally because our students deserve excellent opportunities, and because we know these investments yield measurable results.

The proposed statutory changes threaten to erode local authority and decision-making—foundational principles in a state as diverse and geographically vast as Alaska. Even more troubling is the underlying notion that "equity" should be achieved by reducing what high-performing districts can do, rather than by lifting up those that need more support. We reject that premise. Equity should not be defined by the lowest common

denominator. It must be about ensuring that *every* district has the opportunity and support to thrive.

Our local funding directly supports the goals championed by DEED, this Board, and Governor Dunleavy: improving academic achievement, preparing students for meaningful careers, and ensuring a world-class education for every Alaskan child. In Skagway, these are not just aspirational goals—they are being realized, in large part because of our community's ability and willingness to invest beyond the minimum.

Rather than discouraging local investment, we urge the State to recognize and replicate the conditions that have allowed districts like Skagway to excel. That means honoring local control, encouraging innovation, and working together to raise outcomes for all students across Alaska.

We respectfully call on the State Board of Education and DEED to reject any statutory changes that would limit local contributions to education. Let us aim higher—not by restricting what is working, but by building on it and ensuring every community has the tools it needs to succeed.

Sincerely,
Cory Thole, Board President
On behalf of the Skagway School Board
[redacted]

From: Elissa Bjorum
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public comment re: Alaska school funding changes
Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 2:39:15 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education,

I am a parent of a child in the Sitka School District (SSD). I am also an employee of the SSD, a taxpayer and an active voter in my community.

I disagree with the proposed change to take away local control from our community in Sitka regarding how we fund education.

These changes would take away even more money from my child, her friends and other students. We have made significant cuts in Sitka. When I started here 18 years ago we had multiple electives at the middle school my child currently attends. Now we are down to music as the main elective. My daughter is eligible for gifted and talented (G/T) services. I've heard we might have 20 minutes/day for that this year. Otherwise there has been no option for G/T programming in middle school. Class sizes will grow again, electives will be cut again (including music possibly), class offerings reduced again, lunch and recess times will be reduced again, with the loss in funding that this proposal will bring.

Sitka is a community that supports its students and its schools. We are in the 15th year of the Fish-to-Schools, a program where fish caught by local fishermen and women are donated to SSD for school lunches. Parents and families volunteer their time at school dances, after school activities, book fairs, school carnivals, silent actions, on field trips and in the classroom. The Sitka Native Education Program recently celebrated its 50 year anniversary working with students within SSD.

Our community has also chosen to support our District through actions taken by our city assembly and by voters who've supported funding critical parts of our student activities and building maintenance, etc.

I urge the board to reject this proposed amendment to school funding changes. I ask the Board rather to look for strategies that provide reliable financial support and local control of public education.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Elissa Kaminsky
[redacted]
Sitka, AK
99835

From: grasse_sonia
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: LOCAL Contributions regulation -Comments
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 10:04:43 AM

You don't often get email from grasse_sonia@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I'm a parent and community member in Eagle River, Alaska. I am also an educator at Eagle River High School, as well as a graduate of Anchorage School District and the University of Alaska Anchorage. I have been an Alaska resident since the 1990's. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, **you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state.** I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools it introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

There are multiple ways to solve this issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sonia Grasse
Eagle River High School
Special Education Life Skills Teacher
504 Building Coordinator

Link to Procedural Safeguards and Parental Rights for Special Education:
https://education.alaska.gov/sped

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From: Beth Short-Rhoads
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please reject cuts to local education funding
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:54:43 AM

You don't often get email from bethshortrhoads@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska Department of Education and Early Development,

I'm writing to express my vehement opposition to DEED's proposed cuts to local education funding. It is heartbreaking that not all communities in Alaska are financially able to assist local schools, but this fault lies with the chronic underfunding of education at the state level. Simply put, if Alaska's schools were adequately funded by regular and adequate increases to the Base Student Allocation, there would be no need for elevated local funding and therefore no disparity issues.

In Alaska, when we see a problem—such as chronic underfunding of the schools that prepare our children to work, serve, and lead—we roll up our sleeves, sharpen our pencils, and find a solution. Please act in the spirit of Alaska and allow its citizens the freedom to protect our young people, their future, and the future of our state.

The Alaska Constitution guarantees all students the right to a good education. DEED should be at the forefront of protecting this right, not dismantling its own stated mission of providing "an excellent education for every student every day" with additional funding cuts that public schools can't and shouldn't have to endure.

Sincerely,

Beth Short-Rhoads
Sitka

From: Lyle Sparrowgrove
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: DEED Proposed Changes to Funding schools Outside the CAP
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 3:08:25 PM

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Hello State board of Education Members,

I am writing concerning the proposal by the Alaska Department of Education to include the funds used by school districts to help support their operations.from communities as a part of their funding from the state.

Cherished relationships and agreements with community governments, communities, and other organizations have helped support schools because of the importance of the local schools to everyone in the community, this money should not be counted as funding for the local schools from the state. It is not state money. There are other ways to clear up the Disparity Test without harming schools even more by earmarking these funds. DEED needs to come up with other solutions and not include this money in funding. Why should we support what will cause even more cuts, school closures, reduced staffing, and fewer opportunities for students?

I am baffled, but if we as a state just adequately funded all schools, homeschool, correspondence, and charter schools along with public schools, the disparity test would be cleared up.

DEED, communities, and you the state board, should be using our energies to fund our schools instead of eliminating funds right now to make up for the state's woeful support.

Respectfully,

Lyle Sparrowgrove
Grandparent, parent, and educator
Sitka, Alaska

From:	Erin Binek
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Opposition to the Proposed Regulation Limiting Local School Funding and Control
Date:	Thursday, June 26, 2025 4:12:27 PM

[You don't often get email from erinbinek@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulatory changes that would restrict local municipalities' ability to fund their schools and reduce the financial support school districts receive from the state. At a time when Alaska's public education system is already under tremendous strain, this regulation would only deepen the crisis, further harming our students, educators, and communities.

Undermining Local Control and Community Support

This proposal represents a dangerous act of government overreach. It limits the ability of communities to support their schools in ways that reflect local priorities and realities. School districts and municipalities across Alaska work tirelessly to meet the unique needs of their students—needs that can't be adequately addressed by a one-size-fits-all mandate from the state. Removing that local discretion not only stifles innovation, it silences community voice.

Misaligned with the Federal Impact Aid Program

Applying the federal Impact Aid Program's disparity test to justify this change is deeply flawed. Alaska is the only state required to pass this specific disparity test. The program was never intended to dictate how states structure their own school funding mechanisms, and it does not account for the distinct and vital ways Alaska's communities contribute to public education. The state's rigid alignment with a poorly matched federal metric risks doing more harm than good.

The True Problem Is the State's Impact Aid Deduction

The root of the funding challenge lies not in local contributions—but in the state's outdated practice of deducting Impact Aid from state education funding. Alaska is the only state in the country that still penalizes districts by subtracting federal Impact Aid from their state entitlement. Rather than layering on more regulation, the state should remove the Impact Aid deduction entirely. This direct, sensible change would address the disparity test issue without harming local efforts or diminishing community involvement.

This Proposal Will Exacerbate an Already Critical Funding Crisis

Alaska's public schools are already facing severe funding shortages. This proposal would siphon even more resources from classrooms, increasing class sizes, cutting programs, and weakening vital student services such as transportation and nutrition. Worse still, there is no clear evidence this change would even solve the disparity test issue. Imposing such a sweeping regulation without a guaranteed outcome is irresponsible and shortsighted.

An Attack on Collaboration and Local Innovation

This is not a technical correction. It is an attack on the partnerships and creativity that local school districts and communities have developed over years to support their students. These relationships have allowed districts to stretch every dollar and provide quality education despite limited resources. Undermining this local innovation is a step in the wrong direction.

Better Solutions Exist—Work With Communities, Not Against Them

There are more collaborative, effective paths forward. In 2023, DEED worked successfully with the Director of the Federal Impact Aid Program to protect school funding. That model of cooperation should be the standard. The State Board should also pursue available federal waivers for areas like student nutrition and transportation—practical solutions that preserve district funding while meeting compliance standards.

A Clear Call to Action

I urge the State Board of Education to reject the proposed regulation and instead pursue policies that strengthen, not weaken, our public schools. Support should come in the form of restoring full, fair funding and preserving the ability of municipalities to invest in the success of their children.
If this regulation is enacted, it will cause real harm to our communities. Our schools are not line items on a spreadsheet—they are the heart of our communities.

Please protect our students, respect local governance, and help Alaska live up to its responsibility to provide a high-quality public education to every child.

Sincerely,
Erin Binek
Parent, educator, Alaska citizen and voter

From: Suzanne Cohen
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Rule Change
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 7:47:27 AM

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AK Dept of Education and Early Development (DEED) has proposed new regulations that would count all local contributions in each district. Previously, only certain types of local contributions were counted. Now every dollar a district spends that offers any benefit to students would be deducted from the state contribution. From plowing school parking lots, to letting students swim in city pools. Read the proposed regulation changes here. Read KCAW's detailed report here.There is a 30-day public comment period open now, which ends July 25th at 5:00pm. Email your comments to **eed.stateboard@alaska.gov**.

Dear Dept of Ed folks,

Please do not enact the proposed new regulations that change how contributions to local schools districts are counted. Our schools are in crisis and our students need increases to funding not decreases.

Thank you for your time,

Suzanne Cohen
[redacted]
Juneau, AK 99801

From: sherijnu@aol.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed change to Regulations
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:23:58 AM

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Hello.

I am a 58-year resident of Juneau Alaska. I am writing to ask you not to change how our municipalities contribute to local school districts. What part of busing students to school safely is a problem? Why is the State DOE involved with what municipalities contribute to school districts? Why wouldn't you want PreK education?

None of this makes sense to me. I hope you agree.

Respectfully,
Sheri Williams

From: Angela Imholt
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: PROPOSED CHANGES ON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:29:32 AM

You don't often get email from angieimholt@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To: Department of Education and Early Development

The proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990(b) may have unintended consequences that undermine local control and flexibility in funding public education. Requiring that all local contributions comply with federal impact aid laws could restrict the ability of local governments to support their schools in ways that reflect their community values and needs. This could disproportionately affect rural and Indigenous communities that rely heavily on local appropriations and in-kind contributions to supplement limited state funding.

Furthermore, the proposed amendment to definitions in 4 AAC 09.990(b) may result in a narrower interpretation of what qualifies as a "local contribution." This risks excluding valuable in-kind services and community-driven appropriations that are essential to school operations but do not always align with rigid federal guidelines. Such changes could effectively reduce local investment in education, increase state oversight inappropriately, and shift financial burdens onto districts that are already under-resourced.

At a time when Alaska's public schools are struggling with staffing shortages, deferred maintenance, and inequities in access, our state should be encouraging—not limiting—local contributions. These changes move in the wrong direction.

Thank you, Angie Imholt

From: Larri Spengler
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: against proposed regulations that would count all local contributions
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:36:42 AM

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Greetings:

I am strongly against the proposed new regulations that would deduct all local contributions in each school district from state funding, including even such things as plowing school parking lots and letting students swim in city pools.

Our schools need help, not funding reductions!

Larri Spengler

--

Larri Irene Spengler
[redacted]
Juneau, Alaska 99801
[redacted]
Larri.Irene.Spengler@gmail.com

From: Mike Vieira
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Preserving Local Funding Flexibility for Non-Instructional School District Expenses – A CTE Instructor"s Perspective
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 8:49:54 AM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to you today as a dedicated 2nd generation Career & Technical Education (CTE) instructor in Sitka. I am deeply concerned about the potential impact of limiting local municipalities' ability to creatively fund their school districts for expenses not directly tied to classroom instruction. From my vantage point, this flexibility is absolutely critical, especially for maintaining the high-quality, hands-on learning environments that our CTE students depend on.

Alaska's unique geography, varying population densities, and distinct community needs necessitate a nuanced approach to school funding. While state funding rightfully focuses on core instructional costs, many essential services and programs that contribute significantly to a student's overall well-being and a school's operational efficiency fall outside this direct instructional scope. For CTE programs, this often includes:

- **Specialized Facility Maintenance and Upgrades:** My students learn trades that require specific, often complex, facilities – workshops, labs, and specialized classrooms. The upkeep of these spaces is intensive, demanding regular maintenance, safety checks, and occasional upgrades to meet industry standards. Local contributions are vital to ensure these learning environments remain safe, modern, and effective, particularly for specialized infrastructure unique to vocational programs.
- **Tools and Equipment Maintenance:** Providing students with meaningful learning opportunities in the trades means equipping them with industry-relevant tools and machinery. These tools, from welding equipment to automotive diagnostic systems, require an intensive amount of maintenance, calibration, and repair to remain functional and safe. This ongoing upkeep is a significant non-instructional expense, yet it is absolutely fundamental to delivering practical, hands-on trades education. Without flexible local funding for this critical maintenance, our tools and equipment would quickly fall into disrepair, severely limiting the practical skills our students can acquire.
- **Transportation:** Given Alaska's vast distances and often challenging terrain, local funding can bridge gaps in state transportation allocations, ensuring all students, including those traveling to off-site CTE programs or internships, can access education safely and reliably.
- **Extracurricular Activities and Arts Programs:** While my primary focus is on trades, I

recognize these vital programs are crucial for student engagement and fostering a well-rounded educational experience. Local funding can sustain these opportunities where state funding might not reach.

- **Community Partnerships and Engagement:** Local funds can support initiatives that integrate schools more deeply into their communities, fostering partnerships with local businesses and industries that provide invaluable real-world experience and potential career pathways for my CTE students.
- **Technology Infrastructure:** Beyond instructional devices, local funding can support the robust network infrastructure, cybersecurity, and technical support necessary for a modern educational environment, which is increasingly vital for advanced CTE programs.

Allowing local municipalities to contribute creatively to these areas empowers communities to tailor their educational support to their specific priorities and challenges. It fosters local ownership, encourages community investment in schools, and allows for innovative solutions that might not fit within a standardized state funding model. Restricting this local autonomy would directly jeopardize the quality and availability of trades education, leading to underfunded essential maintenance for our specialized facilities and equipment, and ultimately diminishing the practical skills our students can develop.

We believe that a strong partnership between the state and local communities is paramount to the success of Alaska's education system. By continuing to permit local municipalities to creatively fund non-instructional expenses, the State School Board will affirm the value of local control, recognize the unique needs of each district and, crucially, ensure that our Career & Technical Education programs can continue to provide the hands-on, high-quality training that prepares Alaskan students for successful careers in the trades, thereby **supporting your own mission to "provide an excellent education for every student every day."**

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical matter.
Sincerely,

Mike Vieira
Sitka High School
Career & Technical Education Instructor
[redacted]

From: peter melde
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposed to proposed changes to 4 AAC 09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 9:49:02 AM

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I am strongly opposed to the changes that have been proposed that are intended to restrict the ability of local govenrments to contribute to their local school systems. After years of Republican governors and Republicans in the State Legislature the school funding available to local districts has been gutted. Local contributions are not the problem. State funding eliminations by Republican politicians and the absolute war on public education being waged by Dunleavy are the problem along with the federal war on public education being waged by our own Republican delegation. Tell Dunleavy to stop vetoing public school funding and don't try to destroy one of the last funding sources available to local school districts.

Reject the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09

Peter Melde
[redacted]
Anchorage

From: Sally Rue
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Kiehl, Jesse W (LEG); Hannan, Sara (LEG); Story, Andrea (LEG)
Subject: Oppose proposed changes to 4AAC 09.985 and 990(b)
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 9:59:29 AM

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Dear State Board of Education members,

I am writing to oppose the proposed changes to AK Dept. of Education and Early Development regulations (4AAC 09.985 and 990(b)) that would change the definition of local contributions and start including non-instructional expenses. This would hurt many if not all local districts at a time when they are under immense pressure to provide an adequate education to Alaska's children in the face of relentlessly diminishing financial resources that are not keeping up with costs.

Alaska' future depends on healthy communities and adequately funded schools in order to retain families and workers. This regulation change would further erode the state's investment in public education, and I strongly oppose it.

I have been a strong supporter of quality education for over 40 years as an involved parent, a locally elected school board member, as a member of the State Board of Education, and as an involved citizen. I support the principle of equity, but this proposed change is not an effective solution and will further degrade what schools can offer students, and ultimately damage Alaska's future.

I urge you to vote no on these proposed changes.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your service as members of the SBOE.

Respectfully,

Sally Rue
[redacted]
Juneau

From: Emily Kane
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:19:56 AM

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Please reject the regulation change that would include community contributions to the school budget calculus. How backward! This stance seems to discourage contributions to help raise our children with high standards for excellent education. Most members of our communities and school districts deeply desire helping our children transition to adulthood well equipped for a competitive job market and with a path to personal and financial advancement. I firmly believe the quality of public education flows from these values. Please do not discourage local support to our children's education. Most community members want to be generous. You should also.

Dr Emily Kane
Juneau

I have closed my practice. Perhaps you will find help on my website:
www.DrEmilyKane.com

Be well!

From: Trever Shaishnikoff
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contributions
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:27:45 AM

You don't often get email from tshaishnikoff@ucsd.net. Learn why this is important

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Good Morning,
My name is Trever Shaishnikoff and I am a school board member in the Unalaska City School District. I am writing to oppose the proposed changes to local funding of our schools. The proposed changes would have drastic impacts on what our district is capable of offering our community. Without local contributions at their current level, we would have no choice but to make cuts to things like food service, preschool, and student travel opportunities, and staff training. We also would have to increase class sizes and lower the quality of health insurance we offer to district employees.
Instead of passing a disparity test by reducing schools funding, I implore the Board of Education and Early Development to find ways to bring under-funded schools up.

Thank you,
Trever Shaishnikoff

From: Comer, Jaime
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: protect local control over school funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 1:41:02 PM

You don't often get email from [redacted]. Learn why this is important

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Good afternoon,

I am reaching out to implore you that you do not cut funding to the schools in Alaska. The programs that will be affected will greatly affect our students, who look forward to the programs that help them be involved in wholesome activities that are beneficial for their learning and growth, as well as beneficial for the community that they are a part of. If the funding is taken away, you raise the chance of teacher cuts. If the funding is taken away, you raise the chance of our youth involving themselves in unfavorable extracurricular activities (drugs, alcohol, violence, etc.) If the funding is taken away, you raise the chance of the students not succeeding and fulfilling their capabilities that they need to be full functioning adults. Please reconsider your proposal of cutting funds and let us keep our sports, our programs. The students need them. We should be doing these things for them.

Jaime R. Comer
PreK-1st Special Education Resource Teacher
Hermon Hutchens Elementary School
[redacted]

Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards can be found at:
https://education.alaska.gov/sped

From: Mary Geddes
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed change on local contributions in the regulations of the Department off Education and Early Development
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 2:34:12 PM

You don't often get email from ismar.geddes1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Board of Education Chair and Members,

We are writing because we strenuously object to the proposed change in the regulation to repeal or amend the definition of "appropriation" and "value of in kind services" as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990.

We are longtime citizens of the state and taxpayers in this municipality with grandchildren still in the public school system. I am a 41 year resident of Alaska and my husband has been here even longer.. We own our own home. Our older daughter and her husband also reside in their own home in Anchorage with their children who attend public school. Our younger daughter resides in Juneau. Bottom line, we have substantial interest in the proposed change, either way.

As attorneys, we are well acquainted with the state constitutional requirement in Article VII, section 1, requiring the Legislature to "establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children in the state." Yet the proposed regulation change severely undercuts the political will for sufficient local match and works against the necessary prioritization of educational costs by allowing municipalities to set off other non-education expenses. These expenses concern the maintenance of public property, and are not justifiably counted as educational costs.

Please consider these objections and vote to reject the proposed changes accordingly.

Sincerely,
Mary Geddes
[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Karen Valera-Sherman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: State Funding for Education
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:12:33 PM

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a current ASD educator, parent of ASD alumni who are successful contributing members of their communities, a grandparent of current ASD students, and a community member in Anchorage. I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing local contribution rules.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. I do not believe this proposed regulation meets that goal. It takes a "lowest common denominator" approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local self-determination and punishes community support for schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens and risk for local districts and municipalities.

Our districts are hurting, and this regulation will further limit what we can provide all our diverse students and their individual needs. Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a good life in Alaska.

There are multiple ways to solve the issue at hand. Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm.

Sincerely,

Karen Valera-Sherman

[redacted]
Anchorage, AK 99504

Juneau Community Charter School

1600 Renninger St ~ Juneau, Alaska 99801 ~ Telephone: 907-523-1679

July 25, 2025

Kathhjo Jlin
Executive Secretary to the Board
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
P.O. Box 110500
333 Willoughby Avenue, 9th Floor
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED),

The Juneau Community Charter School (JCCS) is writing to join the Juneau School District (JSD) in expressing our concerns regarding the proposed regulation changes to 4 AAC 09, specifically those amending the definition of "local contribution" in the public education funding formula, as outlined in the Supplemental Notice of Proposed Changes. We stand in solidarity with the JSD and echo the concerns articulated in the JSD Board of Education Resolution No. 2025-02, which highlights the significant risks these changes pose to our students, programs, and community partnerships.

JCCS deeply values its strong partnership with the Juneau School District, which has enabled us to provide diverse and innovative educational options for Juneau families where optional programs best fit their student needs or family educational philosophy. This collaboration has been instrumental in fostering equitable access to quality education and supporting student success for students of diverse talents and needs. However, we are concerned that the proposed regulations, particularly the inclusion of local revenues such as fundraising, food service income, donations, and in-kind services within the state-imposed cap, will severely limit our ability to maintain critical programs and services. According to JSD's Resolution No. 2025-02, these changes could result in an estimated $8 million reduction in funding for the district, with additional undetermined impacts from redefining in-kind services. Such cuts threaten to destabilize essential services that directly benefit Juneau students, including those at JCCS.

The ambiguous language surrounding "in-kind services" further complicates the issue by potentially restricting municipal support, such as shared facilities, maintenance, and public safety coordination. These collaborative partnerships are vital for cost-effective operations and ensuring equitable educational opportunities. Limiting them risks increasing disparities in student outcomes

and undermining the local funding authority that sustains our community-driven educational model.

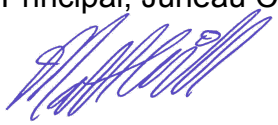
We acknowledge the challenging position of the State Board of Education and DEED in navigating federal obligations, particularly those related to the Federal Impact Aid Program and compliance with the disparity test. We recognize your ongoing efforts to improve processes for charter schools and your commitment to balancing complex interests to achieve the best educational outcomes for Alaska's students. However, we are concerned that the proposed regulations may conflict with federal guidance, which accounts for Alaska's unique geographical challenges and allows for exclusions in the disparity test, as noted in JSD's resolution. Furthermore, the Federal Impact Aid Program has clarified that it neither requested nor recommended these regulatory changes, suggesting that alternative approaches could address federal compliance without jeopardizing local partnerships or public trust.

JCCS urges the State Board and DEED to conduct further work with the school districts, charter schools, and local communities to explore alternative approaches or reforms that preserve essential programs and services, or at the very least care for transition to alternative funding. We believe that through partnership and innovation, we can meet federal requirements while ensuring that our students continue to benefit from robust educational opportunities. JCCS remains committed to supporting the JSD and advocating for solutions that prioritize student success and maintain the strong community ties that define our educational landscape in Juneau.

We respectfully request that the proposed regulation changes be reconsidered or modified to mitigate their anticipated adverse impacts. Comments and questions regarding this matter can be directed to the undersigned. We appreciate your attention to this critical issue and your dedication to Alaska's students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Corey Weiss
Principal, Juneau Community Charter School



Matthew D. Sill, P.E.
APC Chair, Juneau Community Charter School

cc:
Frank Hauser, Superintendent, Juneau School District
Juneau School Board Members:

Deedie Sorensen, Board President
Elizabeth Siddon
Brittany Cioni-Haywood
Emil Mackey
Amber Frommherz
David Noon
Steve Whitney

From: APC Chair, Matthew Sill,
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); Frank Hauser; schoolboard@juneauschools.org
Subject: Juneau Community Charter School - Local Contribution Letter
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:44:09 PM
Attachments: JCCS - Local Contribution Reg Concerns.pdf

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached the Juneau Community Charter School's letter regarding changes to the local contribution regulations.

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Thank you,

Matthew D. Sill, P.E.
Chair, JCCS Academic Policy Committee

From: Trista Patterson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Reject changes to 4AAC09 local contributions!
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:52:36 PM

You don't often get email from [redacted] Learn why this is important

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EED Board,

I write to you as a PhD Economist specializing in rural economic development and resilience, with over two decades of applied experience in Alaska.

I urge you to reject the proposed changes to 4AAC09. Federal impact aid law terminologies were not written with Alaskan communities or their constraints in mind and the proposed changes will impose an undue burden on Alaskan families, local economies, and communities attempting to make ends meet under increasingly difficult conditions. **The definition of local contributions should not be expanded** to include services & support outside the national funding cap. It is crucial that local communities have the necessary control as to how to approach investments and that community partnerships are encouraged and supported as a necessary mechanism to make ends meet in very tough budgetary times. The community of Sitka and other small rural communities cannot afford more hits to educational and resource budgets that affect families and their welfare.

Families in Sitka call on you to reject the changes to the definition of local contributions so that the choices the community makes do not count against funding for public education.

Thankyou

Trista Patterson

[redacted]

THE BRUMAN GROUP PLLC

1120 20th Street, N.W., Suite 740
Washington, D.C. 20036
phone: 202.965.3652
fax: 202.965.8913
bruman@bruman.com
www.bruman.com

July 14, 2025

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
Faatimah Muhammad, Director
Impact Aid Program
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

ELECTRONIC MAIL DELIVERY
Faatimah.Muhammad@ed.gov

RE: Request for a Hearing Pursuant to Sections 7009 and 7011(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 7709, 7711(a)) Regarding Alaska's FY2026 Equalization Determination

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Dear Director Muhammad:

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development ("Alaska" or "the State") received the U.S. Department of Education ("Department") Report for the Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 (State Fiscal Year 2026) under Section 7009(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 ("Determination") on May 16, 2025.

Alaska hereby appeals the Determination of the Department pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a). *Codified at* 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3). Specifically, Alaska disputes the certification denial under Section 7009 for fiscal year (FY) 2026. This denial prevents Alaska from taking into consideration Impact Aid payments when calculating state aid to districts for FY2026. A copy of the Determination is attached.

I. This Appeal is Timely Submitted Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1).

Determination appeals submitted by State Education Agencies ("SEAs") must be received in writing "within 60 days of receipt of the determination." 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1). Alaska received its initial Determination refusing certification on May 16, 2025. This appeal is submitted by U.S. Mail and e-mail, in accordance with the Determination's letter of instruction, on July 14, 2025, which is within 60 days of the receipt date. The Department of Education and Early Development (the SEA) is furnishing a copy of this request to all Local Education Agencies ("LEAs") in the State in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3).

II. Factual Background

Alaska submitted its disparity submission of state fiscal year 2024 data used for fiscal year 2026 certification of its state aid program as equalizing expenditures on March 3, 2025. With that submission, Alaska provided formal notice of its intent to consider a portion of Impact Aid payments when allocating state aid to schools for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, as permitted by Section 7009(c)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA").

The Department requested descriptions for several items over the following weeks and confirmed receipt of all necessary material on May 2, 2025. The Department also notified LEAs of their right to a hearing in accordance with ESEA Section 7009(c)(2) on March 25, 2025. No LEAs requested a hearing. On May 16, 2025, the Department issued its Determination.

In its Determination, the Department found the State's disparity to be 26.88%, which is greater than the 25% disparity permitted by statute, and denied Alaska's certification for FY2026. The Department's decision largely rests on its analysis of Alaska's consideration of LEA transfers between funds and the related finding that such transfers do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Alaska disputes this finding and the underlying rationale.

III. Statement of Disputed Issues of Fact and Law

A. The Department Erred in Fact and Law When Finding That the State Did Not Meet the Disparity Test as Presented for Certification.

The Department questioned Alaska's consideration and treatment of LEA transfers between funds in its FY2026 disparity submission; however, the State's interpretation aligns with established federal direction and national accounting standards. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds. Accordingly, Alaska disputes the Department's finding.

Alaska also disputes the Department's finding that amounts transferred between funds do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Specific funds such as food service and pupil transportation, for example, are earmarked for specific services and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction. When amounts are added to such funds, including through transfers, those revenues are restricted to supporting specific costs that easily meet the definition of special cost differentials. For example, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to funds LEAs transferred into a specific fund for transportation, which qualify as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs (*e.g.*, daily airplane rides) arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska recognized those revenues as associated with special cost differentials and excluded them from total revenues.

B. Even if the Department's Underlying Findings Are Upheld, Alaska Must be Certified if Deemed to Meet the Disparity Test Under an Alternate Method.

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026 based on its original submission since, as detailed above, the Department erred in its initial determination. However, if the tribunal upholds the Department's determination (dated May 16, 2025), the State should be permitted the opportunity to resubmit its request. The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to

the State meeting the disparity standard. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Alaska notes that the method used in its FY2026 disparity submission was selected, at least in part, to comply with a legal position the Department took in its initial FY2022 certification determination report for Alaska, with which Alaska disagrees. Specifically, Alaska disagrees with the Department's position that the State must include transportation-related revenues and expenses in the disparity test under 34 C.F.R. § 222.162. Alaska's pupil transportation funding system is not a part of Alaska's program of state aid for free public education and was recognized as such by the Department in previous years. Accordingly, pupil transportation revenues and expenditures should not qualify as revenue for current expenditures. Alaska put forth its position on this issue in its request for a hearing of that determination in 2021, has continuously preserved this position, and again restates that position and disputed issue of law herein.

C. The Department is Estopped from Refusing Certification for the Proffered Reasons.

Based on the Department's prior conduct in working with Alaska regarding its disparity submissions, the Department is estopped from denying Alaska's certification based on Alaska's inclusion of pupil transportation funds or recognition of transfer adjustments.

D. Failure to Certify Alaska for FY2026 Would Harm the Federal Interest

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026; failure to do so would result in harm to the federal interest. Even if the specific findings at issue in the Determination are upheld, to the extent Alaska can demonstrate it meets the disparity standard under any allowable methodology, Alaska should be certified and permitted to consider Impact Aid payments in disbursing its state aid to districts for FY2026. Failure to do so would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Moreover, the Department's current position would require Alaska to upend its state aid program for public education and have the unintended result of forcing the State to issue state aid for free public education in a manner that significantly dis-equalizes education funding. Consequently, maintaining the Department's determination would create an identifiable harm, rather than resolve one. If the Department's determination is not reversed, Alaska would lose $80 million dollars that would otherwise be available for public school funding in the state. Given Alaska's equalized state aid system, this would impact districts inequitably. Such a result is inconsistent with the legislative intent and federal purpose to provide a statutory exception to states that equalize their school finance formula across all school districts in the state and permit such states to account for Impact Aid within that formula. *See generally Tangipahoa Par. Sch. Bd. v. U.S. Dep't of Educ.*, 821 F.2d 1022, 1030 (5th Cir. 1987) (applying equitable factors to the Department's enforcement actions and questioning the appropriateness of enforcement when legislative intent was met). The Determination is contrary to the purpose of the ESEA and thus in error.

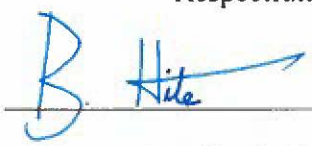
In addition to its inconsistency with the legislative intent of Impact Aid to provide a statutory exception in states that equalize their school finance formulas across all school districts, the Determination is also inconsistent with the Department's stated policy priority of returning

education to the states. *See* Proposed Priorities and Definitions, 90 Fed. Reg. 21,710, 21,712 (proposed May 21, 2025). Alaska designed and operates its program of state aid for free public education as an equalized system within this framework. Determining Alaska meets the disparity test does not impact the Department's Impact Aid allocation to Alaska school districts; rather, the impact affects only the State's funding and allocations, allowing the State to operate its own State aid program for free public education as designed. Federal decertification, on the other hand, would upend Alaska's State aid program for public education, resulting in unintended inequity for Alaska school districts, and could force Alaska to cut essential services or redirect instructional funds—undermining the very students Impact Aid is meant to support, especially in rural and Alaska Native communities.

II. Conclusion

Alaska respectfully requests a hearing before the Office of Hearings and Appeals pursuant to Section 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a) of the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 222.165. The State further requests that the assigned Administrative Law Judge permit an oral briefing to assist with the resolution of disputed material facts. *Id.* at § 222.165(g)(2). Alaska does not waive its right to seek other resolutions for this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



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10014 Crazy Horse Drive
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Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Department of Education and Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Public Comment – Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes to Local Contribution

Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

I am writing to offer comment in opposition to DEED's proposed regulation change to local contribution and in-kind services.

I would like to offer as my comment words from DEED and DEED's counsel. What DEED is saying to the federal government appears to contradict what DEED is telling Alaskans.

On July 14, DEED requested a hearing with the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) to appeal the FY2026 disparity test determination (which was based on FY2024 data).

The appeal letter (attached), from DEED's counsel, undermines and exposes DEED's stated rationale for the local contribution regulation change.

The letter appears to conflict with both DEED's testimony to legislative committees and with DEED's purported rationale for the proposed regulation change as shared with you in public meetings.

DEED's July 14 appeal letter to US ED does not mention a state regulation change. A regulation change has neither been asked for by US ED nor is it a condition of the state passing the disparity test now or in the future.

In an interview with the *Alaska Beacon*, published on July 24, 2025, Commissioner Bishop expressed "confidence" in the state's appeal *that is not predicated upon and does not mention a regulation change*. Commissioner Bishop described the appeal as "a math problem."

"'I'm confident that we did meet it,' Bishop said of the requirements. 'If I base it off of the last appeal and how Alaska was able to share how transportation costs are truly that disparate, then I think we will do fine'" (https://alaskabeacon.com/2025/07/24/alaska-appeals-to-us-education-department-after-failing-funding-test-with-80-8-million-at-stake/).

According to the July 14 letter from DEED's counsel, the state is *already* in compliance with "established federal direction and national accounting standards" and "consistent with longstanding guidance."

"[The] State's interpretation aligns with established federal direction and national accounting standards."

According to DEED's July 14 letter, the state could meet the disparity standard—not with a regulation change—but by "[a]ccounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods" and by additional differentials or exclusions, such as food service (recommended for months by superintendents).

"The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. **Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to the State meeting the disparity standard** [emphasis added]. Failure to certify the State as equalized **when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method** [emphasis added] would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest."

You are being asked to move forward with a devastating, statewide regulation change before the solution identified by DEED—a different accounting method—is even attempted and following DEED's counsel's admission that the state is already in compliance.

DEED's July 14 letter states that "maintaining the Department's [US Ed's] determination would create an identifiable harm, rather than resolve one." The same can been said of DEED's proposed regulation change.

In one year alone, Alaska students and educators will already bear the brunt of federal funding delays and a state veto of education funding. Cutting off local funding and local funding authority would complete the trifecta: *federal, state, and local funding all affected in one, single year*.

It is difficult to see any justification in DEED moving forward with a sweeping regulation change, the rationale for which has been described as "a pretext" and "a ruse to undermine public education in the state of Alaska."

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can provide additional documents, including from the federal government, to support your independent research on this topic.

On behalf of the students in the Juneau School District and students across our great state, thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Frank Hauser
Superintendent
Juneau School District
(907) 523-1702

From: Frank Hauser
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Local Contribution Regulation Change
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:21:21 PM
Attachments: F. Hauser Public Comment - Local Contribution Regulation Change.pdf
250714 Request for Hearing_Equalization Determination_AK-DEED.pdf

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the State Board of Education & Early Development:

Please find attached my public comment opposing the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's proposed regulation change regarding local contribution and in-kind services.

This proposed change would significantly and negatively impact essential educational services and non-instructional programs for students in Juneau and across Alaska.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can provide additional documentation, including from the federal government, to support your independent review of this issue.

On behalf of the students in the Juneau School District and students across our great state, thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Frank Hauser
Superintendent
Juneau School District
[redacted]

From: Gunderson, Megan
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing the Proposed DEED Regulation Change Concerning Local Contributions and In-Kind Contributions
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:49:28 PM

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Members of the Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment today. For the record, my name is Megan Gunderson and I am the current Director of Technology at Valdez City Schools as well as a mother of two VCS students. I taught for ten years in Alaskan public schools, and served on the Valdez City School Board for two years while working for the University of Alaska.

I am speaking to express deep concern regarding the proposed emergency regulation to redefine “local contributions” and “in-kind contributions.”

This change, if adopted as an emergency regulation effective for FY25, will have significant and immediate negative consequences for Valdez City Schools. One of the most immediate and harmful impacts of this regulation would be on the district’s ability to provide basic services like school meals and student transportation. The state funds allocated are not enough to cover the expenses for these services in our region, so the municipality covers an additional layer to create a healthy learning community and ensure equitable access to learning for all its children. The City of Valdez also offers VCS additional funds for student activities so that all student residents can access extracurricular activities--even those who choose to homeschool with other institutions.

If these municipal contributions are now counted against the cap for local contributions, we will be forced to make impossible choices between core supports. These aren’t hypothetical cuts—they are real, immediate, and deeply consequential to student learning and well-being. The proposed change puts the stability of our student support systems at risk, all in the name of alignment with a federal definition that was never intended to limit local partnership.

This proposed regulation undermines the very principle of local control—something that has long been foundational to Alaska’s system of public education and governance. By redefining those contributions in a way that penalizes rather than empowers, this regulation disincentivizes local investment and erodes the collaborative relationship between municipalities and school districts. Rather than honoring community-led solutions, this

change centralizes authority in a way that runs counter to the values of local governance and self-determination that Alaskans deeply value.

I taught in the classroom for ten years in rural districts around the State of Alaska, and I have also taught in urban schools in the Lower 48. I am a Coast Guard brat, and have lived in over a dozen different states around the country. I could live in any community and work for any school district, but I purposefully choose to stay in Valdez and raise my family here because it is one of the first communities that I have seen support its children at every opportunity. The City of Valdez puts kids first in every way imaginable. Our council of local elected officials identified VCS as the most appropriate organization to transmit so many of the services and supports deemed essential for a healthy community, and it contributes funds to the district accordingly. I do not believe it should be in the State Department of Education's power to limit the scope of how our local officials choose to enact their community mission and values.

Furthermore, the City of Valdez provides additional support that is at risk of being established as 'in kind' and counted against VCS's funding cap. Valdez gets 350 inches of snow on average per year, and it can be a difficult place to live in regards to weather. I love that my kids can access a huge City-made sledding hill on the playground every day; in our snowy community, it's truly the only place to play once the playground equipment is under seven feet of snow. I love that my kids can ski on city-groomed trails during PE, and learn in schools that are safe from roof collapse because the city commits to shoveling the snowload. The proposed regulations threaten these opportunities, and so many more.

It is clear that the proposed regulations are a selfish plan by DEED to protect itself from losing over $80 million of funding that it incorrectly intercepts from the federal government, all due to its recent disparity test failure. I believe the entire way DEED is allowed to intercept impact aid and retain a portion for itself is fundamentally flawed; impact aid should be treated as the local funds they are intended to be and fully transmitted to the districts. Messing with the regulation about local contributions is not the way to resolve their issue. In fact, DEED cannot prove that the proposed regulations will resolve its fundamental disparity test issue. They have not provided any proof, evidence, or quantitative metrics on the outcome of these proposed changes. They cannot even speak to the ways in which the proposed regulations would be practically applied.

We will never create equity by reducing strong local support to the lowest common denominator. True equity raises everyone up. This proposed regulation does the opposite—it penalizes communities that go above and beyond for their students, instead of working to elevate those with fewer resources. That is not a sustainable or just model for educational equity in Alaska. A 'sink all boats' approach to education will not create an excellent education for every student every day.

On behalf of the students and community of Valdez, I respectfully urge the board not to

approve this regulation change. I encourage a thoughtful analysis of the consequences and practical applications. If any regulation should be considered for alteration, perhaps it should be the impact aid formula and distribution process itself.

Thank you for your time and service to Alaska's students.

-Megan Gunderson
Valdez, Alaska

Megan Gunderson, M.S., M.Ed.
Director of Technology, Valdez City Schools

[redacted] | www.valdezcityschools.org
[redacted]
[redacted] | Valdez, Alaska

From: Lessens_Kelly
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Jacobs_Carl; Sullivan_America; Office Of The Superintendent
Subject: Opposition to proposed regulations regarding local contribution
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:12:46 PM

You don't often get email from lessens_kelly@asdk12.org. Learn why this is important

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Dear members of the State Board of Education,

This is a letter expressing my individual opposition to the proposed changes to the local contribution regulation as a member of the Anchorage School Board.

By now, I expect that you have received a tremendous amount of public input regarding the proposed changes to the local contribution regulation. I understand what it means to read through every email on any given issue, so I wanted to thank you for the time I am sure that you are putting into your service on Alaska's State Board of Education. Your leadership has never been more important.

I am aware that you have already received formal, nuanced letters of opposition to the proposed changes from individuals including the CFO of the Anchorage School District, the Senior Counsel for the Municipality of Anchorage, and the President of the Anchorage School Board (on behalf of the Board), and that you have received a copy of the *Joint Resolution* opposing the proposed changes which the Anchorage School Board and Anchorage Assembly each unanimously passed earlier this summer.

Because the bulk of my opposition to the proposed regulation changes has been formally spelled out in the text of that *Joint Resolution*, I wanted to share a story with you from some of my earliest days on the Anchorage School Board to communicate an additional, personal rationale for my opposition to the proposed regulation changes.

Briefly, I joined the seven-person ASD Board in May 2021 as one of four new members. That June, our Board met with Dr. Bishop, who was ASD's Superintendent at that time, to review a set of potential District goals for Board adoption. What became known as "Strategy XVI" (but has since been revised as "Strategy 2028") was going to commit the District to target an 80% proficiency rate for 3rd grade reading, a 55% proficiency rate for math for students in grades 3-9, and a lofty goal regarding graduates' College, Career and Life readiness.

The Board's main objective in our June 2021 retreat was to refine and approve the Strategy XVI goals to guide the District through 2026, which (spoiler alert) we eventually did.

The crux of what I wanted to share with you today, however, was Dr. Bishop's response to a question I raised during that June 2021 retreat. When I asked why ASD's math proficiency target couldn't be higher than 55%, she replied—quite honestly and directly—that we didn't have the money to be able to set a higher target, that we couldn't afford to, and that we would need to focus our available resources on 3rd grade reading instead.

I'll admit that I became emotional when I received that response. It did not seem fair to me that our district could allow so thousands and thousands of students to fall through the proverbial cracks for lack of money.

But what I learned from Dr. Bishop's response to me that day—as simple as it sounds—has stayed with me ever since: improving student outcomes takes sustained, targeted investments.

That's the core reason why the proposed regulation changes have me so worried. As you have undoubtedly been told, the proposed changes are poised to pull a minimum of $15 million in local funding away from the Anchorage School District. Because the proposed regulations will directly decrease the resources which ASD would otherwise be able to align with the Board's adopted goals for improving students' outcomes for its students in math, reading, and graduation rates, I urge you to vote no on these proposed regulations and work toward resolving the disparity test failure by other means.

Our students are depending on you.

Sincerely, and with gratitude and best wishes,

Kelly Lessens

From: Karen Roth
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Re: Governor"s education vetoes
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:42:07 PM

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Dear Board Members,

This email is to request that accountability to Alaska's public school children and communities be the top priority of DEED and to take a stand against the governor's heartless and short-sighted cuts to our educational support systems.

Withholding basic funding for tutoring, ELL support, mental health and special education services in our schools has created an environment of broken promises and mistrust across our state. Parents who see cancelled programs, overcrowded classrooms, and their neighborhood schools in survival mode, do not understand why the governor has abandoned the moral responsibility to ensure children receive an excellent education that meets their academic, social, and emotional needs.

It is not an understatement to say the futures of our children are at stake as a result of the choices DEED and the governor are making. Alaskans will not forget or forgive if our children suffer because of apathy or cowardice on the part of the very adults they depend upon to use their voices and power for good.

Thank you for standing up for what is necessary and right for our kids.

Karen Roth

From: Kari Paustian
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Kari Paustian, Sitka Alaska: comments on proposed cuts to local education funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:51:40 PM

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I am writing to express my deep concern over DEED's proposal to drastically cut back on local municipalities' ability to contribute to their school district's funding. I know that you are currently appealing the results of the federal "disparity" test, but regardless of the results of this appeal, I don't believe that cutting local funding so that all school districts are equally underfunded is the solution.

I'm a Science Education Coordinator at Sitka Sound Science Center and we work regularly in classrooms throughout the Sitka School District throughout the school year. We collaborate with teacher teams to bring hands-on, place-based education opportunities to all students in the district, which means our programs don't reach just students who have transportation and can afford after school programs or summer camps.

We are one of many organizations in Sitka that support the SSD and Sitka students in a huge variety of ways, and our community is richer for it. Please don't hamstring us and our students by requiring that local city government and organizations STOP supporting their students. This is not the path to equity and excellence in Alaska's schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Kari

Kari Nelson Paustian (She/her)
Science Education Coordinator
Sitka Sound Science Center

[redacted]

We are on Lingít Aaní – Lingit land. The Lingit people have been Indigenous to these lands and waters for over 10,000 years. Gunalchéesh to the Lingit people for their stewardship of this place since time immemorial and today.

ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

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Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

July 25, 2025

RE: AML Comments on Proposed Regulatory Change

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

Thank you again for your service to the state, public education, and students. We commend to you the following observations as it relates to the proposal to change how the local contribution is calculated.

As we weigh the impact of this proposal, it's worth highlighting your statutory obligations as trustees, essentially, and stewards of good governance. In determining whether the Board is making decisions consistent with statute, then, we would look to AS 14.07.165 that focuses on your duties, and (1) which requires statewide goals, but also local goals that are consistent with local needs.

I'm struck by references in AS 14.075 that while focused on assessment standards, where "the department shall review state education laws and regulations to identify unnecessary laws or regulations and areas where the laws or regulations may be changed to provide school districts with greater control over public education policy."

As you consider, then, the proposed regulations, it is worth looking at your decision through this legal lens – what is expected of you by Alaska Statutes and is your decision consistent with law?

It's also worth highlighting the Board's bylaws (required by statute), which commit board members to delivering, "An excellent education for every student every day." Will your decision about these regulations help you to meet this mission? Will the impact of these regulations positively contribute to an excellent education for every student, or do they run the risk of having the opposite effect?

We want to focus our remarks on a practical approach to meeting your obligations under law, the responsibilities of local governments and school districts, and the needs of students.

First, AML recognizes that the State has an obligation in statute to limit the local contribution to 23 percent of a district's basic need, or the equivalent of a two-mill tax levy on taxable property in the district, whichever is greater.

To effectively determine how the local contribution intersects with this cap the State must determine what goes into basic need. Essentially, the State board in its evaluation should determine what factors that the State Legislature utilizes to determine the BSA, which is the determining element of basic need. It is this number that represents what it costs to provide a basic education for every student. The only way to be confident in these basic numbers is through an adequacy study, which hasn't been completed as part of this process, nor recently.

So, to implement the law as DEED proposes, this very basic step has to be completed. The next step would be to evaluate the variables that go into determining adequacy. Essentially, what costs are counted as part of determining basic need. Then to implement the cap, as intended in statute, the board would establish what expenses of a district, or contributions to the district by the local government, count toward the cap.

If, for instance, the determination of the BSA does not take into account free lunch programs, or after school programs, or pool maintenance, then the cap on the local contribution does not apply. These very fundamental assumptions have to be addressed as part of your next steps.

It's probably not necessary to point out that we should also be sure to apply the cap carefully, and consistent with law. To be clear, we should ensure that DEED is accounting for the basic need established in law, based on the base student allocation adopted in law by the Legislature. Thus, the cap applies to what is lawfully considered BSA, and not the amount of funding that is actually distributed if funding is not appropriated consistent with law. In this way, it is possible that the State may fail the federal disparity test due to the executive branch's reduction in actual funding, while the local contributions remain under the cap based on legislative action. We encourage the board to review those numbers and keep this in mind, and continue to advocate for sufficient actual funding to help you meet your mission.

Next, AML would argue that DEED and the Board of Education have no authority over local government decisions related to provision of funding related to what should technically be considered community services, and local contributions that aren't for educational purposes shouldn't count against a school, let alone a community. Statutes focus the Board's roles and responsibilities on educational attainment, and the local contribution cap related to "basic" need for public education. That's very different than a local government's Constitutional and statutory obligations to implement maximum local self-government, with a liberal construction thereto. Local governments have responsibilities to provide for public safety and well-being, as well as any other service that is determined to meet the needs of local taxpayers and residents. They can do so through many kinds of mechanisms, including in cooperation with school districts. This is entirely separate from basic need, the cap, and the board's duties.

Here is a draft list of education-adjacent or community service-related costs that local governments might reasonably cover, which fall *outside* the scope of "basic public education" as defined by state funding formulas or constitutional mandates. These categories can help the Board of Education delineate the line between required educational expenses and optional, community-enhancing contributions. Not only does the Board lack the authority to restrict these investments in community by communities, but these appropriately fall outside the calculation of the local contribution cap.

Facilities and Infrastructure - These may support education but are not strictly necessary for instructional delivery:

- Facility upgrades beyond adequacy (e.g., aesthetic enhancements, LEED certification)
- Multipurpose community spaces in school buildings (used for senior centers, voting, after-hours events)
- Joint-use agreements for recreational facilities (swimming pools, sports fields)
- Capital projects unrelated to enrollment (e.g., school garden spaces, maker labs)
- Construction of housing for teachers or staff (if not mandated by the school district)

Technology and Digital Access - Local governments may support digital equity initiatives that serve students *and* the broader public:

- Broadband infrastructure investments (especially for rural areas)
- Community Wi-Fi hotspots
- Public access computer labs or co-working spaces
- Local support for digital literacy programs
- Technology upgrades beyond district minimums (e.g., tablets for every student vs. shared devices)

Health, Wellness, and Nutrition - These support the well-being of students but shouldn't necessarily be classified as basic education:

- Free meals beyond federal reimbursements (e.g., universal lunch or dinner programs)
- School-based health clinics
- Mental health counselors not covered by the district
- Youth substance abuse prevention programs
- After-school recreation or sports leagues funded by municipal parks and rec

Transportation and Access - Beyond legally required student transportation, local governments may choose to provide:

- Public transit passes for students
- Crosswalk safety patrols
- Bus service to extracurriculars or afterschool programs
- Weekend or summer youth transportation

Enrichment, Programs, and Staffing - May include support for educational quality or extracurricular access, and which can fall outside basic need:

- Local grants for STEM, arts, or cultural enrichment
- Funding for community liaisons or family engagement specialists
- Teacher recruitment incentives not funded by the district
- Non-mandatory Pre-K or early childhood programs
- Internship coordination or workforce development partnerships

Libraries and Learning Resources - Separate from or to augment school district libraries, local governments may choose to provide:

- Public library resources tailored for students
- Shared funding of makerspaces or innovation hubs
- Support for adult education and GED programs

Community and Cultural Services - These support place-based learning or identity development, beyond basic education, and can include:

- Civic education programs sponsored by the municipality
- Support for youth leadership councils
- Integration of Indigenous knowledge or language programming
- Support for field trips or cultural experiences not part of the school curriculum

<u>Next Steps</u>

AML will continue to advocate for the release of Impact Aid to school districts. Its purpose is to supplement what would otherwise be a strong tax base, a tax base that if not for federal land ownership would enhance the ability of local governments to contribute to public education. These funds truly are local. Does that have implications for the State, and its budget? Yes – but that's the State's obligation to address.

There are clearly issues related to basic need, adequacy, and State law that the Board will want to bring to the Legislature to address. AML can see an important role for the Board of Education to participate actively in the Legislature's education task force, and to spend time with the legislative branch to develop the metrics that will be used to assess and then adequately fund basic need.

At the same time, we do believe there are next steps. Wanting to understand how accounts are used and what should be included or excluded is a common goal that will take time and discussion. This is important not just to assess adequacy, but also to inform the State's approach to equity. It isn't as cut and dry as a regulatory change – we have to take the time to work together and make sure that we have the accountability and clarity necessary to understand the fundamental need for education and local

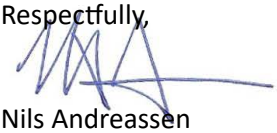
support beyond the definition. Local governments would benefit from this as much as the Department, Board, and school districts. A collaborative approach to understanding what goes into public education – which local governments share a responsibility with the State for, as critical funding partners – and what comes out (which for us is just as important), will help to remove some of the challenges currently experienced in an ongoing debate about how to meet our mandate.

This is an area where instead of new and challenging regulations, the Board of Education could initiate a process of engaging with the governing bodies of school districts to develop goals for these standards that meet the State's interests and reflect local needs, as required by statute. The Board should also direct the Commissioner and staff to work with organizations like the Alaska Association of School Business Officials and Alaska Government Finance Officers Association to unpack what's currently in place and come to consensus on how these processes are structured, how we all benefit from a common understanding, and how to assign educational expenses vs non-educational expenses that are based on local needs. We hope you'll include the Alaska Municipal League in that collaboration, such that we can contribute to the clarity of purpose and administration in future implementation of any action by the Board, and provide input into the determination of community services.

Ultimately, any action that you take that has the effect of reducing school district funding further will negatively impact students in Alaska. I know how much weight you must give to that consideration, and how important it is to board members in carrying out your duties, including to mitigate the harm that comes thereof.

With that in mind, we recommend setting aside these proposed regulations and focus this next year on these parallel paths – engage with the Legislature on adequacy, and engage with districts and finance officers on operationalizing goals we have in common. Your next steps should be consistent with law, and contribute to the Board's ability to truly deliver an excellent education for all students. Alaskans are counting on you in this.

Respectfully,



Nils Andreassen
Executive Director

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July 14, 2025

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
Faatimah Muhammad, Director
Impact Aid Program
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

ELECTRONIC MAIL DELIVERY
Faatimah.Muhammad@ed.gov

RE: Request for a Hearing Pursuant to Sections 7009 and 7011(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 7709, 7711(a)) Regarding Alaska's FY2026 Equalization Determination

---

Dear Director Muhammad:

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development ("Alaska" or "the State") received the U.S. Department of Education ("Department") Report for the Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 (State Fiscal Year 2026) under Section 7009(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 ("Determination") on May 16, 2025.

Alaska hereby appeals the Determination of the Department pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a). *Codified at* 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3). Specifically, Alaska disputes the certification denial under Section 7009 for fiscal year (FY) 2026. This denial prevents Alaska from taking into consideration Impact Aid payments when calculating state aid to districts for FY2026. A copy of the Determination is attached.

I. This Appeal is Timely Submitted Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1).

Determination appeals submitted by State Education Agencies ("SEAs") must be received in writing "within 60 days of receipt of the determination." 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(1). Alaska received its initial Determination refusing certification on May 16, 2025. This appeal is submitted by U.S. Mail and e-mail, in accordance with the Determination's letter of instruction, on July 14, 2025, which is within 60 days of the receipt date. The Department of Education and Early Development (the SEA) is furnishing a copy of this request to all Local Education Agencies ("LEAs") in the State in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 222.165(a)(3).

II. Factual Background

Alaska submitted its disparity submission of state fiscal year 2024 data used for fiscal year 2026 certification of its state aid program as equalizing expenditures on March 3, 2025. With that submission, Alaska provided formal notice of its intent to consider a portion of Impact Aid payments when allocating state aid to schools for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, as permitted by Section 7009(c)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA").

The Department requested descriptions for several items over the following weeks and confirmed receipt of all necessary material on May 2, 2025. The Department also notified LEAs of their right to a hearing in accordance with ESEA Section 7009(c)(2) on March 25, 2025. No LEAs requested a hearing. On May 16, 2025, the Department issued its Determination.

In its Determination, the Department found the State's disparity to be 26.88%, which is greater than the 25% disparity permitted by statute, and denied Alaska's certification for FY2026. The Department's decision largely rests on its analysis of Alaska's consideration of LEA transfers between funds and the related finding that such transfers do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Alaska disputes this finding and the underlying rationale.

III. Statement of Disputed Issues of Fact and Law

A. The Department Erred in Fact and Law When Finding That the State Did Not Meet the Disparity Test as Presented for Certification.

The Department questioned Alaska's consideration and treatment of LEA transfers between funds in its FY2026 disparity submission; however, the State's interpretation aligns with established federal direction and national accounting standards. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds. Accordingly, Alaska disputes the Department's finding.

Alaska also disputes the Department's finding that amounts transferred between funds do not meet the definition of a special cost differential. Specific funds such as food service and pupil transportation, for example, are earmarked for specific services and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction. When amounts are added to such funds, including through transfers, those revenues are restricted to supporting specific costs that easily meet the definition of special cost differentials. For example, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to funds LEAs transferred into a specific fund for transportation, which qualify as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs (*e.g.*, daily airplane rides) arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska recognized those revenues as associated with special cost differentials and excluded them from total revenues.

B. Even if the Department's Underlying Findings Are Upheld, Alaska Must be Certified if Deemed to Meet the Disparity Test Under an Alternate Method.

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026 based on its original submission since, as detailed above, the Department erred in its initial determination. However, if the tribunal upholds the Department's determination (dated May 16, 2025), the State should be permitted the opportunity to resubmit its request. The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to

the State meeting the disparity standard. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Alaska notes that the method used in its FY2026 disparity submission was selected, at least in part, to comply with a legal position the Department took in its initial FY2022 certification determination report for Alaska, with which Alaska disagrees. Specifically, Alaska disagrees with the Department's position that the State must include transportation-related revenues and expenses in the disparity test under 34 C.F.R. § 222.162. Alaska's pupil transportation funding system is not a part of Alaska's program of state aid for free public education and was recognized as such by the Department in previous years. Accordingly, pupil transportation revenues and expenditures should not qualify as revenue for current expenditures. Alaska put forth its position on this issue in its request for a hearing of that determination in 2021, has continuously preserved this position, and again restates that position and disputed issue of law herein.

C. The Department is Estopped from Refusing Certification for the Proffered Reasons.

Based on the Department's prior conduct in working with Alaska regarding its disparity submissions, the Department is estopped from denying Alaska's certification based on Alaska's inclusion of pupil transportation funds or recognition of transfer adjustments.

D. Failure to Certify Alaska for FY2026 Would Harm the Federal Interest

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026; failure to do so would result in harm to the federal interest. Even if the specific findings at issue in the Determination are upheld, to the extent Alaska can demonstrate it meets the disparity standard under any allowable methodology, Alaska should be certified and permitted to consider Impact Aid payments in disbursing its state aid to districts for FY2026. Failure to do so would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Moreover, the Department's current position would require Alaska to upend its state aid program for public education and have the unintended result of forcing the State to issue state aid for free public education in a manner that significantly dis-equalizes education funding. Consequently, maintaining the Department's determination would create an identifiable harm, rather than resolve one. If the Department's determination is not reversed, Alaska would lose $80 million dollars that would otherwise be available for public school funding in the state. Given Alaska's equalized state aid system, this would impact districts inequitably. Such a result is inconsistent with the legislative intent and federal purpose to provide a statutory exception to states that equalize their school finance formula across all school districts in the state and permit such states to account for Impact Aid within that formula. *See generally Tangipahoa Par. Sch. Bd. v. U.S. Dep't of Educ.*, 821 F.2d 1022, 1030 (5th Cir. 1987) (applying equitable factors to the Department's enforcement actions and questioning the appropriateness of enforcement when legislative intent was met). The Determination is contrary to the purpose of the ESEA and thus in error.

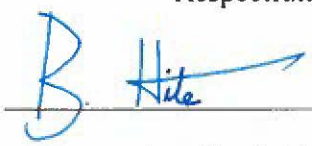
In addition to its inconsistency with the legislative intent of Impact Aid to provide a statutory exception in states that equalize their school finance formulas across all school districts, the Determination is also inconsistent with the Department's stated policy priority of returning

education to the states. *See* Proposed Priorities and Definitions, 90 Fed. Reg. 21,710, 21,712 (proposed May 21, 2025). Alaska designed and operates its program of state aid for free public education as an equalized system within this framework. Determining Alaska meets the disparity test does not impact the Department's Impact Aid allocation to Alaska school districts; rather, the impact affects only the State's funding and allocations, allowing the State to operate its own State aid program for free public education as designed. Federal decertification, on the other hand, would upend Alaska's State aid program for public education, resulting in unintended inequity for Alaska school districts, and could force Alaska to cut essential services or redirect instructional funds—undermining the very students Impact Aid is meant to support, especially in rural and Alaska Native communities.

II. Conclusion

Alaska respectfully requests a hearing before the Office of Hearings and Appeals pursuant to Section 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a) of the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 222.165. The State further requests that the assigned Administrative Law Judge permit an oral briefing to assist with the resolution of disputed material facts. *Id.* at § 222.165(g)(2). Alaska does not waive its right to seek other resolutions for this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer S. Mauskapf, Esq.
Bonnie Graham, Esq.
Blake Hite, Esq.
The Bruman Group, PLLC
Counsel for the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature

Alaska State Board of Education
Attn: Secretary Kathijo Jolin
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811

July 25, 2025

Via email: eed.stateboard@alaska.gov

RE: Proposed Regulation Change (4 AAC 09)

Dear State Board of Education,

Thank you for your service to our children and their education. I am writing to sincerely ask that you reject the proposed changes to the local contribution regulations and diligently work with stakeholders for a well-vetted solution on how to address disparity concerns.

It is critical to know the rationale that the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) provided in its recently applied for waiver of the FY26 federal disparity submission. In its July 14, 2025, letter (enclosed) to the U.S. Department of Education's Impact Aid Program, the Bruman Group, counsel for DEED, stressed that transportation costs and nutrition should not be counted in the disparity test due to great geographic cost differentials of those expenditures by region in our state. Specifically, the appeal states:

> "Consistent with long standing guidance…Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds…Specific funds such as food service and pupil transportation, for example, are earmarked for specific purposes and cannot be used to support general classroom instruction…For example, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to funds LEAs transferred into a specific fund for transportation, which qualify as special cost differentials given the unique transportation costs (e.g., daily airplane rides) arising from the geographic isolation of Alaska's districts.
>
> Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to the State meeting the disparity standard [emphasis added]. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest."

The proposed local contribution regulation changes to 4 AAC 09 would limit these exemptions currently being requested in the waiver to the federal government. These two actions contradict each other and do not make sense that the State Board would want to adopt them in regulations now.

Contact
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th St Juneau, AK 99801

907-465-3744
rep.andi.story@akleg.gov

Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature

All of Alaska's children face a very uncertain fiscal future for their education and potential loss of educational opportunities. I am urging the Board to work with stakeholders to ensure that their local funding capabilities are not disrupted by changes to well-established regulations that would have negative impacts on all children, rural and urban. Rural, REAA and urban districts are in the top 95 percent that are removed before computing the disparity test. These proposed changes will not fix equity issues. The federal Department of Education states that the disparity test does not guarantee equity between districts as it is a very complex issue.

I ask that you reject these proposed local contribution regulation changes and instead work with stakeholders to collaboratively understand the issues and identify solutions.

I believe all the levels of governance that address education policy and funding of our children and adults' education in our state need to be working well together. I am committed to this.

Thank you for considering my comments. I sincerely appreciate the work that you do.

Respectfully,

Andi Story

Representative Andi Story
House District 3

Enclosure

Contact
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th St Juneau, AK 99801

907-465-3744
rep.andi.story@akleg.gov

From: Glenn Cravez
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Regulatory Change to Definition of Local Contribution
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 1:51:33 PM

You don't often get email from glenn@cravezlawak.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I oppose the proposed change that would expand the definition of "local contribution" to include services provided at no charge to a district by a city or borough. This change would drastically reduce the amount of money that local governments can contribute to their school districts. This change undercuts school funding even further than what the Governor already is trying to do via veto. It also undermines the notion of local control. I am deeply opposed to this proposal.

Glenn Cravez. [redacted], Anchorage 99502.

Law Office of Glenn E. Cravez, Inc.
[redacted]
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Juneau, AK 99801-8529
907-523-1770

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
c/o Commissioner Deena Bishop
Department of Education and Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Public Comment – Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes to Local Contribution Limits

Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

I am writing to express concerns regarding the proposed regulatory changes to 4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990, as outlined in the *Supplemental Notice of Proposed Changes on Local Contributions* published by the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). I appreciate the opportunity to comment and offer the following for your consideration.

1. Acknowledgment of DEED Support
First, I want to express sincere appreciation to Lori Weed and Heather Heineken of DEED, who took the time on Tuesday, July 23rd, to meet with school business officials statewide. Their willingness to engage and clarify the proposed changes was helpful in providing insight and allowing districts to better understand the potential impact and prepare more informed public comments.

2. Concerns with the Creation of 4 AAC 09.985
DEED proposes to add 4 AAC 09.985, states that:

> "a local contribution is limited to appropriations or in-kind services that are consistent with 20 U.S.C. 7713(4) or 34 C.F.R. 222.161(c)(1)."

However, federal regulations do not mandate this change. According to 34 C.F.R. 222.161(c):

> "Where a State funding formula requires a local contribution equivalent to a specified mill tax levy... 'local tax revenues' include any revenues recognized by the State as satisfying that local contribution requirement."

This clearly places authority with the State of Alaska to define what constitutes a local contribution. There is no federal requirement compelling the adoption of 4 AAC 09.985.

Furthermore, DEED's own statement in their July 14, 2025 letter requesting a hearing under Sections 7009 and 7011(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act states:

> "If the tribunal upholds the Department's determination (dated May 16, 2025), the State should be permitted the opportunity to resubmit its request… accounting for special cost

differentials under alternative methods would likely lead to the state meeting the disparity standard."

This suggests that the State has pathways to maintain federal compliance without imposing this regulatory change, which further weakens the rationale for adopting 4 AAC 09.985.

3. Issues with Revisions to 4 AAC 09.990(b) – Definitions
The proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.990(b) would repeal key definitions of "appropriations" and "value of in-kind services", introducing more ambiguity than clarity:

- **Definition of Appropriation:** The deletion of "appropriations" defined as "money appropriated to a district's school operating fund by the city or borough" removes a clear and useful boundary. While DEED has informally stated that only municipal funds are to be counted, without a codified definition, future interpretations may vary. The definition should remain to preserve clarity and consistency.

- **Definition of In-Kind Services:** The removal of a defined list (e.g., insurance, utilities, audits, maintenance) opens the door for unequal application. Some municipalities might document administrative time, snow removal, or facility use as contributions, while others may not. This creates an unlevel playing field and encourages disputes between districts and municipalities. If DEED intends to expand the list, it should publish a comprehensive, standardized framework rather than remove clarity.

4. Clarification Needed on "Free Public Education" and "Current Expenditures"
The proposed 4 AAC 09.985 ties permissible contributions to 20 U.S.C. 7713(4), which defines "current expenditures" for free public education. However, this raises several issues:

- **Definition of Free Public Education:** According to 20 U.S.C. 7713(6), "free public education" means instruction provided at public expense, under public supervision, without tuition, and includes preschool but not education beyond grade 12. It does not explicitly require pupil transportation (unless tied to an IEP), school meals, preschool programs, or extracurricular activities.

  As such, DEED should clarify what Alaska specifically considers part of "free public education" before using this definition to limit allowable local contributions.

- **Pupil Transportation:** The proposed 4 AAC 09.985 appears to require that pupil transportation be included in calculating local contributions. Yet in DEED's own letter to the federal government states:

  "Alaska's pupil transportation funding system is not a part of Alaska's program of state aid for free public education... pupil transportation revenues and expenditures should not qualify as revenue or current expenditures."

This is a direct contradiction and must be reconciled before proceeding.

- **Extracurricular Activities:** These activities are not legally required. Furthermore, these programs often serve the general public, not only students. Athletic events and drama performances draw community-wide attendance and benefit.

  The City and Borough of Juneau, recognizing this value, began providing supplemental contributions to the Juneau School District to support these programs. This decision was made after direct consultation with DEED's School Finance Manager. These contributions have also helped offset travel costs for rural districts traveling to Juneau, creating access and equity while strengthening inter-district collaboration and public benefit.

5. Implementation Timeline and Fiscal Impacts
Perhaps most urgently, the proposed regulation could take effect within 30 days of approval, creating substantial disruption. A retroactive requirement to reevaluate in-kind services or reclassify contributions will create unnecessary administrative burden and compliance risk.

To prevent this, I strongly urge the State Board of Education to delay the effective date of any changes until July 1, 2026 (FY2027).

Conclusion
While I understand and support the goal of ensuring alignment with federal funding requirements, the proposed changes:

1. Are not required by federal law,
2. Create conflict with prior DEED guidance,
3. Remove definitions that support clarity and consistency,
4. Introduce inequity and uncertainty in in-kind contributions,
5. Contradict the State's own position on transportation,
6. And will cause undue disruption if implemented in the current fiscal year.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Board refrain from adopting the proposed changes, or at minimum, delay implementation to FY2027 and further refine the definitions and guidance provided in the regulation.

Thank you for your time and your continued service to Alaska's students and educators.

Sincerely,

Nicole Herbert

Nicole "Nico" Herbert, CPA
Chief Financial Officer
Juneau School District

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July 14, 2025

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Faatimah Muhammad, Director
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RE: Request for a Hearing Pursuant to Sections 7009 and 7011(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 7709, 7711(a)) Regarding Alaska's FY2026 Equalization Determination

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Dear Director Muhammad:

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The Department questioned Alaska's consideration and treatment of LEA transfers between funds in its FY2026 disparity submission; however, the State's interpretation aligns with established federal direction and national accounting standards. Consistent with longstanding guidance, Alaska adjusted revenues relating to specific funds. Accordingly, Alaska disputes the Department's finding.

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B. Even if the Department's Underlying Findings Are Upheld, Alaska Must be Certified if Deemed to Meet the Disparity Test Under an Alternate Method.

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026 based on its original submission since, as detailed above, the Department erred in its initial determination. However, if the tribunal upholds the Department's determination (dated May 16, 2025), the State should be permitted the opportunity to resubmit its request. The Impact Aid regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 222.162(d) provide four ways the State may account for special cost differentials when determining the disparity percentage. Accounting for special cost differentials under alternate methods would likely lead to

the State meeting the disparity standard. Failure to certify the State as equalized when it meets the disparity standard using an alternative method would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Alaska notes that the method used in its FY2026 disparity submission was selected, at least in part, to comply with a legal position the Department took in its initial FY2022 certification determination report for Alaska, with which Alaska disagrees. Specifically, Alaska disagrees with the Department's position that the State must include transportation-related revenues and expenses in the disparity test under 34 C.F.R. § 222.162. Alaska's pupil transportation funding system is not a part of Alaska's program of state aid for free public education and was recognized as such by the Department in previous years. Accordingly, pupil transportation revenues and expenditures should not qualify as revenue for current expenditures. Alaska put forth its position on this issue in its request for a hearing of that determination in 2021, has continuously preserved this position, and again restates that position and disputed issue of law herein.

C. The Department is Estopped from Refusing Certification for the Proffered Reasons.

Based on the Department's prior conduct in working with Alaska regarding its disparity submissions, the Department is estopped from denying Alaska's certification based on Alaska's inclusion of pupil transportation funds or recognition of transfer adjustments.

D. Failure to Certify Alaska for FY2026 Would Harm the Federal Interest

Alaska met the disparity test and should be certified for FY2026; failure to do so would result in harm to the federal interest. Even if the specific findings at issue in the Determination are upheld, to the extent Alaska can demonstrate it meets the disparity standard under any allowable methodology, Alaska should be certified and permitted to consider Impact Aid payments in disbursing its state aid to districts for FY2026. Failure to do so would be contrary to the program's purpose and harm the federal interest.

Moreover, the Department's current position would require Alaska to upend its state aid program for public education and have the unintended result of forcing the State to issue state aid for free public education in a manner that significantly dis-equalizes education funding. Consequently, maintaining the Department's determination would create an identifiable harm, rather than resolve one. If the Department's determination is not reversed, Alaska would lose $80 million dollars that would otherwise be available for public school funding in the state. Given Alaska's equalized state aid system, this would impact districts inequitably. Such a result is inconsistent with the legislative intent and federal purpose to provide a statutory exception to states that equalize their school finance formula across all school districts in the state and permit such states to account for Impact Aid within that formula. *See generally Tangipahoa Par. Sch. Bd. v. U.S. Dep't of Educ.*, 821 F.2d 1022, 1030 (5th Cir. 1987) (applying equitable factors to the Department's enforcement actions and questioning the appropriateness of enforcement when legislative intent was met). The Determination is contrary to the purpose of the ESEA and thus in error.

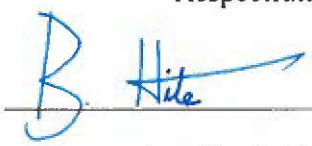
In addition to its inconsistency with the legislative intent of Impact Aid to provide a statutory exception in states that equalize their school finance formulas across all school districts, the Determination is also inconsistent with the Department's stated policy priority of returning

education to the states. *See* Proposed Priorities and Definitions, 90 Fed. Reg. 21,710, 21,712 (proposed May 21, 2025). Alaska designed and operates its program of state aid for free public education as an equalized system within this framework. Determining Alaska meets the disparity test does not impact the Department's Impact Aid allocation to Alaska school districts; rather, the impact affects only the State's funding and allocations, allowing the State to operate its own State aid program for free public education as designed. Federal decertification, on the other hand, would upend Alaska's State aid program for public education, resulting in unintended inequity for Alaska school districts, and could force Alaska to cut essential services or redirect instructional funds—undermining the very students Impact Aid is meant to support, especially in rural and Alaska Native communities.

II. Conclusion

Alaska respectfully requests a hearing before the Office of Hearings and Appeals pursuant to Section 7009(c)(4)(B) and 7011(a) of the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 222.165. The State further requests that the assigned Administrative Law Judge permit an oral briefing to assist with the resolution of disputed material facts. *Id.* at § 222.165(g)(2). Alaska does not waive its right to seek other resolutions for this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer S. Mauskapf, Esq.
Bonnie Graham, Esq.
Blake Hite, Esq.
The Bruman Group, PLLC
Counsel for the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

From: Herbert, Nicole "Nico"
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Commissioner, DEED (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment - Local Contribution Regulation Changes
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:20:28 AM
Attachments: 250714 Request for Hearing_Equalization Determination_AK-DEED.pdf
25.07.24 Local Contribution Public Commentss.pdf

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Good morning State Board of Education,

Attached are my formal comments regarding the proposed regulation changes to local contributions. For reference, I've also included DEED's *Request for Hearing Regarding Alaska's FY2026 Equalization Determination*, as it is cited within my testimony.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
-Nico

Nicole "Nico" Herbert, CPA
Chief Financial Officer
Juneau School District
[redacted]

From: v.l.christensen@gmail.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School funding and local contributions
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:00:53 PM

[You don't often get email from v.l.christensen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern,

I want to express my concerns with the cap on local businesses contributions and funding to our public school system.

So much of what gives our schools and educators the opportunity to provide an impact on students lives is because of the funding and support of the community.

It’s a circle that many depend on, and value. I have seen the negative impact of oversized classes in my son’s second grade class and the remarkable difference in a manageable class size for his 3rd grade class and feat we are headed back in that direction a with the current discussions of cutting funding to our schools. Please hear us out and help support schools, the students who deserve it and our future.

Vanessa Vetsch

Sent from my iPhone

From: Caitlin Carlton
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local Contribution Regulations
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:18:51 PM

[You don't often get email from caitlindori@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello, My name is Dori Carlton and I am a resident of Skagway. It was brought to my attention that the board is considering a regulation that would cut our current funding. The Skagway School district is currently underfunded as it is, which is why our community works so hard to support the children in this town so they receive the education they deserve. Skagway wants local control over how our community funds education. Our community works hard to support the education of the children in this town, and doesn't want to see that at risk.

From: William Ferguson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Municipal Support of School Districts
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 2:55:42 PM

You don't often get email from fergusonwilliam307@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,
We cannot continue to underfund our school districts and therefore our students. The recent moves to change how municipalities can financially support their school districts would continue to cut away from our school funding. The fact that the municipalities are willing to support the districts to the extent that they are indicates that they are willing to do all they can when decreases in the BSA continue. Continued underfunding of schools will have a snowball effect on the state's demographics. I believe your mission is to provide "an excellent education for every student every day". Please do not support the DEED plan to hamper a municipality's ability to fund their own schools. The reasons are all wrong. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,
William Ferguson
Sitka

From: Mary Whitmire Bordley
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I OPPOSE changes to 4.AAC.09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:17:00 PM

You don't often get email from mary.bordley@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to state regulation 4 AAC 09.

The proposed changes to the definitions of local contributions will decrease funds available to schools and hurt students, teachers, and communities. As a public school teacher and parent, the proposed changes will have a direct negative effect on my family.

Enacting the proposed changes will further damage the quality of public education in our state. Please do not accept them.

Sincerely
Mary Bordley

From: Anita Youngman
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: 4 AAC 09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:25:13 PM

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Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to state regulation 4 AAC 09.

The proposed changes to the definitions of local contributions will decrease funds available to schools and hurt students, teachers, and communities. As a public school teacher and parent, the proposed changes will have a direct negative effect on my family.

Enacting the proposed changes will further damage the quality of public education in our state. Please do not accept them.

Sincerely
Anita Youngman
[redacted]
Sent from my iPhone

From: Allie Shepherd
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to changes in 4 AAC 09
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:30:57 PM

You don't often get email from allie.shepherd@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to state regulation 4 AAC 09.

The proposed changes to the definitions of local contributions will decrease funds available to schools and hurt students, teachers, and communities. As a public school teacher and parent, the proposed changes will have a direct negative effect on my family.

Enacting the proposed changes will further damage the quality of public education in our state. Please do not accept them.

Sincerely,
Allison Shepherd
Anchorage Parent and Educator

Sent from my iPhone

From:	Rachel Sutton
To:	EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject:	Opposition to Proposed Regulation Changes — Support Valdez Students
Date:	Friday, July 25, 2025 3:52:58 PM

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Dear State Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned parent of Valdez to urge you to reject the proposed regulation changes that would reclassify outside-the-cap funding and redefine “in-kind” contributions provided by our city.

Valdez is an incredible place to raise my children. The City of Valdez provides incredible Parks and Recreation activities that tie in beautifully with our local school district. For example, a highlight for this town in the winter months is how the City of Valdez strategically plows snow from the elementary parting lot into a sledding hill for children to use at recess as well as for us to use as a family on the weekends. It is safely constructed with the City of Valdez's equipment and elegantly groomed as the ski trail groomer makes its rounds toward the ski trails. What an amazing experience for our students! Why would you withhold something like that from them at no cost to the state? It's absurd. Due to our close proximity to the city ski trails, our student have an amazing annual experience when they are able to snowshoe and cross country ski as part of their physical education classes. The equipment has already been provided. Again, why would you restrict that programing at no cost to the state?

Like much of the state, our town is quite a distance from the next town. We also have more snowfall to manage than any other community in the state. Our students have significant travel needs to participate in school and school activities. Our city graciously aides with this. Again... at NO ADDITIONAL COST TO THE STATE.

Most importantly, we have a very important food service partnership with the city. I know students who may not be adequately provided for at home. Nutrition is an important topic that our city wants to help with. Why on Earth would you restrict our city from this partnership? This is baffling. The city monies used to feed kids in Valdez are not be part of YOUR budget.

I live here. I vote here. I pay property taxes here. Stay out of my kids' business. How dare you propose to restrict my town from supporting my kids?

All students in Valdez deserve access to safe transportation, quality nutrition, after school opportunities, and community-supported programs. Please protect student opportunities, respect local control, and oppose these harmful regulation changes.

Sincerely,

Rachel Sutton
Parent and Concerned Community Member

From: Laura Stats
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: I oppose changes proposed by DEED
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 3:58:59 PM

You don't often get email from laurastatsdaugherty@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear DEED,

I am writing regarding the proposed changes to the administrative code 1) 4 AAC 09.985 is proposed to be added to require that all local contributions be consistent with federal impact aid laws.
(2) 4 AAC 09.990(b). is proposed to be changed as follows: repeal or amend the definitions of “appropriation” and “value of in-kind services,” as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990, to clarify budgeting language for school districts.

Let me clearly state that I am adamantly opposed to these changes.

First let me point out that much of this problem exists due to Governor Dunleavy’s uncooperative stance on sufficiently funding Alaska Schools BSA increases which have forced city and boroughs across the state to fund local education. For the past two legislative sessions the Alaska Legislature has worked very hard to pass adequate bipartisan inflation proof BSA funding to schools that was vetoed by the governor 2 years in a row leaving significant gaps in adequate funding? And this year he chooses to veto this in June when school districts already g have their budgets in. There is nothing that our governor has done to provide a flourishing education system in Alaska and DEED is now doing the same.

Of course this has put the state in the position where city and boroughs have had to step up to fund schools more aggressively. Here in Juneau, we have been informed that 52% of our property tax go to education. The vetoed increase in for BSA funding to all Alaskan schools at large has put Alaskan city and buroughs in the position to fund our schools. This has caused the flunking in the disparity tests.

When the legislature adopted the education funding statutes, it chose to include eligible federal impact aid in the funding formula and chose to limit local contributions in order to support a state equalized funding formula. Alaska’s statutory school funding formula (AS 14.17.410) allocates education dollars fairly across all districts, including those that rely more heavily on federal aid.

In 2023 did DEED and the SBOE disparity tests, did you inform the governor and the Alaska State Legislature along with the citizens of state?

Again, I am opposed to these changes. I am for Governor Dunleavy, DEED and the SBOE to work in conjunction with our legislators to allow them to pass bills which increase and inflation proof the BSA as was suggested in the final days of the legislative session this year.

Kind regards,
Laura Stats
Juneau, Alaska

From: Kristin Garot
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed DEED regulation change regarding local contribution
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:00:39 PM

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I am writing to urge you to carefully consider the implications of your proposed action to change regulations related to local contributions to school districts. Significantly changing the way districts and communities allocate resources without a corresponding change in the funding formula makes your actions detrimental to creating a community that wants to support students in the public school setting.

I have spent most of my professional career in service to Alaska's students -- as a teacher, as a principal, and as a district instructional leader. I care a lot about this issue and can see the detrimental impact the proposed changes will have if enacted.

I understand the concept of reducing the outcome of having communities of haves and have-nots. But this is not the way to accomplish this outcome -- and it's not the way to respond to a federal finding that sits on a methodology for reviewing that gap in a way that all other states have decided not to use.

It takes looking more carefully at the state-wide funding formula and using other measures besides the disparity test to make sure we're meeting that obligation to support students across the state. I am not sure that this proposed approach will in fact help us meet the federal requirement -- seems like a big gamble if it's not actually going to meet the requirement.

In a time when public school districts must compete for attendance with other options families have, this change will have the impact of having more and more families choosing something that is not the local public school. If our local community can no longer support students with grants for supporting place-based initiatives, if we have to cut all transportation and food services, if we have to significantly reduce student activities -- then the outcome will be more families being pushed away from our schools.

I believe in the capacity of public schools to support all students -- and improve outcomes for all students. This change shuts down our ability to do that throughout the state.

Kristin Garot
Juneau, Alaska

From: sunsetlappo@icloud.com
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: "disparity test"
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 11:15:22 AM

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This is the wrong way to go. Education in this state is being starved of funds. This would just add to the problem, not help.

From: Natalee Rothaus
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to proposed 4 AAC 09.990(b)
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:25:43 PM

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To: EED State Board Members

From: Natalee Rothaus, 45 year Alaska resident, mother of 2 children who successfully completed K-12 in the Juneau School District (JSD), former JSD (& JESS) employee

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed changes below as it will further restrict local Alaskan school districts' flexibility to spend funds for the numerous demands on their diminished annual budgets.

4 AAC 09.990(b). is proposed to be changed as follows: repeal or amend the definitions of "appropriation" and "value of in-kind services," as those terms are used in the definition of "local contribution" in AS 14.17.990, to clarify budgeting language for school districts.

Myself, along with thousands of other people in our Capitol City, state and nation are concerned and appalled as to what has and is happening to public education. Knowing there is tremendous pressure and need on how to disperse statewide funds I ask you not to move further with this regulation.

Thank you all for the work you do.

Natalee Rothaus
[redacted]
Juneau 99801

From: Elaine Reale
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed Changes on Local Contributions in Dept of Education Regs
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:36:52 PM

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To State Board of Education:
Please vote against the proposed changes to the local contribution in the public education funding formula.

Elaine Reale
Anchorage Resident
[redacted]

From: Karen Wilson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Contributions regulations change
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:41:39 PM

[You don't often get email from kwilson@wileng.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern:

We are totally opposed to this regulation change. Our schools are already short on funds without further deductions!

Sincerely,
Karen and Jeff Wilson
Juneau

From: Vicki Turner Malone
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Resolution to limit local contributions for education
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:56:39 PM

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I am totally opposed to this measure for the following reason :
It removes local control from communities and prohibits them from participating in the education of their children.

I hope this school board, which appears to be very interested in parental choice, would not do anything to prohibit the choice of parents participate in financing their children's education at a community level.

Vicki Turner Malone
[redacted]
Wasilla, AK 99654
District 27
Mailing address:
[redacted]
Wasilla, AK 99687

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: Paola O.
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: regarding the proposed regulation on local funding contributions for education
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 5:00:06 PM

You don't often get email from paolaorozco342@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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As part of the state board it is your job to figure out how to best sever your people in this state, community, etc. You are in this position because of us, the people. Your job is to serve the people and put our needs first, that is the job you signed up for, and you need to take on that responsibility and fulfill your duties accordingly.

Thank you.

Paola O.

From: Valerie T
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: School Funding
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 5:02:07 PM

You don't often get email from vtruncali@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Regulation Limiting Local School Funding

To the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am writing to express my strong support for the continued robust public funding of local schools in Alaska, and my deep concern about the proposed regulation that would count in-kind services toward the maximum local contribution to school funding.

Public education is a cornerstone of our communities, and it is essential that local governments retain the ability to support their school districts beyond the state-mandated minimum—whether through direct financial contributions or in-kind support. These local investments are not excessive; they are necessary, especially in a state as geographically vast and diverse as Alaska, where needs vary widely from district to district.

I understand the intent of this regulation is to bring Alaska into compliance with the federal "disparity test" and protect vital Impact Aid funding. However, I urge the Board to find an alternative path that does not penalize communities for going above and beyond to support their schools. Counting in-kind services against the local funding cap could lead to real harm for students—reducing support for programs like student meals, mental health services, extracurricular activities, and other vital resources that foster a safe and enriching learning environment.

Now is not the time to scale back our commitment to public education. Strong schools are the foundation of strong communities, and they require meaningful, flexible support at the local level.

Please reject this proposed regulation and work collaboratively with federal partners to ensure both compliance and fairness without jeopardizing the educational opportunities our children deserve.

Sincerely,

Valerie Truncali
Anchorage school district

Parent, Dental Hygienist, Community Member

Sent from my iPad

From: Rachel Blakeslee
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Please oppose the proposed local contribution regulation changes
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 5:10:55 PM

[You don't often get email from rachel.g.blakeslee@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Dear Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am a mother of a public school student and community member in Anchorage.

I urge you to oppose the proposed regulation changing the local contribution rules and redefining what constitutes local contribution.

As state board members, you have a duty to act in the best interest of the children of our state. This proposed regulation is antithetical to that responsibility. This new proposal takes a “lowest common denominator” approach to equalizing support for schools. It reduces local control and punishes vital community support for schools. Support, mind you, that is critical to help address the massive funding gap that continues to widen with our state’s chronic underfunding of our public schools. It introduces significant ambiguity to state regulation that will increase bureaucratic burdens, costs associated with those burdens, and risk for local districts and municipalities.

In the end our kids are those that will suffer. Our districts are already hurting, and our families are leaving the state for its failure to provide sufficient resources to support a high quality education for our children. This regulation will further limit the learning opportunities our kids can receive, constrict already limited resources, and further erode our public education system.

Please remember that your actions have real impacts on real families trying to make a life in Alaska. We will not forget what has already been stolen from us by poor political leadership and the fickle promises of certain appointed DEED officials who, above all else, are driven by greed and self interest at the expense of the most vulnerable.

Please reject this misguided proposal, evaluate all options, and choose an approach that does the least harm. This proposal is not the answer.

Respectfully,
Rachel Blakeslee
Anchorage, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: G Nelson
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored); schoolboard@asdk12.org
Subject: Take no action
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 10:16:35 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Honorable Members of the Alaska Board of Education and Early Development,

I strongly urge you to take no action regarding the proposed changes to state regulations regarding the financing of public schools and the required local contribution.
As a retired educator, I continue to participate in public schools as a volunteer and substitute proctor of assessments. I experience first hand the hard work of our public school staff and see the progress students are making.
Our students and families need support and adequate funding at this time, not more hardship.
As a community member I am deeply concerned about the financial impact these changes would have on private citizens.

Stand up for students and take no action on these proposed changes.

Gretchen Nelson
Anchorage Alaska

From: Dawson Dahl
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed changes on local contributions 4 AAC 09
Date: Saturday, July 26, 2025 6:34:43 AM

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I am writing today out of deep concern regarding the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09, which propose to change the definition of local contributions to include "value of in kind services". I strongly urge you not to approve these proposed changes. The value of community donations and volunteer services should not be included in the municipal funding cap for schools.

Why would you seek to limit a communities efforts to support their children using creative and freely given local services? What useful purpose would it serve to include these donations in the fiscal cap for municipalities?

Our schools are suffering from chronic underfunding from the state. Inflation has increased costs, yet the state funding remains flat. So many programs, teachers, counselors, and admin have been cut over the past 5-10 years!! Our kids and our future suffer because of this. The local funding cap already limits how much communities are able to compensate for that loss in state funding. I don't see any useful reason to calculate, much less include, the monetary value for community services that are freely given in order to support our schools and our kids. These proposed changes would discourage community support and involvement in schools.

Please do not approve these proposed changes. Let parents and communities have the freedom to freely and without fiscal "punishment ", support their most valued asset, their children!

With appreciation,

Kristin Dahl
Anchorage, AK

From: searoad2@msn.com
To: eed.contact (EED sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Regulations Changes
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 11:49:42 AM

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Dear DEED,

I strongly opposed the proposed regulation changes and definitions to the language code that municipalities can use to financially support their already struggling districts.
Let's be honest, Alaska has failed once again the "disparity test" because communities can't access the tax base of federal lands, like any other state that receives Impact Aid.
The Dunleavy Administration is proposing to re-write the code to create inequality NOT equality in communities that can raise revenue!

I want to reiterate how devastating this will be for every school district in our state, and for that I strongly opposed to the proposed changes!

Sincerely,

Adriana Bryan

From: Otto
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed changes /local contribution/state edu
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:04:30 AM

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This attempt to compel school districts to meet the 'disparity test' -the existence of which needs to called into question- will fail in its intentions. I am familiar with a small school district in Southeast Alaska, having on occasion worked a couple of years as an aide. I am not now currently employed. I resided there for 38 years and my children all graduated from the school district.

The intent of the 'disparity test' is to equalize opportunity for education between school districts with greater financial resources and those without. The school district with which I am familiar(Wrangell) belongs to the latter. This district has strong support in the community. The city of Wrangell contributes the maximum funding allowed under state law to the school district. The district relies heavily on funding from the federal government for rural schools. This funding is needed after the federally mandated shutdown of logging which supported the town. The federal funding has passed the Senate, but not yet the house.

So, if the proposed changes to contributions to local contributions is enacted, here is what would happen to this district: it would be worse off than before, which is against the intent of the 'disparity test'. I can state this with confidence. The City would have to pay employees to track and bill for services provided, which hurts the City. The school district likewise would need to pay someone to track funds and pay the bills from the City. Funds used to pay the City will not be used for educating students. This diverts funds which should be used to repair the leaking roofs and buy curriculum and pencils. This is a case of the rubber band being stretched thin enough to break.

Public education is one of the greatest strengths of the American ideal: every child has the opportunity(stress! opportunity, not guaranteed success) to have an education. The idea of equalizing the outcome of public education through meeting disparity tests will fail to produce the desired results.

Sincerely, Christina Florschutz

From: maura obrienphillips
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Local gov n schools
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 8:20:05 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

it’s up to the local government. Do NOT make this state controlled. Each local entity can make their decision based on what is available and helpful to their school to help educate their students!!!!

From: Rozlyn Grady-Wyche
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Cc: Sheley Secrest
Subject: Formal Opposition to Commissioner Bishop's Proposed Regulation Changes
Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2025 8:03:01 PM

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Rozlyn Grady-Wyche
Alaska Education Chair, NAACP Tri-State Area Conference (Alaska, Oregon, Washington)
educationak@naacpaowsac.org

June 24, 2025

Dear Members of the Alaska State Board of Education,

I write today on behalf of the NAACP Tri-State Area Conference serving Alaska, in my role as Education Chair, to express our strong and unequivocal opposition to the regulation changes being proposed by Commissioner Deena Bishop.

As witnessed during the most recent State Board of Education meeting, nearly 90 minutes of non-stop public testimony made it abundantly clear: Alaskans across the state, educators, students, families, and community leaders oppose this proposal and recognize the harm it would cause. And yet, Commissioner Bishop appears determined to move forward, ignoring the overwhelming voices of the people she is meant to serve.

For the Anchorage School District alone, this proposed change would mean a $15 million cut. That's not a policy adjustment that's a direct blow to classrooms, to students already underserved, and to the teachers doing everything they can with too few resources. Statewide, this regulation would deepen inequities and undermine efforts to build an inclusive, thriving, and culturally responsive public education system.

Commissioner Bishop is pitching this regulation change as necessary to comply with federal standards and avoid failing the disparity test. But let's be clear: the federal government did not request this change; this narrative has been fabricated by Bishop. The reason Alaska is even subject to the disparity test is because we remain the only state in the country that chooses to use $81 million in Federal Impact Aid to fund education through the state's formula, rather than allowing districts to retain those funds directly. This is not about federal compliance or efficiency, it is about Governor Dunleavy's continued refusal to adequately fund public education.

As Education Chair of the NAACP Tri-State Area, I work closely with families and advocates in communities that will be disproportionately impacted especially Alaska Native, Black, rural, low-income, and students with disabilities. Let me be clear: these proposed changes threaten the very foundation of equitable education in our state.

We are not fooled by language that cloaks defunding in the rhetoric of "efficiency." This proposal does nothing to increase student success, close opportunity gaps, or support educational justice. Instead, it prioritizes privatization and budget slashing at the expense of Alaska's children.

The NAACP urges the Alaska State Board of Education to reject this harmful proposal and instead advance policies that reflect:

• A deep commitment to public education as a civil right,

• Community voice in all decision-making processes, and

• Adequate and Equitable funding and support for the students who need it most.

We will continue to mobilize families and educators across Alaska to speak out and stand up until public education is protected, has adequate funding, and never undermined.

Thank you for your time and for your service to Alaska's students.

In solidarity,

Rozlyn Grady-Wyche
Alaska Education Chair
NAACP Tri-State Area Conference (Alaska, Oregon, Washington)
educationak@naacpaowsac.org
[redacted]

From: Connie Markis
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Cease and Desist!
Date: Monday, June 23, 2025 5:02:28 PM

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I am fully against removing 15 million dollars to once again deny students the support they need and deserve to help them
reach their goals of good mental, physical and academic excellence. Please believe in them and give them the support they need. Thank you.
Connie Markis

From: Paul McDonogh
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Regulation Changes to Local Contribution Requirements (4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990(b))
Date: Monday, June 23, 2025 2:50:26 PM

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Dear Members of the State Board of Education and Early Development,

I am writing to respectfully voice my strong opposition to the proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.985 and 4 AAC 09.990(b) concerning the definition and consistency requirements of local contributions to public education.

We need greater—not weaker—tools for collaboration and shared responsibility in this difficult fiscal environment.

These proposed amendments, while seemingly mere technicalities, risk undermining one of the few remaining areas of flexibility for school districts in Alaska. At a time when our state continues to face a long-standing structural revenue crisis, it is both short-sighted and counterproductive to further restrict how local Assemblies, City Councils, and Tribes can contribute to and sustain their public schools.

These changes would also severely undermine the governor's strategic priority to expand "school choice" initiatives. What real 'choice' remains when communities are blocked from investing in what makes each school unique and excellent? In Anchorage, for example, Bartlett High School's Olympic-style swimming pool attracts families focused on competitive athletics and scholarships; West High's theater draws those interested in drama and production; and the King Career Center appeals to students seeking hands-on trade experience. Maintaining these specialized programs depends on local in-kind contributions like facility use, along with local financial support for transportation, coordination, and infrastructure. Restricting these forms of local investment would directly conflict with the State Board of Education's goal of strengthening school choice. Rather than squeezing out support through needless technicalities, we should be diversifying the approaches available to local governments and communities to step up for our schools.

For these reasons, I urge the Board to reject the proposed changes and instead open a broader dialogue about how the State Board of Education can be a dedicated partner in locally-driven solutions and long-term investment in public education. Supporting local communities is the only responsible leadership option to address the wide range of demographic, infrastructure, and funding realities that are faced by Alaska's 55 school districts.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Alaska's students.

Sincerely,
Paul McDonogh
Parent in Chugiak, Alaska

mcdonogh.paul@gmail.com

From: Paola Banchero
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.985
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 12:51:40 PM

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Dear State Board of Education,

I'm writing to oppose proposed changes to 4 AAC 09.985 that would limit local support for public school districts.
The State Board of Education mishandled the initial change, calling it an emergency measure and trying to speed its passage while the public was getting its first taste of summer.
It's ridiculous that this issue seems to have priority, when the abject failure of the state to adequately support public schools, particularly rural schools that are falling apart, has not. (See https://www.propublica.org/article/alaska-deterioriating-public-schools-reporting)
Public schools need every bit of help from local municipalities as they can get as it is clear the state isn't doing the sufficient amount to educate children in public schools. Alaska should be looking at the strong support other developed nations give their students.

Thanks and regards,
Paola Banchero
Anchorage, Alaska

From: Will Judy
To: EED, State Board (EED sponsored)
Subject: Comment on proposed regulation limiting Municipal contributions to Schools - "Outside of the CAP"
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:51:33 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

I'm sending this as a public comment in response to the proposed regulation to limit what Municipalities can provide to school districts that is considered "Outside the CAP".

I'm very familiar with the Alaska constitution and its requirement to provide adequately for Public school system in Alaska.

This has been woefully ignored for more than a decade and the current Governor is at fault for the current disparity and flat/negative funding of our Public School system, actively vetoing any increase in spending on Public Schools.

I also understand the reason for the Public School cap and funding formula that Alaska uses to fund its public schools.

With the current funding crisis for ALL of Alaska's public schools, limiting services that Municipalities provide to the schools in within their boundaries will only exacerbate the currenting funding issues resulting in even more loss of teachers, schools, and other education services within all of Alaska.

I strongly oppose this regulation and its negative impacts it will have on Alaska schools.

Work needs to be done to hold the current and future administrations accountable for Alaska schools that is required by the Alaska Constitution. The Alaska DEED should NOT seen as working for the Governor, it works for the State of Alaska and its Public Education system.

If school funding was adequate with the Foundation formula, I wouldn't oppose this regulation, however, as it stands now, schools are so underfunded that "Outside the CAP" funding isn't considered extra but vital.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel to reach out if you have any questions

about my comments.

William Judy
[redacted]
Juneau AK 99801