

2015/2016 Alaska Superintendents Association (ASA) Standing Resolutions

Section A: Governance

The Association believes that the most effective delivery of education is accomplished at the local level and that the school district governance must ensure that all children receive an equitable and adequate public education.

Further, the Association supports the minimum federal and state regulations required to coordinate educational services. (2010)

Section B: Employees

The Association believes that school district employees are an essential asset in creating and maintaining an effective educational system. Every Alaska school district must be guided by employee standards, thereby providing the best educational opportunity for all children. In these difficult financial times it is imperative that we value school employees, in order to be able to recruit, retain and develop teachers and administrators who represent the diverse society and cultures unique in Alaska. We challenge the legislature to provide changes in educational funding one year in advance, or at minimum prior to April so that districts can plan and provide for the highest degree of career stability for the staff.

Alaska Teacher Placement provides an essential service, and that the Alaska Legislature through the University of Alaska should provide adequate funding.

Section C: Student Support Services

The Association believes that all students must be afforded equitable educational opportunities; given opportunities to excel in both curricular and co-curricular activities; transported to school in a safe manner; educated in a safe environment; and supported in their learning and goal of becoming responsible, lifelong learners.

The Association further believes that all children must be prepared to enter into a competitive, global workforce that requires they be competent problem solvers and skilled technology users.

C-1. Alaska Children's Trust: The Association supports the work of the Alaska Children's Trust, and urges all administrators to work with the Trust and other agencies to address the tragic consequences of abuse, neglect, violence, and crime experienced by too many of Alaska's children. (1996, 2007, 2014)

C-2. Mandated Courses/Curriculum: The Association opposes mandated courses or curriculum for students through federal and state legislation or regulation. The Association believes that curricular matters are a local right and responsibility. (1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 2009)

C-3. Internet Access: The Association supports robust Internet services for all Alaska communities to better ensure student access to relevant and rigorous content and course offerings. (2014)

C-4. Technology Access: The Association recognizes and supports the use of age appropriate technology and software to enhance instruction and stimulate student learning. (2014)

Section D: Finance

The Association believes that foundation and capital funding, distributed on an adequate and equitable basis, are essential to the future of Alaska and all districts. The Association supports being accountable for the dollars entrusted to the school districts and any measure that will allow districts to operate in a more efficient manner.

We fully support the findings in the report on Foundation Formula Revisions and ask the legislature to implement the recommendations. We request that the Legislature fund as many capital improvement projects as possible, based on DEED's process and priority ranking.

Section E: Student Learning

The Association supports quality educational opportunities for all children in Alaska. The development, attainment and assessment of content standards are the shared responsibility of schools, families, communities, State of Alaska and Department of Education and Early Development. The Association further believes that all school districts should be accountable for student learning.

Section F: School Size Criteria

The State of Alaska has a legal obligation to provide an equitable and adequate education to all Alaskan students regardless of where they live and this obligation must be honored. ASA opposes any efforts to increase the current school funding threshold above 10 students. (2015)

ASA Special Resolution

A resolution of the Alaska Superintendent Association (ASA) supporting no change to the minimum number of students (10) necessary to be counted as a school.

WHEREAS, the current funding formula provides funding as a school where a community has an Average Daily Membership (ADM) of 10 students; and

WHEREAS, there have been discussions that the Legislature may consider increasing the minimum student count for school funding to 25 in order to reduce State spending on education; and

WHEREAS ASA supports maintaining the minimum student count for school funding at ten (10); and

WHEREAS, education is a fundamental right of all Alaska students; and

WHEREAS, increasing the minimum student count for school funding to 25 would result in the likely closure of over 60 schools in over two dozen Alaska School Districts with a significantly disparate impact on rural communities and Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS, a substantial number of the affected students would be elementary and middle school aged youth; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has a constitutional obligation to provide an equitable and adequate education to all Alaskan students regardless of where they live and this constitutional obligation must be honored with regard to the students who would be negatively affected by the school closures; and

WHEREAS, there has, to date, been no study or finding that providing alternative educational services such as access to a correspondence program would be constitutionally sufficient or adequate for the displaced students in the affected communities; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing a constitutionally adequate education, the State must also meet federal and state requirements including, but not limited to, the obligation to provide a free appropriate public education to eligible students; and

WHEREAS, APA noted that school closures have additional impacts in small Alaska communities where closure of the school essentially dismantles the community itself. APA also noted that the closure of small schools may also force other remaining students into correspondence programs that may not be appropriate if the student does not have the community and family supports necessary for a successful and constitutionally adequate educational experience.

Adopted by the ASA Membership September 2015