



2016 Joint Position Statements

Priority Funding for Education

ACSA believes PreK-12 Education funding must be the State of Alaska's primary financial concern as follows:

- The State of Alaska must provide consistent, reliable, and predictable revenue for the Foundation Funding Program.
- The State of Alaska must fund at the true cost of education in all regional districts.
- The State of Alaska must provide full funding to districts for all initiatives, laws and mandates that require additional services.
- The State of Alaska must develop and implement a multi-revenue fiscal plan to eliminate the highs and lows of oil dependent funding.

Early Childhood Education

ACSA believes early childhood education must be a priority for all Alaskans who desire to increase the long-term success for all children. Research is clear and consistent that the benefits of early childhood education are significant. ACSA supports reliable, long-term funding of early childhood education programs that will offer quality early education opportunities to children across our state.

Career and Technical Education

Career Technical Education (CTE) for both rural and urban schools is critical to high standards and Alaska's economic growth and stability. Involvement, professional development, and management is needed by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) and Department of Labor & Workforce Development (DOL), while collaborating with educators and industry based professionals.

Preparing, Attracting and Retaining Qualified Educators

ACSA strongly encourages development of comprehensive statewide programs to prepare, attract, and retain high quality effective educators and professionals.

Minimum Number of Students

ACSA opposes proposals to change the minimum number of students (currently 10) for funding of a school in the state foundation formula. In an effort to achieve a small savings in funding, proposed changes would seriously degrade the quality of educational opportunities available to rural students in dozens of communities across the state. Changes would also put into question the state's fulfillment of its constitutional requirement to provide equitable and adequate education to all Alaska students, as well as its compliance with federal obligations.

Other State Issues

- We support a careful review of the three legislative studies authorized by HB278 presented in the late summer/fall of 2015, with an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and analysis.
- We encourage the legislature to take action at little or no cost to the state to continue efforts to control the cost of Worker's Compensation claims, including: control of utilization rates; improved management of claims; improved Reemployment Benefits process.

Other State Issues Continued

- We support finding a solution to the charges imposed on school districts and municipalities with regards to PERS termination studies and "below the floor" charges, which have had unintended consequences for employers.
- We strongly encourage the legislature to take action to assure that quality mental health services are available to support all of our schools.

Statewide Considerations and ESSA

With the recent passage of the ESSA we encourage the State Board of Education and the legislature to proceed carefully when examining our current accountability structure as we all embrace positive change. This change will best be accomplished by involving multiple stakeholders including, but not limited to, the State School Board, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, superintendents, principals, teachers, business professionals, students and parents to create a more vibrant, long term and effective integrated system of standards, curriculum, instruction, evaluation and review.

JPS Federal Issues

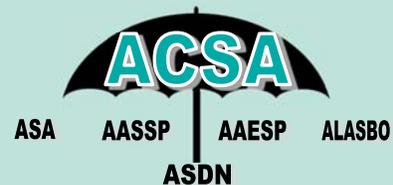
Forest Receipts/SCRSA

ACSA strongly endorses the continuation of the 100 plus year partnership that was created between the Federal Government and communities to compensate communities financially impacted by the placement of timber reserves into federal ownership.

- If SCRSA is not reauthorized, funding for educational programs in Alaska will decrease from \$11,700,000 to less than \$500,000 in FY17.
- SCRSA is critically important to 24 of Alaska's 54 school districts. In fact, the revenues from SCRSA represent more than 33% of the annual budget in some of the 24 districts. A reduction in funding of this magnitude will have significant impacts on districts and create significant hardships for the districts we serve.

Other Federal Issues

- We encourage legislators to restore the FY2016 302(b) allocation of funds for the Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittees to at least the FY2010 level at \$163.6 billion.
- We support adjustments to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) "Cadillac Tax" thresholds to account for high medical costs in Alaska. The current calculation unfairly penalizes Alaskan employers for factors beyond their control.



ACSA's mission is to create a common voice, advocating for public education by shaping policy and growing leadership capacity across Alaska.



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