

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

FROM: Tyson Cox, Assembly Member *TRC*
Ryan Tunseth, Assembly Member *RT*

DATE: February 25, 2025

SUBJECT: Resolution 2025-014, Urging the State of Alaska to Implement a Sustainable Increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and Invest in Strategic Improvements to Public Education (Cox, Tunseth)

Without a base student allocation (BSA) increase, one-time funding, or a mix of both, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District will be facing a budget deficit of just under \$17 million for FY26 which will require consolidating schools, increasing class size, and eliminating programs important to our students and community members.

A stagnant BSA has significantly decreased the buying power of State allocated educational funding over the last 20 plus years. Even if this Assembly decides to fully fund education to the maximum allowable amount, the KPBSD will not be able to present us with a balanced budget without eliminating programs, increasing the number of students in each classroom, and consolidating schools.

Potential solutions to this Alaska State education funding dilemma are before our State Legislature and Governor. Solutions will most likely be presented as a BSA increase, one-time funding, and the Governor's education priorities through HB 69, HB 76 and SB 82.

Without stable, inflation-proof education funding in Alaska we will continue to see our Alaska educational system erode. The KPBSD cannot solve an upcoming FY26 funding deficit without major cuts that will undoubtedly weaken the public education available to students of the Kenai Peninsula for years to come.

As you all know, the KPB can only fund to the "cap". Even with maximum assistance from the Borough, the KPBSD will still fall slightly less than \$17 million short of being able to continue with the current student education programs provided to our community unless additional State funds are allocated.

This resolution requests that the State Legislature and Governor Dunleavy pass a balanced education package that includes a permanent and sustainable increase to the BSA—indexed to inflation—as well as strategic investments in teacher retention, student literacy, and school choice options as part of a comprehensive education plan that incorporates responsible reforms to strengthen student achievement.

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RE: Base Student Allocation

It also urges the Alaska Legislature and Governor Dunleavy to prioritize a long-term, bipartisan solution for FY26 and beyond, providing school districts with predictable funding levels while incorporating policy measures that enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Alaska's education system.

Your consideration is appreciated.