



BOARD OF EDUCATION

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

IMPROVE EDUCATION FUNDING

Education funding in Alaska has not kept pace with the rising costs that school districts have faced over recent years. This funding shortfall places the ability of districts to deliver high-quality education at risk, leading to substantial staffing reductions and program cuts. How education is funded could be improved in the following areas to benefit students throughout Alaska:

- **BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION:** To ensure predictable and sustainable funding, enact annual legislation within 45 days of the legislative session to establish the BSA, adjusted for inflation since 2011 using Legislative Finance Division analysis and the same inflation factor applied to other administrative budgets.
- **ALASKA READS ACT SUPPORT:** Provide funding to school districts to support the requirements of the Alaska Reads Act, including increased staffing levels necessary to deliver valuable interventions for students both in and out of school.
- **DEFERRED MAINTENANCE:** Funding North Pole High School's Mechanical and Electrical Upgrades, ranked 7th on the FY2026 Major Maintenance Grant list at \$12,803,053, is a critical need for FNSBSD. With \$367 million in deferred maintenance, delays caused by limited funding hinder essential projects across our district. Increasing funding to allow more than one capital improvement project per year for large districts is necessary to address these urgent needs effectively.
- **TRANSPORTATION:** Increase its transportation funding by at least \$270 per pupil to \$1,172 per pupil for FY25.
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Increase funding for special education students, including correspondence students, to reflect eligibility growth and the rising cost of specialized services, including staffing, transportation, required extended school year programs, assistive technology, and individualized support.
- **CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION:** We urge legislators to prioritize targeted funding for Career and Technical Education programs, ensuring Fairbanks and Alaska develop a skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of our local and state economies.
- **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT (PBIS):** Provide targeted funding for districts to strengthen their positive behavioral interventions and support programs. PBIS is a proven framework that reduces disciplinary incidents, improves school climate, and enhances economic outcomes by focusing on positive reinforcement and support strategies. support.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- **RETURN TO DEFINED BENEFITS RETIREMENT SYSTEM:** School districts need a better benefits system with shared risk between employers and employees to make Alaska a competitive education employer compared to other states. A strong defined benefit retirement package is essential to attract and retain educators, offering them security in retirement. The current system fails to incentivize teachers to work or remain in Alaska, undermining efforts to build a stable and experienced workforce.



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IMPACT OF BUDGET DEFICITS

PAST BUDGET CUTS

Over the past several years, the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District has faced ongoing budget deficits and has taken significant steps to address these financial challenges. Despite our proactive approach, including closing schools and reducing staff and programs, we have reached a critical point where further cuts are severely impacting the quality of education we provide to our students. Improving student outcomes remains the priority of both the district and the state; however, achieving this goal is not possible with severely restricted resources. Without increased funding from the state, we will be forced to make additional reductions that significantly limit the opportunities available to our students, staff, and community. The following outlines the substantial reductions the district has already implemented in the last five years:

REDUCTIONS OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS

- More than 200 jobs
- Closure of 4 schools:
 - Joy Elementary
 - Nordale Elementary
 - Anderson Elementary (Eielson Air Force Base)
 - Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High (Eielson Air Force Base)
- Increased class sizes
- 17.5 FTE Special Education staff cut (despite ~20% increase in special education students)
- Eliminated programs and services:
 - Extended Learning Program (Gifted & Talented)
 - Elementary band and orchestra
 - Elementary art
- Reduced funding and activities:
 - 50% cut to elementary activities
 - 50% cut to school supply budgets
 - 20% cut to secondary activities
 - High School Hockey eliminated
- Administrative reductions:
 - 20% cut to administration
- Operational cuts:
 - Closed the district print shop
 - 19% cut to custodial staff

FY26 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Looking ahead to FY26, the district is facing an estimated **\$16 million deficit**. **This deficit includes an assumption of a \$680 increase in the Base Student Allocation.**

In anticipation of this deficit, the district has already made the decision to **contract out evening/shift custodial services**, resulting in the reduction of 74 jobs. Additionally, the school board will be making the decision in February to **close an additional five elementary schools**. Even if the board proceeds with closing five elementary schools, which would generate an estimated \$7 million in savings, **there will still be a \$6 million shortfall** that must be addressed through further reductions or additional funding.

EST. FY26 DEFICIT	\$16 MILLION
CONTRACTING	\$3 MILLION
CUSTODIAL	
CLOSING 5 SCHOOLS	\$7 MILLION
REMAINING FY26 DEFICIT	\$6 MILLION



SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS & GROWTH

2024-25 School District Goals



LITERACY

We're committed to early literacy, aiming to build on last year's success and continue growing our students' reading skills.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

By partnering with families and focusing on family involvement, we're making sure parents and guardians can be hands-on and engaged in their children's learning journey.



GROWTH FOR ALL

We support every student to reach their full potential. We offer extra help and resources for those who need it.

CONSISTENT GROWTH
Endless Potential

Growth from 2023-24 Goals



LITERACY

Our goal was to increase reading proficiency and we saw a 23% improvement in grades K-3 from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

September 2023

Proficient / Well Above

40.6%

April 2024

Proficient / Well Above

63.8%



ATTENDANCE

Our goal was to increase the percentage of students with 90% or better attendance. We saw almost a 3% increase in attendance which is an extra 100,000 student contact hours compared to the previous year.

+100,000
CONTACT HOURS



CLIMATE & CULTURE

Our goal was to show growth in improving student and staff culture in the school district and schools. The majority of students, staff, and parents have a positive or very positive view of their school.

"I FEEL LIKE I BELONG."

Students who agree:

70.1% (+2.6% growth)

Staff who agree:

83.6% (+5.0% growth)