



Resolution #36

BioGlitter Initiative

Submitted by **Sylvie Wailand**

Date 10/29/25

Be it resolved by the Polaris General Assembly that:

1. **Whereas**, plastic glitter is a form of intentionally added microplastic, which does not biodegrade and contributes to persistent pollution in waterways, soil, and wildlife;
2. **Whereas**, plastic glitter is commonly used in schools for art projects, exposing children directly to microplastics and making students both vulnerable to health impacts and unintentional contributors to pollution;
3. **Whereas**, recent scientific studies confirm that microplastics are pervasive in Alaska's environment, including:
 - a. Southcentral Alaska Waterways: A 2024 survey of 39 rivers, lakes, beaches, and tap water sources in Anchorage and surrounding areas found microplastics in 100% of samples, with fibers and fragments dominating;
 - b. Remote Ecosystems: Microplastics were detected in snow and surface waters across Far North, Interior, and Southcentral Alaska, with some snow samples containing 681 particles per liter, indicating atmospheric deposition;
 - c. Marine Wildlife: A 2025 University of Alaska Fairbanks study found microplastics in 33 of 34 spotted seal stomachs harvested for subsistence in the Bering Sea region, and a 2024 study confirmed microplastic particles in muscle, liver, and blubber tissues of walruses;
4. **Whereas**, these findings demonstrate that microplastics travel through food webs and have been documented in subsistence resources vital to Alaska communities, raising serious ecological, cultural, and health concerns;
5. **Whereas**, glitter made from conventional plastic (such as PET or PVC) is a known contributor to microplastic pollution when used in art, crafts, and school projects, and plastic glitter has been classified as an intentionally added microplastic under international environmental guidelines;
6. **Whereas**, a 2025 Girl Scout survey of Anchorage art teachers revealed that the majority have already eliminated or significantly reduced the use of plastic glitter in their classrooms, demonstrating both feasibility and educator support for this transition;

7. **Whereas**, students and youth leaders, including members of the Girl Scouts of Alaska, have demonstrated civic engagement and advocacy by raising awareness of this issue and calling for action at the district level; and
8. **Whereas**, sustainable, non-plastic alternatives such as biodegradable glitter made from plant cellulose and natural decoration materials (such as leaf confetti and sand-based sparkles) are readily available and suitable for school activities.

Therefore, be it resolved by the Polaris General Assembly that the purchase and distribution of plastic glitter be prohibited in all classrooms, art programs, and school-sponsored activities by the end of the current school year is supported by the Polaris student body. The adoption of biodegradable or natural alternatives for art and craft projects is encouraged. Students, staff, and families are educated about the environmental and cultural impacts of microplastic pollution, using resources developed in partnership with local organizations and student-led initiatives. By doing this, ASD would be leading by example as a sustainable district, reducing sources of microplastic pollution and protecting Alaska's waterways, wildlife, and communities for future generations. Finally, we recognize and celebrate the student and community leadership that brought this initiative forward, encouraging continued youth engagement in environmental stewardship and civic participation.

Action Statement: This resolution will be brought to SAB with the hope of getting passed. If passed there, it will be brought to the Anchorage School Board.

Sources:

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Prata, J. C., da Costa, J. P., Lopes, I., Duarte, A. C., & Rocha-Santos, T. (2020). Environmental exposure to microplastics: An overview on possible human health effects. *Science of The Total Environment*, 702, 134455. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.134455>

Southcentral Alaska Microplastics Survey Report. (2024). Public Interest Network / Research & Policy Center. <https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Southcentral-Alaska-Microplastics-Survey-Report.pdf>

Sletten, A. (2024, January 25). Southcentral Alaska waterways survey finds widespread microplastics. Alaska Public Media.

<https://alaskapublic.org/news/2024-01-25/southcentral-alaska-waterways-survey-finds-widespread-microplastics>

Dev, S., Schwarz, D., Rashedin, M., Hasan, M. I., Kholodova, D., Billings, S., Barnes, D. L., Misarti, N., Saleh, N. B., & Aggarwal, S. (2024). Unveiling microplastics pollution in Alaskan waters and snow. *Environmental Science: Water Research & Technology*, 10, 2020–2029. <https://doi.org/10.1039/D4EW00092G>

University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Northern Engineering. (2024). Microplastics pollution in Alaska. <https://ine.uaf.edu/research-highlights/2024/microplastics-pollution>

Sletten, A. (2023). Microplastics in Spotted Seal Stomachs from the Bering and Chukchi Seas in 2012 and 2020 (Master's thesis). University of Alaska Fairbanks. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/14971>

University of Alaska Fairbanks. (2025, March 31). Microplastics contaminate spotted seal diets in remote Alaska waters. <https://www.uaf.edu/news/microplastics-contaminate-spotted-seal-diets-in-remote-alaska-waters.php>

Rosen, Y. (2024, February 6). Microplastics found in body tissues of walruses harvested by Alaska hunters. *Alaska Beacon*. <https://alaskabeacon.com/2024/02/06/microplastics-found-in-body-tissues-of-walruses-harvested-by-alaska-hunters>

The resolution passes with unanimous consent.