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## Juneau School District

### Board of Education 2014 -2015 Legislative Priorities

#### **Protect the classroom**

##### **Increase funding thru the Foundation Formula**

The Juneau Board of Education urges the Alaska Legislature to increase Foundation Formula funding to protect services to students in the classroom. (AS 14.17.410) Our district is facing a minimum \$3.5 million shortfall after cutting \$11 million in the past 5 years, and losing approximately 100 positions and numerous programs and services to students. A multi-year funding plan that addresses inflationary costs will help maintain offerings, services and support to students and staff, provide efficiencies and build confidence in Alaska's public school system.

Increase Juneau's District Cost Factor. Juneau's cost of living is the highest of the large districts and the current factor does not accurately reflect actual cost differentials.

##### **Provide one-time monies for energy relief and health insurance relief**

This support is critical for meeting our rising energy costs and health insurance costs. Legislative work is being done on a possible statewide health care plan or other solution to help meet one of the largest rising costs to school districts. These costs directly impact revenue available for curriculum materials and professional development for staff to teach to higher Alaska standards and reduce funds for school offerings to meet requirements for the Alaska Performance scholarship.

##### **Support funding of the State's unfunded liability to retirement systems**

This ensures that more revenue will not be diverted to the unfunded liability but available for precious classroom dollars.

## **Achieve Operational Efficiencies**

Provide for assessments that reflect the new higher standards and then replace the High School Qualifying Exam.

Pursue optional statewide health care plan or other solution to achieve health care costs savings.

Provide for a multi-year funding plan that addresses inflationary costs. A pattern of tight and temporary budgeting to the classroom inhibits sustainable planning and encumbers valuable time that could be used more effectively. Under the leadership of the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force this was successfully implemented from FY 2008 to 2011.

**A solid funding process for public education is an investment in the future of students; the families they will raise, and the economic viability of Alaska.**

## **Invest in Resources that Improve Student Learning**

### **Technology in the Classroom**

**Add a Technology Funding Factor** similar to the Career Tech Factor (AS 14.17420) in the foundation formula. Alaska students must be prepared for the digital world. This factor can help address hardware and software purchases, infrastructure, including bandwidth and training needs for students and staff. AASB's **Consortium for Digital Learning** would provide a powerful cost effective digital device to every student and teacher to access unlimited educational content and increase instructional strategies, personalize learning, and improve digital literacy.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Only half of Juneau Kindergarten students come to school having been provided with essential pre-kindergarten experiences to insure success at school. Offering voluntary early learning experiences is an investment in savings to costs for remediation. The Juneau Pre-K Pilot, a part of the Alaska Pilot Pre-kindergarten, served a total of 81 students in the last two years. Sixty-five youngsters have both a fall and a spring score

to evaluate "about expected" growth. Of the 65 students 71% made "about expected" growth as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

2014–2015 Board of Education:

Sally Saddler, President; Sean O'Brien, Vice President; Andi Story, Clerk;

Phyllis Carlson, Destiny Sargeant, Barbara Thurston, Lisa Worl

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