

Update on Fiscal Situation and How it May Impact Steller

Remember when Steller lost an Art Teacher and we all complained AFTER THE FACT??? We have a chance to weigh in before things happen this week!

Here is one Steller parent's perspective.

EVERY VOICE MATTERS! This Wednesday 3/2, 1-4:30 pm, you are warmly invited to HAVE YOUR SAY on the state budget! You don't even have to fly to Juneau! Please go to the Legislative Information Office in Anchorage 716 W 4th Ave #200 (park west of the building and you can go inside and get a free parking permit to place in your car)

Feeling shy? You can also write to ALL legislators using this email:

Gov.ALLlegislators@alaska.gov

More information:

Our state is in a fiscal crisis, due to less money coming in than we are spending. This 8 minute video by ISER economist Gunnar Knapp gives a helpful overview of the state's fiscal situation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWZqWwHPcyE>

- CUTS TO ALL SCHOOLS COMING SOON: Mostly due to rise of medical insurance and benefits in education, the funds that ASD has to work with is not enough to retain the current staff levels. In order to balance the budget, there will be approximately **50 teacher position cuts** in the district.
- IF the state does not retain the \$50 bump up in the per student allocation, called the BSA, or base student allocation that is in statute, and the word on the street is that the legislature will NOT honor this law passed two years ago, ASD will be looking to cut approximately 200-300 teaching positions. Word is that the legislature intends to cut even more from education.
- According to Ed Graff, there is no other areas to cut in ASD because the admin has already made so many cuts, and so classrooms in schools will be impacted. Many schools are making do with less curriculum materials and fewer admin staff. I have attended many ASD budget meetings and I mostly agree with this assessment.
- If this is an issue that matters to you, we are at a CRITICAL time to speak your mind to your legislator. If you do not know who that is, please check this link. If you're not sure who your legislator is, scroll to the bottom of this page: <http://akleg.gov/> and enter your address. Make sure to point out to

- your legislator that you are THEIR CONSTITUENT. They want to hear from you!!
- The first release of state cuts is likely to come next week or the week after and they are taking testimony THIS WEDNESDAY 3/2!



This is from an Alaska PTA Vice President, Alison Arians who just returned from Juneau:

I'm just back from a three-day trip to Juneau. We spoke to more than 35 legislators and staff while we were there, and got a pretty good idea of what they are thinking now that the first third of the session is complete. Most Majority members talked about wanting to cut the government first before they look at new revenue sources. Everything is on the table, including especially cuts to education. We stand to lose the \$50 Base Student Allocation that has been promised to us. This will take money directly out of the classroom.

Legislators need to know that we want them to support our public schools, and we are willing to pay for the services we receive—**ESPECIALLY OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

Please, go to a caucus, and ask them to please work to develop a sustainable budget for the sake of Alaska's children. Tell them that you support plans for obtaining new sources of revenue, including income taxes, a sales tax, reducing the PFD, and a variety of other taxes. They aren't hearing this enough. Explain that you support a broad-based approach to make sure that costs of state government are shared by all. **WE ARE WILLING TO PAY FOR THE STATE**

SERVICES WE RECEIVE.

Ask them to prioritize education funding, and to honor the \$50 Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase that is now in statute. Schools have already faced many cuts over the last few years, and this BSA increase will help keep teachers in the classroom. You could also ask them to support Pre-K funding, which dramatically improves student success, and also helps people be successful in life after school.

We are in the middle of some really tough times, and the legislators need to know what we think NOW so they can go back to Juneau with the confidence that we will support them to make hard decisions in this, an election year.

It's hard to get all the way to Juneau, and expensive as well—but tomorrow is a chance for you to talk directly to your legislators from right here in town!

NONE of the above is sanctioned by Steller or ASD. This is information from one parent.

If you would like more information, feel free to email: Alyse.galvin@gmail.com

Check out facebook page Great Alaska Schools Anchorage or website GreatAlaskaSchools.com