

CLERK'S OFFICE
APPROVED

Date:

1-31-12

Submitted by: ASSEMBLY MEMBER DRUMMOND
ASSEMBLY MEMBER GRAY-JACKSON
Prepared by: Assembly Counsel's Office
For reading: January 31, 2012

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR NO. 2012-35**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE
"FUNDING FOR SCHOOL MEALS ACT" AND ALASKA HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
EFFORTS TO TIMELY SUPPORT THE ACT WITH A "DO PASS" RECOMMENDATION.**

WHEREAS, Anchorage Mayor Dan Sullivan has clearly demonstrated Anchorage's commitment to raising academic standards and preparing graduates to compete on an international level for jobs; and

WHEREAS, during the Mayor's Education Summit in Anchorage in November 2011, Samuel Abrams, a visiting scholar at Teachers College, Columbia University cited "good and free lunches for all students" as a top priority for successful schools; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies have shown that students who eat breakfast will consistently improve in math, language, reading, and vocabulary with increased test scores; will have higher rates of attendance and lower rates of tardiness; and will have fewer behavioral problems and lower obesity rates; and

WHEREAS, according to a study commissioned by Feeding America and the ConAgra Foods Foundation, hungry children suffer from lower academic achievement and workers who experienced hunger as children create a workforce pool that is less competitive with lower levels of educational and technical skills; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage School District's 2010-11 Profile of Performance Report estimated that 21,778 students were eligible to receive free or reduced breakfasts and lunches; and

WHEREAS, Alaska is one of only twelve states that does not provide a state match to school district participants in the Federal Free and Reduced-Price School Breakfast and Lunch Program; and

WHEREAS, the Funding for School Meals Act is the current legislation supporting state funding to school districts participating in the Federal Free and Reduced-Price School Breakfast and Lunch Program by providing a base amount of 35 cents for each breakfast served and 15 cents for each lunch served; and

WHEREAS, the Funding for School Meals Act passed the State Senate and was transmitted to the State House of Representatives in February 2011; and

WHEREAS, this legislation was requested by the Food Bank of Alaska, the Alaska Food Coalition, and the Alaska School Nutrition Association and is endorsed by the Association of Alaska School Boards, including endorsement by the Anchorage School

1 District; and

2
3 WHEREAS, the Funding for School Meals Act is currently in the Alaska House
4 Finance Committee; and

5
6 WHEREAS, with an increased participation rate to 60% of Alaskan students, Alaska
7 has the opportunity to receive an additional \$1.9 million in federal funds which would greatly
8 offset the state share of funding;

9
10
11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

12
13 **Section 1.** The Anchorage Assembly supports funding for the Funding for School
14 Meals Act.

15
16 **Section 2.** The Anchorage Assembly supports Alaska House Finance Committee
17 efforts to timely move the Funding for School Meals Act out of committee
18 with a "Do Pass" recommendation, so that Anchorage's students will
19 benefit from a healthier school environment that best supports a
20 competitive workforce and a successful future for our children and our
21 community.

22
23 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 31st day of
24 January, 2012.

25
26
27
28 Debbie Osander
29 Chair

30
31 ATTEST:

32
33
34 Bethane S. Buehler
35 Municipal Clerk
36



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM

No. AM 98-2012

Meeting Date: January 31, 2012

1 **From:** ASSEMBLY MEMBER DRUMMOND

2
3 **Subject:** **AR 2012-35 — A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL**
4 **ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE “FUNDING FOR SCHOOL MEALS ACT” AND**
5 **ALASKA HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE EFFORTS TO TIMELY SUPPORT**
6 **THE ACT WITH A “DO PASS” RECOMMENDATION.**
7

8 Studies relating to the benefits of school meals have shown the following:
9

- 10 • Improved school achievements;
- 11 • Improved standardized test scores;
- 12 • Improved scores in language, reading, and math;
- 13 • Improved math scores and participation;
- 14 • Improved memory and listening skills;
- 15 • Improved vocabulary;
- 16 • Improved brain function;
- 17 • Calmer, more obedient behavior;
- 18 • Fewer disciplinary referrals needed;
- 19 • Fewer emotional problems;
- 20 • Higher rates of attendance;
- 21 • Lower rates of tardiness; and
- 22 • Lower obesity rates.

23
24 Implementing a state-matching fund will encourage more schools to provide school meals and
25 improve existing programs. The cost of state-matching could be greatly offset by improving and
26 increasing participation in the school meals programs. It is estimated that an increased school
27 participation rate to 60% would generate \$1.9 million in federal funds which would greatly impact
28 the state share. Investing in school meals programs will directly benefit the future of Alaskan
29 students and consequently promise a better future for the community of Anchorage and the
30 state of Alaska.

- 31
- 32 • Alaska State House of Representatives, Representative Cathy Munoz, Sponsor Statement,
33 HB132: Funding for School Meals
- 34 • Alaska State Legislature, Senator Bill Wielechowski, Sponsor Statement, Senate Bill 3 –
35 Funding for School Meals
- 36 • Anchorage School District, Superintendent Carol Comeau, Letter re: Comments Regarding
37 ASD Support of SB3

38
39 Respectfully submitted:

40
41 Harriet Drummond
42 Assembly Member, Section 3



REPRESENTATIVE CATHY MUÑOZ

HB132: Funding for School Meals

House Bill 132 will provide a state match of 35 cents for each breakfast served and 15 cents per lunch for schools participating in the federal Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast and Lunch Program. Currently, Alaska is one of twelve states that does not provide a state match and is amongst the bottom ten states for participation in the school meals program.

With an increased school participation rate to 60% Alaska has the opportunity to receive an additional \$1.9 million in federal funds which would greatly offset the state share.

One out of eight Alaskan families struggle to feed their families. While the school lunch program feeds over 36,000 students at a free or reduced rate for lunch, and over 18,000 for breakfast, only 20% of participating schools offer breakfast, impacting 22,253 Alaskan children, 6,850 of these children are from low income families who qualify for free or reduced price meals. HB132 provides an opportunity to offer more nutritious meals to a greater number of children.

Multiple studies have shown students who eat breakfast consistently improve in math, language, reading and vocabulary. Test scores increase, higher rates of attendance and a decrease in tardiness also occurs, with fewer behavioral problems and lower obesity rates.

This legislation is supported by the Food Bank of Alaska, The Alaska Food Coalition, Alaska School Nutrition Association, and has been endorsed by numerous school districts. These organizations have seen and heard about the struggle many families in Alaska face to put nutritious food on the table, and have first-hand knowledge of the increased benefits to the children. I urge your support for HB132.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session
State Capitol, Rm. 101
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-2435
Fax: (907) 465-6615

Interim
716 W. 4th Ave, Ste. 540
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-0120
Fax: (907) 269-0122



Chair
State Affairs Committee

Co-chair
Joint Armed Services Committee

Vice Chair
Resources Committee
Judiciary Committee

Member
Admin Reg Review

Senator_Bill_Wielechowski@legis.state.ak.us

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 3 – Funding for School Meals

"An Act providing for funding for school lunch and breakfast."

Senate Bill 3 will provide a state match for schools participating in the federal Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast and Lunch Program. This legislation will encourage more schools to provide nutritious meals for underprivileged children and allow schools that already do so to improve their programs. Currently in Alaska, twenty percent (20%) of schools participating in the school lunch program do not offer school breakfast, impacting 22,253 Alaskan children, 6,850 of whom are children from low income families who qualify for free or reduced price meals. For many children, these are the only nutritious meals they will get on a regular basis. Alaska is one of the only states that does not help supplement the program.

This legislation will provide school districts with a base amount of 35 cents for each breakfast served and 15 cents per lunch. To compensate for higher costs, rural schools will receive additional assistance through a funding formula based on the applicable School District Cost Factor for each district.

In addition to fighting childhood hunger, investing in school meals has been shown to improve school attendance and performance, reduce violence, and combat childhood obesity.

This legislation was requested by the Food Bank of Alaska, The Alaska Food Coalition, and the Alaska School Nutrition Association; and currently has been endorsed by the Yakutat Board of Education, the Petersburg Indian Association, the Petersburg School District, the Lower Kuskokwim School District, the Bering Strait School Board, the Cordova School District, the Yupiit School District, the Kenai Peninsula School District, the Chugach School District, the Anchorage School District, the Homer Food Pantry and the AARP.



Anchorage School District

5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504-3135
(907) 742-4000

SCHOOL BOARD

John Steiner
President

Crystal Kennedy
Vice President

Kathleen Plunkett
Treasurer

Jeannie Mackie
Clerk

Jeff Friedman

Pat Higgins

Don Smith

SUPERINTENDENT

Carol Comeau

February 16, 2011

Honorable Bill Wielechowski
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room 115
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: Comments Regarding ASD Support of SB3

Dear Senator ^{Bill} ~~Wielechowski~~,

The Anchorage School District Student Nutrition Department has been able to weather the difficult financial challenges over the last five years thanks to the support of the Anchorage School Board.

In 2005-2006 the School Board approved a ten cent increase in all meal prices and a twenty-five cent increase in 2007-2008 and in 2008-2009. The sixty cent increase in that short period of time made it difficult for many families to pay for meals for their children.

In May of 2008 the School Board approved the transfer of \$1.123 million from the general fund to the Student Nutrition fund to cover losses from previous years and help the department for the next few years from increasing meal costs for parents/students.

The Student Nutrition Department has reduced staff to the point that further reductions are no longer possible. Truck and equipment replacement purchases have been severely reduced since 2007. Some equipment parts were taken from units to keep other equipment operational. That only worked until there were no more units available for parts. The School Board has approved use of the Student Nutrition fund balance to offset the need for replacement trucks and equipment. That only works until the fund balance is gone.

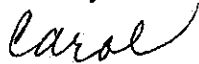
Since 2005 food costs have escalated as shown below and it is predicted that food costs will go up another three to ten percent over the next few years. The new dietary guideline will require ever higher costs especially in Alaska because most fresh fruits and vegetables are not grown in colder climates. According to our records annual expenditures for food products since 2005-2006 are as follows:

2005-2006	\$4,379,194
2005-2007	\$5,076,974
2005-2008	\$4,991,302
2005-2009	\$5,152,219
2005-2010	\$5,328,019

Student Nutrition has done everything possible to control food costs but much of that effort is lost through increases in employee benefits, salaries, and retirement costs.

State reimbursement will help offset increased food costs associated with the new dietary guidelines. Every district in the state will be impacted. The addition of breakfast reimbursement will allow Anchorage School District to evaluate schools not currently served. The additional state funding for breakfast may allow the ASD to provide meals at schools for which it was not previously economically possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol".

Carol Comeau
Superintendent