

Advocacy

Board member advocacy and support for a free (W) public education can make a significant and positive difference for Peninsula young people every day.

The board strives to obtain adequate funding for school programs and facilities. The Alaska Legislature normally legislates and appropriates for the entire state and not for individual districts. It does not normally have direct relationships with individual school boards. The indirect relationships are very important, however, because the Legislature appropriates the majority of funds which operate the KPBSD and the Alaska Statutes (AS) which govern school operation.

The board should keep its legislators informed concerning local and state educational programs, financial and legislative needs, and positions with respect to various proposals under consideration by the Legislature. The board should support strongly proposed legislation which it approves, and oppose equally strongly proposed legislation which it believes to be unwise. When advisable, the board should join with other local boards in direct efforts with the Legislature by correspondence, by appearing before legislative committees at public hearings, and in similar ways. (C).

The Board endeavors to be informed about local, state, and federal legislation and remain proactive in legislative decision making. The superintendent reviews current legislation and legislative issues relevant to school system policies and goals to determine the specific or potential impact on the school system. The superintendent monitors enacted legislation and makes appropriate recommendations regarding necessary policy changes.

The board may work with the State Board of Education and DEED on regulatory matters and school improvement/development initiatives as time permits. The board may also provide representation to appropriate local and state agencies.

Although the board president is the official spokesperson for the board on all matters, individual board members may prepare and deliver testimony in alignment with board positions when appropriate.

The board and individual board members strive to take a proactive stance with regard to legislation by maintaining regular contact with lawmakers, particularly during the legislative sessions, and by remaining current on legislative trends and issues which may affect education (H).

The board affiliation with the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) is instrumental to board advocacy efforts. Board member participation during the annual review of AASB Belief Statements and Core Resolutions provides understanding of the statewide impact of potential and existing legislation and allows the possibility that district positions will be supported statewide.

Board member participation in advocacy training exposes board members to important skills and information. Participating in the AASB Resolution Committee process at the annual conference and one of the Legislative Fly-ins can be particularly relevant. Including advocacy sessions at the NSBA National Conference is also encouraged.