



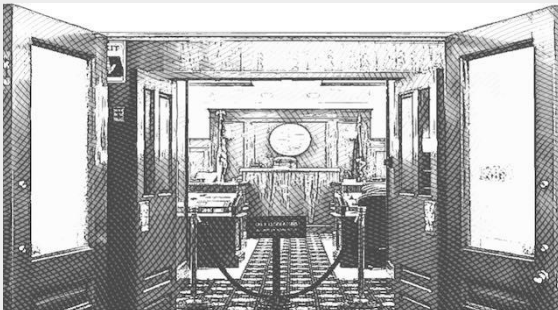
Attending the Alaska Association of School Boards Leadership Academy in Juneau was a wonderful learning experience. My years in education gave me experience working as a K-12 classroom teacher and a school and district administrator, as well as working with graduate students in the Higher Ed community and as an educational consultant with over 400 schools across the U.S., but being a board member was a new experience with a need for a whole new set of skills. The Legislative Fly-In provided an opportunity to network with board members from across the state and to learn important skills as I moved into the roll of advocate for both the KPB School District and districts across the Great State of Alaska.

Being a relative newcomer to Alaska I am always in awe of the beauty and grandeur of my new home state. My first trip to Juneau was no exception. The fun and exploration began with my flight into the Capitol city and the experience of arriving at an airport without any Taxi cabs. Thanks to the Board delegation from Chugach for sharing their ride with this newcomer or I might still have been waiting at the airport.

Immediately upon arrival and stashing luggage in my room at the 4 Points Inn I walked the few blocks to the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall for a session on CTE presented by AASB titled Exploring Culturally Connected CTE Opportunities. Emily Ferry (AASB) and Julia Staley (SERRC) hosted the event with Zach Stensen, director of the Bristol Bay Region CTE team serving as moderator. Four districts in the SW area have formed a consortium with the goal of providing CTE programs in 16 pathways to their students. They have used creative scheduling to carve out week long blocks of time where students from all four districts can come together for an intensive learning experience. This program focuses on students from 22 communities building on skills that many times are overlooked in regular school programs. For more info on the Bristol Bay model programs, see: <https://bbrcte.org>

Saturday morning started early with a 7:30 breakfast. Participants were arranged at tables based on their home district. We were fortunate to share a table with Kodiak Schools. They had two board representatives, their superintendent, and a student representative. The Goal for the two-day conference was to become a top-notch advocate for education in general and specifically for your district as we met with legislators beginning on Monday. The major theme woven through all topics was the importance of telling “Our” story. Legislators need to know what the challenges and successes are for *OUR* district. Not just our own legislators, but anyone and everyone who will listen. Lon Garrison and Tiffany Jackson began the morning starting with the Alaska Constitution (<https://aasb.org/what-does-alaskas-constitution-say-about-education/>) and sharing the dynamics of the 33rd Legislative Session. Norm Wooten and Lon Garrison continued discussions around a historic review of school funding and specifics on the current needs of Alaska schools. (https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/2302_Fly-In_Legislative-Context_v2-compressed.pdf). Senator Luki Tobin, chair of the Senate Education Committee spoke during our lunch meal. She shared her story of growing up in Nome and her desire to ensure that every student is seen and heard. She believes that perhaps we are measuring the wrong thing when attempting to define student success.

After lunch Lon Garrison and Norm Wooten facilitated a current legislative bill review.

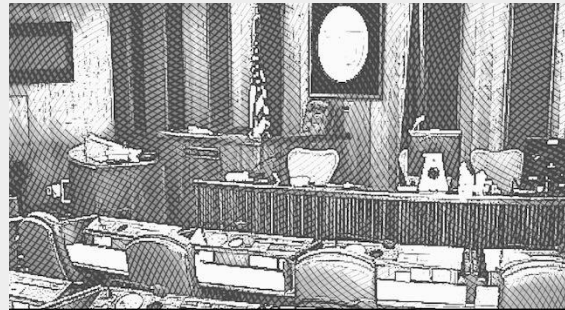


House Bills

No Bills introduced this week.

Bills introduced previously:

- [HB 6](#) – Rep. George Rauscher (R-Sutton) – Public Schools; Opioid Awareness Program
- [HB 9](#) – Rep. Ashley Carrick (D-Fairbanks) – Add Faculty



Senate Bills

Bills introduced this week:

- [SB 52](#) – Senate Education Committee – Increase Base Student Allocation

Bills introduced previously:

- Member to University Board of Regents
- [HB 21](#) – Rep. Sarah Vance (R-Homer) - School/University Employee Health Insurance
 - [HB 26](#) – Rep. Andrea Story (D-Juneau) – Council for Alaska Native Languages
 - [HB 27](#) – Rep. Tom McKay (R-Anchorage) - Designate Sex for School Sponsored Sports
 - [HB 31](#) – Rep. Rep. Andrea Story (D-Juneau) - Alaska Performance Scholarship; Eligibility
 - [HB 39](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor – Appropriation: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds; Supplemental
 - [HB 40](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor – Appropriation: Capital/Supplemental
 - [HB 41](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor – Mental Health Budget
 - [HB 44](#) – Rep. Andrea Story (D-Juneau) – Cultural Education Program
 - [SB 9](#) – Sen. Shelley Hughes (R- Palmer) - Alaska Sunset Commission
 - [SB 11](#) – Sen. Jesse Kiehl (D-Juneau) – Teacher & Public Employee Retirement Plans
 - [SB 13](#) – Sen. Robert Meyers (R-North Pole) – University; Textbooks/Materials Cost
 - [SB 14](#) – Sen. Scott Kawasaki (D-Fairbanks) – RIP for Public Employees/Teachers
 - [SB 24](#) – Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson (D-Anchorage) – Public Schools: Mental Health Education
 - [SB 25](#) – Sen. James Kaufman (R-Anchorage) -Repealing Funds, Accounts, and Programs
 - [SB 29](#) – Sen Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak) – Civics Education; Establish Alaska Civics Education Commission
 - [SB 40](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor – Appropriation: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds; Supplemental
 - [SB 41](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor – Appropriation; Capital/Supplemental
 - [SB 42](#) – Rules Committee by Request of the Governor - Appropriation: Mental Health Budget
 - [SB 43](#) – Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson (D-Anchorage) – Health and Personal Safety Education

After a break, we had an opportunity to hear Marissa Rathbone, Director of Strategic Advocacy, Washington State School Directors Association. She brought a fresh voice on strengthening our advocacy skills. (<https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/AASB-PPT->

[2023-compressed.pdf](#)). Our discussions on advocacy with Marissa continued on Sunday after another delicious breakfast including a video on the Science of Persuasion (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFdCzN7RYbw>) that outlines six important components: Reciprocity, scarcity, authority, consistency, liking, and consensus.

Speakers continued throughout the morning including Dr. Lisa Parady (ACSA), Nils Andreassen, Alaska Municipal League, and folks from the Great Alaska Schools speaking on Advocacy Partners (<https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/ACSA-compressed.pdf>) Speaker for our lunch was Neil Steininger, OMB. (<https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/23.2.5-OMB-AASB-Budget-Brief-compressed.pdf>)

After lunch Discussions revolved around other voices for advocating including Student Wellness and mental health. (<https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/230131-AASB-Legislative-Academy-Other-Voices-compressed.pdf>) We closed the day with time to work with our group in formulating our talking points (<https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/Talking-Point-Examples-compressed.pdf>) to share with the legislators on Monday and Tuesday.

On Monday, Feb 6, and Tuesday, Feb 7 after an early 7am breakfast with AASB we met with legislators from both the Alaska House and Senate. Everyone we met listened to what we had to say and seemed attuned to our conversations regarding the need for increased school funding. Our own Representatives Ruffridge and Vance welcomed us as did Senators Stevens and Bjorkman. We also met with Representatives Galvin, Josephson, Ortiz, Himschoot, Allard, and Story. Senator Bishop joined our meeting with Senator Bjorkman and we met with the aides for Senator Merrick and Hoffman. We also had the privilege of hearing U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan as he addressed a joint House and Senate.

An early flight back to the Kenai on Wednesday morning closed out the Juneau Fly-In, 2023. On reflection, I believe I now have a thorough concept of how our state government works and I feel considerably better prepared to “Tell Our Story” to all who will listen.

Romanin
Juneau, AK
February, 2023