**Talking Points for CSHB 69**

* **Constitutional Convention Language**
* **Absenteeism –** over 2/5 of our students are missing 3 weeks or more of school.
* **Charter Schools**
  + Year-Round Submissions: Allows charter schools applications.
  + Charter School Renewal – Streamline the process, faxing renewal applications are inefficient and outdates.
  + Appeal of termination should be clear and at two-level process (commissioner, then State Board of Education
  + Charter School funding should be treated as a brick and mortar school with balances.
  + Remove Administrative Cost Expansion from 8% to 4%. Charter schools operate from their own school board, they do not want or need excessive help from the district and should not have to pay for it.
* **Cell Phone Language**
  + ‘When most of us were growing up, if we had a bully they were at school. We got home and we could have a little bit of relief at home,” she said. “These kids now, they don't have a relief. It's 24 hours a day."
  + Eight other states have similar laws that restrict the use of phones with a few exceptions.
  + In the recent Netflix movie “Addolescents”, while not true, one can easily see why having most of a child’s day free from distractions and ready to learn can not only provide academic progression, but also a safety issue from bullying.
* **Transportation**
  + Increase transportation to 20 percent because of inflation and the districts need help
* **No-Borders Learning**
  + Students and families should be able to choose their public school, no matter where they live. Studies have showed and even in this building we can see that competition makes people excel. A student should not have to have a poorer education because of their zip code.
* **School Bond Debt**
  + This extends the school bond reimbursement program to extend until 2030 to provide districts with extra time to pay down loans.
* **Residential Schools**
  + This part of the amendment is necessary for long-term and short-term help to all students who might need additional support beyond the walls of home.
* **Correspondence Schools/Whole Child**
  + In FY25, there are **23,621 correspondence students** out of **126,831 total students** in Alaska, making up **19%** of the student population.
  + A decade ago, correspondence students made up less than **9%** of the student body. This number has more than **doubled**, despite Alaska being one of the highest-funded states for education.
  + Why? Parents are choosing to take on the **challenging task of leading their child’s education**, often seeking more personalized and effective alternatives.
  + **Parental Sacrifice**: Homeschooling often requires one parent to reduce or give up their career, demanding **significant financial and physical effort**.
  + **Transportation Costs**: Unlike brick-and-mortar schools, the state does not cover transportation for correspondence students, despite families shouldering rising **fuel and energy costs** to ensure well-rounded educational experiences.
  + **Special Education Disparity**: Over **2,000 correspondence students** require **special education services**, yet funding for these needs is absent. Parents must use their **already reduced BSA allotment** to cover costs for tutors, manipulatives, and assistive technology.
  + **Reading Support Gap**: Correspondence students do not receive **additional funding for literacy programs**, whereas brick-and-mortar schools benefit from **READS Act allocations**.
* **Teacher/Parent Initiatives**
  + 3/4 of educators say they are doing at least some “catch up” to get their students up to speed academically.
  + Built in rewards for doing a good job
  + Helps parents/teachers to be on same team for excellence.
  + Absenteeism
* **Teacher Spending Accounts**
  + Teacher spend average $673 per year
  + Face of what the classroom and students needs
  + Teachers universally support the idea of savings/spending account to help pay for classroom materials
* **Lump Sum for Teachers**
  + Recruitment measures that work
  + Millitary uses it.
* **Educational Savings Accounts**

19 programs enacted

488,736 students nationwide using it

$7,531 is the average amount ---far less than what it takes to educate a student in our brick and mortar schools

Teachers universally support the idea of savings/spending account to help pay for classroom materials

* **BSA $1,010**

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education today sent a letter to all chief state school officers informing them of existing flexibility in federal formula funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to support education choice initiatives. Providing guidance to states on this flexibility is one of the Department’s first actions in implementing President Trump’s [Executive Order Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/expanding-educational-freedom-and-opportunity-for-families/).

We should want to keep Alaska on target …or bring our state up to speed in a swift manner like the 17 states who have enacted robust educational opportunities for our most treasured commodities.

It’s time to fund **all** students equitably, ensuring that correspondence, charter, micro-schools, students receive the full support they need to thrive.