

Rogers Park Community Council Resolution in Support of Full Funding of Public Education

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska Constitution provides that one of the core responsibilities of State and Local Governments is to provide for public education,

WHEREAS, State Statutes provide that home rule municipalities have the authority and responsibility to provide support for public education,

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage, under its home rule authority, has accepted the authority and responsibility to act on behalf of the people in its community to ensure full funding of public education up to the State of Alaska imposed funding caps on local public education funding,

WHEREAS, investments in public education, including pre-K and smaller class sizes with high quality teachers, have increasingly been found to be a cost-effective investment in providing students and their families with the foundation they need to both help extend their education and secure larger economic opportunities¹,

WHEREAS, investments in public education have increasingly been found to be associated with measurable improvements in student achievement results²

WHEREAS, increased investments in public education will be critical to help remediate the wide range of learning losses that arose during the pandemic³

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has fallen way behind Washington State where they have been increasing their investment in public education and significant investments are needed to catch up with salaries across Washington State where Anchorage competes to attract and retain highly qualified and effective teachers,

- WA State Avg. Teacher Salary Increase FY1718-FY2223 (5 years) = 50%

¹ R. Chetty, "Opportunity Insights: Education: How Do We Amplify Education as an Engine of Mobility? Using big data to help children get the most from school," <https://opportunityinsights.org/education/>, retrieved November 27, 2022

² C.K.Jackson, C. Wigger, H. Xiong, "Do school spending cuts matter? Evidence from the Great Recession", American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 12(3), 304-335, (2021); C.K. Jackson, C. Mackevicius, "The distribution of school spending impacts", Annenberg Institute at Brown University, Education Working Paper 21-357

³K. Shores, M. Steinberg, "Fiscal Federalism and K-12 Education Funding: Policy Lessons from Two Educational Crises" (Great Recession and COVID-19), Educational Researcher Policy Forum (2022)

- Anchorage CPI-U Inflation Increase FY1718-FY2223 (5 years) = 20%
- AK State Avg. Teacher Salary Increase FY1718-FY2223 (5 years) = 8%, rapidly falling behind local inflation

WHEREAS, Governor Dunleavy, in his February 16, 2019, revised budget submission to the Legislature, eviscerated public education funding levels [cut State K12 Aid to School Districts by 24%] while proposing miniscule support for early reading [cut \$10.00 in K12 Budget for each 1c proposed for early reading], setting the stage for a dramatic decline in the real, inflation adjusted state financial support of public education over his first term in office,

WHEREAS, declining state financial support of public education simultaneously lowers the State of Alaska imposed funding caps on local public education funding (Anchorage), unduly limiting our local community's ability to increase funding to address local challenges,

WHEREAS, Governor Dunleavy, lead the successful effort to eliminate state support of school bond debt reimbursement which had helped enable local communities to sustain local school facilities with major component replacements, roofs, heating/ventilation systems, seismic upgrades, aging water/wastewater system, sprinkler and lighting system replacements, and increasing space to meet the needs of the students whose needs were formally recognized in the George W. Bush Administration's Americans with Disabilities Act, exacerbating a growing backlog of needed facility repairs and replacements which have led to compromises in local classrooms, e.g, leaking roofs, aging heating and ventilation systems, old lighting systems.

WHEREAS, inflation in Anchorage has increased by 14.4 % over the past four years [BLS, Anchorage CPI-U, October 2018-October 2022 percentage increase] and dramatically eroded local purchasing power for our schools, teachers, students and families in our community,

WHEREAS, several States have significantly increased their support of public education over the past four years and are looking to continue to do so, including making major investments in teacher compensation to enable them to attract and retain highly qualified and effective teachers

- Education Week, Teaching Profession, "Teacher Salaries Aren't Keeping Up with Inflation", April 27, 2022:
 - "When adjusted for inflation, the average teacher salary decreased by an estimated 3.9% over the last decade"

- “Some states have passed significant pay raises this year...Mississippi teachers...an increase of more than 10 percent...Alabama will receive raises that range from 4 percent to nearly 21 percent...**New Mexico teachers will see their base salary levels increase by an average of 20 percent**
- National Association of State Budget Officers, Budget Blog, July 29, 2022:
 - **“The strong growth in tax collections and revenues exceeding forecasts led many states to report their largest surplus in state history**, with governors calling for...**additional investments in areas including education** and infrastructure...”

WHEREAS, the most recent University of Alaska Institute of Social and Economic Research Teacher Compensation Study [UAA ISER, Salary & Benefits Schedule and Teacher Tenure Study, Table 2, 2014 data, November 13, 2015] indicated that Anchorage needed to increase teacher salary schedules by 10% [from 1.24 to 1.38 X Washington State’s average teacher salary, adjusted for Alaska and Washington State purchase power parity]; extending the findings of that teacher compensation study to 2022 teacher salaries, indicates that Anchorage *now needs to increase the local teacher salary schedule by 44% in order to become competitive with Washington State teacher salaries* [MAFA Analysis of Alaska and Washington Teacher Salaries, 2014-2022]

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Rogers Park Community Council supports the full funding of public education to the level required in Alaska to enable our teachers, students, families and communities to recover from:

- the significant decline in real inflation adjusted loss of purchasing power for our schools,
- the significant decline in real inflation adjusted Alaska and Anchorage teacher compensation levels, especially as compared to Washington State, which has historically provided Anchorage and Alaska with a supply of new highly qualified and effective teachers,
- the decline in student learning growth rates and complications arising from mental health challenges that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic,
- the increase in class sizes to:

- 50% above recommended levels in the critical early K-3 Elementary grade levels
- 28% above recommended levels in 4th – 12th grade levels
- which significantly hinders aggregate class instructional pace and effectiveness⁴
- a decline in teacher professional development and classroom support services which enable our teachers to help our students learn and grow,
- a decline in support staff salaries and benefits relative to competitive alternatives which has led to high staff vacancy rates which have had a negative impact on students and their families, e.g., bus driver compensation failed to attract/retain an adequate supply of drivers leading to significant and disruptive rationing of bus service this fall in Anchorage

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Rogers Park Community Council (RPCC) requests that the **Anchorage School District** advocate for the full funding of the preK-12 public education budget required to meet the needs of our students and families with the Governor, Legislature, Assembly and Mayor to enable Anchorage students and families to recover from funding and pandemic deficits and get back on track for strong, sustained academic growth and preparation for success in life,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Rogers Park Community Council (RPCC) requests **our Anchorage Assembly and Mayor** advocate for full funding of public education with the Governor and Legislature to enable our children, families and community to begin to recover from funding and pandemic deficits and get back on track for strong, sustained academic growth and preparation for success in life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Rogers Park Community Council (RPCC) requests **our Anchorage Legislators** advocate for full funding of public education with the Governor and their colleagues in the Legislature to enable our children, families and community to begin to recover from funding and pandemic deficits and get back on track for strong, sustained academic growth and preparation for success in life.

⁴ MAFA Comparison of Fall 2022 class size to ASD Evidence Based Public School Funding Model (2016); MAFA Review of R. Chetty, et al, Opportunity Insights and referenced education research on benefits of smaller class size/challenges of larger class sizes presented to Alaska State Senate Finance Committee and joint meeting of the Alaska State House/Senate Education Committees, 2019

ROGERS PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FULL FUNDING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Pete Mjos, Rogers Park Community Council President

Date: December ____, 2022 Votes For: ____ Votes Against: ____ Abstentions: