

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner

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Department of Education
and Early Development

Juneau, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2019

**State Board of Education Reaffirms
Commitment to Alaska's Education Challenge**

JUNEAU -- The State Board of Education and Early Development, meeting today in Juneau, issued the following statement in a unanimous vote regarding Alaska's current fiscal challenges and its enduring commitment to meet Alaska's Education Challenge:

"The State Board of Education and Early Development (board) takes its responsibility to Alaska's students very seriously. Each of us volunteers to serve on the board because we believe in the promise of Alaska's youth. They are the future of our state.

This year, an intense focus has developed on the board's response to Governor Michael J. Dunleavy's proposed budget. The board acknowledges that the State of Alaska's financial challenges call for Alaskans, including its appointed and elected officials, to prioritize re-evaluating its budget. We are pleased with the level of engagement the public has demonstrated in response to our sobering budget reality. With the public testimony that has been delivered, we are confident that public education will continue to be a priority for those with decision-making authority, as it is for the board.

Whether our budget increases or decreases or remains the same, it will not change our resolve to use the resources allocated to us to fulfill the three commitments we have made to our youth through Alaska's Education Challenge:

- 1) Improve student success;
- 2) Cultivate safety and well-being; and
- 3) Support responsible and reflective learners.

Finally, we cannot emphasize enough our steadfast support for Alaska's schools, educators, students, and their families. These times require the creative and innovative solutions that can only come through cooperation and partnership with state leadership. It is with this same spirit that the board also extends its support to the Governor and the Legislature, as they work together to pass a sustainable budget that reflects the values of all Alaskans and positions our state for a prosperous future."

State Board of Education and Early Development Members:

Chair James Fields, First Vice Chair Keith Hamilton, Second Vice Chair Lorri Van Diest, Member Sandra Kowalski, Member Tiffany Scott, Member Bob Griffin, Member Sally Stockhausen, Lieutenant Colonel Jeremiah Hammill, Student Advisor Tanis Lorrington, and Student Advisor-Elect Abigail Mainard

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