



SENATE BILL 119

"An Act relating to grant programs to support libraries"

AkASL & AkLA Support SB 119

Sec. 14.56.360 (see 2008 changes)

PURPOSE:

- An annual \$3000 grant for Alaska public school libraries to purchase new materials

GOALS:

- To increase Alaskan students' access to new and varied library resources
- To put money directly into resources for students
- To parallel the already existing state support of public libraries

R A T I O N A L E

- Public school library budgets vary widely among school districts as well as within school districts.
- Many communities in rural Alaska have no public library and rely on the resources of their school libraries.
- Senate Bill 119 would be a long term investment in our school infrastructure as well as an investment in the education of our future citizens.
- Reference resources in particular are critical for a quality education in Alaska and need to be current in order to reflect changes in world geography, politics, science and health.

Examples:

- Some schools in our state still have atlases that show the USSR rather than Russia and the various independent republics, even though that political change took place before current students were born.
- Pluto changed from planet to dwarf planet.

For more AkASL legislative information go to:

<http://www.akla.org/akasl>

Alaska Legislative website address: <http://www.legis.state.ak.us>

T A L K I N G P O I N T S

- Stress the purpose, goals and rationale.
- SB 119 would ensure that rural and urban public school students across the state have access to new materials every year.
- Research shows that students in schools with large book collections make better gains in reading.
- Expenditures for updating library collections appear to be linked to student achievement.
- "The libraries in the high-performing schools spend over 25% more on books and print materials per 100 students than those in the low-performing schools." *An Essential Connection*, p. 45, by Robert Burgin, 2003.
- The crunch in educational funding has impacted school library budgets to the point that some schools have no library budget.
- The cost of resources goes up every year, even as budgets get smaller.
- Some schools can not fund popular reading programs such as Battle of the Books.

TIMELINE as of 2/17/08:

2007-2008 School Year:

Steps Completed:

- SB 119 passed out of the Senate Finance Committee 2/8/08.
- 2-11-08 SB 119 was amended to add the public library proposal.
- SB 119 went to Senate Rules Committee 2/18/08.

2008 Changes to SB 119:

SB 119 now includes TWO library grant programs. The one we have been working on is now named Sec. 14.56.360.

Both grant programs are needed for libraries and would be good, responsible ways to spend state money that would have long-term impact.

- **Sec. 14.56.355** is a public library construction and major expansion matching grant program. This is a capital expenditure and matching funds will come from the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development for communities with less than 10,000 people.

- **Sec. 14.56.360** is a public school library collection development grant. This grant is an operating expenditure and a division of the State Library will award and administer the grants. Grants will be no more than \$3000 for a fiscal year and used to improve school library collections. School library eligibility is based on a specified set of criteria.



Please support SB 119 as it makes its way through the House this legislative session. Your AkASL representative will keep you updated when your support is needed to contact legislators.