

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## News From The House Majority

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House Majority Press  
Craig Johnson – (907) 465-5369  
Renée Limoge – (907) 465-5446



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**CONTACT:** Renée Limoge (907) 465-5446

## House Funds Education

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska House of Representatives' Finance Committee has passed the Supplemental Appropriations bill out of committee which has provided early funding for education in Alaska.

SB 98 passed out of the House Finance Committee earlier today. The bill contains \$887 million for the education formula and pupil transportation. Last week the House passed HB 158 to create a public education fund which will hold these funds.

“Through this supplemental appropriation, we are demonstrating our ongoing commitment to our highest priority,” said Finance Committee Co-Chairman Kevin Meyer (R-Anchorage). “We are early funding education by committing \$400 million of FY 05 surplus revenue to the Public Education Fund, \$440 million from the FY 06 General Fund, and \$14.1 million from this year's K-12 lapse. On the first day of this session, we outlined our priorities, and education was number one. Today, we have shown our resolve to meet the educational funding needs of our state.”

The \$70 million increase this year is on top of the \$82 million increase the legislature passed last year. HB 1, a bill to increase the base student allocation, is expected to pass the Senate soon.

“Now more than ever it is important for the Legislature to step up to the plate and support funding the best educational opportunities for our kids. Children entering school in 2005 should have every opportunity to prepare for whatever vocation they choose,” said House Finance Co-Chair Mike Chenault (R-Nikiski). “By appropriating nearly \$890 million we are helping to ensure that Alaska's children receive the best education possible.”

SB 98 will now move to the House floor for consideration by the body.

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