

Help Fund School Libraries!

Alaska Statute AS14.56.360-375 (the **School Library Collection Development Grant**) would insure that Alaskan rural and urban public school students have access to new materials every year. The public school library collection development grant will be awarded and administered by the State Library. Grants will be no more than \$3,000 for a fiscal year and are to be used to improve school library collections. Regulations are in place, school libraries have pre-certified, and the law just needs to be funded. You can read the law at http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill_text.asp?hsid=SB0119Z&session=25 and go to Section 3.

Did you know?

- Public School Library budgets vary widely among and within school districts in Alaska?
- Some school libraries have NO budget and rely on PTSA and book fairs to provide resources for their students?
- Many rural communities have no public library and rely on the school library for books and resources?
- The average cost of all library books in 2008 was \$21.10, non-fiction averaged \$27.04 and fiction books averaged \$17.63?
- Online databases can cost as much as \$3,000 per year depending on school size?
- Some schools in our state have out of date resources such as:
 - atlases still showing the USSR?
 - books that have Pluto as a planet and not a dwarf planet?
 - average copyright dates from 1980 or 1970 or even older?
 - sound recordings on cassette tapes instead of CDs and Playaways?

What can you do?

- Step on board to fund Alaska Statute AS14.56.360-375.
- Contact your legislators and ask them to support funding AS14.56.360-375. (<http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/misc/districts.php>)
- Write letters to the editor of your paper.
- Inform your peers, teachers, principals, and parents and ask them to push for funding.

Why fund the School Library Collection Development Grant?

- Research shows that students in schools with large book collections have higher reading scores.
- Expenditures for updating school library collections have been linked to student achievement.
- Some schools cannot fund popular reading programs such as Battle of the Books.
- The grant supplements school budgets; ***it doesn't replace them*** and will help provide **equity in resources to ALL Alaskan students.**