



# LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICES

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## Research Brief

TO: Representative Les Gara  
FROM: Katie Spielberger, Legislative Analyst  
DATE: September 23, 2013  
RE: Staffing and Enrollment Changes in Selected Alaska School Districts  
*LRS Report 14.060*

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***You asked for information about teacher and staff reductions in selected large Alaska school districts in recent years. Specifically, you wished to know the percentage change in staffing and enrollment numbers for each year since Fiscal Year 2011 in the following school districts: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kodiak, and Mat-Su.***

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Alaska's public K-12 school funding is determined using a statutorily defined formula to calculate the amount of state aid provided to each school district each year. Incorporated into the formula are factors intended to account for variations in school size, geographic cost differences, students with special and intensive needs, correspondence programs, federal aid, and the ability of communities to provide local contributions.<sup>1</sup>

Employee salaries and benefits are one of the largest components of most district budgets. According to the Anchorage School District, for example, salaries and benefits make up at least 85 percent of the district's total operational budget.<sup>2</sup>

We asked the school districts of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kodiak, and Mat-Su to provide us with staffing information for fiscal years (FY) 2011-2013 and preliminary estimates for FY 2014.<sup>3</sup> Some districts were better able than others to provide specific staffing data within our timeframe.<sup>4</sup> All figures are presented as provided to us by the district. For all districts, FY 2014 figures are preliminary estimates.

In light of variations in the way data were reported to us, we present each district's report separately, and we urge caution when comparing staffing data across different sources. All positions are reported in terms of "full-time equivalency" (FTE)—that is, two half-time positions would be counted as one full-time position. Unless otherwise noted, budgeted staffing numbers provided here do not differentiate among funding sources—for example, some positions may be funded by grants instead of state funds.

All of the districts we examined reported a net decrease in total number of staff positions between FY 2011 and FY 2014, ranging from a net decrease of 2.7 percent in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to 13 percent in the Kodiak Island Borough School District. While enrollment also fluctuated to some extent in all of the districts during these years, no district had a net decrease in enrollment of greater than 1 percent. The greatest change in enrollment occurred in the Mat-Su Borough School District, where enrollment has increased by approximately 2 percent since FY 2011; the total number of staff positions in the district, however, declined 6 percent during this period.

We present below staffing information for each district, followed by enrollment data for these districts and the state overall.

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<sup>1</sup> The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides an overview of the public school funding formula at [http://eed.alaska.gov/news/Funding\\_Program\\_Overview\\_2012.pdf](http://eed.alaska.gov/news/Funding_Program_Overview_2012.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> "Understanding District Finances," <http://www.asdk12.org/budget/understanding/>.

<sup>3</sup> These fiscal years correspond to school years 2010-11 through 2013-14.

<sup>4</sup> One district noted that staff reductions in its administrative office made it difficult to respond to such information requests. In addition, many districts noted that the beginning of the school year was a difficult time to compile such information, which may have resulted in less detailed figures in some cases.

## Anchorage

The Anchorage School District reported a declining trend in the budgeted number of employees in most job classification categories, as shown in Table 1. Over the last three years, enrollment has increased slightly, but the total number of budgeted positions has declined by more than five percent, with losses in all categories except principals. Staff reductions appear to have been greatest among teacher assistants, custodians, and drivers and attendants. Mark Foster, the district's Chief Financial Officer, noted the following significant shifts in the budget over these years:

Administrative, professional and technical positions were streamlined and consolidated. Central office administrative, professional, technical, and clerical staff was reduced by 11 percent in FY2014.

The reduction in teaching positions was concentrated in central office "teacher experts," specialized program "pull-out" support teacher positions, and counselors, while resources were shifted to direct classroom instruction.

Instructional support was reduced in order to preserve direct classroom instruction to the extent practical while attempting to maintain quality.

Auxiliary services were streamlined in order to preserve direct classroom instruction to the extent practical while attempting to maintain quality of service.

**Table 1: Anchorage School District Budgeted Number of Employees by Job Classification, FY2011-2014**

Job Classification	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
Admin/Professional/Technical Support	405.0	416.7	2.9%	409.4	-1.7%	391.7	-4.3%	(13.3)	-3.3%
Clerical	365.6	364.8	-0.2%	353.2	-3.2%	341.6	-3.3%	(24.1)	-6.6%
Principals	149.3	148.8	-0.3%	149.3	0.3%	151.8	1.7%	2.5	1.7%
Teachers	3,385.6	3,317.9	-2.0%	3,341.7	0.7%	3,290.4	-1.5%	(95.2)	-2.8%
Teacher Assistants	770.8	770.6	-	757.6	-1.7%	673.1	-11.2%	(97.7)	-12.7%
Maintenance/Warehouse	187.5	184.0	-1.9%	181.0	-1.6%	174.0	-3.9%	(13.5)	-7.2%
Custodians	370.3	370.3	-	367.8	-0.7%	331.3	-9.9%	(39.0)	-10.5%
Drivers and Attendants	111.0	112.0	0.9%	111.0	-0.9%	95.2	-14.3%	(15.9)	-14.3%
Noon Duty Attendants	75.4	75.9	0.7%	73.4	-3.3%	73.2	-0.3%	(2.2)	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,415.48</b>	<b>5,344.3</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>	<b>5,335.0</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>	<b>5,130.5</b>	<b>-3.8%</b>	<b>(285.0)</b>	<b>-5.3%</b>

**Notes:** All positions are full-time equivalent (FTE). FY2014 data are preliminary. These figures represent the total number of positions budgeted using all funding sources. We rounded figures to one decimal place.

**Source:** Mark Foster, Chief Financial Officer, Anchorage School District, [foster\\_mark@asdk112.org](mailto:foster_mark@asdk112.org).

For more detailed information about district finances, the Anchorage School District Office of Management and Budget provides extensive budget information online at <http://www.asdk12.org/budget/>.

## Fairbanks North Star Borough

The Fairbanks North Star Borough has reduced its overall staff positions each year since FY2011, with reductions occurring in all job classification categories except principals. During these years there have been only very minor changes in enrollment. Table 2 summarizes these data.

**Table 2: Teacher and Staff Positions in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, FY2011-2014**

Job Classification	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
Exempt	63.65	59.65	-6.3%	59.85	0.3%	58.05	-3.0%	-5.6	-8.8%
Confidential Hourly	10.50	12.00	14.3%	12.00	-	10.00	-16.7%	-0.5	-4.8%
Principals	43.00	43.00	-	43.00	-	44.00	2.3%	1	2.3%
Certified	951.03	931.83	-2.0%	950.93	2.0%	915.40	-3.7%	-35.63	-3.7%
Support Staff	694.04	694.54	0.1%	685.43	-1.3%	687.61	0.3%	-6.43	-0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,762.22</b>	<b>1,741.02</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>1,751.21</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>1,715.06</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>	<b>-47.16</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>

**Notes and Source:** All positions are full-time equivalent (FTE). FY2014 data are preliminary. The "Certified" job classification category includes all certified teachers. Figures were provided by Mike Fisher, Chief Financial Officer, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, [mike.fisher@k12northstar.org](mailto:mike.fisher@k12northstar.org).

## Juneau

Table 3 shows the numbers of each type of position in the district from FY 2011 through FY 2014, as well as the change from the previous year. The Juneau School District's budget for FY 2014 shows a decrease of nine total positions from FY 2013. The district reported a difficult budgeting cycle and noted the following among the staff reductions: two middle school counselors, two special education teachers, one IT position, one high school career advisor, one custodian, one high school activity assistant, and one administrative assistant (all FTE). Enrollment since FY 2011 has decreased by just under half a percent.

**Table 3: Teacher and Staff Positions in the Juneau Borough School District, FY2011-2014**

Job Classification	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
Aides	160.3	142.8	-10.9%	125.4	-12.2%	124.0	-1.1%	-36.3	-22.6
Assistant Superintendent	1.0	1.0	-	1.0	-	0.0	-100.0%	-1.0	-100.0%
Certified Director/Coordinator	11.7	9.6	-17.9%	7.5	-21.9%	7.5	-	-4.2	-35.9%
Classified Director/Manager	11.0	10.0	-9.1%	11.0	10.0%	11.0	-	-	-
Maintenance/Custodial	55.0	53.0	-3.6%	47.0	-11.3%	46.0	-2/1%	-9.0	-16.4%
Principals	17.0	17.0	-	15.0	-11.8%	15.0	-	-2.0	-11.8%
Specialist-Certified	46.3	41.8	-9.7%	43.0	2.9%	45.5	5.8%	-0.8	-1.7%
Specialist-Classified	12.0	12.0	-	10.0	-16.7%	7.0	-30.0%	-5.0	-41.7%
Superintendent	1.0	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0	0.0%	-	-
Support Staff 10 Month	36.1	41.0	13.6%	44.2	7.8%	36.9	-16.5%	0.8	2.2%
Support Staff 12 Month	41.5	40.6	-2.2%	35.1	-13.5%	34.2	-2.6%	-7.3	-17.6%
Support Staff 9 Month	29.7	29.9	0.7%	22.6	-24.4%	24.8	9.7%	-4.9	-16.5%
Teachers	356.0	343.4	-3.5%	326.9	-4.8%	327.5	0.2%	-28.5	-8.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>778.5</b>	<b>743.1</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>	<b>689.5</b>	<b>-7.2%</b>	<b>680.5</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>	<b>-98.0</b>	<b>-12.6%</b>

**Notes:** All positions are full-time equivalent (FTE). FY2014 data are preliminary. We rounded figures to one decimal place for ease of comparison.

**Source:** David Means, Director of Administrative Services, Juneau School District, [david.means@juneauschools.org](mailto:david.means@juneauschools.org).

## Kodiak Island Borough

Table 4 shows the numbers of FTE staff for most types of positions in the Kodiak Island Borough School District from FY 2011 through FY 2014, as well as the change from the previous year. Between FY 2011 and FY 2014, the district reduced staff by about 57 positions overall, with about half of these reductions occurring in teaching staff. Although enrollment declined slightly during these years—by just under 1 percent—the net decrease in staff positions was much greater. Marilyn Davidson, Assistant Superintendent, noted that some additional reductions are not reflected in these data.

**Table 4: Teacher and Staff Positions in the Kodiak Island Borough School District, FY2011-2014**

Job Classification	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
General Funded Teaching Staff	194	180	-7.2%	177	-1.7%	158	-10.7%	-36	-18.6%
Grant Funded Teaching Staff	9	8	-11.1%	9	12.5%	9	-	-	-
Counselors	8	7	-12.5%	6	-14.3%	5	-16.7%	-3	-37.5%
Occupational/Physical Therapists	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	-
Psychologists	5	4	-20.0%	4	-	4	-	-1	-20.0%
Speech Language Pathologists	2	3	50.0%	2	-33.3%	2	-	-	-
Certificated Admin Staff	17	14	-17.6%	13	-7.1%	12	-7.7%	-5	-29.4%
Classified/Exempt Staff	210	203	-3.3%	197	-3.0%	197	-	-13	-6.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>-5.8%</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>	<b>-58</b>	<b>-13.0%</b>

**Notes:** All positions are full-time equivalent (FTE). FY2014 data are preliminary. Staffing numbers are rounded for ease of comparison.

**Source:** Marilyn Davidson, Assistant Superintendent, Kodiak Island Borough School District, 907-481-6209.

## Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Table 5 presents teacher and staff positions in the Mat-Su Borough School District for FY 2011-2014. During these years, enrollment has increased by nearly 2 percent. Katherine Gardner, Director of Human Resources for the District, noted that the district has worked hard to avoid eliminating classroom teachers, attempting instead to pare down support functions as much as possible.

**Table 5: Teacher and Staff Positions in the Mat-Su Borough School District, FY2011-2014**

Job Classification	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
<b>Certified</b>									
Director	7.9	6.4	-19.0%	4.9	-23.4%	7.9	61.2%	0	-
Supervisor	1.0	1.0	-	0.0	-100.0%	0.0	-	-1	-100.0%
Administrator	54.0	51.8	-4.1%	51.2	-1.2%	53.2	3.9%	-0.8	-1.5%
Classroom Teacher	665.7	611.4	-8.2%	624.2	2.1%	613.0	-1.8%	-52.7	-7.9%
SPED Teacher	169.7	170.0	0.2%	174.2	2.5%	157.2	-9.8%	-12.5	-7.4%
Specialist	216.5	250.9	15.9%	232.4	-7.4%	242.1	4.2%	25.6	11.8%
Counselor	26.5	37.0	39.6%	27.2	-26.5%	27.5	1.1%	1	3.8%
Nurse	33.8	41.4	22.5%	29.7	-28.3%	29.0	-2.4%	-4.8	-14.2%
<b>Certified Total</b>	<b>1,175.1</b>	<b>1,169.7</b>	<b>-0.5%</b>	<b>1,143.7</b>	<b>-2.2%</b>	<b>1,129.8</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>-45.3</b>	<b>-3.9%</b>
<b>Classified</b>									
Director	7.5	8.0	6.7%	9.0	12.5%	7.0	-22.2%	-0.5	-6.7%
Supervisor	21.3	20.5	-3.8%	18.8	-8.3%	18.8	-	-2.5	-11.7%
Instructional Support	225.7	228.4	1.2%	235.4	3.1%	222.2	-5.6%	-3.5	-1.6%
Administrative Support	114.8	104.0	-9.4%	107.5	3.4%	105.0	-2.3%	-9.8	-8.5%
Custodial and Support Staff	262.5	231.2	-11.9%	221.7	-4.1%	209.7	-5.4%	-52.8	-20.1%
<b>Classified Total</b>	<b>631.6</b>	<b>592.0</b>	<b>-6.3%</b>	<b>592.3</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>562.7</b>	<b>-5.0%</b>	<b>-68.9</b>	<b>-10.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,806.7</b>	<b>1,761.7</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>	<b>1,736.1</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>	<b>1,692.5</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>	<b>-114.2</b>	<b>-6.3%</b>

**Notes:** All positions are full-time equivalent (FTE). FY2014 data are preliminary. These figures present staff from the general operating fund. The classification of custodians changed between FY 2011 and FY 2012, so we combined Custodial and Support Staff positions into a single category. We rounded figures to the nearest decimal place.

### Changes in District Enrollment, FY2011-2014

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) collects the Average Daily Membership (ADM) of each school district in the state based on the average number of enrolled students during a 20-school day count period in October. For each of the selected school districts, we present below the ADM for the last three completed school years. We also include DEED enrollment projections for the current school year. Actual enrollment data for the 2013-14 school year will be collected this October and finalized in early 2014.<sup>5</sup>

All of the districts we examined had small fluctuations in enrollment during these years, with minor changes projected for the 2013-14 school year.

**Average Daily Membership (ADM) of Selected Alaska School Districts**  
Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades, FY2011-2014

School District	FY2011	FY2012		FY2013		FY2014 (Projected)		Net Change	
		No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change	No.	Percent Change
Anchorage	48,613	48,422	-0.4%	48,493	0.1%	48,885	0.8%	272	0.6%
Fairbanks North Star Borough	14,238	14,277	0.3%	14,273	0.0%	14,283	0.1%	45	0.3%
Juneau Borough	4,983	4,952	-0.6%	4,957	0.1%	4,962	0.1%	-21	-0.4%
Kodiak Island Borough	2,543	2,517	-1.0%	2,513	-0.2%	2,521	0.3%	-22	-0.9%
Mat-Su Borough	16,965	17,338	2.2%	17,247	-0.5%	17,283	0.2%	318	1.9%
Selected Districts Total	87,342	87,506	0.2%	87,483	0.0%	87,934	0.5%	592	0.7%
All other Districts Total	41,705	41,380	-0.8%	41,498	0.3%	41,389	-0.3%	-316	-0.8%
<b>State Total</b>	<b>129,047</b>	<b>128,886</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>	<b>128,981</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>129,323</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>0.2%</b>

**Notes and Sources:** Average Daily Membership (ADM) is calculated based on the average number of enrolled students during a 20-school day count period in October. We rounded ADMs to the nearest integer. Data for the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years—which correspond to state fiscal years (FY) 2011, 2012, and 2013—are from “Average Daily Membership by Districts FY88-FY12,” Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, updated March 7, 2013, and accessed through <http://education.alaska.gov/stats/>. Estimates for the 2013-14 school year are from “Estimated State Program Allocations for FY14,” Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, prepared April 15, 2013, and accessed through <http://education.alaska.gov/schoolfinance/>.

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

<sup>5</sup> Enrollment data and other information about all Alaska school districts can be found at <http://education.alaska.gov/stats/>. For the 2010-11 through 2012-13 school years, we used the ADM data from the “Average Daily Membership by Districts FY88-FY12” report, which was updated March 7, 2013. Projected ADMs for the 2013-14 school year are from the “Estimated State Program Allocations for FY14” document, which we accessed through the DEED’s School Finance page, <http://education.alaska.gov/schoolfinance/>.