



POLICY BRIEF

ALASKA POLICY FORUM

Alaska's Teachers Outnumbered Four to Five by Other Staff in 2021

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Investing in high-quality teachers is a crucial predictor of student success.¹ Data from the National Center for Education Statistics lists the number of classroom teachers, other staff, and expenditures per pupil in Alaska's school districts.² Other staff includes district administrators, principals, guidance counselors, librarians, instructional aides, and more. Thus, examining the ratio of teachers to other staff from the 2021–2022 school year reveals which districts are investing more heavily in resources that directly affect students.³



Takeaways

1. For every four teachers in Alaska, five staff members are performing other functions than teaching.
2. Districts average three teachers for every four members of other staff (0.75 to 1).

¹ "Ask a REL Question." Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL), Dec. 2019. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/askarel_118.asp (visited 3/8/23)

² "Search for Public School Districts." National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch> (visited 3/8/23)

³ Sarah Montalbano. "Snapshot: Teachers vs. Other Staff in Alaska in 2021." Alaska Policy Forum. February 27, 2023. <https://alaskapolicyforum.org/2023/02/snapshot-teachers-vs-other-staff-in-alaska-in-2021> (visited 3/8/23)

3. Of Alaska's major school districts, the Mat-Su Borough School District (MSBSD) reported the highest ratio of teachers to other staff, nearly one to one (0.96 to 1). Teachers represented 49% of MSBSD's staff, and total expenditures equaled \$15,939 per student.
4. The Anchorage School District reported a similar ratio (0.95 to 1), and teachers also accounted for 49% of all staff. However, ASD's expenditures equaled \$16,525 per student.
5. Tanana City School District reported the lowest ratio of teachers to other staff (0.35 to 1). For each teacher, the district employs almost three other staff members. Only 26% of the district's staff are teachers.
6. Among all school districts, Aleutian Region School District reported the highest ratio of teachers to other staff (1.63 to 1). Only two full-time staff members and one part-time staff member are required to support the district's four teachers, who represent 62% of

the district's personnel. Expenditures per pupil totaled \$104,500.

7. In only seven of Alaska's 53 school districts do teachers comprise 50% or more of the district's staff: Alaska Gateway (69%), Aleutian Region (62%), Craig City (51%), Kenai Peninsula Borough (52%), Nome Public Schools (55%), Sitka (54%), and Yakutat (50%).

While the functions of some administrative and support staff may be necessary and worthwhile, they are mostly peripheral to ensuring students develop the basic skills needed to succeed. Funding should be prioritized for the greatest benefit to students in the classroom, which means investing in teachers rather than administrators.

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