



Alaska Association of Student Government

Resolution #7

Unfreezing the Cut for English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learners (ELL) Educators for all Alaska School Districts

Submitted by: Jessica Dycelle Denig & Wasilla High School Council

Submitted: April 22, 2026

Be it Resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments that

1. **Whereas**, ELL (English Language Learners) and ESL (English as a Second Language) educators were cut in July 2025 due to federal reductions in education funding;¹
2. **Whereas**, the Trump administration froze \$890 million across the nation for English language acquisition;²
3. **Whereas**, the Trump administration blocked the release of an estimated \$6.2 billion in congressionally approved education funding through the U.S. Department of Education grant programs;¹
4. **Whereas**, beginning July 1, 2025, the federal government withheld funding for multiple education programs—including Migrant Education, Supporting Effective Instruction, Language Instruction for English Learners, Student Support and Academic Enrichment, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers—totaling an estimated \$46.4 million for Alaska schools;¹
5. **Whereas**, this funding included \$21.3 million for migrant education, \$10.8 million for supporting effective instruction, \$1.1 million for English language learning, \$6.6 million

for student support and academic enrichment, and \$6.5 million for 21st Century Community Learning Center programs;¹

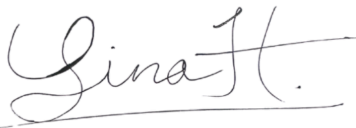
6. **Whereas**, Anchorage School District, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and Kuspuk sued the U.S. Department of Education in July 2025 for the Administrative Procedure Act being violated;³
7. **Whereas**, the Administrative Procedure Act governs the federal rulemaking and adjudication processes, ensuring public participation and accountability for executive branch agencies;⁴
8. **Whereas**, the percentage of public school students in the United States who were ELLs increased overall between fall 2011 (9.4 percent, or 4.6 million students) and fall 2021 (10.6 percent, or 5.3 million students);⁵
9. **Whereas**, Wasilla High School started the 2025-2026 school year with 28 students in the ESL and ELL program and has now increased to 30 students;
10. **Whereas**, the increase in students for the program demonstrates the continued demand for the program and the need for qualified educators to support these students;
11. **Whereas**, the ESL and ELL program is still currently active, but is not fully functioning due to a lack of educators;
12. **Whereas**, the yearly WIDA testing is an assessment for ELLs that is administered to K-12 English learners in over 40 U.S. states;⁶
13. **Whereas**, WIDA is an online test to determine whether or not students need to continue English language services;⁶
14. **Whereas**, WIDA testing assesses English proficiency and is an active component of the program, but does not replace the instruction and individualized support provided by ESL and ELL educators;
15. **Whereas**, ESL and ELL educators facilitate targeted language development, reduce dropout rates, and support culturally responsive teaching, ensuring equitable access to academic content;⁷
16. **Whereas**, the absence of ESL and ELL educators limits students' ability to access academic content fully, increasing the risk of falling behind or disengaging from school;

Therefore, be it resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments that the restoration and protection of ESL and ELL educator positions in all Alaskan school districts is

essential to effectively address the educational needs of the student population requiring these specialized educators and resources. A lack of appropriate training prevents teachers from effectively supporting these students, who require increased individualized attention to achieve academic success.

Action Statement: If passed by the General Assembly of AASG, this resolution will be brought to the Alaska State Legislature, the Department of Education, and Alaska's federal delegation to request the reinstatement of funding and positions for ESL and ELL educators across the state.

The resolution passes with unanimous consent.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lina H." with a horizontal line underneath.

AASG Vice President, Lina Hischer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cassandra Mirosh" with a horizontal line underneath.

AASG Executive Director, Cassandra Mirosh

Works Cited

1. Smith, C. (2025a, July 4). *Trump administration freezes millions in grants to Alaska schools*. Alaska Beacon.
<https://alaskabeacon.com/2025/07/03/trump-administration-freezes-millions-in-grants-to-alaska-schools/>
2. Smith, C. (2025b, July 16). *Trump administration freeze of millions for adult education prompts layoffs, cuts for Alaska*. Alaska Beacon.
<https://alaskabeacon.com/2025/07/16/trump-administration-freezes-millions-for-adult-education-prompting-layoffs-cuts-for-alaska/>
3. II, A. J. (2025, July 22). School districts sue Trump administration over \$6 billion funding freeze. *ABC News*.
<https://abcnews.com/Politics/school-districts-sue-trump-administration-6-billion-funding-story?id=123944596>
4. *Summary of the Administrative Procedure Act*. (2013, February 22). US EPA.
<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-administrative-procedure-act>
5. COE. (n.d.). English Learners in Public Schools. Retrieved April 21, 2026, from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf/english-learners-in-public-schools>
6. *Access for ELLs 2.0*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 21, 2026, from <https://www.browardschools.com/bcps-departments/bilingualesol/programs/esol/access-for-ells-20>
7. *What are the benefits of ESL?* (2021, August 16). Lamar.
<https://degree.lamar.edu/online-programs/education/med-teacher-leadership/esl/the-benefits-of-esl/>