



**Alaska Association of Student Government
Resolution #9**

Implementation of a Water Safety Education Course in the state of Alaska

Submitted by: Sand Point Student Council; Michael Kvasnikoff, Azia Walls, & Judah Roof

Submitted: April 22, 2026

Be it Resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments that:

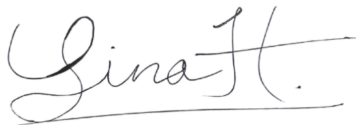
1. **Whereas**, for many years in the United States, the 2nd leading cause of death in children ages 5-14 is drowning;¹
2. **Whereas**, in the state of Alaska, capsizing, swamping, and falling overboard are among the leading causes of cold-water immersion incidents;²
3. **Whereas**, in the United States, there are an estimated 4,000 fatal unintentional drownings every year (11 per day) and 8,000 non-fatal drownings yearly (22 per day);²
4. **Whereas**, non-fatal drowning can result in long-term health problems and costly hospital stays;²
5. **Whereas**, the National Center for Cold Water Safety warns that sudden immersion in water under 60 degrees Fahrenheit can kill a person in less than a minute;³
6. **Whereas**, ocean temperatures surrounding Alaska rarely exceed 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and cold water immersion can quickly lead to hypothermia;^{3,4}
7. **Whereas**, Alaska consistently leads the nation in drowning deaths;⁵
8. **Whereas**, nearly 9 of 10 Alaskans who have drowned in non-occupational settings were not wearing life jackets;⁵
9. **Whereas**, Alaska had an age-adjusted rate of 4.4 drowning deaths per 100,000 residents (2018-2021), which is roughly twice that of almost every other state;⁵
10. **Whereas**, studies have shown that people without life jackets have a 50% higher chance of drowning;⁶
11. **Whereas**, many communities in Alaska are located along coastlines or near bodies of water;

12. **Whereas**, the monetary and time cost of educating students would be low due to the large availability of free online resources and volunteers;

Therefore, be it resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments supports the implementation of a water safety course within schools in the state of Alaska.

Action Statement: If passed by the General Assembly of AASG, this resolution will be brought to the Alaska Department of Education to be discussed.

The resolution passes with unanimous consent.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lina H.", written over a horizontal line.

AASG Vice President, Lina Hischer

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cassandra Mirosh", written over a horizontal line.

AASG Executive Director, Cassandra Mirosh

Sources:

1. Drowning Data | Drowning Prevention | CDC
<https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/data-research/index.html>
2. 2021_ColdWaterSurvivalGuide.pdf
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/2021_ColdWaterSurvivalGuide.pdf
3. You're not a polar bear: The plunge into cold water comes with risks | American Heart Association
<https://www.heart.org/en/news/2022/12/09/youre-not-a-polar-bear-the-plunge-into-cold-water-comes-with-risks>
4. Ocean Water Temperatures for Alaska - Current Results
<https://www.currentresults.com/Oceans/Temperature/alaska-average-water-temperature.php>
5. Alaska drownings led the nation, with alcohol use and lack of lifejackets often involved
<https://alaskapublic.org/news/2023-06-22/alaska-drownings-led-the-nation-with-alcohol-use-and-lack-of-lifejackets-often-involved>
6. Cummings P, Mueller BA, Quan L. Association between wearing a personal floatation device and death by drowning among recreational boaters: a matched cohort analysis of United States Coast Guard data. *Injury Prevention*. 2011;17(3):156–159. doi: 10.1136/ip.2010.028688. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]