

Special Education Service Agency (SESA)

ASK

Please support HB 246: increase SESA's funding formula.

WHAT

- SESA is an educational service agency comprised of a team of **highly specialized special education teachers** trained in teaching students with low incidence disability (LID). The Low Incidence Disabilities Outreach Program offers **training** and **consultative services** inclusive of a statewide lending library for Alaskans. Low incidence disabilities include **autism, deaf and hard of hearing (DHH), vision impairment, emotional disabilities, and multiple disabilities.**



Image 1: Student reading her name in Braille.

- SESA's low incidence disabilities outreach program is funded through a formula based on Alaska's total statewide enrollment or Annual Daily Membership (ADM).
- As illustrated below, Alaska's ADM is in decline while SESA's LID caseload is steadily increasing creating an environment where every year they are serving more children with less money.

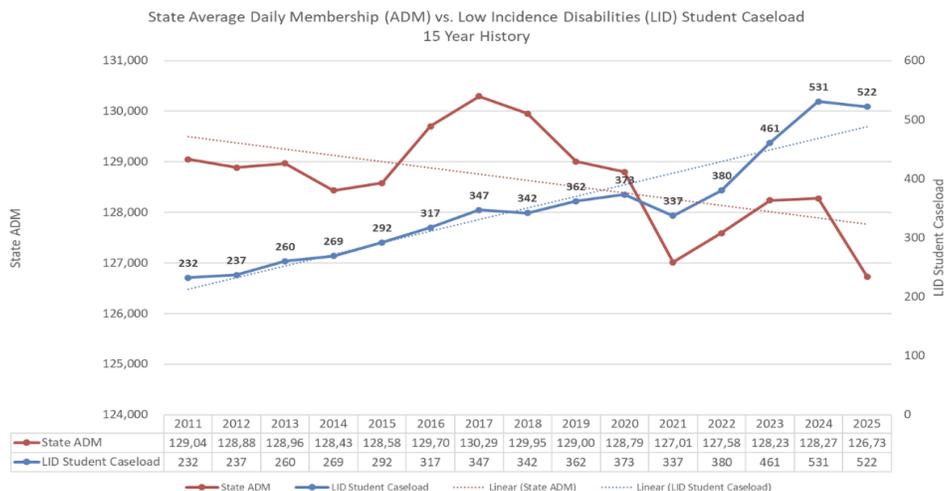




Image 2: Student trialing new AAC device.

➤ SESA currently has funding for 13.05 FTE education specialists in their LID program with a maximum caseload of 40 students per position. This equates to a maximum LID program enrollment of **522 students** served at any one time. *Due to vacancies*, SESA LID program has staffed 11.7 FTE positions which means a maximum of **468 students** served at one time.

- *In FY25 there were **19** students and school teams waitlisted in two LID programs for about two months before getting assigned to a SESA education specialist.*
- At the end of FY25 school year, the LID program had served **522 students**.
- *In FY26 there have been **six** students placed on the waiting list in the LID Autism program. There are **four** students and school teams still waiting to receive an assigned SESA education specialist.*
- SESA's current funding formula is $ADM \times \$23.13$. This rate, coupled with unprecedented inflation, does **not** allow the addition of full-time positions to serve the projected growth of the program while maintaining competitive salaries.
- A funding increase to \$26.89 will:
 - Prevent LID program staff reduction.
 - Increase LID program by about 3 staff.
 - No wait list or reduce the wait list time.
 - Increase onsite and individualized consultations in rural Alaska.
 - Increase competitive salaries to hire and retain highly specialized special education teachers.

ASK: Please support passage of HB 246 to increase SESA's funding to 26.89/student