

## **Alaska State Chamber of Commerce 2008 Position**

### **Prioritize Alaska's Educational Needs**

The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce urges the Administration and Legislature to foster development of Alaska's educational system that serves citizens and businesses, thereby meet the demand for a strong and viable economy.

The State of Alaska must have a superior educational system, a system that is second-to-none, if we are going to compete successfully in the global community; we cannot be satisfied with anything less.

A superior educational system will provide Alaska with a strong foundation for success in our rapidly changing world. A superior educational system will provide citizens with enhanced opportunities for life-long learning and provide businesses with access to a highly trained workforce; each is essential to development of a strong and vibrant economy.

#### **Action Required:**

- Increase funding available for operation of our schools by:
  - Funding PERS/TRS liabilities,
  - Providing funding that addresses the additional resources required to educate K-12 intensive needs students along with regular K-12 students,
  - Supporting responsible funding of the University of Alaska
  
- Support programs that champion workforce readiness and link training to employment and career technical education in public schools:
  
- Support concepts like those outlined in the Taylor Plan in concert with the development of a fiscal plan for the State of Alaska
  
- The Alaska State Chamber will continue to encourage partnerships with private sector and public agencies in concert with efforts on the Pre K-12 level and post-secondary to assist Alaska's business and industry requirements, and to address continuing and emerging workforce needs.