



For Immediate Release  
Date: Thursday January 29, 2015  
Contact: Lisa Skiles Parady, ASA  
Work: 907.586.9702  
Cell: 907.903.1689  
email: lparady@alaskaacsa.org

## **Alaska Superintendents Association response to Governor Seeking Appeal of Ketchikan Gateway Borough's Education Lawsuit**

"Governor Walker and Attorney General Craig Richards' decision to appeal Superior Court Judge Carey's decision and seek a stay of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's education lawsuit is most welcome" noted Todd Poage, President of the Alaska Superintendent's Association (ASA). "We welcome this decisive action by the new administration to keep education whole and resist further erosion of school funding. Similar to the state itself, our districts face serious financial challenges, including the loss of federal Secure Rural School funds and the fallout from falling oil prices. The move to appeal this decision gives the state and school districts time to think through the potential impacts if the decision were to be upheld."

The heart of the issue lies with the idea that the current required local contribution violates Alaska's Constitution because it is a tax earmarked for a special purpose. Such an interpretation is arguable, notes ASA Executive Director, Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady, as "the Education Clause of the Alaska Constitution requires that the Legislature *establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children in the state*. We appreciate the Governor taking steps to have a final determination of issues that could profoundly impact schools. The state should have a keen interest in sustaining the authority necessary to establish and maintain schools, including requiring those areas of the state with established local government to contribute to public education. Although much work remains to be done to complete the process of establishing local government in Alaska, it would be a misstep to weaken school districts while that work continues."

#