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**From:** pl hamlett [plhamlett@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 24, 2013 9:23 AM  
**To:** info@communitycouncils.org  
**Subject:** FW: Berta's Briefings - The Ultimate Investment

Mark,

please fwd to CCCC members

Thanks

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From: [Sen.Berta.Gardner@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Berta.Gardner@akleg.gov)  
To: [Sen.Berta.Gardner@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Berta.Gardner@akleg.gov)  
Subject: Berta's Briefings - The Ultimate Investment  
Date: Wed, 23 Jan 2013 23:43:40 +0000



**January 23, 2013**



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## The Ultimate Investment

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Write a Letter to the Editor  
and it to the Anchorage Daily  
[letter@adn.com](mailto:letter@adn.com)

**D.C. DELEGATION**

Senator Begich

907-271-5915

EMAIL: [Sen. Mark Begich](mailto:Sen.Mark.Begich)

Senator Murkowski

907-271-3735

EMAIL: [Sen. Lisa Murkowski](mailto:Sen.Lisa.Murkowski)

Congressman Young

907-271-5978

EMAIL: [Rep. Don Young](mailto:Rep.Don.Young)

Activity in the capitol is picking up. We've had three meetings of the Senate Education so far and while I am excited to dive into statewide issues, I am concerned about the recent announcement of 215 positions to be cut from the Anchorage School District. Among the biggest hits will be to graduation advisors and support staff, intervention specialists and special education aides. These positions are important to the success of all students and to the goal of achieving a 90% graduation rate by 2020.



What will we invest in education?  
is the wrong question. The right question is:  
What does it take to get the student  
outcomes we want to see?  
- Senator Berta Gardner

We in Alaska are familiar with the dilemma of stretching finite resources as much as possible, but the education system we expect needs adequate investment and the attention of legislators and the Governor. It is time that we make a lasting commitment to schools, by providing resources necessary for the job we expect and by providing them early allowing schools to plan ahead with confidence. The Governor proposes a fourth year of flat funding for our schools – a level of funding reduces opportunity for excellent results.

Yes, great results takes more than money. We have been working with the University of Alaska to support enhanced teacher preparation. We need a serious statewide discussion of voluntary preschool programs to boost success of children, particularly those most at risk of not completing high school. We should be serious about the quality of time spent in the classroom by reducing the test preparation and test taking. Let's discontinue use of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam, which is not useful to anyone. Let's also increase the mandatory school attendance age to 18 unless students have already graduated, and we should enforce our existing truancy laws.

Education is the ultimate investment and we must make a real commitment if we want every Alaskan student to have a meaningful opportunity to be ready to meet the challenges of the future. I encourage you to contact the Governor, write letters to the editor, and share your stories about how education has made you successful.

I'm Berta and I'm still listening,

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office

Berta

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