



**Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District  
OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD**

***Mission: Mat-Su Borough School District prepares students for success***

December 29, 2015

To: Sustainable Education Committee  
From: Susan Pougher, MSBSD School Board President  
Regarding: Unfunded mandates and local control

On behalf of the MSBSD Board, I would like to address the committee on concerns our Board has regarding charter school decisions no longer appear to rest with a local school board. In our local Board Policy; MSBSD BP 6190, it is clearly stated that "[t]he Board shall give appropriate consideration to any charter school petition in light of its overall effect on the district's students and proposed school's ability to function effectively and meet its goals." The Board recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to safeguard the interests of its students and community in deciding whether to grant or deny charter school applications.

As a Board we are tasked with providing programs that can demonstrate fiscal sustainability and ensure that risk is minimal. It appears that HB278 has severely limited the decision making of our Board to use sustainability and risk as factors in deciding whether to approve a charter school. The language of the regulations truly puts an unfair burden on a school district.

Please understand that our Board is very serious about our fiduciary responsibility to our community. We are also very committed to local control, which brings me to one final observation. Our interpretation of the regulations regarding charter school applications leads us to question whether or not there is an erosion of local control when it comes to accepting or denying charter school applications. It is our greatest hope that we are able to continue providing sustainable school choices to our community while maintaining our commitment to local control.

We believe local control is consistent with the values of our state and our local Mat-Su Community. Please don't use language from regulations that is contrary to the support of local school districts and the Boards who have been elected to govern them.

Sincerely,

Susan Pougher  
MSBSD School Board President