



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Lynn Gattis

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Sponsor Statement HB 93

“An act relating to the authorization, monitoring and operation of charter schools”

Currently, only local school districts can approve or reject public charter school applications. School districts monitor, renew or terminate public charter school contracts. A charter school is a semi-autonomous public school that is mission-based and has some control over its budget, curriculum, calendars and, selection of employees.

Having school districts as sole authorizers limits the ability of parents and community members to establish more charter schools. It has also created an added layer of financial burdens that has diminished the level of services the schools can offer its students.

This bill will allow multiple authorizers of public charter schools in Alaska. Authorizers can be government agencies, universities and/or nonprofit organizations. Authorizers will be approved by the Department of Education and Early Development and will have the same role and responsibilities as current school districts to approve, monitor, renew or terminate a public charter school. The formula to fund charter schools will remain unchanged and will be based on the location of the charter school and the local school district in that geographical area.

Based on data from other states with multiple or independent authorizers, the number of charter schools have increased and communities and parents have been empowered with more choices to meet students' needs.

Indirect costs charged to charter schools will vary by authorizers and the schools will have more financial and hiring autonomy; schools will be able to hire teachers and other professionals within or outside from local school districts' labor bargaining agreements.

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