

**HB**

**157**

**Chair, Judiciary  
Labor & Commerce  
Oil & Gas**

**Military & Veteran Affairs**  
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
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## Alaska State Legislature House of Representatives



While in Session  
**State Capitol, Room 118**  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182  
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**Representative Jay Ramras**  
District 10

### **House Bill 157 Sponsor Statement**

**"An Act relating to charter school funding."**

Charter schools are a valuable alternative form of education for students in Alaska. House Bill 157 supports the development of charter schools across the state by providing for an "incubation" period of two years during which a charter school can establish a strong base of students. Ordinarily a charter school must meet a minimum average daily membership, or ADM, in order to be counted as a separate school and therefore receive full funding by the state. House Bill 157 waives the ADM requirement for the first two years and thus provides full funding to new charter schools who are attempting to establish themselves.

House Bill 157 also lowers the current required ADM for charter schools from 150 students to 100 students. Lowering the ADM will give charter schools that operate in small communities a smaller more attainable goal of enrollment. Currently, if a charter school falls below the minimum ADM, it is counted as the largest school in the district, and therefore receives the lowest level of funding. The results of this cut in funding can be catastrophic.

House Bill 157 supports charter schools and their mission to provide students in Alaska with the best educational opportunity to suit their learning needs. Please join me in supporting charter schools by supporting House Bill 157.

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: HB157-EED-ESS-3-27-07  
 Bill Version: HB157  
 ( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Education & Early Development  
 Title: An Act relating to charter school funding. RDU: K-12 Support  
 Component: Foundation Program  
 Sponsor: Representative Ramras  
 Requester: Health, Education & Social Svc, Finance Component No.: 141

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>						
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This would provide a school size adjustment and additional funding for those Charter Schools that have an Average Daily Membership [ADM] of at least 100. In addition, this legislation would allow new charter schools to go through the school size table independently regardless of ADM count for the first two years of service.

The FY2008 Projections do not have any Charter Schools that would qualify for this adjustment. Future years funding cannot be determined because the ADM variables and if there are new Charter Schools are unknown.

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans, Director Phone 465-8679  
 Division: School Finance Date/Time 3/27/07 8:10 AM  
 Approved by: Barbara Thompson, Deputy Commissioner Date 3/27/2007  
 Agency: Education & Early Development

**CHARTER SCHOOLS  
 FY2008**

District	Charter School	FY08 ADM	FY07 ADM
ANCHORAGE	Aquarian Charter	355.00	351.10
ANCHORAGE	Highland Tech Charter	269.00	266.35
MAT-SU	Academy Charter School	228.00	228.00
ANCHORAGE	Alaska Native Charter (NEW FY08)	200.00	
KENAI	Kaleidoscope Charter School	196.00	159.00
FAIRBANKS	Star of the North Secondary School (charter)	195.00	194.93
KETCHIKAN	Ketchikan Charter School	190.00	188.90
KENAI	Aurora Borealis Charter (soldotna)	183.00	178.00
MAT-SU	Midnight Sun Charter School	173.00	163.00
ANCHORAGE	Winterberry Charter	165.00	160.25
ANCHORAGE	Eagle Academy Charter	163.00	164.00
KENAI	Soldotna Montessori Charter	159.00	161.00
FAIRBANKS	Chinook Montessori Charter School	155.00	155.00
LOWEP KUSKOKWIM	Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik Immersion (bethel)	155.00	142.60
ANCHORAGE	Rielke Schule Charter (NEW FY08)	151.00	
KETCHIKAN	Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter	151.00	151.00
FAIRBANKS	Effie Kokrin Charter	150.00	97.65
KENAI	Fireweed Academy Charter (Homer)	90.00	66.00
JUNEAU	Juneau Community Charter School	68.00	67.65
NOME	Anvil City Science Academy	44.00	43.50

## **Charter School Statutes**

### **Sec. 14.17.905. Facilities constituting a school.**

(a) For purposes of this chapter, the determination of the number of schools in a district is subject to the following:

(1) a community with an ADM of at least 10, but not more than 100, shall be counted as one school;

(2) a community with an ADM of at least 101, but not more than 425, shall be counted as

(A) one elementary school, which includes those students in grades kindergarten through six; and

(B) one secondary school, which includes students in grades seven through 12;

(3) in a community with an ADM of greater than 425, each facility that is administered as a separate school shall be counted as one school, except that each alternative school with an ADM of less than 200 shall be counted as a part of the school in the district with the highest ADM.

(b) Notwithstanding (a)(3) of this section, a charter school shall be counted as a separate school if the charter school has an ADM of at least 150 students.

### **Sec. 14.17.990. Definitions.**

In this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise,

(1) "ADM or average daily membership" means the aggregate number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in a school district during the student count period for which a determination is being made, divided by the actual number of days that school is in session for the student count period for which the determination is being made;

(2) "district" means a city or borough school district or a regional educational attendance area;

(3) "district adjusted ADM" means the number resulting from the calculations under AS 14.17.410 (b)(1);

(4) "district ADM" means the sum of the ADMs in a district;

(5) "eligible federal impact aid" means the amount of federal impact aid received by a district as of March 1 of the fiscal year as a result of an application submitted in the preceding fiscal year, including advance payments and adjustments received since March 1 of the preceding fiscal year from prior year applications, under 20 U.S.C. 7701 - 7714, except payments received under 20 U.S.C. 7703(f)(2)(B), to the extent the state may consider that aid as local resources under federal law;

(6) "local contribution" means appropriations and the value of in-kind services made by a district;

(7) "taxable real and personal property" means all real and personal property taxable under the laws of the state.

**Sec. 14.17.450. School size factor.**

(a) For purposes of calculating a school's ADM to determine state aid, the ADM of each school in a district shall be computed by applying the following formula:

If the student count The adjusted student count is

in a school is The number of

At least But less than Base Multiplier students in

excess of

10 - 20 39.6

20 - 30  $39.6 + (1.62 \times 20)$

30 - 75  $55.8 + (1.49 \times 30)$

75 - 150  $122.85 + (1.27 \times 75)$

150 - 250  $218.1 + (1.08 \times 150)$

250 - 400  $326.1 + (0.97 \times 250)$

400 - 750  $471.6 + (0.92 \times 400)$

750 or over  $793.6 + (0.84 \times 750)$ .

(b) If the ADM in a school is less than 10, those students shall be included in the ADM of the school in that district with the lowest ADM as determined by the most recent student count data for that district.

**CHARTER SCHOOLS  
FY2008**

<b>District</b>	<b>Charter School</b>	<b>FY08 ADM</b>	<b>FY07 ADM</b>
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Aquarian Charter	355.00	351.10
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Highland Tech Charter	269.00	266.35
<b>MAT-SU</b>	Academy Charter School	228.00	228.00
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Alaska Native Charter (NEW FY08)	200.00	
<b>KENAI</b>	Kaleidoscope Charter School	196.00	159.00
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>	Effie Kokrin Charter	195.00	97.65
<b>KETCHIKAN</b>	Ketchikan Charter School	190.00	188.90
<b>KENAI</b>	Aurora Borealis Charter (soldotna)	183.00	178.00
<b>MAT-SU</b>	Midnight Sun Charter School	173.00	163.00
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Winterberry Charter	165.00	160.25
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Eagle Academy Charter	163.00	164.00
<b>KENAI</b>	Soldotna Montessori Charter	159.00	161.00
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>	Chinook Montessori Charter School	155.00	155.00
<b>LOWER KUSKOKWIM</b>	Ayaprun Eliitnaurvik Yup'ik Immersion (bethel)	155.00	142.60
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	Rielke Schule Charter (NEW FY08)	151.00	
<b>KETCHIKAN</b>	Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter	151.00	151.00
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>	Star of the North Secondary School (charter)	150.00	194.93
<b>KENAI</b>	Fireweed Academy Charter (Homer)	90.00	66.00
<b>JUNEAU</b>	Juneau Community Charter School	68.00	67.65
<b>NOME</b>	Anvil City Science Academy	44.00	43.50

**CHARTER SCHOOLS  
FY2008**

*District Name/School*

<b>ANCHORAGE</b>	<b>ADM</b>
Frontier Charter (Correspond)	n/a
Aquarian Charter	355.00
Family Partnership Charter School (corresp)	n/a
Winterberry Charter	165.00
Eagle Academy Charter	163.00
Highland Tech Charter	269.00
Alaska Native Charter (NEW FY08)	200.00
Rielke Schule Charter (NEW FY08)	151.00

**DELTA GREELY**

Delta Cyber charter School (corresp.)	n/a
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**FAIRBANKS**

Chinook Montessori Charter School	155.00
Star of the North Secondary School (charter)	150.00
Effie Kokrin Charter	195.00

**JUNEAU**

Juneau Community Charter School	68.00
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**KENAI**

Aurora Borealis Charter (soldotna)	183.00
Kaleidoscope Charter School	196.00
Fireweed Academy Charter (Homer)	90.00
Soldotna Montessori Charter	159.00

**KETCHIKAN**

Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter	151.00
Ketchikan Charter School	190.00

**LOWER KUSKOKWIM**

Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik Immersion (bethel)	155.00
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**MAT-SU**

Academy Charter School	228.00
Midnight Sun Charter School	173.00
Twindley Bridge Charter School (corresp)	n/a

**NOME**

Anvil City Science Academy	44.00
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**TOTAL OF 24 CHARTER SCHOOLS PROJECTED FOR FY2008**

# Charter Schools

State of Alaska > Department of Education & Early Development > Charter Schools

## Charter School Contacts

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**Eagle Academy Charter School**  
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 Eagle River, AK 99577  
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**Anchorage Schools**  
**Family Partnership Charter School**  
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 Anchorage, AK 99503  
 Phone: (907) 742-3700  
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**Anchorage Schools**  
**Frontier Charter School**  
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 Anchorage, AK 99503  
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 Anchorage, AK 99501  
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**Delta-Greely Schools**  
**Delta Cyber Charter School**  
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 Fax: (907) 247-8568  
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**Ketchikan Gateway Borough Schools**  
**Tongass School of Arts & Sciences**  
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**Lower Kuskokwim Schools**  
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**Mat-Su Borough Schools**  
**Academy Charter School**  
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**Mat-Su Borough Schools**  
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**Mat-Su Borough Schools**  
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**Nome Public Schools**  
**Anvil City Science Academy**  
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**School Profile**

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**School Profile**

**School Profile**

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# **Charter Schools in Alaska**

## **Questions and Answers about Charter Schools**

### **A summary:**

The Alaska Legislature passed the Charter School Act in 1995. Governor Knowles signed the bill into law. House Bill 101 amended the existing Alaska statute for charter schools and was signed into law July 1, 2001. The major changes of the amendment are: length of charter was changed to a maximum of ten (10) years, total number of allowable charter schools to operate within the state set at 60, and the geographical restrictions on number of total schools per region or district was dropped.

Both the local school board and the State Board of Education must approve a charter school application before the school can begin operation. If a local school board denies an application, there is no appeal to a higher authority.

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### **Q: How many charter schools can operate in Alaska?**

**A:** The Legislature allowed for the creation of up to 60 charter schools statewide with no geographical restrictions.

### **Q: Are charter school personnel subject to the school district's labor agreements?**

**A:** Charter school teachers and other employees are subject to the same collective bargaining agreements of the school district in which the charter school operates. The only exception is when the district and the bargaining unit representing a teacher or other employee agree to an exemption.

### **Q: What are the possibilities for waivers from state regulations?**

**A:** Regulation 4 AAC 03.091 allows local school boards to seek waivers from certain state regulations. Not allowed are waivers to regulations that are required by a specific state or federal law or a regulation necessary to assure health and safety standards. The request to waive a regulation needs to come from the local school board and be approved by the State Board of Education.

### **Q: Have schools been able to waive the standardized achievement test requirements?**

**A:** Student testing is required by state regulation, not by statute, except the High School Graduation Requirement Exam, which is state statute. Waivers are allowed, under specified circumstances.

### **Q: Can a charter school require local school districts to charge students and parents for such items as uniforms, lab fees, transportation fees and textbooks?**

**A:** We know of no law prohibiting school districts from setting and collecting these fees. Note, however, that AS 14.03.080, which entitles school age children to a

public education without tuition, must be considered.

**Q: Can the school district disallow a student, particularly a special education student, from enrolling in a charter school if the school believes the student will not benefit from the educational style or methods used?**

**A:** A charter school may be designed to serve two broad categories of students: (1) students within an age group or grade level, or (2) students who will benefit from a particular teaching method or curriculum. These are very broad criteria that can be further defined in the charter school contract. Civil rights laws disfavor discrimination against students with disabilities.

**Q: Can a charter school be a statewide program, such as a correspondence school, or a boarding school specializing in technology, math or science?**

**A:** Yes. Nothing in the Charter School Act prohibits these types of charter schools. However, the local school board that starts a boarding charter school would have to provide funding for the boarding part of the operation as well as the academic program.

**Q: Could a year round school-without-walls, community-based education program be a charter school?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Can a school-within-school program be a charter school?**

**A:** Yes. A charter school can be operated in an existing school district facility or in a facility not currently being used as a public school. The only stipulation set by the Charter School Act is that the school superintendent must determine that the facility meets standards for health and safety.

**Q: Do charter school teachers have to come from a school district's approved hire list?**

**A:** The state does not require school districts to maintain a hire list. For those that do, this is a local decision.

**Q: How does a charter school get its funding?**

**A:** Funding for a charter school will be not less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school. That amount will be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in the same school district.

**Q: Can the school district keep any of the funding generated by the charter school to pay for services that the school district's central office provides the charter school?**

**A:** Yes, but only an amount determined by the Department of Education and only for indirect (overhead) costs.

**Q: Is the district liable for any accidents that may happen to students or staff in a charter school?**

**A:** Charter schools are public schools. A school district is liable for a charter school to the extent that it is liable for other public schools in its jurisdiction.

**Q: Who would have the authority to expel students?**

**A:** Under 4 AAC 06.060, a superintendent or principal may suspend a student from school, but only the local school board may expel a student.

**Q: What happens when the district cannot negotiate exceptions to the collective bargaining agreement for charter school teachers? Is there a waiver for that?**

**A:** Teachers in a charter school are subject to the district's negotiated agreement unless the district and the teacher's bargaining unit agree otherwise. The act provides no waiver to this provision.

**Q: Who evaluates the charter school teachers? Is it the charter school principal, the central office administrators, or both?**

**A:** Charter school teachers need to be evaluated in an equivalent manner as all other teachers in the district. However, in a charter school that does not employ a principal, the district, in cooperation with the charter school, will designate a school district administrator to conduct the evaluation.

**Q: Who hires the charter school principal?**

**A:** The principal is hired by the charter school's academic policy committee. The charter school principal selects, appoints and supervises charter school employees. Remember, the Charter School Act does not require a charter school to have a principal. Other administrative structures are allowed.

**Q: Who evaluates the charter school principal?**

**A:** Assuming the charter school hires a principal, the academic policy committee is responsible for conducting the evaluation.

**Q: Does the school superintendent have the authority to fire the principal?**

**A:** The Charter School Act gives the authority to hire a principal to the academic policy committee. The authority to hire brings with it the authority to fire.

**Q: Can the local school board close the charter school.**

**A:** Yes. The charter school contract must contain a clause that allows the local school board to terminate the contract if the charter school fails to meet its educational or financial goals or for other good cause.

**Q: Will the district assume tenure responsibility for the charter school teacher?**

**A:** To the extent required by state law, yes.

**Q: Can an existing public school use the Charter School Act to secede from a school district?**

**A:** No. A charter school is a public school and operates under contract to the local school board.

**Q: Can a school district with a single site use the Charter School Act to secede from Alaska's education system?**

**A:** No. A single site school district can use the Charter School Act to meet the needs of its students. A contract must be worked out between the school board and the charter school. A community conceivably could support a charter school idea that is a radical departure from what is currently offered in public schools. However, the district still would be responsible for educating students who do not choose to attend the charter school.

**Q: How are students selected for charter schools?**

**A:** A charter school can be designated to serve students within a certain age group or grade level and students who will benefit from a particular teaching method or curriculum. The charter school and local school board need to define the age groups or grade levels and who will benefit from the program. All eligible students may apply to the charter school.

**Q: What happens if the number of students who apply exceeds the charter school's capacity to serve them?**

**A:** If the number of applications exceeds the charter school's capacity, then the school and local school board need to try to find additional space and teachers to accommodate the students. Failing that, students are selected by random drawing in a lottery.

**Q: Does a charter school discriminate de facto against minority students because access to the school would be impossible for some due to distance and other geographical barriers? Would it have to provide a boarding school?**

**A:** No. Alaska Statute 14.03.080(a) entitles every child of school age to attend a public school within the school district boundaries in which the child is a resident. The State of Alaska does not provide funding to any school district to offer a boarding school, nor is any school district required to offer a boarding option.

**Q: Can a local school board require that a charter school principal have a "Type B" Administrative Certificate?**

**A:** The local school board may set a standard requiring such employees to possess a Type B administrator certificate.

**Q: What about the timing of charter school approval by a local school board? Will funds be available in mid year, or should the charter school wait until the beginning of the next year to start up?**

**A:** Fiscally, it would be much more advantageous for the charter school to wait until the beginning of the next school year to start up. The ADM (average daily membership) is officially done the first 20 school days in October and the foundation formula funding is based on these ADM figures.

**Q: Can religious schools be charter schools?**

**A:** The Charter School Act requires a charter school to be nonsectarian. This is the same rule that applies to all public schools.

**Q: Will the state provide additional funding to a school district that starts a charter school?**

**A:** No, House Bill 101, the "Charter School Grant Program" AS 14.03.263, has been repealed.

**Q: Must charter schools maintain the same records for students and staff required of regular public schools?**

**A:** The charter school must keep the records specified in the Charter School Act. If not otherwise required by the state or federal government, other records required of regular schools may be waived by the local school board. The charter school is subject to the same auditing requirements as regular public schools.

**Q: Where can someone interested in starting a charter school get an application?**

**A:** The state application is available on-line at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/forms/forms1.html#charterschools> and is called: "Charter Schools Application." This application follows Alaska Charter School Statutes AS 14.03.250-290 and state regulations 4 AAC 33.110.

District applications can be obtained from local school district central offices.

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Do you have a comment or a question that was not answered here? Please **E-mail the Webmaster**

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## FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

520 Fifth Avenue Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4756 (907) 452-2000  
www.northstar.k12.ak.us



March 1, 2007

The Honorable Jay Ramras  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 104  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Ramras:

It is a pleasure to support HB 157 "An Act Relating to Charter School Funding." The enactment of this bill will greatly benefit school districts and ultimately our students. Allowing charter schools two years to build capacity will make a significant difference in their success. As with a business, it usually takes at least two years to build a viable program.

Changing the separate school ADM requirement from 150 to 100 will allow school districts to provide more alternatives for our students. With this change, unique specialized programs will have a better opportunity to flourish. The 150-student requirement created a catastrophic funding threshold for some worthwhile charter schools.

Thank you for introducing this beneficial legislation. Thank you for your dedicated service to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Shortt". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ann Shortt, Ed.D.,  
Superintendent of Schools



F ♦ N ♦ A

Fairbanks Native Association

March 2, 2007

Representative Jay Ramras  
State Capitol, Room 118  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Ramras,

I am writing to thank you for introducing HB 157, an "act relating to charter school funding." As you know, Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) is the legal financial sponsor of the Effie Kokrine Charter School here in Fairbanks. As such, FNA has an obvious vested interest in the school's continuing success. But beyond the administrative level, we have a deeper, more vital interest in insuring the educational success of all Alaska's children. HB 157, by recognizing that funding for a charter school based on 100 students is a more realistic and sustainable number than the current requirement of 150 students, will help our children achieve that success.

In Fairbanks, where three of the 23 charter schools in Alaska are located, we see first hand the value charter schools offer parents as they search for the best educational opportunity to meet their children's needs. We see an atmosphere where children are safe, where students thrive and academic success is an integral part of the school's daily culture. At Effie Kokrine we also see a new, unique program that pairs that academic success with Native culture and provides a welcome, respectful, and exciting model to the community.

At the same time, new programs and new ideas, important though they are, can be difficult to establish. HB 157 recognizes that situation and allows new charter schools two years to meet the 100 student threshold. After two years, with enrollment at 100 students or greater and funding levels set to the small school standard, charter schools will be able to hire teachers, provide infrastructure, purchase instructional material and provide support staff to best meet the needs and challenges of all Alaska's students.

Thank you again for introducing HB 157 and for your support for educational choice, and charter schools in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Shirley L. Lee  
Executive Director

cc: Dr. Ann Shortt, Superintendent, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District  
Eleanor Laughlin, Principal, Effie Kokrine Charter School  
FNA Education Committee

**Emily Stancliff**

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**From:** Sharon McConnell Gillis [gilliss@doyon.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 01, 2007 9:43 AM  
**To:** Rep. Jay Ramras  
**Subject:** HB 157 Charter Schools

Good Morning Jay:

As the Executive Director of Doyon Foundation I want to thank you for introducing HB 157 which would assist Charter Schools. Doyon Foundation was honored to be one of the organizations that established the Effie Kokrine Charter School in Fairbanks and we are hopeful that the bill will pass. Schools like Effie are unique and need time to get established. We appreciate your work on this matter.

Sincerely,

*Sharon McConnell Gillis*

Executive Director

Doyon Foundation

1 Doyon Place, Ste. 300

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

907-459-2050

Fax: 907-459-2065

[www.doyonfoundation.com](http://www.doyonfoundation.com)

**Emily Stancliff**

---

**From:** Stephanie Allison [slacpa@acsalaska.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 01, 2007 2:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Jay Ramras  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* HB 157

Representative Ramras,

I'm very interested in HB 157. As a Montessori parent I believe the Montessori program in Juneau would function better as a charter, however it is difficult to "grow" the program to 150 ADM within the school district, since the district has MANY other priorities.

I'd be happy to provide testimony on the benefits of smaller learning communities, as a parent and as a representative of Great Alaska Schools (AKA Alaska Kids Count).

Thank you for your time,

**Stephanie L. Allison, CPA**  
**slacpa@acsalaska.net**  
**723-3092 (wk)s**  
**790-6407 (fax)**

**Alaska Charter School Association  
801 E. Arctic Ave.  
Palmer, Alaska 99645**

To: Representatives and Senators  
From: Barbara Gerard, Alaska Charter School Association

RE: In Support of HB 157

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Greetings from Alaska Charter School Association!

Charter Schools continue to provide very wonderful and necessary opportunities for parents who seek alternatives to the traditional education system. We know that one size does not fit all. We are blessed with this viable and growing option for students and families.

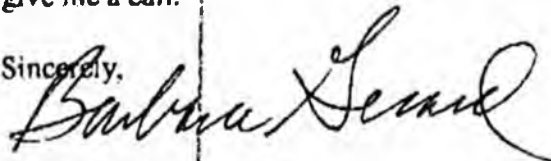
These dynamic and focused charter schools face many barriers in the beginning, one of which is the challenge faced during the start up years of meeting the minimum average daily membership in order to acquire the full funding level set by the state. House Bill 157 waives this ADM requirement for the first two years, allowing a developing school safe harbor while implementation of their ideas and charter occurs.

The other important aspect of House Bill 157 is the lowering of the ADM for charter schools from 150 to 100. This is very important, especially in small communities! Currently, should a charter school drop below the 150 mark by 1 student, a catastrophic financial situation occurs, with school losing a large portion of it's funding on a per pupil basis due to the loss of one student! (Suddenly the "stand alone school" is paired with the largest neighboring school, no longer receiving the full funding level.)

Please support this bill in providing safe harbor for charter schools in their beginning two years and also lowering the ADM requirement minimum from 150 to 100 students! We cannot request this strongly enough! Alaska's families deserve educational choice. Please make every effort to encourage "choice" options and support developing schools!

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gerard,  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Alaska Charter School Association



# Effie Kokrine Charter School



March 16, 2007 *Located on the Howard Luke Campus*

601 Loftus Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Phone (907) 474-0958; Fax (907) 479-2104

Eleanor Laughlin, Principal

Representative Jay Ramras  
Alaska House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 118  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Ramras:

I wanted to thank you for introducing HB 157, relating to charter schools and for your continued support of the Effie Kokrine Charter School (EKCS). As you may know, we are more than halfway through our second year of operation. We are working hard this spring to increase our enrollment and will continue working over the summer to add more students to our program.

HB 157 is an important legislative bill that would benefit many charter schools throughout the State of Alaska. Charter Schools are an important part of the educational values we place on our young future Alaskans.

Last week our new Early College Site Coordinator Alexis Ross Miller began working to further develop our Early College program, which started at EKCS this past year. We have more than 20 students enrolled in college classes this semester: English 111, Biology 104 and Math 060. Interior Aleutians Campus (I-AC) professors and University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty are teaching these courses.

If you would like to investigate the Early College initiative, which is being funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, along with support from other equally reputable foundations, you can go to the Early College website at [www.earlycolleges.org](http://www.earlycolleges.org).

Many states and governors are wholeheartedly supporting the Early College initiative – sometimes referred to as the dual enrollment program – and ensuring it becomes the cornerstone of education reform. Perhaps Alaska could also join in and become part of this important education movement.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at (907) 474-0958 ext 105. If you have the time during Easter Break, please stop by and visit with us. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Laughlin  
Principal

#### ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kenny Bugey, Chairman/Parent Member

Sheryl Meierotto, Teacher Member

Ray Barnhardt, UAF Member

Charles Kashatok, Teacher Member

Eleanor Laughlin, Teacher Member

Shirley Moses, FNA Member

Elizabeth Fleagle, Elder Member

Julie Biddle, Parent Member

Josh Snow/Carla Kangas, Teacher Co-Members



# Juneau Montessori SCHOOL

750 St. Ann's Ave., Douglas, AK 99824 Phone: (907) 364-3535, Fax (907) 364-3537

March 25, 2007

Representative Jay Ramras  
State Capitol, Room 118  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Honorable Representative Ramras:

This letter is to support HB 157 "An Act relating to charter school funding."

In education, one size does not fit all.

Equitable funding is necessary for all schools, alternative or mainstream, to meet the needs of students and support performance at desirable levels of achievement. Adequate funding for charter schools is needed if they are to become sustainable educational options within the public school system. Allowing new charter schools for the first two years of existence to be exempted from meeting the minimum average daily membership, and reducing the ADM to 100 students to be eligible for full funding are steps forward toward equitable funding.

Charter schools offer opportunities to improve educational services by recognizing student's individuality, fostering accountability, and increasing parental involvement in their children's education. Based on three basic principles: autonomy, performance, and choice; charter school teachers and administrators have the flexibility and autonomy to choose the instructional methods and practices necessary to run their programs in a manner that allows them to meet students' needs, which in turn enhances student performance and parental satisfaction.

Recent research on educational models has indicated that when students participate in small learning communities, they are more likely to be successful, not only academically, but also socially and emotionally. When teachers are able to develop a relationship with the students and their parents, students feel supported and become more resilient and resourceful.

Thank you for your leadership and support of alternative educational programs.

Sincerely,

Lupita Alvarez  
School Director



[Click here to return to the original story](#)

## Charter school! funding in danger

### Lawmakers mull changes to state's education budget

Alaska's handful of small charter schools stand to lose a quarter of a million dollars in crucial funding next year.

Alaska provides less money to operate charter schools with fewer than 150 students than it does for other schools.

Those affected include the Juneau Community Charter School. For Juneau's 66 students, the money can make a big difference. Already parents chip in for everything from classroom help to janitorial duties, said Brenda Taylor, one of the parents who manage the school.

"We chose not to pay for lunchtime and recess aides. Those are jobs parents can do for us," she said. "We can use that money to pay for extra art teachers and extra music teachers."

It's unclear how much the Juneau charter school will lose next year if small-charter school funding isn't restored.

But this year, it amounted to \$40,000 out of the school's \$400,000 budget, said Tim Blust, parent of a fourth-grader.

Under the state's school funding formula, charter schools with fewer than 150 students are allocated money as if they were the largest school in the district. For Juneau, that means the little elementary school will be supported as if it had the efficiencies of the much larger Juneau-Douglas High School.

In past years a special legislative appropriation made up some of the difference.

Juneau parents have lobbied for the funding on behalf of all the state's small charter schools, which this year include schools in Fairbanks, Nome, Bethel and Homer, in addition to Juneau. They've found legislators reluctant to give extra money, however.

"The 150-student level is there for a reason, for efficiency purposes," said Rep. Kevin Meyer, R-Anchorage, the Finance Committee co-chairman.

Charter school parents may value the personal attention their children get, but the state shouldn't subsidize it, said Meyer and others.

"The statute says before you have a charter school you are supposed to have over 150 students," he said. "Now some of these folks still want to do the charter school even though they don't have 150."

"It's very inefficient for the school district to have several charter schools around," he said.

Juneau's charter school is intentionally kept small for those students who thrive in that kind of environment.

The practice found little sympathy from Rep. Mike Chenault, a Nikiski Republican who co-chairs the House Finance Committee.

"I have three kids in public schools, and I would love them to be in smaller class sizes also," he said. Chenault said he didn't want to spend extra so that a few children could benefit.

"I'm very comfortable with the education that my children are getting in public school," he said.

It's not a fair comparison, said Juneau charter parent Harriet Milks.

"Education is not, and shouldn't be, a one-size-fits-all proposition, especially in Alaska," she said.

Rep. Bill Stoltze, R-Chugiak, said he supported charter schools and would like to see more of them, despite his vote against extra funding.

"I'm a huge fan of charter schools," he said, but "I'd like to keep some of these issues out there so we have more allies on making the systemic fixes."

Parent Brenda Taylor said she agreed with the intent, and would prefer a formula that didn't force small schools to constantly get special appropriations.

"A long-term solution would be excellent. It's completely what we want to have," she said.

The vote to add the extra \$250,000 failed along party lines, with Democrats voting for the funding and Republicans against.

Juneau Charter School parents said they would try to resurrect the funding in the Senate.

• Pat Forgey can be reached at [patrick.forgey@juneauempire.com](mailto:patrick.forgey@juneauempire.com).

Click here to return to story:

[http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/032707/loc\\_20070327020.shtml](http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/032707/loc_20070327020.shtml)

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: HB157-EED-ESS-3-27-07  
 Bill Version: HB157  
 () Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Education & Early Development  
 Title: An Act relating to charter school funding. RDU: K-12 Support  
 Component: Foundation Program  
 Sponsor: Representative Ramras  
 Requester: Health, Education & Social Svc. Finance Component No.: 141

**Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)**

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>						
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**FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)**

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This would provide a school size adjustment and additional funding for those Charter Schools that have an Average Daily Membership [ADM] of at least 100. In addition, this legislation would allow new charter schools to go through the school size table independently regardless of ADM count for the first two years of service.

The FY2008 Projections do not have any Charter Schools that would qualify for this adjustment. Future years funding cannot be determined because the ADM variables and if there are new Charter Schools are unknown.

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans, Director  
 Division: School Finance  
 Approved by: Barbara Thompson, Deputy Commissioner  
 Agency: Education & Early Development

Phone 465-8679  
 Date/Time 3/27/07 8:10 AM  
 Date 3/27/2007

**CHARTER SCHOOLS  
 FY2008**

District	Charter School	FY08 ADM	FY07 ADM
ANCHORAGE	Aquarian Charter	355.00	351.10
ANCHORAGE	Highland Tech Charter	269.00	266.35
MAT-SU	Academy Charter School	228.00	228.00
ANCHORAGE	Alaska Native Charter (NEW FY08)	200.00	
KENAI	Kaleidoscope Charter School	196.00	159.00
FAIRBANKS	Star of the North Secondary School (charter)	195.00	194.93
KETCHIKAN	Ketchikan Charter School	190.00	188.90
KENAI	Aurora Borealis Charter (soldotna)	183.00	178.00
MAT-SU	Midnight Sun Charter School	173.00	163.00
ANCHORAGE	Winterberry Charter	165.00	160.25
ANCHORAGE	Eagle Academy Charter	163.00	164.00
KENAI	Soldotna Montessori Charter	159.00	161.00
FAIRBANKS	Chinook Montessori Charter School	155.00	155.00
LOWER KUSKOKWIM	Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik Immersion (bethel)	155.00	142.60
ANCHORAGE	Rielke Schule Charter (NEW FY08)	151.00	
KETCHIKAN	Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter	151.00	151.00
FAIRBANKS	Effie Kokrin Charter	150.00	97.65
KENAI	Fireweed Academy Charter (Homer)	90.00	66.00
JUNEAU	Juneau Community Charter School	68.00	67.65
NOME	Anvil City Science Academy	44.00	43.50

FYI

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**From:** Mindy H. Lobaugh [mailto:mindy\_lobaugh@eed.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 2:17 PM  
**To:** eddy\_jeans@eed.state.ak.us  
**Cc:** elizabeth\_sweeney@eed.state.ak.us  
**Subject:** RE: What if we changed the foundation formula from 425 to 325?

Eddy,

Craig and Wrangell would be the only two districts affected by this change. The increase in state funding for each is:

Craig: \$ 238,342  
Wrangell: \$ 252,533  
TOTAL \$ 490,875

*Mindy Lobaugh*  
Alaska Department of Education & Early Development  
Foundation Program Administrator  
907-465-2261  
907-463-5279 [fax]

---

**From:** Eddy Jeans [mailto:eddy\_jeans@eed.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 1:45 PM  
**To:** 'Mindy Lobaugh'  
**Subject:** FW: What if we changed the foundation formula from 425 to 325?

Please let me know what the answer is.

---

**From:** Rebecca Rooney [mailto:Rebecca\_Rooney@legis.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 12:16 PM  
**To:** eddy\_jeans@eed.state.ak.us  
**Subject:** What if we changed the foundation formula from 425 to 325?

Rep Wilson has asked: If we change the ADM threshold (currently 425) for each school in a community to be administered separately, down to 325 what would the increase in cost be? If I remember correctly it would only impact 2 communities, Wrangell and Craig. Is this correct? Thank you in advance for your time in researching this.

*Peggy Rooney*  
House HESS Committee Aide  
Rep. Peggy Wilson  
907-465-3759e

FYI

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**From:** Mindy H. Lobaugh [mailto:mindy\_lobaugh@eed.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 2:17 PM  
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TOTAL \$ 490,875

*Mindy Lobaugh*

**Alaska Department of Education & Early Development**  
Foundation Program Administrator  
907-465-2261  
907-463-5279 [fax]

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**From:** Eddy Jeans [mailto:eddy\_jeans@eed.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 1:45 PM  
**To:** 'Mindy Lobaugh'  
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**From:** Rebecca Rooney [mailto:Rebecca\_Rooney@legis.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 02, 2007 12:16 PM  
**To:** eddy\_jeans@eed.state.ak.us  
**Subject:** What if we changed the foundation formula from 425 to 325?

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*Becky Rooney*  
*House HESS Committee Aide*  
*Rep. Peggy Wilson*  
907-465-3759e

3/2/2007

Department of Education & Early Development  
 Prepared 2/7/07  
 Districts w/ fewer school size adjustments than schools

Prepared by School Finance

District	Schools	Total ADM less Corresp.	# of School Size Adjustments	Reason
Annette Island	Leask Middle School Metlakatla High School R. J. Elementary	282.35	2	Community was btwn 101-425 ADM
Craig	Craig Elementary Craig Middle School Craig High School	347.55	2	Community was btwn 101-425 ADM
Hydaburg	Hydaburg Elementary Hydaburg Jr/Sr. High School	79.60	1	Community was btwn 101-425 ADM
Wrangell	Stikine Middle School Wrangell Elementary School Wrangell High School	354.74	2	Community was btwn 101-425 ADM