

**SB**

**57**

<target><bill>SB 57</bill><subject>SB  
57</subject><comm>HFIN26</comm></target>



# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 2  
 Bill Version: CSSB 57(FIN)  
 (S) Publish Date: 4/1/09

Identifier (file name): SB057-EED-ESS-3-31-09 Dept. Affected: Education & Early Development  
 Title: An Act realting to charter and alternative school funding. RDU: K-12 Support  
 Component: Foundation Program  
 Sponsor: Senator Thomas  
 Requester: Senate Finance Component Number: 141

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

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	Appropriation Required	Information					
	FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Personal Services							
Travel							
Contractual							
Supplies							
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims	1,314.3	0.0	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3
Miscellaneous							
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</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	1,314.3	0.0	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3	1,314.3
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>	<b>1,314.3</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

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

This bill would increase funding for charter and alternative schools.  
 Alternative schools with an Average Daily Membership [ADM] of 175 or greater will adjust through the school size table independently.  
 If the alternative school has an ADM of 120 but less than 175 and in the 1st year of operation; or had an ADM count of 175+ in the prior year but fell below 175 in the current fiscal year, then the ADM count will be multiplied by 1.33.  
 If the charter school is under 150 ADM, then the ADM count will be multiplied by 1.18.  
 Otherwise if the charter school has an ADM of 120 but less than 150 and in the 1st year of operation; or had an ADM count of 150+ in the prior year but fell below in the current fiscal year, then the ADM count will be multiplied by 1.38.  
 The GF appropriation capitalizes on the Public Education Fund [PEF].

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans, Director Phone 465-8679  
 Division: School Finance Date/Time 4/1/09 12:00 AM  
 Approved by: Larry LeDoux, Commissioner Date 4/1/2009

Department of Education & Early Development  
4/1/2009

Prepared by School Finance

District/School Name	FY09	FY10	Cost if	Cost if
	Charter School ADM	Charter School ADM	Eligible under Sec. 1 ('c)	Eligible under Sec. 1 (d)
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>				
Alaska Native Charter School [Eff. FY09]	160.70	180.00		
Aquarian Charter	361.15	360.00		
Highland Tech Charter	240.20	260.00		
Winterberry Charter	184.50	200.00		
Eagle Academy Charter	164.00	165.00		
Rilke Schule Charter	209.90	240.00		
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>				
Chinook Montessori Charter School	153.20	153.00		
Star of the North Secondary School (charter)	200.55	201.00		
Effie Kokrine Charter School	140.65	145.00	\$ 350,590	
Watershed Charter School [to open in FY10]	-	155.00		
<b>JUNEAU</b>				
Juneau Community Charter School	68.00	78.00	\$ 194,684	
<b>KENAI</b>				
Aurora Borealis Charter (soldotna)	184.00	185.00		
Kaleidoscope Charter School	233.00	248.00		
Fireweed Academy Charter (Homer)	72.75	76.00	\$ 147,231	
Soldotna Montessori Charter	161.60	161.00		
<b>KETCHIKAN</b>				
Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter	152.40	150.00		
Ketchikan Charter School	173.30	170.00		
<b>LOWER KUSKOKWIM</b>				
Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik Immersion (bethel)	172.05	172.00		
<b>MAT-SU</b>				
Academy Charter School	228.95	231.00		
Fronteras Charter School	186.85	187.00		
Midnight Sun Charter School	165.00	165.00		
<b>NOME</b>				
Anvil City Science Academy	44.00	44.00	\$ 21,796	
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>\$ 714,301</b>	

x 1.18

x 1.38

Department of Education & Early Development  
Prepared 4/1/09

Prepared by School Finance

District & Alternative School Name	FY09 Alternative School ADM	FY10 Alternative School ADM	x 1.33      175-200 ADM	
			Cost if Eligible under Sec. 1 (d)	Cost if Eligible under Sec. 2
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>				
A.V.A.I.L.	59.10	54.00		
Polaris K-12	479.00	480.00		
Steller Secondary	293.25	292.00		
Continuation Program	32.20	26.00		
COHO	40.05	35.00		
Whaley Center	468.83	485.25		
Benny Benson Secondary/S.E.A.R.C.H.	232.75	230.00		
Crossroads School	52.65	51.00		
S.A.V.E.	237.85	227.00		
<b>CRAIG</b>				
PACE Alternative High School	8.50	8.50		
<b>DELTA/GREELY</b>				
New Horizons High School	24.80	24.00		
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>				
Alternative Learning Systems	105.60	107.00		
<b>JUNEAU</b>				
Yaakoozge Daahakidi Alt High School	140.35	150.00		
<b>KENAI</b>				
Homer Flex	36.30	31.00		
Kenai Alternative School	98.20	67.00		
Peninsula Optional HS	37.05	38.00		
<b>KETCHIKAN</b>				
Revilla High School (Alt.)	66.55	86.00		
<b>LOWER KUSKOKWIM</b>				
Bethel Alternative Boarding School	33.80	33.00		
<b>MAT-SU</b>				
Mat-Su Day School	37.55	40.00		
Valley Pathways Alternative School	205.90	204.00		
Burchell Alternative High School	220.75	211.00		
Mid-Valley Alternative High School	193.55	174.00	\$	600,002
<b>NORTH SLOPE</b>				
Kiita Learning Community	57.50	53.00		
<b>SITKA</b>				
Pacific Alternative	37.75	35.00		
<b>Total Revenue</b>			\$	<b>600,002</b>

## Charter School Funding: CSSB 57 (FIN)

- CSSB 57 (FIN) is about supporting school choice and doing away with the charter school penalty.
- Current law results in charter schools, with fewer than 50 students, receiving 30% to 45% less state funding than neighborhood schools of their same size.
- The root of the problem is the way the foundation formula calculates the “adjusted student count” for charter and alternative schools versus neighborhood schools. Almost all schools have their enrollment adjusted upward by a formula in the state education law that is based on the size of the school.
- The adjusted student count is the basis of school funding. The adjusted count is multiplied by the BSA, the area cost differential and other factors to determine funding.
- Charter schools with an enrollment of fewer than 150 students, and alternative schools with fewer than 200 students, are not treated as separate schools, and the result is their enrollment is adjusted downward. Neighborhood schools are always funded as separate schools, regardless of their enrollment.
- Senate Bill 57 fixes the funding problem in an equitable, fiscally responsible manner.
- CSSB 57(FIN) funds charter schools with fewer than 150 students at the same per-student rate as neighborhood schools with 400 students. This requires charter schools to be significantly more efficient than other schools, but it is a manageable funding level.
- CSSB 57(FIN) also addresses the problem created for school districts, when their charter and alternative schools unexpectedly enroll fewer students than the number required for the state to fund them as separate schools.
- Today, when charter and alternative schools fall just one student below their separate-school threshold, the state cuts funding by \$500,000 - \$700,000. This is a disaster for the school and its district.
- CSSB 57(FIN) contains a one-year, hold-harmless provision for charter schools and alternative schools that unexpectedly fall below the threshold, and are either in their first year of operation or were above the threshold the previous year. For one year, these schools will receive 95% of the per-student rate they would have received at the threshold.
- Finally, CSSB 57(FIN) lowers the separate-school threshold for alternative schools from 200 to 175.
- Alaska has a serious problem with school achievement and high school graduation. One type of school is not best for all students. Charter schools and alternative schools offer parents choice within the public school system.
- CSSB 57(FIN) has received strong support from around the state. The Alaska Association of School Boards, and representatives of the Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, Anchorage, Lower Kuskokwim, Ketchikan and Mat-Su school districts, as well as numerous parents have testified in favor of this bill.
- Our school funding system has limited communities’ ability to create and sustain innovative programs. It is essential that the legislature takes action this session.



## Board of Education 2009 Legislative Priorities

### INCREASE SMALL CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING

JSD supports equitable state funding for charter schools so these educational options are financially feasible for districts. The Board supports legislation giving small charter schools a student count adjustment of 1.17, which would be comparable to the funding for a neighborhood school with an enrollment of 400. Current statute funds charter schools of 150 or more at the same rate as neighborhood schools. Charter schools of fewer than 150 students are funded so inequitably that they are at risk of closing and new ones cannot open. The legislature has recognized the value of charter schools in providing educational options for public school students, but has not provided the funding to make those options truly accessible or available to all students.



**Matanuska Susitna Borough School District**  
**Career & Technical Education**

501 N. Gulkana  
Palmer, Alaska 99645  
907-746-9274 907-761-4087 Fax

*"Developing citizens for a global society by inspiring students to think, learn, achieve, and care".*

**April 16, 2009**  
**Testimony on Senate Bill 57**

Good Morning, my name is **Ray DePriest** and I am the Director of the Career and Technical Education Department for the Mat-Su Borough School District. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill 57.

The Mat-Su Borough School District supports Senate Bill 57 and is supportive of school choice and currently hosts 4 charter schools and 3 alternative schools, which enroll approximately 1500 students.

I do believe that Senate Bill 57 will correct the funding problem in an impartial and fiscally dependable manner.

By lowering the threshold for alternative schools from 200 to 175 Senate Bill 57 will address a financial setback that occurred this year for MSBSD, one of our alternative schools unexpectedly dropped below the required 200 number by 6 students, resulting in a \$780K deficit to the school district.

The one-year, hold-harmless provision for charter schools and alternative schools that unexpectedly fall below the threshold, allows charter and alternative schools to focus student education and not financial deficit created by the current funding.

Charter schools and alternative schools offer parents choice within the public school system that provides smaller learning communities, drop out prevention and increased graduation rates.

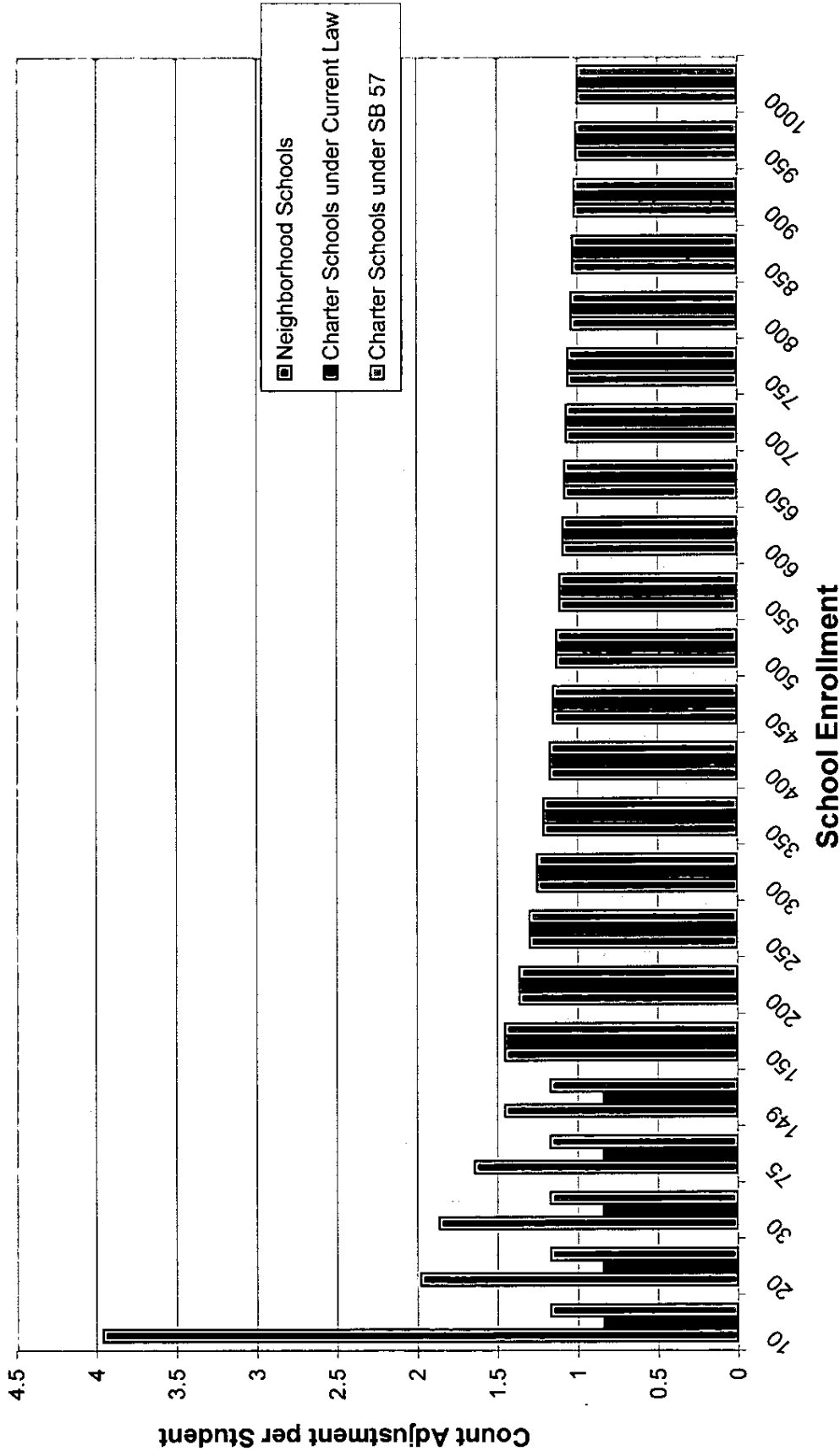
In conclusion Senate Bill 57 creates a sustainable funding system for innovative programs. I thank you for your time and effort that all of you put in for the students of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Ray DePriest  
Director, Career & Technical Education

### Adjusted Student Count for Charter Schools vs. Neighborhood Schools

The adjusted student count of each school is the basis of state funding. The number of students enrolled in a school is increased or decreased according to the formula in AS 14.17.450, to determine the school's adjusted student count. That adjusted student count is then multiplied by the district cost factor, the special needs factor and, finally, by the base student allocation to determine the amount of funding.



\* This chart assumes that a charter school with fewer than 150 students has a student count adjustment of .84 under current law, because it is located in a district that contains a school with over 750 students, such as Anchorage, Fairbanks, Mat-Su or Juneau. A charter school in a community such as Kenai, Bethel, Ketchikan or Nome would have a student count adjustment of .92 or .97.

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## Sectional Analysis CSSB 57(FIN)

### Section 1

**Subsection (c)** states that charter schools with fewer than 150 students will have their student count adjusted by the same per-student rate as neighborhood schools with 400 students.

Under the school size factor statute, AS 14.17.450(a), the per-student rate of adjustment for 400-student neighborhood schools is 1.18, which means their student enrollment is multiplied by 1.18 to determine their "adjusted student count." The adjusted student count is the basis for the calculation of state funding provided to school districts.

**Subsection (d)** is an exception to subsection (c) for charter schools that are either in their first year of operation or had more than 150 students the previous year. It grants these charter schools a one-year hold-harmless period, during which they will receive 95% of the per-student rate of neighborhood schools with 150 students.

Under the school size factor statute, the per-student rate of adjustment for 150-student neighborhood schools is 1.45, and 95% of that rate is 1.38. Charter schools in the hold-harmless year will have their enrollment multiplied by 1.38 to determine their adjusted student count.

Subsection (d) requires charter schools that are in the hold-harmless year to submit a plan for the following year to their local school board. The plan must describe what will happen the following year if the school again has fewer than 150 students and no longer qualifies for the hold-harmless provision.

**Subsection (e)** creates a one-year hold-harmless period for alternative schools similar to the subsection (d) provision for charter schools. Alternative schools that enroll 121-174 students, but are either in their first year of operation or had at least 175 students the previous year, will receive 95% of the per-student rate of neighborhood schools with 175 students.

Under the school size factor statute, the per-student rate of adjustment for 175-student neighborhood schools is 1.40, and 95% of that rate is 1.33. Alternative schools in the hold-harmless year will have their enrollment multiplied by 1.33 to determine their adjusted student count.

**Subsection (f)** defines the term "student rate." The student rate is the base plus the multiplier under AS 14.17.450(a) divided by the student count.

**Section 2:** lowers the number of students that an alternative school must enroll, in order to be funded as a separate school, from 200 students to 175 students.

This section also makes a technical amendment creating the exception from the existing requirement that charter schools have at least 150 students to have their own adjusted student count calculation. Without this amendment, the Department of Education would continue to calculate school funding as if the students at charter schools under 150 attended the largest school in their district.

## Statutes That Determine Adjusted Student Count

### 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. 14.17.450. 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:

<b>If the student count In a school is</b>			<b>The adjusted student count is</b>			
<b>At least</b>	<b>But less than</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Multiplier</b>	<b>The number of Students in excess of</b>		
10	- 20	39.6				
20	- 30	39.6	+	(1.62	x	20)
30	- 75	55.8	+	(1.49	x	30)
75	- 150	122.85	+	(1.27	x	75)
150	- 250	218.1	+	(1.08	x	150)
250	- 400	326.1	+	(0.97	x	250)
400	- 750	471.6	+	(0.92	x	400)
750 or over		793.6	+	(0.84	x	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.

## Example Adjusted Student Count Calculations

**100 Students in a Neighborhood School** have an Adjusted Student Count of **154.6**  
And a per student adjustment of 1.55.

$$122.85 \text{ base} + 1.27 \text{ multiplier} \times (100 - 75 = 25) \quad 122.85 + 31.75 = 154.6$$
$$154.6 / 100 = 1.55$$

**100 Students in a Charter School under Current Law** have an Adjusted Student Count of **84**  
And a per student adjustment of .84

$$\text{No base} + .84 \text{ multiplier} \times \text{all 100 students} \quad 0 + 84 = 84$$
$$84 / 100 = .84$$

**100 Students in a Charter School under SB 57** have an Adjusted Student Count of **118**  
And a per student adjustment of 1.18.

$$\text{No base} + 1.18 \text{ multiplier} \times \text{all 100 students} \quad 0 + 118 = 118$$
$$118 / 100 = 1.18$$

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The adjusted student count of each school is the root of state funding for school districts. The number of students enrolled in a school is increased or decreased according to the formula in AS 14.17.450, to determine the school's adjusted student count. The adjusted student count is then multiplied by the district cost factor, the special needs factor and by the base student allocation, to determine the amount of funding.



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
501 N. GULKANA  
PALMER, ALASKA 99645  
Office of the School Board  
(907) 746-9272 Fax (907) 761-4076

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 09-002

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL BOARD IN SUPPORT OF  
SENATE BILL NO. 57 "AN ACT RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING."

**WHEREAS**, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board invites support of Senate Bill No. 57 "An Act Relating To Charter School Funding"; and

**WHEREAS**, charter schools give opportunities outside of the traditional public schools for innovative programs to be implemented; and

**WHEREAS**, charter schools gain momentum and interest from a broader larger audience as a program is developed in the initial year of operation; and

**WHEREAS**, charter schools like all schools have fluctuations in enrollment and losing program gravity because of a slight drop in enrollment below 150 students for one year could have a longer term detrimental impact on the school; and

**WHEREAS**, a school that is not recognized as a school site for funding purposes receives a reduced financial allocation; and

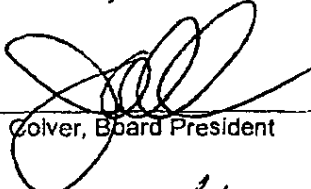
**WHEREAS**, being recognized as a school site gives economic relief by bringing a greater dollar amount to the school allowing for more comprehensive and adequate funding; and

**WHEREAS**, this Bill offers the initial year of operation for a charter school as an opportunity to build community support and student numbers and ultimately strengthens the quality of the program and the potential for program and student accomplishment; and


**WHEREAS**, encouragement is offered to add language to this Bill to lower the enrollment for alternative school's recognition as a school site from 200 students to 175 as a measure to support an alternative school's need for a smaller learning community.

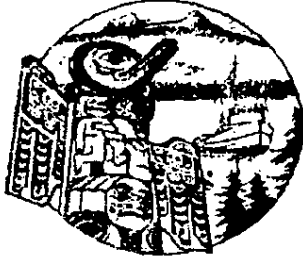
**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board supports Senate Bill No. 57 "An Act Relating to Charter School Funding."

**ADOPTED** by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board this 18th day of February, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Colver, Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George Troxel, Superintendent

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stacy Escobedo, Board Secretary



**Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District**  
Robert Boyle, Superintendent  
333 Schoenbar Road  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
phone 907-247-2109; fax 907-225-3870  
boyle@kgbsd.org

February 13, 2009

Senator Joe Thomas  
1292 Sadler Way, Suite 313  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Senator Thomas:

I am sending you a resolution by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District Board of Education in support of Senate Bill 57, an Act relating to charter school funding.

We believe charter schools are public schools that provide valuable education options to Alaska families in addition to encouraging parent and community involvement in our schools. The current funding system results in a significant decrease in funding for charter schools as compared to other neighborhood schools of their same size, should small changes in student enrollment take place.

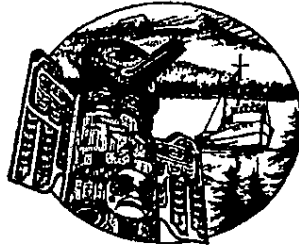
The Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District supports the passage of Senate Bill 57 in modifying the current school funding law as it applies to charter schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Boyle". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert Boyle  
Superintendent



**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION #09-04**

**A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL NO. 57, WHICH IS AN ACT  
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING**

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 57 will modify the current school funding law as it applies to charter schools with fewer than 150 students; and

**WHEREAS**, charter schools provide valuable education options to Alaska families and encourage parent and community involvement; and

**WHEREAS**, the current funding system results in a dramatic decrease in funding for charter schools as compared to neighborhood schools of their same size ; and


**WHEREAS**, adjusted student count as determined under AS 14.17.450 is the basis of state funding for all schools in Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 57 funds charter schools with fewer than 150 students to an adjusted student count by the same per-student rate as neighborhood schools with 400 students; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District supports passage of Senate Bill 57.

*Adopted by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Eakes, Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Fitzgerald, Vice President



**TONGASS SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES RESOLUTION**

**Urging the Governor of Alaska and the Alaska State Legislature to pass Senate Bill 57, "An Act relating to charter school funding."**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE TONGASS SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES:**

**WHEREAS** the Constitution of the State of Alaska and other laws and policies of the State require educational opportunities for all children; and  
**WHEREAS** Charter schools are public schools that provide valuable education options to Alaska families; and  
**WHEREAS** Charter schools increase learning opportunities and encourage parent and community involvement in our schools; and  
**WHEREAS** the current state funding system limits communities' ability to create and sustain these innovative programs; and  
**WHEREAS** current state law results in charter schools receiving 30% to 45% less state funding than neighborhood schools of their same size; and  
**WHEREAS** Senate Bill 57 funds charter schools with fewer than 150 students at a per-child rate closer to that of average, urban elementary schools; and  
**WHEREAS** Senate Bill 57 solves the funding problem in an equitable, fiscally responsible manner; and  
**WHEREAS** Senate Bill 57 will support our schools and districts as they carry out the legislature's intent in creating the charter school law;  
**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Tongass School of Arts and Sciences Academic Policy Committee supports the passage of Senate Bill 57; and  
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Tongass School of Arts and Sciences Academic Policy Committee urges the Governor of Alaska and the Alaska State Legislature to pass Senate Bill 57, "An Act relating to charter school funding."  
**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Sara Palin, Governor of Alaska; the Honorable Gary Stevens, Senate President; the Honorable Mike Chenault, House Speaker; the Honorable Senators Hoffman and Stedman, Senate Finance Committee Co-Chairs; the Honorable Senators Ellis, Elton, Huggins, Olson, and Thomas, Senate Finance Committee Members; the Honorable Kyle Johansen, Representative, House District 1; and members of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Board.

*Michelle Johnston*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 President, Academic Policy Committee

*February 10, 2009*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date:



**Position Statement on SB 57  
Charter School Funding**

In 1995, AASB supported the creation of charter schools in statute. Over the years, school boards have subsidized and otherwise assisted local charter schools in providing Alaska families with a viable choice in public education.

AASB encourages the Legislature to amend AS 14.17.450 as outlined in SB 57 to establish a more equitable means of funding charter schools.

School boards find themselves caught between local citizen initiatives to create choices within public schools and an inadequate funding stream in statutes that require supplemental funding from local districts.

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17 (907) 586-1183

(907) 586-2065

[aasb@aasb.org](mailto:aasb@aasb.org)

<http://www.aasb.org>



*Anvil City Science Academy*  
*Nome, Alaska*

My name is Todd Hindman and I am the lead teacher at Anvil City Science Academy in Nome.

I am speaking in support of SB57 on behalf of Nome Public Schools' Board of Education and the Academic Policy Committee of Anvil City Science Academy.

In a small community such as Nome, a charter school with a student population of 150 is highly unlikely and if it were able to achieve that enrollment, it would most likely have an adverse effect on the other public schools.

The small size of ACSA is one of its strengths. It allows for flexibility in its daily operation to provide unique educational opportunities to its students. This allows students to easily get out in the community and environment to use it as a resource in their education, providing a more meaningful learning experience. Our small size also creates a culture around family values to ensure student success through daily engagement of parents.

Thank you for your efforts at providing support for small charter schools, which are identifying and meeting specific needs in the communities they serve.

Nancy Wagner, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District  
520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
Ph-(907) 452-2000, ext. 401 Fax-(907) 451-0541

Thank you Chairman Seaton and members of the House Education Committee.

I am representing the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and want to express our support for Senate Bill 57.

I would like to thank the House Education Committee for scheduling SB57. This Bill is extremely important to Charter schools which provide choice and alternative educational programs for our students.

We currently have three charter schools and a new one coming on-line next year. Two of our current charter schools and our new charter school have target enrollments at about 155 students, so struggling to meet the 150 funding threshold is not uncommon.

This year, one of our charter schools just missed the 150 student "average daily membership" threshold during the count period, even though they had over 150 students by the end of the count. Falling short of the current enrollment threshold cost our district about \$680k...All because of a small timing difference related to student enrollments.

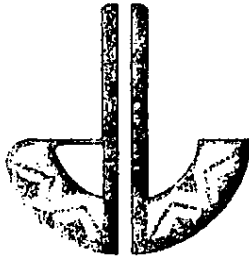
While we expect that all our existing charter schools will be larger than 150 students next year, this bill helps address the catastrophic impact should a school fail to meet that 150 student threshold, even if by the thinnest of margins. It is a fair compromise for funding of existing charter schools.

We also expect our new charter school to exceed 150 students next year. But this bill also provides a fair funding compromise should their startup enrollments fall a little short. It would still be difficult to offer the curriculum as originally envisioned, but it would not be impossible, as is currently the case. It provides a great incentive for schools to get to their targeted enrollments.

SB87 fixes the funding problem in an equitable, fiscally responsible manner.

I encourage you to pass this Bill. Providing alternative educational programs is important for the public school system. We are charged with the responsibility of meeting the needs of EVERY child enrolled in our district. Alternative and Charter Schools provide the opportunity for Alaska families to choose the program that best meets their child's needs. Without the provisions outlined in SB57, at least one of our charter schools could be in danger of having to close.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB57.



## Doyon, Limited

1 Doyon Place, Suite 400  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-2941  
(907) 459-2000  
[www.doyon.com](http://www.doyon.com)

Norm Phillips, Jr.  
President and CEO  
E-mail: [phillipsn@doyon.com](mailto:phillipsn@doyon.com)  
Direct Dial: (907) 459 2004  
Fax: (907) 459 2060

March 25, 2009

Senator Joe Thomas  
State Capitol, Room 510  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

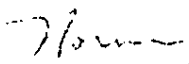
Dear <sup>Joe</sup> Senator Thomas:

Thank you for introducing SB 57, this bill directly aligns with Doyon, Limited's mission statement, which includes promoting the economic and social well-being of our shareholders and future shareholders. The Effie Kokrine Charter School is important to the Alaska Native community in the interior. With almost 25% of our 17,500 shareholders residing in the Fairbanks community we believe that a culturally sensitive school is essential to the well-being of our shareholders.

Therefore, on behalf of our shareholders, Doyon, Limited supports SB 57.

Thank you again and please let me know if we can do anything else to help. I can be reached at (907) 459-2000 or by e-mail at [phillipsn@doyon.com](mailto:phillipsn@doyon.com).

Sincerely,

  
Norman L. Phillips, Jr.  
President and CEO

cc: Linda Evans, Principal, Effie Kokrine Charter School

From: Vickie Erickson [mitchvicky@gci.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:46 AM  
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Johnny Ellis  
Cc: Sen. Kim Elton; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Joe Thomas  
Subject: SB 57

Dear Senators,

I would like to thank all of you in your past support of for schools in Alaska, especially those that are small in numbers and therefore needing more support when it comes to funding issues. I am requesting your support for the passage of SB 57.

Charter Schools allow parents, community members, and teachers to be in charge of developing unique educational programs and to be involved in decision making for school policies. As a parent of three Charter School children and two more that will soon be in Charter schools, it means a lot to me to be involved in school policies and the operations of our school. Our educational process is very flexible, which provides for the needs of our children and parents alike.

The Anvil City Science Academy has been in operation for eleven years now, it was created by parents, teachers, and many community members who were interested in a family oriented school characterized by high academic standards and a well-rounded curriculum, with an emphasis in science and math. The Science Academy serves 5th through 8th grade students who come to the school with a wide variety of backgrounds, learning styles, experiences, and needs. We are able to address the individual differences and learning styles, and creativity we see an increase in learning and creativity for all students. Our students at this time are involved in a salmon habitate restoration project grant from the Department of the Interior, and are working with Charlie Lean of Norton Sound Economic Development Company ,because of this project the Academy students were nominated and won the "Spirit of Youth" award in the catagory of Science . Another project that is noteworthy is the Artist in Schools project in which students are interviewing Nome residents in preparation for writing a play about the last 50 years in Nome.

Anvil City Science Academy has 44 students, with two and half certified teachers, no support personnel. This gives the school the needed flexibility to provide opportunities to the studetns to go beyond the traditional classroom walls in order to utilize community and environmental resources. In addition, in a small community such as Nome, a program like ACSA cann't reach a student count of 150 students, without having an adverse affect on the other public schools in the district. Therefore, a smaller program like ACSA is beneficial to the community by providing an alternative education program, while minimizing the possible impact on other schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Erickson

**From:** Sen. Kim Elton  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 7:45 AM  
**To:** Dana Owen  
**Subject:** FW: Support for SB 57

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Hubert Angaiak [mailto:hangaiak@pci.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 7:40 AM  
**To:** Sen. Kim Elton; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Gary Stevens  
**Subject:** Support for SB 57

Honorable Senators,

I would like to thank you for your continued support in providing the best education for Alaska's children. I fully support SB 57 and I urge you to pass it. Charter Schools provides a positive alternative in education for our children. We are always looking for solutions in providing whats best in education for our children and Charter Schools are part of the solution.

Thank you.

kind regards,  
Hubert Angaiak  
Bethel, Alaska 99559  
907-543-3074

**From:** payroll@ci.nome.ak.us on behalf of Dana Handeland [dhandeland@nomealaska.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 28, 2009 8:29 AM  
**To:** Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Kim Elton; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Gary Stevens  
**Subject:** supporter of SB 57

Donny,

I want to thank you and your fellow Senators for supporting Charter Schools in Alaska. We have actively worked for the past several years to provide a more permanent "fix" to the funding dilemma that we face due to the typical charter school enrollment and the current method of funding. We believe that great strides have been taken with SB 57.

Our school here in Nome has an enrollment of 44 which is capped due to space constraints at the current facility. We are paired with the largest school in our district causing concerns each year of whether we still can continue to provide the Nome community with optional educational opportunities. We have a proven program and a waiting list each year.

We work hand in hand with our district, many times providing a venue to try new methods that can later be implemented into the larger district. Providing a more equitable funding formula for charter schools only furthers the endless opportunities that our Alaskan education system can provide all Alaskan children especially in the future.

Thank you again for your continued support. The community of Nome appreciates this most important work for our children.

Dana Handeland  
Anvil City Science Academy, APC member

**From:** Lisa Leeper [lleeper@nomeschools.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:02 PM  
**To:** Sen. Joe Thomas  
**Subject:** Support for SB 57

Dear Senator Thomas,

I teach at Anvil City Science Academy in Nome. I hope that you will consider the following points in order to help SB 57 pass this stage with the Finance Committee in order that it may be heard by all and voted upon.

Respectfully,  
Lisa Leeper  
Teacher, Anvil City Science Academy

- Charter schools are public schools that provide valuable education options to Alaska families.
- The existing school funding law results in charter schools that enroll fewer than 150 students receiving 30% to 45% less state funding than neighborhood schools of their same size.
- Inequitable funding limits communities' ability to create and sustain these schools.
- There is a dramatic decrease in funding (\$500,000 - \$700,000 loss) when a charter school's enrollment drops from 150 students to 149, which creates a financial crisis for both the school and its host district.
- Senate Bill 57 solves the funding problem in an equitable, fiscally responsible manner.
- SB 57 funds charter schools with fewer than 150 students at the same per-student rate as neighborhood schools with 400 students.
- SB 57 contains a one-year, hold-harmless provision for charter schools that are either in their first year of operation or had more than 150 students the previous year, reducing the financial damage to their district.
- SB 57 will allow school districts to carry out the intent of the legislature in creating the charter school law, by increasing quality education options available to Alaska families.
- SB 57 is supported by the Alaska Association of School Boards, and superintendents and parents of charter school students from across the state. The bill has been co-sponsored by Senators Thomas, Stevens, Elton, and Davis.

2/25/2009

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**From:** Diane Cathcart [Diane\_Cathcart@ci.juneau.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2009 2:53 PM  
**To:** Sen. Kim Elton; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Gary Stevens  
**Cc:** Catherine Reardon  
**Subject:** Support for SB57

Dear Senators and Staff,

Thank you for taking a moment out of your busy schedules to read this email.

I am writing to request your full support of SB57-An Act Relating to Charter School Funding.

As you are well aware; education is not a one size fits all. It is important for families to have a choice and different settings are a better fit for different children and their families. By creating more equitable funding it helps ensure small charter schools will continue to exist. Small Charter Schools are constantly trying to reach out to families with diverse needs for their children; whether it is a smaller overall school size so children don't feel "lost" in the crowd or children that have special learning needs. Small Charter Schools have the ability to help more children that are in danger of falling through the cracks, *if* they are properly funded. In my humble opinion this also helps relieve the stress larger schools may feel from trying to help children in need while maintaining the needs of the general school populous.

Full funding for ALL our children and schools should be every Alaskans priority; we owe it to our children and their future.

Thank you for your time and your service to our State.

Sincerely,

Diane Cathcart (Juneau Community Charter School 4/5/6 Class parent)  
310 Irwin St Apt B  
Juneau, AK 99801  
907-523-2166

1/28/2009

January 26, 2009

Dear Senator Elton, Senator Davis, Senator Olson, Senator Huggins and Senator Stevens; members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 57. It is a well written piece of legislation that would help small charter schools continue to serve students all across Alaska. These students' schools are in need of more equitable funding to support salaries and supplies. I am grateful you support charter schools as an option for parents to meet their child's needs.

I have three children in the Juneau School District public school system. I chose to enroll in the lottery when my eldest child was in the first grade. Luckily she got in the charter school and since the second grade it has been a wonderful educational and social environment for her and her siblings.

While I attended Arizona State University as a college student, I took almost every math class offered. I have always loved math and the sciences. The methods used to teach math at the charter school are rigorous, build solid understandings of number patterns and such strong flexibility in solving problems that I sincerely wished I had had the opportunity to be exposed to and to learn math in such a progressive, skill-building, visual way. It is exciting to see students experience this type of meaningful math.

I attended public school throughout my life and I loved school, however I believe my children are far more comfortable and intensely involved in their projects while also thoroughly enjoying attending school. They are being given an exceptional chance to become all they can. The projects that incorporate writing, research, art, social studies/science and teambuilding are solid methods of fun and learning. The parents of these students become involved as well and work hard to support this small charter school.

The Juneau Community Charter School is in need of financial support. Parents contribute by supporting teachers in the classroom, helping teachers prep for the week to come, we work around the school facility to build shelves, clean and make it work efficiently. Parents also work very hard to fundraise to meet the financial commitments it takes to run the charter school. It is sorely underfunded at present.

The charter school has been part of the Juneau School District, serving a wide array of students for over ten years. It sets high standards and builds leadership, competence and love of our environment in such a compassionate manner.

To be very honest, if it were not for the charter school, I know I would begin a small child-care business and home school my children.

It has been stated, from President Obama to our Governor's State of the State, that education is one of the top legislative priorities. I sincerely hope that funding small

charter schools, through creative use of resources, educate children in a way that many children need, to become successful is also a priority within your committee.

In Alaska, small charter schools are funded dramatically lower per student compared to district counterparts. This bill recognizes charter schools as important options and is an attempt to balance educational funding per student at a reasonable percentage.

Please continue your support and know that small charter schools are doing important works on behalf of students all across Alaska, in particular here in Juneau. Please know that besides the many, many parents and educators who believe in the success of small charter schools and its' students high achievement, test scores and critical thinking skills we have no lobbying force to help other Senators or House members understand this issue. Please I ask each of you to help by sharing your support for SB 57.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Senate Bill 57.

Sincerely,

Beth Rivest, wife of a hard-working, small business owner; loving and caring parent of three wonderful children; and a member of the Juneau Community.

Sen. Kim Elton

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**From:** Linda Newman [newman@alaska.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 28, 2009 12:35 AM  
**To:** Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Gary Stevens  
**Cc:** Catherine Reardon; Sen. Kim Elton  
**Subject:** Fwd: Thank you for Senate Bill 57

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee: My wife and I are forwarding a copy of this email that we sent to Senator Kim Elton earlier this week. We are sending this to you so that you can see how much we appreciate his co-sponsorship of Senate Bill 57, and so that you will know that we are grateful to you for considering this bill. Thank you for the support you've provided charter schools in the past; we hope you will support this effort to assist Alaska's small charter schools, which currently operate under an inequitable and unsustainable funding scheme. We look forward to the discussion about the bill at your Thursday meeting.

Sincerely,

Tony and Linda Newman  
 newman@alaska.net

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Linda Newman <newman@alaska.net>  
**Date:** January 25, 2009 11:11:53 PM AKST  
**To:** Senator\_Kim\_Elton@legis.state.ak.us  
**Subject:** Thank you for Senate Bill 57

Senator Elton: Every year for the past several we've written to you to ask for your help in trying to fund Alaska's small charter schools, including Juneau's, in a more equitable way. We're extremely pleased and excited to be able to write to you tonight and thank you for taking leadership on this issue right away this session, by cosponsoring Senate Bill 57.

If this bill successfully makes it through the legislative process and passes into law this year it will provide relief to the Juneau Community Charter School just in the nick of time. We know that we've said in my prior letters to you that the situation is already urgent, but this year, for the first year in the seven years that we've been involved as parents of JCCS students, we are operating at a budget deficit and drawing down the school's savings. We probably have less than two years of funding left at the rate we're depleting the savings. The Charter School simply can't operate indefinitely on the unfair funding formula that leaves charter schools funded at a per-student rate that is significantly lower than other similar-sized schools in the district. We've all but resigned ourselves to the fact that our kids' school will likely need to close in a year or two because it will simply run out of money. (Believe us, we've exhausted ourselves trying to fundraise out of this mess.)

The importance of this bill for all of Juneau's kids is demonstrated by the fact that the Juneau School District has made more equitable small charter school funding one of its legislative priorities this year, and has resolved to support us in our efforts to correct the current funding inequity. We've just reviewed the bill and have exchanged a few emails with our fellow Charter School parents, and we are in agreement that the approach outlined

1/28/2009

through this bill may be the best one yet. This bill makes it possible for small schools to operate, but still maintains the legislature's intent to encourage the formation of larger schools.

In our prior-year emails and letters to you on this issue we've taken much time and space to tell you about our kids and how much they--our whole family--gain from our participation in Juneau's Charter School. All of those things remain true. Our kids are learning so much and so well, but best of all, the Charter School has become an important part of all our lives because of the community that's grown around it.

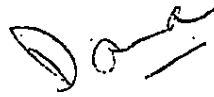
Let us know what you would like us to do to assist you in securing passage of this bill this year.

Sincerely,

Tony and Linda Newman  
308 Distin Avenue  
Juneau, AK 99801  
586-2172  
newman@alaska.net

1/28/2009

3072



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**To:** Larry Johansen  
**Subject:** RE: Charter school Bill

Larry--

Thanks. As chair of the education committee, I'm holding a committee hearing on the bill in a half hour and am co-sponsor of the bill.

Kim

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**From:** Larry Johansen [mailto:rowdydog@gci.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 8:05 AM  
**To:** Sen. Kim Elton  
**Subject:** Charter school Bill

Senator Elton,

I quick word in support of the funding formula equalization bill. I am a charter school parent. We do school jobs to save our school money to make our program happen. My wife and I perform janitorial service and recess duty to save cost. Its not that we mind doing these jobs but we would like to be able to spend our volunteer efforts on jobs that would directle lead to improving oue children's educational experience. AS it is the Juneau charter school is an educational success meeting core standards and for all social classes. Please help us help our kids.

-Larry Johansen  
3010 Foster  
Juneau, AK



1/29/2009