

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

1970

HOUSE and SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE FILES, 1999 - 2000

Alternative Sec. 4

AS 14.03.260 is amended by adding new subsection to read:

(e) If a school district intends to charge a charter school for services provided, then the school district shall itemize the services provided to charter schools in the district. The cost of the itemized services shall be identified separately. The portion of costs related to the charter school shall conform to the cost principles as defined in United States Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87 or be determined using a cost allocation method mutually agreed to by the school district and the charter school. In addition to administration, services provided by a local school district may include audio-visual services, curriculum, staff development and training, special needs and intensive services, transportation, procurement, facility rental and other services that are agreed to between the local school district and charter school. Except for administration services, those services required by law and other services with benefits that are inseparable between the charter school and the school district, a charter school may elect not to receive services provided by a local school district.

Summary of Changes:

- 1) Requires itemization only if the district intends to charge the charter school for the service.
- 2) Requires the cost of the itemized services to be identified separately.
- 3) Requires a cost allocation method that conforms to the cost principles as defined in US OMB Circular A-87 or based upon a mutually agreed method between the charter school and the school district.
- 4) Clarifies that administration is a service that a charter school must receive.
- 5) Replaces language "district wide programs" with "services with benefits that are inseparable between the charter school and the school district" in list of services that a charter school must receive.

2/7/00
adopted N/O

1-LS0598N.1
Ford
1/31/00

#1

A M E N D M E N T I

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSHB 191(), Draft Version "N"

1 Page 3, lines 19 - 21:

2 Delete "services for administration, district-wide programs or services, or other
3 services required by law, a charter school may elect not to receive services provided by a
4 local school district"

5 Insert "administrative services or other services required by law, a charter school and
6 a school district may agree, as a provision of the contract between the charter school and the
7 school district, to specify those services provided by the school district that are not to be
8 provided to the charter school. The school district services that are not provided to the
9 charter school shall be assigned a per student value as required under this subsection"

passed 6-3

2/7/00

AMENDMENT 2

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSHB 191(), Draft Version "N"

1 Page 2, following line 28:

2 Insert a new bill section to read:

3 **** Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.255(d) is amended to read:

4 (d) A charter school may be operated in an existing school district facility or
5 in a facility within the school district that is not currently being used as a public
6 school, if the chief school administrator determines the facility meets requirements for
7 health and safety applicable to public buildings or other public schools in the
8 district."

9 Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

adopted N/O

2/7/00

AMENDMENT 3

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSHB 191(), Draft Version "N"

- 1 Page 3, line 1:
- 2 Delete "AS 14.17.410(b)(1)(A) and (B)"
- 3 Insert "AS 14.17.410(b)(1)"

2/7/00

1-LS0598\N.4

Ford

2/3/00

adopted N/O

AMENDMENT #4

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSHB 191(), Draft Version "N"

- 1 Page 3, line 29:
- 2 Delete "and may not extend beyond July 1, 2010 [2005]"
- 3 Insert "[AND MAY NOT EXTEND BEYOND JULY 1, 2005]"

Adopted 1/31/00

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 191()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES DYSON, Kohring

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to charter schools."

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 * Section 1. AS 14.03.250(a) is amended to read:

4 (a) A charter school may be established as provided under AS 14.03.250 -
5 14.03.290 upon the approval of the local school board and the state Board of
6 Education of an application for a charter school. The state Board of Education may
7 not approve more than 60 [30] charter schools to operate in the state at any one time
8 [AND SHALL APPROVE CHARTER SCHOOLS IN A GEOGRAPHICALLY
9 BALANCED MANNER AS FOLLOWS: NOT MORE THAN 10 SCHOOLS IN
10 ANCHORAGE; NOT MORE THAN FIVE SCHOOLS IN FAIRBANKS; NOT MORE
11 THAN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH; NOT
12 MORE THAN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH; NOT
13 MORE THAN TWO SCHOOLS IN THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU; NOT
14 MORE THAN SEVEN SCHOOLS LOCATED IN OTHER AREAS OF THE STATE,
15 AND THESE SEVEN SCHOOLS SHALL BE ALLOCATED AS NEARLY

1 AS POSSIBLE IN A GEOGRAPHICALLY BALANCED MANNER THROUGHOUT
2 THE REST OF THE STATE].

3 * Sec. 2. AS 14.03.255(c) is amended to read:

4 (c) A charter school shall operate under a contract between the charter school
5 and the local school board. A contract must contain the following provisions:

6 (1) a description of the educational program;

7 (2) specific levels of achievement for the education program;

8 (3) admission policies and procedures;

9 (4) administrative policies;

10 (5) a statement of the charter school's funding allocation from the local
11 school board, including the itemized costs of administrative or other services to be
12 provided [AND COSTS ASSIGNABLE] to the charter school [PROGRAM
13 BUDGET];

14 (6) the method by which the charter school will account for receipts
15 and expenditures;

16 (7) the location and description of the facility;

17 (8) the name of the teacher, or teachers, who, by agreement between
18 the charter school and the teacher, will teach in the charter school;

19 (9) the teacher-to-student ratio;

20 (10) the number of students served;

21 (11) the term of the contract, not to exceed a term of 10 [FIVE] years;

22 (12) a termination clause providing that the contract may be terminated
23 by the local school board for the failure of the charter school to meet educational
24 achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause;

25 (13) a statement that the charter school will comply with all state and
26 federal requirements for receipt and use of public money;

27 (14) other requirements or exemptions agreed upon by the charter
28 school and the local school board.

29 * Sec. 3. AS 14.03.260(a) is amended to read:

30 (a) A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an
31 annual program budget. The budget shall be not less than the basic need for the

1 charter school as determined under AS 14.17.410(b)(1)(A) and (B) and must
2 reflect the itemization and per student value required under (e) of this section
3 [AMOUNT GENERATED BY THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE CHARTER
4 SCHOOL LESS ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS RETAINED BY THE LOCAL
5 SCHOOL DISTRICT, DETERMINED BY APPLYING THE INDIRECT COST RATE
6 APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY
7 DEVELOPMENT. THE "AMOUNT GENERATED BY STUDENTS ENROLLED IN
8 THE CHARTER SCHOOL" IS TO BE DETERMINED IN THE SAME MANNER
9 AS IT WOULD BE FOR A STUDENT ENROLLED IN ANOTHER PUBLIC
10 SCHOOL IN THAT SCHOOL DISTRICT].

11 * Sec. 4. AS 14.03.260 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

12 (e) The local school district shall itemize each service provided by the local
13 school district to a charter school and each district-wide program or service provided
14 to the charter school if the cost is allocated to the district. Each itemized service or
15 program must be given a per student value by the school district. Services provided
16 by a local school district may include services for administration, audio-visual services,
17 curriculum, staff development and training, special needs and intensive services,
18 transportation, procurement, facility rental, and other services that are agreed to
19 between the local school district and the charter school. Except for services for
20 administration, district-wide programs or services, or other services required by law,
21 a charter school may elect not to receive services provided by a local school district.

22 (f) In addition to the amount provided to an approved charter school in the
23 annual program budget under (a) of this section, a charter school budget must include
24 an allocation equal to the amount determined by dividing the amount of local revenues
25 contributed under AS 14.17.410(c) by the average daily membership of the district and
26 multiplying that number by the average daily membership of the charter school.

27 * Sec. 5. AS 14.03.275 is amended to read:

28 **Sec. 14.03.275. Contracts; duration.** A contract for a charter school may be
29 for a term of no more than 10 [FIVE] years and may not extend beyond July 1, 2010
30 [2005].

31 * Sec. 6. Section 9, ch. 77, SLA 1995, is repealed.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2000 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CS HB 191 (FIN)

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction) _____	Dept. Affected <u>Education & Early Development</u>
Title <u>An Act relating to charter schools</u>	BRU <u>Teaching and Learning Support</u>
Sponsor <u>Rep. Dyson</u>	Component <u>Quality School</u>
Requester <u>House Finance</u>	Component No. <u>2147</u>

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Personal Services	102.3	105.0	107.0	109.0	111.0	113.0
Travel	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Contractual	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Supplies	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2000) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time	1					
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Please refer to the attached sheet for a detailed description.

Prepared by: Barbara Thompson
 Division: Teaching and Learning Support
 Approved by: Richard S. Cross, Commissioner
 Agency: Department of Education & Early Development

Phone: 465-8727
 Date/Time: 01/28/00
 Date: 1/31/2000

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Fiscal Note Description for CSHB 191
Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
1/28/00

Section 1 of CSHB 191 removes the former requirements that the State Board of Education & Early Development may not approve more than 30 charter schools to operate in the state at one time and shall approve charter schools in a geographically balanced manner. Amended language raises the cap on the number of charter schools to be allowed from 30 to 60. Language related to approval of charter schools geographically is eliminated.

Section 2 requires the inclusion of a statement showing itemized costs or administrative or other services provided by a district to its charter schools.

Section 3 states that the annual charter school budget shall be not less than the basic need for the charter school and must reflect the itemization and per student value.

Section 4 requires districts to itemize services provided to the charter schools and itemize services and programs whose costs are allocated districtwide. Charter schools may elect not to receive services, except for administration, districtwide programs or services or other services required by law.

Section 5 extends allowable charter school contract time from 5 years to 10 years.

Personal Services - 102,205

One new full-time Education Specialist II, Range 21, is needed to administer the charter schools application process; provide technical assistance to school district and charter school staff who are planning for or initiating a charter school; assure compliance with state charter school statutes and regulations, assure quality programs are developed and supported, develop and maintain a charter schools regulations process; and evaluate the effectiveness of Alaska's charter schools.
(\$77,000)

Funds for one .15 FTE Grants Administrator II will be needed to address fiscal issues and complete fiscal documents related to charter schools grant applications and billings. (\$8,205)

Funds for one .50 FTE Administrative Clerk II will be needed to provide clerical support to the Education Specialist and for the application process. (\$17,000)

Although the grant administrator and administrative clerk are existing positions, current federal fund sources are not sufficient to fund the portions of the charter schools duties that would be assigned to them.

Travel - \$5,000

Travel funding will need to be provided for a limited number of technical assistance and/or compliance reviews of charter schools. (\$5,000)

Contractual - \$50,000

Contractual funding is needed primarily to contract for evaluation of the effectiveness and success of charter schools in Alaska. Additionally, some contractual funding is needed for support for administrative services functions, postage, phone charges, copier charges, and printing and dissemination of information about effective and successful charter schools.

Supplies - \$4,000

Funding will be needed for the purchase of general office supplies and materials for meetings related to charter schools. (\$4,000)

Total Request for Year 1- \$161,205

Back up for Amendments 2-4

Proposed conceptual amendments to CSHB 191(FIN) Work Draft 1-LS0598\N:

House Finance Committee Members,

The following are "friendly amendments" Representative Dyson will speak for if the Finance Committee will bring them up for consideration. Thank You

- Page 3, Line 29: Delete end of sentence (after the word "years"). The intent of this amendment is to eliminate the sunset on the Charter School Law.
- Insert a new section to read:

AS 14.03.255(d) is amended to read: (d) A charter school may be operated in an existing school district facility or in a facility within the school district that is not currently being used as a public school [,] if the chief school administrator determines the facility meets requirements for health and safety applicable to other public schools **or public buildings** in the district.

The intent here is to make it easier for charter schools to find a place to meet. With this change a charter school would be allowed to meet in "public buildings" (such as a church or a theater).
- Page 3, Line 1: Eliminate the words "(A) and (B)" in the statute number. This is a suggestion by Eddie Jeans, EED. The "basic need" amount is calculated for each school and is done as an application of more than sub sections (A) and (B) of AS 14.17.410(b)(1). If a charter school chose to provide intensive services, for example, the basic need amount would reflect an increase as described in subsection (D) as well... Because the basic need is calculated according to the particular situation as a matter of routine, it is an easily referenced and defensible number. Eddie Jeans is here and has the expertise to answer questions on this one.

Proposed conceptual amendments to CSHB 191(FIN) Work Draft 1-LS0598\N:

House Finance Committee Members,

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The intent here is to make it easier for charter schools to find a place to meet. With this change a charter school would be allowed to meet in "public buildings" (such as a church or a theater).
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REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

CSHB 191 Sponsor Statement

"An Act relating charter schools; and providing for an effective date."

In 1995, the Alaska State Legislature passed CSSB 88(FIN) authorizing Alaskan charter schools. Alaskan charter schools have attracted an impressive cadre of educational enthusiasts who have struggled to make the Charter Schools work under Alaska law. Three years of experience has highlighted the areas of Alaskan charter school law that need adjustment. HB 191 addresses some of these issues.

Charter schools may be the most vibrant force in Alaskan education today. No one can say with confidence how large this movement may grow if we give it a chance. While it is too early to say anything conclusive about their educational effectiveness, there is a growing body of positive evidence.

Genuine educational innovation and passionate participation are occurring in Alaska's charter schools. While it is reassuring and heart-warming to see the dedication and fervor of parents involving themselves in their children's education, it is alarming to see the difficult barriers they face. HB 191 lowers some of these barriers.

A U.S. Department of Education Charter School study shows that lack of funds, facilities, and opposition by school boards and districts are among the leading "difficult" or "very difficult" barriers faced by our nation's charter schools. Alaska is no exception. Unfortunately, when compared nationally, our charter school law has been rated "weak". This bill gives strength to charter schools in some of the areas pointed out as lacking within these studies.

HB 191 strengthens the hand of charter schools by:

- 1) Increasing the allowable length of a charter school's contract,
- 2) Ensuring accountability by requiring student exit exams,
- 3) Allowing not-for-profit charter schools to raise funds in order to enhance their budgets, and
- 4) Clarifying that charter school students are to receive an fair share of the revenue they generate.

- E-mail -
Representative_Fred_Dyson
@Legis.state.ak.us

- Internet -
<http://www.akrepublicans.org>

Sectional Analysis of CSHB 191(FIN) An Act Relating to Charter Schools

Section 1: Ensures accountability in that charter schools cannot be exempted from the exit exam requirement.

Section 2: Amends AS 14.03.255(c) to do some house-keeping (includes "a" and "the" as appropriate), and requires that the Charter School contract must include an itemized cost of administrative or other services to be provided to the Charter School.

Section 3: Amends AS 14.03.260(a) to require that a charter school annual program budget will reflect a per student amount equal to the aggregate, prorated per student amount in the district, plus, if a charter school does not reside in district facilities, an additional amount for cost of facilities.

This section also gives guidelines on non-profit charter school fundraising.

Section 4: Amends AS 14.03.260(b), the section defining how the charter school program budget is to be used, to include the facility funds required in Section 3, and requires that amount to be no less than what is budgeted for students who are not charter schools students.

Section 5: Extends charter school contracts up to 10 years and removes the sunset.

Section 6: Removes the sunset.

Section 7: Sets an effective date for Section 1

WORK DRAFT

WORK DRAFT

WORK DRAFT

1-LS0598M
Ford ✓
5/11/99

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 191()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES DYSON, Kohring

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to charter schools; and providing for an effective date."

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 * Section 1. AS 14.03.255(a) is amended to read:

4 (a) A charter school operates as a school in the local school district except that
5 the charter school (1) is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program,
6 curriculum, and scheduling requirements; (2) is exempt from AS 14.14.130(c); the
7 principal of the charter school shall be selected by the academic policy committee and
8 shall select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school; and (3)
9 operates under the charter school's annual program budget as set out in the contract
10 between the local school board and the charter school under (c) of this section. A
11 local school board may exempt a charter school from other local school district
12 requirements if the exemption is set out in the contract, except that a local board
13 may not exempt a charter school from the provisions of AS 14.03.075.

14 * Sec. 2. AS 14.03.255(c) is amended to read:

15 (c) A charter school shall operate under a contract between the charter school

WORK DRAFT

WORK DRAFT

1-LS0598M

- 1 and the local school board. A contract must contain the following provisions:
- 2 (1) a description of the educational program;
- 3 (2) specific levels of achievement for the education program;
- 4 (3) admission policies and procedures;
- 5 (4) administrative policies;
- 6 (5) a statement of the charter school's funding allocation from the local
- 7 school board, including the itemized costs of administrative or other services to be
- 8 provided [AND COSTS ASSIGNABLE] to the charter school [PROGRAM
- 9 BUDGET];
- 10 (6) the method by which the charter school will account for receipts
- 11 and expenditures;
- 12 (7) the location and description of the facility;
- 13 (8) the name of the teacher, or teachers, who, by agreement between
- 14 the charter school and the teacher, will teach in the charter school;
- 15 (9) the teacher-to-student ratio;
- 16 (10) the number of students served;
- 17 (11) the term of the contract [, NOT TO EXCEED A TERM OF FIVE
- 18 YEARS];
- 19 (12) a termination clause providing that the contract may be terminated
- 20 by the local school board for the failure of the charter school to meet educational
- 21 achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause;
- 22 (13) a statement that the charter school will comply with all state and
- 23 federal requirements for receipt and use of public money;
- 24 (14) other requirements or exemptions agreed upon by the charter
- 25 school and the local school board.

26 * Sec. 3. AS 14.03.260(a) is amended to read:

- 27 (a) A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an
- 28 annual program budget. The budget must include
- 29 (1) the aggregate, prorated [SHALL BE NOT LESS THAN THE]
- 30 amount generated by all [THE] students enrolled in [THE] charter schools in that
- 31 district [SCHOOL] less the cost of administrative or other services provided

WORK DRAFT

WORK DRAFT

1-LS0598\M

1 [COSTS RETAINED] by the local school district, prorated per student; in this
 2 paragraph, the [DETERMINED BY APPLYING THE INDIRECT COST RATE
 3 APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. THE] "aggregate,
 4 prorated amount generated by all students enrolled in [THE] charter schools in that
 5 district [SCHOOL]" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for
 6 students [A STUDENT] enrolled in other [ANOTHER] public schools [SCHOOL]
 7 in that school district; and

8 (2) an amount to pay costs of providing a school building or facility
 9 if the charter school is not operating in an existing school district facility; if a
 10 charter school program budget includes an amount for the costs of providing a
 11 school building or facility, that amount may not be less than the amount that
 12 would be budgeted for providing a school building or facility for students in the
 13 district who are not charter school students.

14 * Sec. 4. AS 14.03.260(b) is amended to read:

15 (b) The program budget of a charter school is to be used for operating
 16 expenses of the educational program of the charter school, including purchasing
 17 textbooks, classroom materials, and instructional aids, and, if the charter school is
 18 not operating in an existing school district facility, for the costs of providing a
 19 school building or facility.

20 * Sec. 5. AS 14.03.260 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

21 (e) A charter school qualified as tax exempt under 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may
 22 conduct fund-raising activities or accept donations of money or materials to supplement
 23 the program budget of the charter school.

24 * Sec. 6. AS 14.03.275 is amended to read:

25 **Sec. 14.03.275. Contracts [; DURATION].** A contract for a charter school
 26 may be for a term of no more than 10 [FIVE] years [AND MAY NOT EXTEND
 27 BEYOND JULY 1, 2005].

28 * Sec. 7. Section 9, ch. 77, SLA 1995, is repealed.

29 * Sec. 8. Section 1 of this Act takes effect January 1, 2002.

Sectional Analysis of HB 191 An Act Relating to Charter Schools

Section 1: Removes the cap on the number of charter schools allowed.

Section 2: Ensures accountability in that charter schools cannot be exempted from the exit exam requirement.

Section 3: Does some house-keeping (includes "a" and "the" as appropriate), and includes the requirement that an itemized list of costs of services be included in the charter school contract.

Section 4: Clarifies that a charter school is to receive an equitable share of all funds generated by its' students.

This section also gives guidelines on non-profit charter school fundraising.

Section 5: Adds a new subsection clarifying the financial agreement between the charter school and the school district. It requires the itemization of the cost of educational services provided by the district. "Educational services" include all services provided by the district which are not shown in individual school budgets. Itemizing the cost of these services will provide better accountability to taxpayers.

This subsection also ensures that the charter schools can opt out of any of these services, except for administrative services and those required by law.

Section 6: Extends charter school contracts up to 10 years and removes the sunset.

Section 7: Defines Charter schools as separate schools for the purpose of a district school count.

Section 8: Removes the sunset.

Section 9: Sets an effective date for Section 2.

Section 10: Sets an effective date for Section 7.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

1204-141

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

GOLDBELT PLACE
801 WEST 10TH STREET, SUITE 200
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1894

(907) 465-2800
FAX (907) 465-4156

April 28, 1998

The Honorable Fred Dyson
House of Representatives
State Capitol Room 508
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Dyson:

Because of your interest in charter schools, I thought you might be interested in recent State Board of Education action on the topic. At its March 28 Board Meeting in Juneau, the Board reviewed recommendations of the Board's Charter School Subcommittee. The Board gave conceptual approval to a number of the recommendations developed by the subcommittee.

The Board adopted a position in support of amending the Alaska Charter School law to accomplish the following:

- | Sec. | |
|------|---|
| 1 | • Lift the current cap on the number of charter schools allowed. |
| 2 | • Ensure educational programs are based on state standards. |
| 4 | • Establish fund raising guidelines for charter schools that are established as nonprofit institutions so as not to jeopardize the school's public school status. |
| 5 | • Remove the sunset provision of 2005, which is currently in the law. |
| | • Create a body at the local community level to which applicants who are denied approval of a charter school application by a local Board of Education can appeal. The appeals body would consist of three people, such as a representative of the local PTA, a Teacher and member of the local borough assembly or city council. This body would be an advisory body to the local board. |
| | • Grant start-up funding for charter schools. |
| 11 | • Clarify that charter schools receive local revenues in excess of required local contribution as well as state determined basic need. |

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POSITION STATEMENT

Letter,
April 28, 1998
Page 2 of 2

The Board reaffirmed that issues of confidentiality dealing with teacher evaluation could be resolved under existing law by having teachers hired by charter schools waive their rights to confidentiality so that Academic Policy Committees could have access to needed information.

Please contact Marjorie Menzi, the Department's Charter School Liaison, at 465-8720, if you have questions related to these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Shirley J. Holloway, Ph.D.
Commissioner

cc: State Board of Education

Marjorie Menzi, Charter School Liaison



Anchorage School District

4600 DeFarr Road
P. O. Box 196614
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6614
(907) 333-9561

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April 27, 1999

Representative Fred Dyson (Via FAX 465-4587)
Representative John Coghill (Via FAX 465-3258)
Co-Chairs, House HESS Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

MAY 03 1999

Dear Representatives Dyson and Coghill:

Thank you very much for holding the hearing on HB 191, the Charter School Bill, on Saturday, April 24, when it was convenient for us to attend and testify. As I stated at the audio-conference, the Anchorage School District has the following comments and concerns relating to the proposed changes in the Charter School Law.

Section 1: The Anchorage School District does not object to the removal of the cap on the number of charter schools for the Anchorage School District. At the current time, there are four charter schools in the ASD and one other charter school approved, but not operational at this time. Removing the cap will allow the Alaska DOE and the State Board of Education to approve more charter schools in the State.

Section 2: The Anchorage School District supports this addition if it is necessary to reinforce the importance of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. Our Charter School Policy 333 clearly states that the Anchorage School District charter schools must take all required state and local tests required by Alaska Statute, DOE Regulations, and ASD Policy. The ASD feels that the charter schools must participate in the Benchmark Exams, the HSGQE and CAT tests as long as they are required for all other students.

Section 3: The Anchorage School District has significant concerns about the intent and implications to the ASD if this section is implemented. What is meant by "the itemized costs of administrative or other services to be provided"? This would be cumbersome and take valuable time and resources on the part of the ASD staff and the charter school staff to account for all of this time. For example, I have spent the equivalent of approximately 300 hours since July 1, 1998, working on charter school issues; this amount of time does not take into account the time spent by the

Superintendent, Budget Director, the Chief Financial Officer, the Controller, the Purchasing Director, the Executive Director of Special Education and all Supervisors, the Warehouse, and many other departments as well as various School Board members. Last year, our first year with charter schools, I would say that the time spent was double that of this year for all of us! At the current time, these services are covered by the Indirect Cost of 4.31% for this school year which is subtracted from the allocated budget for the charter school; there are no additional administrative charges. The ASD has worked out a charge-back system for services for students, such as special education, related services, and Bilingual services delivered by ASD staff, rather than charter school staff for those charter schools who have elected to retain the 20% special needs funding under the Foundation Program. Classes at the King Career Center and at other schools taken by charter school students, etc. are also charged to the charter school budgets through the charge-back system.

Another issue concerns allowing the charter schools to opt out of services not required by law or regulation. Our ASD Charter School Policy 333 requires that charter schools use our purchasing and procurement procedures so that their funds can be audited in a manner similar to all of our schools. The District takes its public accountability very seriously and feels that charter schools should not be able to "opt out" of our financial accounting procedures. If waived by the School Board, charter schools do not have to use some of our services if they do not require them.

Eliminating the five-year term limit will help the charter schools find housing more easily. The annual reporting mechanism and the ability of a local School Board to terminate the contract on an annual basis for cause or for failing student achievement is sufficient protection to a school district. Landlords and possible contractors as well as financial lenders would be more willing to lease facilities if the terms could be negotiated for a longer term.

Section 4: The ASD believes that the 4.31% Indirect Cost rate is a better method to calculate administrative costs. We believe, based on our two-year experience in the ASD, that this is less financially than a department by department accounting of time spent on charter schools.

Anchorage School District Charter School Policy 333 now allows our charter schools to keep the funds raised by the school and to accept donations of money and materials to supplement the program budget. It is reported as part of the revenue for

accounting purposes. All donations of equipment or furnishings which are permanent become the property of the ASD as per School Board Policy.

We request clarification of the additional language which states that the "amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district and must reflect state, local and other funding for that school district. Not every school incurs the same expenditures as other similarly sized schools. For example, new buildings may have improved heating systems, and those cost savings are recognized in their budgets. Not all schools offer community education or have swimming pools. Each school is a separate entity from the others, and their annual budgets reflect these differences. A listing of the individual school budgets and per student costs at each school is provided on Attachment A. In addition, charter schools, as do the other ASD schools, receive services such as curriculum and instruction, training and development, audio-visual, community resources, etc., that are not charged to individual school budgets or provided for in the indirect cost rate. These services, in addition to other services not provided to charter schools such as transportation and district-wide maintenance of plant if in a non-District facility, are funded by state and local revenues. These amounts are included in other department budgets, not in the charter schools budgets or in other schools budgets.

In the ASD, charter schools have an option to retain the special needs and intensive needs Foundation funding in their budgets. If they choose to retain the funding, then they are required to provide the service, either directly or through the ASD charge-back system. If the charter school chooses not to retain the special needs funding, then the services are provided by the ASD at no additional cost to the charter school. It is important to recognize that special needs services, district-wide services and other qualified programs are not included in the individual school budgets, and require funding from the state and local sources.

Section 5: This new section would become a book-keeping nightmare for our district. The ASD provides many of the services listed in this section at no cost: audio visual services, curriculum support and training, staff development and training, etc. are free and available. The ASD does NOT provide special needs and intensive services unless the charter school pays for the service through a charge-back arrangement; if the charter school provides the service, they are able to retain the 20% foundation revenue.

Transportation is not provided to any of our alternative schools and programs and should not be provided at no cost to the charter schools due to the excessive cost which would not qualify for reimbursement from the State of Alaska. Facility rental is the responsibility of the charter school at this time since there is limited space available in the Anchorage School District. At the current time, charter schools are charged a pro-rata square footage rate for utilities and custodial services in any ASD facility used by the charter school. If the charter school leases a facility, the lease is paid out of the revenues generated for the program budget. At the current time, the ASD School Board Policy 333 allows for additional funding, but the School Board and Administration have not chosen to pay for leasing and associated housing costs. The ASD believes this is a local control issue and should not be made part of State law since it is the local School Board who controls how the revenue is expended.

More information is requested as to the intent of which services a charter school would be permitted to opt out of; again, this should be a locally-determined issue. The Anchorage School Board is in the best position to determine which costs and services are required for the charter schools in the ASD.

Section 6: The Anchorage School District has no objection to dropping the sunset clause and the extension of the duration of the contract for the charter schools.

Section 7: The Anchorage School District supports the charter school being treated as a separate school as long as the ASD would not be penalized by the DOE in calculating allowable square footage for debt reimbursement in school construction projects. We do not believe that it should be combined with the largest school in the District (Service High School) and funded at .84. If a charter school is processed through the School Size Factor, their revenues should be sufficient to address many of their housing and other issues. If a charter school is housed within another school, which is highly unlikely in the ASD due to space constraints, then their funding could remain at .84 since they will only be charged for utilities and custodial services on a pro-rata square footage basis.

Section 8: No objection.

Section 9: No objection.

Section 10: No objection.

Again, thank you for allowing the Anchorage School District to provide you with additional comments to those made on Saturday, April 24, 1999.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (907) 269-2290 if you have need for more information.

Sincerely yours,

Carol Comeau

Carol Comeau
Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Attachment

cc Bob Christal, Superintendent
Janet Stokesbary, Chief Financial Officer
Larry Wiget, Government Relations
School Board members
Glen Biegel, Alaska Charter School Assn.
Greg Miller, Aquarian Charter School
Jack Miller, Family Partnership Charter School
Craig Naylor, Walden Pond Charter School
Linda Sharp, Village Charter School

390	Williwaw	611	2,247,539	3,678
400	Willow Crest	504	1,663,404	3,300
410	Wonder Park	516	1,955,584	3,790
418	Gladys Wood	527	1,768,828	3,356
499	Unallocated *		5,118,848	
		<u>26,907</u>	<u>\$ 102,696,090</u>	<u>\$ 3,817</u>

Org	Charter Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
510	Aquarian **	111	\$ 426,377	\$ 3,841
540	Family	494	2,015,232	4,779
565	SPYDER			
585	Village **	21	81,719	3,891
590	Walden Pond **	153	817,193	5,341
		<u>779</u>	<u>\$ 3,340,521</u>	<u>\$ 4,288</u>

Org	Middle Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
450	Polaris K - 12	475	\$ 1,872,308	\$ 3,942
700	Central Middle School of Science	833	\$ 3,536,298	\$ 4,245
710	Clark Middle School	779	3,463,747	4,446
730	Gruening Middle School	593	2,909,005	4,906
740	Hanshaw Middle School	937	3,982,758	4,251
750	Mears Middle School	1,002	4,207,770	4,199
755	Mirror Lake Middle School	711	3,252,766	4,575
760	Romig Middle School	774	3,461,288	4,472
770	Wendler Middle School	939	3,990,603	4,250
780	Goldenview Middle School	818	3,559,444	4,351
799	Unallocated *		454,635	
		<u>7,861</u>	<u>\$ 34,690,622</u>	<u>\$ 4,413</u>

Org	High Schools/Alternative Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Per Student
800	Bartlett High	1,818	7,168,803	3,943
805	King Career Center	475	3,296,361	6,940
810	Chugiak High	1,943	7,282,988	3,748
820	Dimond High	2,017	7,412,176	3,675
830	East High	1,847	7,134,887	3,863
835	S.A.V.E.	229	1,130,308	4,936
840	Service High	2,244	7,859,014	3,502
845	Steller	295	1,130,881	3,833
850	West High	1,490	6,272,706	4,210
875	McLaughlin	167	1,467,136	8,785
880	Benny Benson	200	1,028,971	5,145
881	S.E.A.R.C.H.	105	421,319	4,013
885	A.V.A.I.L.	64	241,887	3,779
899	Unallocated *		4,628,844	
		<u>12,894</u>	<u>\$ 56,476,281</u>	<u>\$ 4,380</u>

Notes: * These funds are distributed to the schools throughout the year. For example, distribution is based on enrollment for additional staffing allocation for large class sizes, textbook adoptions, and emergency supplies and equipment.

** Aquarian, Village, and Walden Pond Charter Schools have chosen to include special needs funding in their school budgets. Walden Pond and Village have been provided funding based on the old formula which provided a higher amount of funding for FY 1998-99.

A variety of schools have grade levels that cover more than one level - elementary, middle and high school level. Each school is shown only one time regardless of school grade level configuration.

Anchorage School District
 Anchorage, Alaska
 Revised FY 1998-99
 Budgeted Cost Per Student in School Budgets

ATTACHMENT A

Org	Elementary Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
100	Abbott Loop	530	\$ 1,909,923	\$ 3,604
110	Airport Heights	324	1,333,784	4,117
112	Alpenglow	576	1,903,338	3,304
114	Aurora	498	1,658,625	3,331
115	Baxter	499	1,710,881	3,429
116	Bayshore	527	1,924,848	3,652
118	Bear Valley	501	1,641,761	3,277
120	Birchwood ABC	331	1,350,118	4,079
125	Bowman	586	2,042,917	3,486
130	Campbell	528	1,781,249	3,374
140	Chester Valley	323	1,194,363	3,698
150	Chinook	528	1,768,732	3,350
160	Chugach	246	972,336	3,953
170	Chugiak	508	1,933,565	3,806
174	College Gate	491	1,870,712	3,810
180	Creekside Park	374	1,360,669	3,638
190	Denali	547	2,132,013	3,898
200	Eagle River	387	1,402,386	3,624
210	Fairview	430	1,830,842	4,258
215	Fire Lake	358	1,347,660	3,764
220	Girdwood	152	763,858	5,025
230	Government Hill	425	1,635,471	3,848
235	Homestead	470	1,632,106	3,473
237	Huffman	486	1,654,458	3,404
240	Inlet View	255	993,567	3,896
242	Kasuun	639	2,032,375	3,181
244	Kennedy	225	1,030,600	4,580
245	Klatt	524	1,927,703	3,679
246	Kincaid	459	1,584,357	3,452
248	Lake Hood	514	1,766,504	3,437
250	Lake Otis	566	2,110,658	3,729
257	Mt. Spurr	287	1,092,764	3,808
260	Mt. View	425	1,765,457	4,154
270	Muldoon	412	1,689,108	4,100
280	North Star	496	1,937,112	3,905
290	Northern Lights ABC	546	1,739,304	3,186
300	Northwood	370	1,348,446	3,644
310	Nunaka Valley	365	1,455,787	3,988
315	Ocean View	399	1,455,408	3,648
320	O'Malley	489	1,641,983	3,358
324	Orion	424	1,752,898	4,134
328	Ptarmigan	379	1,334,995	3,522
330	Rabbit Creek	435	1,489,630	3,424
335	Ravenwood	426	1,476,189	3,465
340	Rogers Park	616	1,982,898	3,219
345	Russian Jack	385	1,579,358	4,102
350	Sand Lake	598	1,914,411	3,201
360	Scenic Park	536	1,742,590	3,251
362	Spring Hill	616	1,939,939	3,149
364	Susitna	617	2,099,056	3,402
365	Taku	430	1,482,349	3,447
370	Tudor	525	1,753,091	3,339
380	Turnagain	389	1,387,219	3,566
384	Tyson, William	353	1,562,209	4,426
386	Ursa Major	208	1,159,040	5,572
388	Ursa Minor	210	958,267	4,436

Sec. 14.03.250. Establishment of charter schools.

- (a) A charter school may be established as provided under AS 14.03.250 - 14.03.290 upon the approval of the local school board and the state Board of Education of an application for a charter school. The state Board of Education may not approve more than 30 charter schools to operate in the state at any one time and shall approve charter schools in a geographically balanced manner as follows: not more than 10 schools in Anchorage; not more than five schools in Fairbanks; not more than three schools in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; not more than three schools in the Kenai Peninsula Borough; not more than two schools in the City and Borough of Juneau; not more than seven schools located in other areas of the state, and these seven schools shall be allocated as nearly as possible in a geographically balanced manner throughout the rest of the state.
- (b) A local school board shall prescribe an application procedure for the establishment of a charter school in that school district. The application procedure must include provisions for an academic policy committee consisting of parents of students attending the school, teachers, and school employees and a proposed form for a contract between a charter school and the local school board, setting out the contract elements required under AS 14.03.255 (c).
- (c) A local school board shall forward to the state Board of Education applications for a charter school that have been approved or denied by the local board.

Sec. 14.03.255. Organization and operation of a charter school.

- (a) A charter school operates as a school in the local school district except that the charter school
 - (1) is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program, curriculum, and scheduling requirements;
 - (2) is exempt from AS 14.14.130 (c); the principal of the charter school shall be selected by the academic policy committee and shall select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school; and
 - (3) operates under the charter school's annual program budget as set out in the contract between the local school board and the charter school under (c) of this section. A local school board may exempt a charter school from other local school district requirements if the exemption is set out in the contract.
- (b) A charter school shall
 - (1) keep financial records of the charter school;
 - (2) oversee the operation of the charter school to ensure that the terms of the contract required by (c) of this section are being met;
 - (3) meet regularly with parents and with teachers of the charter school to review, evaluate, and improve operations of the charter school; and
 - (4) meet with the academic policy committee at least once each year to monitor progress in achieving the committee's policies and goals.

(b) A charter school shall operate under a contract between the charter school and the local school board. A contract must contain the following provisions:

- (1) description of the educational program;
- (2) specific levels of achievement for the education program;
- (3) admission policies and procedures;
- (4) administrative policies;
- (5) statement of the charter school's funding allocation from the local school board and costs assignable to the charter school program budget;
- (6) method by which the charter school will account for receipts and expenditures;
- (7) location and description of the facility;
- (8) name of the teacher, or teachers, who, by agreement between the charter school and the teacher, will teach in the charter school;
- (9) teacher-to-student ratio;
- (10) number of students served;
- (11) the term of the contract, not to exceed a term of five years;
- (12) a termination clause providing that the contract may be terminated by the local school board for the failure of the charter school to meet educational achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause;
- (13) a statement that the charter school will comply with all state and federal requirements for receipt and use of public money;
- (14) other requirements or exemptions agreed upon by the charter school and the local school board.

(d) A charter school may be operated in an existing school district facility or in a facility within the school district that is not currently being used as a public school, if the chief school administrator determines the facility meets requirements for health and safety applicable to other public schools in the district.

Sec. 14.03.260. Funding for charter school.

(a) A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an annual program budget. The budget shall be not less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school less administrative costs retained by the local school district, determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Education. The "amount generated by students enrolled in the charter school" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district.

(b) The program budget of a charter school is to be used for operating expenses of the educational program of the charter school, including purchasing textbooks, classroom materials, and instructional aids.

(c) The charter school shall provide the financial and accounting information requested by the local school board or the Department of Education and shall cooperate with the local school district or the department in complying with the requirements of AS 14.17.910 .

(d) The expenses of housing nonresident students who attend the charter school, including room, board, and other reasonable housing expenses, may not be paid for with state money but may be paid for with funds contributed by sources other than the state.

Sec. 14.03.075. Secondary pupil competency testing. [Effective January 1, 2002].

- (a) A pupil may not be issued a secondary school diploma unless the pupil passes a competency examination in the areas of reading, English, and mathematics. The department shall determine the form and contents of the examination and shall score completed examinations. A pupil who fails to pass the examination required under this subsection and who is no longer in attendance shall receive a certificate of attendance from the school district indicating the years of attendance and that the pupil has not passed a competency examination or received a diploma.
- (b) A pupil who fails the examination required under this section may be reexamined. A reexamination may not be offered more often than once every three months and must occur within three years after the date the pupil is no longer in attendance. A pupil who passes the reexamination and who meets any other graduation requirements shall receive a diploma from the school district.

Sec. 14.17.905. Facilities constituting a school.

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 750, shall be counted as

(A) one elementary school, which includes those students in grades kindergarten through 6; and

(B) one secondary school, which includes students in grades 7 through 12;

(3) in a community with an ADM of greater than 750, 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.

4 AAC 09 is amended by adding a new section to read:

4 AAC 09.019. PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING CALCULATIONS. All school funding calculations based on ADM will be carried to the second decimal place. All rounding shall be done so that in the third decimal place the digit 5 or above rounds upwards and the digit 4 and below rounds downward. Total adjusted ADM for the district shall be rounded to two decimals.

Authority AS 14.17.920 AS 14.17.910 AS 14.17.500

4 AAC 09.020 is repealed:

4 AAC 09.020 TEACHERS ENTITLED TO PAY. Repealed.

4 AAC 09 is amended by adding a new section to read:

4 AAC 09.021. ELIGIBLE IMPACT AID. For the purpose of determining the date that Impact Aid funds are received by a school district, the department will use the date printed on the Federal Impact Aid payment voucher.

Authority: AS 14.17.920

4 AAC 09.105 is repealed and readopted to read:

4 AAC 09.105. DEFINITIONS. As used in this chapter, and in AS 14.17.905, unless the context requires otherwise

(1) "alternative school" means an educational program, that is not a correspondence study program, which;

(A) is designed to target a specific student population to receive a specialized instructional program or curriculum; or

(B) is a charter school.

(2) "community" means

(A) an incorporated city;

Alaska
Public Charter Schools
Directory
June 1998



Additional Information

Alaska Department of Education
Charter School Contacts Summary

Marjorie Menzi: Charter School Liaison

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Academy Charter School

Students Enrolled: 84 (K-3)

Grade Levels: K-3 (phasing in K-5 over a four year period)

Mission: Our mission is to create a learning system that encourages and develops students' inherent abilities to be competent, confident, productive and responsible young adults. We will strive to produce a generation of young people who possess the habits, skills and attitudes necessary to empower them to succeed as life long learners and outstanding citizens.

Purpose: The primary focus of the Academy Charter is on the well being of the children of our community. It is the goal of the approximately 10 currently active member (project designers) to create a purposeful, living laboratory, which will operate in a caring, supportive and closely monitored environment. As an integral part of the Matanuska-Susitna School District, the Charter's successful innovations will be transferable to other schools in the District and to the larger world community, thus benefiting all of our children. Charter Community members seek to make education a community passion.

State Board of Education Approval: April 28, 1997

School District

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Aquarian Charter School

Students Enrolled: 120 (est.)

Grade Level: 3-6

Mission: This proposed Charter School has a program philosophy designed for bright, high achieving children from families with working parents. In addition, the children [will] have a stress-free environment, filled with joy, drama, music, art, and intended to enhance the educational program and boost achievement

Purpose: The Aquarian Charter School is designed for bright, high achieving children from families with working parents.

State Board of Education Approval: April 28, 1997

School District

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Anvil City Science Academy

Students Enrolled: 20

Grade Level: 5-8

Mission: Our mission is to enable children, parents, teachers and community to achieve academic excellence through an opportunity for partnership in commitment and involvement in a public school setting that takes advantage of the natural inquisitiveness and explorative nature of children. Through the establishment of a setting of thematic learning, outward bound exploration and science based curriculum, the student will develop critical thinking, creative thinking, logical organization, respectful cooperativeness and leadership skills that will enable him/her to compete at a high level in academic and vocational settings as well as become a contributing and constructive community member.

Purpose: Anvil City Science Academy was created and shaped by a small nucleus of like-minded parents, teachers, and community members interested in a family oriented, character developing, highly rigorous academic education as well as concern for the future of their own and community children. It is an expectation that all students will have a high achievement, for each has great potential. Technology and scientific research methods are an integral part of the curriculum, as it will be an integral part of every child's future.

State Board of Education Conditional Approval: June 9, 1998

School District

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District Contact

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Charter School Contact

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Below0@hotmail.com

Aurora Borealis Charter School

Students Enrolled: 75 (est.)

Grade Levels: K-8

Mission: To provide teachers and parents with the opportunity, responsibility, and accountability for the management and control of the total school curriculum and environment; to produce a flexible set of learning outcomes measured with different and authentic forms of assessment; to provide students with an educational opportunity of the highest quality; and to foster student, parent, and community involvement through the use of community resources and partnerships.

Purpose: The purpose of Aurora Borealis School is to offer the finest academic program possible that will provide for increased learning opportunities for all students in an environment designed to meet the unique needs of each student by providing opportunities consistent with their learning styles [and] to improve pupil learning by creating a school with high and rigorous standards for pupil performance.

State Board of Education Approval: April 28, 1997

School District

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District Contact

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Charter School Contact

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(cell Phone:) 252-3146
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E-mail: oberts@alaska.NET
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connection, or use Fax: no. 262-4477
attention Ed, (Mr. Oberts work Fax:no.)

Bay View Charter School

Students Enrolled: 26

Grade Levels: K-7

Mission: Bay View School Community is committed to providing a public school option where all members, students, staff, and parents, function democratically. Students are valued as unique individuals who are encouraged to learn both independently and collaboratively. A hands-on approach is emphasized integrating the arts and the appreciation of the natural world. The School Community embraces diversity, creating small, mixed-aged, and family-oriented environments which exhibit mutual respect and caring.

Purpose: Bay View Charter School is a public school operating under the auspices of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education. Bay View offers a choice for students who might benefit from an integrated, thematic approach to education using the arts, the environment, and culture in a small, intimate learning community.

State Board of Education Approval: April 28, 1997

School District

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Charter School Contact

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Chinook Charter School

Students Enrolled: 75

Grade Levels: K-8

Mission: Chinook Charter School, a school of choice, will strive to create a dynamic educational environment, which fosters educational excellence and cultivates personal, intellectual, and emotional growth and responsibility. We will provide this through an alliance formed through a seamless web of educators, parents, businesses and community members.

Purpose: The philosophy of Chinook Charter is grounded in the belief that learning is interwoven with life. The community serves as our campus with Chinook School acting as our headquarters. The school offers a nurturing multi-age environment, which supports a highly rigorous academic program. Integrated teaching encourages students to make connections between ideas and concepts in different content areas. Chinook School values time. The flexibility of time allows for small group seminars, grand conversations and investigations with teachers and students. Chinook is a professional development site which values innovation, teacher research and excellence in teaching.

State Board of Education Approval: April 16, 1996 (3)

School District

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District Contact

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*for proposed charter schools
contact Nick Stayrook
*contact John Monahan for charter
schools already approved

Charter School Contacts

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Delta Greely Cyber Charter School

Students Enrolled: 100

Grade Levels: 7-12

Mission: The mission of the Cyber School is to prepare students with the knowledge and technological skills to compete and succeed in the 21st century.

Purpose: The purpose of the Delta Greely Cyber Charter School is to provide a unique method for students, parents, and teachers to transform the way their learning is delivered and applied. The School will foster educational excellence with students, parents, and staff planning and designing the course of study that best meets the needs of each learner using educational technology to gain access to curricular resources.

State Board of Education Approval (with conditions) February 4, 1997

School District

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District Contact

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Charter School Contact

Mary Corcoran or Jack Detzel

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Delta/Greely School District

P.O. Box 1000

Delta Junction, AK 99737

Family Partnership Charter School

Students Enrolled: 60 (cst.)

Grade Levels: 7-12

Mission: The charter school is committed to a framework in which mankind's first and most basic school, the home, is supported by the community as a viable education alternative. The charter school is to be a non-sectarian partnership school between students, parents, professional educators and community members where as many families as desire will customize an education for their children. It will utilize a school without walls wherein parents are to bear the primary responsibility for the management of their children's education.

Purpose: We live in an ever-changing world. Every day we discover new opportunities for learning. New tools, technology, methods and ways of thinking demand a more flexible and open model for educational program development. The Family Partnership Charter School will provide a framework for the responsible use of public resources in which students, parents and educators can make the most of these opportunities.

School District

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Homer Charter School

Students Enrolled: 20 (est.)

Grade Levels: 4-6

Mission: To provide a compassionate learning environment that gives students, parents, teachers and community members the power to develop self-reliance, cooperation, intellect, creativity, reasoning ability, and personal growth.

Purpose: The Homer Charter School recognizes many different styles of learning. Many students do well in a traditional classroom, yet some students learn best when they control their learning environment and when lessons are individualized and tied to real-world applications. To accommodate such students, the Homer Charter School will establish a program that implement the following teaching methods: Socratic Practice, Individual Learning Plans, Experiential Learning, Project-based Curricula, [and] Interdisciplinary Education. The establishment of such a school will not only benefit individual students, but eventually will provide all Homer schools with more options for tested activities, methods, and curricula.

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Juneau Community Charter School

Students Enrolled: 40

Grade Levels: K-4

Mission: The Juneau Community Charter School will provide a balanced education using developmentally appropriate techniques which tap into the child's need to explore and create in all fields of learning. Our strong connection with parent and community resources gives students diverse perspectives and unique learning opportunities.

Purpose: In our surveys, parents expressed a belief that optimal learning occurs in an environment where active parental involvement is expected and encouraged and where student-teacher ratios are low. The JCCS proposal integrates this principal; parents will aid teachers within the classroom, on field trips, with facility maintenance, clerical support or with individual projects. Partnerships with local and state museums and other community organizations enhance learning opportunities. In addition, Spanish is taught to all grades.

School District

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Ketchikan Charter School

Students Enrolled: 178

Grade Levels: K-6

Mission: Through the cooperation of parents, teachers, and students, Ketchikan Charter School will create a Learning Environment that fosters growth of Character, High Academic Achievement, and the Love of Learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens.

Purpose: The Ketchikan Charter School Committee sees a need to offer parents another choice in educating their children in this District. A structured and more challenging curriculum that includes specific and sequential content, skills, and knowledge is wanted and needed. Regular assessment and early remediation must be available. The Charter School Law enables students, parents, teachers and administrators to accept responsibility for the education of children.

School District

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District Contact

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no Fax: number
Linda Houts
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Midnight Sun Family Learning Center

Students Enrolled: 90 (est.)

Grade Levels: K-8

Mission: Through a cooperative network of parents, teachers, and community members, Midnight Sun Family Learning Center will provide a safe, nurturing, family oriented, multi-age learning environment supporting a highly rigorous academic program for higher education preparation with high standards of responsible citizenship. Current technology will be incorporated in all aspects of the students' education. Midnight Sun Family Learning Center will promote academic excellence, character development, and educational enthusiasm resulting in responsible, productive citizens.

Purpose: Midnight Sun Family Learning Center was created and shaped by a small nucleus of like-minded parents, teachers, and community members interested in a family oriented, character developing, highly rigorous academic education as well as concern for the future of their own and community children. It is an expectation that all students will have high achievement, for each have great potential. Technology is an integral part of the curriculum as it will be an integral part of every child's future.

School District

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New Beginnings Charter School

Students Enrolled: 20 (est.)

Grade Levels: 7-12

Mission: The mission of the New Beginnings Charter School is to provide quality education services exclusively for junior and senior high school students whose emotional, physical, social and intellectual development has been affected by substance abuse in an academic environment where learning opportunities promote healthy life choices, abstinence, a life of recovery and educational success for them to build their futures upon.

Purpose: The purpose of the New Beginnings Charter School is to offer the finest academic program possible that will provide for increased learning opportunities in a safe, supportive, nurturing environment that values the individual student, recognizes diversity of learning styles and teaching methods and encourages innovation in teaching while maintaining high academic standards.

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Project Education Charter School

Students Enrolled: Target 50*

Grade Level: 9-14

(*Pending lease agreement with the Air Force. Anticipated to be in operation in FY 98.)

Mission: Provide a quality education in an environment that encourages innovative modes of teaching and learning in order to empower each individual student to develop academically, socially, and physically as a global citizen of the 21st Century.

Purpose: Project Education Charter School strives to address the critical need among Alaska's rural students for a school which will offer them both a strong academic choice as well as a vocational element that reflects the needs of employment. The focus for the Charter School centers on grades 9-12 with the inclusion of course offerings in grades 13-14 in partnership with the Rural College of University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Technology and the low pupil teacher ratios help to ensure rewarding educational experiences.

State Board of Education Approval April 16, 1996

School District

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S.P.Y.D.E.R. Charter School

Students Enrolled: 180

Grade Levels: 7-12

Mission: To provide a supportive learning environment in which all students may realize their full potential. The Sports Program for Youth Development, Education, and Recreation (S.P.Y.D.E.R.) Charter school recognized the need for Anchorage athletes to have access to an educational environment that promotes the mind, body, and spirit of the student athlete in a way that decreases stress to the student, family, and educational system. S.P.Y.D.E.R. Charter school believes they will provide an educational environment, which is flexible to the demands of seasonal sports training and competition, so that athletes can better attain their educational goals and increase their competitive edge.

Purpose: S.P.Y.D.E.R. Charter school will exist for the purpose of providing a unique educational experience for the competitive athlete.

State Board of Education Approval: February 17, 1998

School District

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Charter School Contact

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Takotna Training Center

Students Enrolled: 40 maximum

Grade Levels: 9-12 + K-12 Correspondence (Home School Program)

Mission: Takotna Training Center, a school of choice, is a dynamic educational environment whose participants are willing to take risks as they foster educational excellence and cultivate personal, intellectual and emotional growth, technological skills, responsibility, and citizenship. The school provides a safe nurturing environment which values the individual, recognizes diversity of learning styles and teaching methods, and encourages innovation in teaching while maintaining high academic standards.

Purpose: Takotna Training Center will target all interested high school students who want to explore an education in an alternative setting. Special attention will be paid to "at-risk" students who are in danger of dropping out of school.

State Board of Education Approval: April 16, 1996

School District

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Charter School Contacts

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Takotna Community Assoc.
Takotna, AK 99675
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Village Charter School

Students Enrolled: 60

Grade Levels: K-8

Mission: To help students (1) reach their potential, (2) become well-rounded people who exemplify the best values of society, (3) become effective in improving the character and quality of the world around them.

Purpose: The Village Charter School is designed with a strong math/science/reading program, emphasis on musical literacy and instruction in two foreign languages.

State Board of Education Approval: February 17, 1998

School District

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Walden Pond Charter School

Students Enrolled: 130

Grade Levels: 7-12

Mission: The mission of Walden Pond is to provide a challenging educational program for students in grades 7 through 12, with emphasis upon serving students presently "falling through the cracks," through small class sizes, multi-level instructional units, varied methods of instruction, a well-rounded curriculum, and strong parental involvement.

Purpose: Walden Pond is designed around the goal of reaching students exhibiting signs of frustration as early in their secondary career as possible and challenging them to be successful in a competitive academic program. It builds upon the concept that if all members of the school community (teachers, parents, students) feel a sense of ownership, significance and responsibility, then student learning and confidence will improve.

School District

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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. The act is currently in effect.

Since the act passed, many questions have been asked about charter schools. To answer them, the Department of Education developed this information booklet.

The act creates a 10-year pilot project that allows for up to 30 charter schools to operate at any one time. The charter school act expires on July 1, 2005.

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.

The State Board of Education in December of 1995 adopted a regulation to implement the Charter School Act.

Q: What is a charter school?

A: A charter school, created by the Charter School Act of 1995, is a school that operates under contract to a local school board.

Q: Who oversees a charter school?

A: An academic policy committee, consisting of parents of students attending the school, teachers and school employees, oversees the school according to the terms of the charter school contract. But the local school board that approved the charter school has the ultimate authority, even to terminate the contract.

Q: How is a charter school different than a regular public school?

A: It is important to remember that a charter school is a public school and must be free from sectarian control. Beyond that, a charter school is exempt from a number of rules that regular public schools are required to follow.

Q: What rules are different for a charter schools?

A: Five exemptions and exceptions are spelled out in the Charter School Act. A charter school

- is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program, curriculum and scheduling requirements.
- is exempt from a state law that requires superintendents of schools to "select, appoint, and otherwise control" school district employees that serve under the superintendent.
- is allowed to hire and supervise its principal through the charter school's academic policy committee.
- operates under a charter school budget set out in the charter school contract.
- is allowed any other exemptions from local school district requirements that the local school board and charter school can agree to.

Q: How many charter schools can operate in Alaska?

A: The Legislature allowed for the creation of up to 30 charter schools statewide. Ten of the 30 can be in Anchorage; five in Fairbanks; three in Kenai; three in Mat-Su; and two in Juneau. Seven additional charter schools can be started in the rest of the state and must be distributed, as much as possible, in a geographically equal manner.

Q: How will the geographically equal distribution be achieved?

A: The legislature took care of most of the geographical distribution by allocating up to 23 charter schools in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, Mat-Su and Kenai. The State Board of Education grouped the remaining 49 school districts into seven geographic regions. To give each geographic region the opportunity to start a charter school, the State Board will not approve more than one charter school in each region until July 1, 1997. After that date, the regions dissolve, and the State Board will use its own discretion in achieving the geographic distribution.

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: To date, no school district has requested a waiver from this requirement. But since student testing is required by state regulation, not by statute, the testing regulation is eligible for waiver.

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. However, because civil rights laws disfavor discrimination against students with disabilities, caution is advised when disallowing admission.

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.

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: This is a decision that the local school board should make since the school board is responsible for setting the charter school's budget. Each school district can use either a fall or spring counting period to establish enrollment for computing funding from the state. The district can use the enrollment count that is most advantageous.

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: The Legislature has made no special funding appropriation for charter schools.

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: Applications can be obtained from local school district central offices. However, local school boards are not required to have application procedures before June 30, 1996. But a number of school boards are making their application procedures available earlier than that date.

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



Return to the Alaska Department of Education home page



Alaska Charter School Association

Rep. Eldon Muldoon
 Rep. Gene Therriault
 Rep. Alan Austerman
 Rep. Con Bunde
 Rep. Gary Davis
 Rep. John Davies
 Rep. Richard Foster
 Rep. Ben Grussendorf
 Rep. Vic Kohring
 Rep. Carl Moses
 Rep. Bill Williams,
 Members, House Finance Committee
 Room 519
 State Capitol
 Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: HB 191

Dear Representatives:

This follows my audio testimony on April 24 in front of the HESS committee. Charter Schools need to have a strong law to protect and force Districts to provide equal and fair treatment in funding and housing. I implore you and your colleagues to act in a manner which will provide equal and fair treatment of Charter School students, teachers, and parents! PLEASE move HB 191 out of your Finance Committee. This bill is vital in enabling Charter Schools to truly be the catalysts for school reform!

Through out the state, Charter Schools are demonstrating successful strategies and innovations for education. Sadly enough, the committed, dedicated parents and teachers, (willing to sacrifice time, money, physical labor, emotional support and continuous effort,) have had to bear the burden of the costs to JUST for the Charter School to SURVIVE! This burden was forced upon these parents and teachers by the District's unwillingness to provide equal funding and equal housing. Charter Schools have been and are still the "step child". As the step child, we have to fight for every scrap, every dollar to just meet our needs. We are fighting for equal funding and physically building our own make shift sites just to open the doors. We must constantly fight against "the bad guy" view of other schools within the district, other teachers and other parents. We believe this condition, that of the step child or bad guy, largely comes from the fact we are challenging status quo, adding competition and stimulating innovation to public education.

Change causes fear. Fear causes discrimination and inequity. I am asking you, each and every one of you, our Representatives, to stop the discrimination, stop the inequity and provide us with some PROTECTION to do the jobs you have asked us to do...Improve education and provide parental choice in education! A strong law which delineates that Charter Schools are in fact "a

school", (their own site). A strong law which delineates that an equal portion of the federal, state, and local revenues shall be given to the Charter Schools. HB 191 does a great job of strengthening and improving the current law! Please, please, move this Bill through your committee so that it can be voted upon by the House!

I find the cost estimates on this bill by DOE inflated. We cannot continue to make parents, teachers and students of charter schools personally bear the burden and be punished monetarily for having chosen choice in education!

The funding issue, equal revenue, is of great importance for our school and all rural schools. Our goal is to stay a small school. A small school in which every student is acknowledged for their individual talents and skills. Since the horror of Colorado, our belief in small schools are even greater! SB 36, sentencing schools under 200 to have their funding calculated at the nearest largest school level, causes Charter school, specifically small charter schools of under a 200 student population, to be penalized! Specifically, this school year, a student at Academy Charter School in Palmer, Alaska was valued at or funded at a per pupil rate of approx. \$5900.00. Since the SB 36 sentencing, this next year, a student at Academy Charter School in Palmer, Alaska will be valued at or funded at a per pupil rate of approx. \$4817.00. Moving of HB191 from your committee, specifying that Charter Schools are in fact "a school" will make our per pupil amount back to \$5900.00, the same as this year. Our students deserve to be valued at the same funding rate! Equity is a must!

The removal of the sunset clause contained in HB 191 is very important! Longer contracts would allow for banks to consider our school for a building loan. This bill has so many vital aspects to the future of Charter Schools. The specific language in the revised law will stop the current trend of discrimination in funding.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance. Students, teachers and parents should not be punished monetarily, or ill treated in order for their students to have equal treatment. I thank you in advance, for your efforts in beginning a new trend equity.

Thank you for all of your efforts and assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gerard,
Secretary, Alaska Charter School Association
Principal, Academy Charter School

Academy Charter School

641 Cope Industrial Drive

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Academy Charter School Principal, Barbara Gerard

Academy Charter School Advisory Board, Debbie Rothermel

phone #907-726-2358 FAX

E Mail BGerard@MSB.Mat-Su.k12.ak.us

Dear House Finance Committee
Rep. Eldon Mulder

Rep. Gene Therriault

Rep. Alan Austerman

Rep. Con Bunde

Rep. Gary Davis

Rep. John Davies

Rep. Richard Foster

Rep. Ben Grussendorf

Rep. Vic Kohring

Rep. Carl Moses

Rep. Bill Williams

The Academy Charter School has demonstrated remarkable student progress and school success. The Academy Charter School has earned great respect and commendation in the community, the state and the nation for its successful journey on the path of school innovation, parent involvement and school reform. The school successfully managed its budget and was fiscally accountable. The school successfully utilized innovative scheduling; a fast paced, rigorous curriculum; innovative staffing and teaming; parent and community volunteers; and the requirement of parent participation.

The Academy Charter School administered benchmark student assessment in which to establish student entry levels. Student achievement and progress was documented through portfolios as well as standard assessment. End of year student assessment was administered and the testing results were compared to entry levels, charting student progress. The results show one, two and three year grade equivalent student improvement over their entry levels.

Parent, student and community satisfaction surveys show extreme satisfaction on the part of parents, students and community. Teacher satisfaction surveys show extreme satisfaction and feelings of success by the staff.

There seems to be no doubt as to the success of this charter school. It is a true tribute to parent and teacher partnerships in the

education of children.

With the above information, one would expect to hear of great encouragement and "paving the way" by the hosting District Administration. The fact of the matter is that due to the lack of specific language in the Alaska 1995 Charter School Law which delineates funding and housing specifications/notes, the Charter schools must constantly waste valuable energy, time and effort in defending itself from the hosting District administration and fighting to obtain everything the Charter school needs. (See attached letter to Representative Dyson)

Great inequities are occurring. Due to the lack of delineation of funding in the law, parents, teachers and students of a Charter School must often tolerate ill treatment and a "step child" mentality from the hosting District. Parents and teachers are expected to shoulder the burden of expenses such as skirting portable buildings and making the site functional and safe for the students and teachers. Each year the budget determination by the District Administration as to what formula is to be used to determine student dollar units and funding for Charter School causes a waste of time, energy and effort on the part of parents, students and teachers of the Charter school as we write letters, call administration and school board members and plea for equal funding during the public hearing portion of the meetings. Even with our proven success, we are fighting to receive adequate space for our school. (See attached letter to Representative Dyson.)

Across the nation, Charter Schools are proving successful. We are witnessing school innovation and school reform even among conventional schools due to the catalyst of Charter Schools. By providing parents school choice, Charter Schools have provided a healthy competition and the dawning realization that we must partner with parents in order to improve America's schools and maintain the public education system.

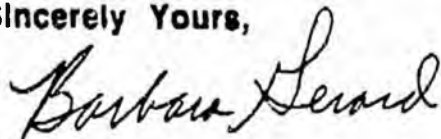
Charter Schools are living laboratories of school reform. These laboratories must be protected and allowed to operate without administrative interference and sabotage. These living laboratories must have their scientists (teachers) given the freedom to focus on the mission before them. Currently the negotiated agreement, specifically non-tenure and seniority, in a RIF situation could cause the "scientists" to be forcibly removed and replaced, with out regard to the fact the outcomes and laboratory results will be negatively altered and impacted. Freedom from this situation is another example of protection which needs to be delineated in the Charter School Law.

Freedom from the Administration's covert control and possible

sabotage is necessary and language asserting this protection needs to be delineated in the law.

I thank you for your time and consideration. I feel confident in your ability to address these concerns and your dedication to improving America's schools. Please contact me if I can be of any further service.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Gerard". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Barbara Gerard
Principal
Academy Charter School
Palmer, Alaska

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May 4, 1999

Rep. Eldon Mulder
Rep. Gene Therriault
Rep. Alan Austerman
Rep. Con Bunde
Rep. Gary Davis
Rep. John Davies
Rep. Richard Foster
Rep. Ben Grussendorf
Rep. Vic Kohring
Rep. Carl Moses
Rep. Bill Williams
Members, House Finance Committee
Room 519
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: HB 191

Dear Representatives:

This follows my testimony on April 24 before the HESS committee and my letter of April 27 (enclosed) regarding changes to the existing charter school laws. HB 191 is a vital piece of legislation, and I urge you to report it out of your Finance Committee.

Via this letter I am proposing an amendment to HB 191, so that the bill will result in a zero dollar fiscal note. While I believe the DOE's two current fiscal notes are wholly inaccurate (\$161,205 for HB 191 Sec. 1, and \$3,535,635 for HB 191 Sec. 7), I make this proposal so HB 191 does not get bogged down in your committee, since it is my understanding that your committee may have a desire not to report out any bill that includes a positive fiscal note. If I am mistaken in this assumption, then I would ask that HB 191 be reported out with only the single change noted below to Section 4.

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Members, House Finance Committee
May 4, 1999
Page 2

I would recommend the following changes to HB 191/CSHB
191:

SECTION 1: No changes to existing law.

In other words, at least for this legislative session do not lift the cap on the number of possible charter schools. No geographical area is "bumping up" against the current cap. While I cannot imagine how DOE can support its \$161,205 fiscal note for claimed additional staffing to process anticipated applications, a "no change" to existing law would zero out this fiscal note. I would hope the Finance Committee would indeed lift the cap (i.e., pass Section 1 of HB 191), but I would rather see other portions of HB 191 pass, then for the bill to fail entirely.

SECTION 4(a): "... must reflect state, local and other funding for that school district,"

should be changed to:

"... must include all state, local and other funding for that school district."

DOE attaches no fiscal note to any portion of this section, nor is my suggested change intended to increase by even a single penny state monies spent on or allocated to charter schools. The purpose behind my suggested change is singular: to require the local school districts to equitably distribute to charter schools the local monies it collects from the local tax base. I will address this in greater detail below.

SECTION 7(b): Delete this section in its entirety.

While the DOE has greatly overestimated the impact of this proposed additional language, there will be some cost. DOE's overestimation comes from DOE assuming that all charter schools will enjoy increased funding if they are treated as "stand alone" facilities, regardless of the number of students enrolled. But with last year's passage of SB 36, schools with over 220 students are already funded at a higher rate than smaller schools. Many of the charter schools already have more than 220 students, or in any event are scheduled to increase to at least this number. DOE's

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Members, House Finance Committee
May 4, 1999
Page 3

estimation fails to take this into account. Thus, with or without the passage of HB 191 Sec. 7(b), DOE's \$3,535,635 fiscal note is overestimated by \$1.5 million, if not much more. As with Section 1, above, I would hope that the Finance Committee would indeed make the proposed changes as stated in HB 191/CSHB 191, but I would rather delete this section than see the entire bill fail.

Other comments: The most important parts of this extremely vital HB 191 are the lifting of the sunset clause/contract length clause contained in Section 6, and Section 4, regarding distribution of local funds.

As to Section 6, this is a zero fiscal note amendment. But, landlords and banks are hesitant to lease or sell property on such a short lease or amortization schedule. Neither the Anchorage School District nor, to the best of my knowledge anyone else, have objected to lifting these caps, and thus I would urge the passage of Section 6.

As to Section 4, the problem is simple: the Anchorage School District, at least, has taken the position that it need not provide housing or funds sufficient for a charter school to obtain its own housing. I will not repeat the arguments contained in my April 27 letter to Reps. Dyson and Coghill (attached), but instead ask that each of you read my letter. Then, compare this with ASD Assistant Superintendent Carol Comeau's letter of that same date (also attached), wherein at page four Ms. Comeau states that:

At the current time, the ASD School Board Policy 333 allows for additional funding, but the School Board and Administration have not chosen to pay for leasing and associated housing costs. The ASD believes this is a local control issue and should not be made a part of State law since it is the local School Board who controls how the revenue is expended. (Emphasis added.)

In other words, ASD is boldly stating that it has no intention of providing either housing or facility funding for charter schools. Yet by state law charter schools are "district schools." And as a matter of stark reality, neither a "regular" school nor a charter school can survive without either a facility or funding to enable the charter schools to obtain their own facility. Charter schools' limited budgets (\$3880 per student, as

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Members, House Finance Committee
May 4, 1999
Page 4

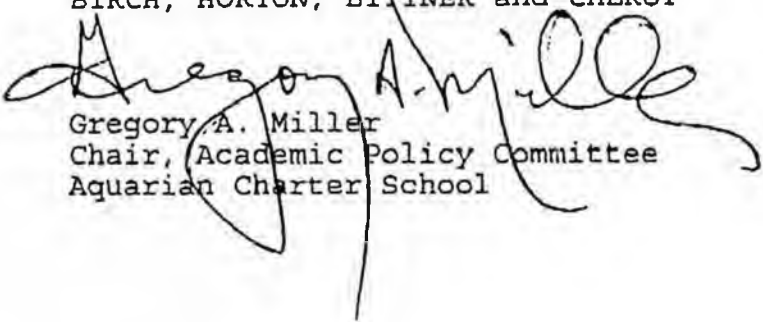
compared with \$7500 per student in "regular" ASD schools) are completely eaten up by paying the same union wages as at all other ASD schools, paying for utilities, etc.

In summary, please, please pass HB 191, in one form or another. Charter schools can and, after just two years are, providing better education for less money. We do not need a \$14 million new facility. We are not asking for more state funds. But we do need a stronger charter school law, one that will require ASD (and other districts, to the extent needed), to equitably distribute the local funds it receives. This is not a "local issue," simply because districts may be seeking to withhold local monies. This is a state issue, one that can be fixed by amending A.S. 14.03.250-.275.¹

I welcome your calls, either at work (907-276-1550) or at home (907-344-9672).

Sincerely,

BIRCH, HORTON, BITTNER and CHEROT



Gregory A. Miller
Chair, Academic Policy Committee
Aquarian Charter School

GAM/jap

cc: Rep. Fred Dyson
Mr. Jack Miller
Mr. Gien Biegel
Aquarian Charter School
Academic Policy Committee
Ms. Carol Comeau

¹ Obviously, where there is no local tax base, such as in rural areas, Section 4 and the distribution of local monies is not at issue.

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April 27, 1999

Rep. Fred Dyson
Rep. John Coghill
Co-Chairs, Health, Education
& Social Services
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

VIA FACSIMILE (907) 465-4587
VIA FACSIMILE (907) 465-3256

Re: HB 191

Dear Reps. Dyson and Coghill:

This follows my testimony last Saturday regarding changes to the existing charter school laws. I want to again thank both of you, plus your entire committee, for HB 191. It is a vital piece of legislation. I would be 100 percent supportive of the bill if the current version of HB 191 is passed with even just one change:

Sec 4(a): "... must reflect state, local and other funding for that school district," should be changed to

"... must include all state, local and other funding for that school district."

Since the first charter schools opened in Anchorage last year, the Anchorage School District ("ASD") has demonstrated that it will interpret in the most narrow possible manner whatever language the Legislature enacts. Put another way, unless you include language that requires ASD (and, presumably, other local school districts) to provide equal funding and/or housing, the school district will not distribute its revenues in a fair manner. ASD, at least, repeatedly has stated that charter schools "share" in "local funding" received by ASD, but that is a far cry from ASD distributing these monies "equally" or "fairly." If pursuant to HB 191 the school districts need only "reflect" what local (or other) money they pass on to charter schools, ASD will still not be

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Rep. Fred Dyson
Rep. John Coghill
April 27, 1999
Page 2

compelled to be fair. They can "reflect" forever, yet distribute nothing.

It is impossible for ASD or any other school district to state correctly that charter schools are being treated "equally" or "fairly," if all ASD students have expenses of — and thus receive — an average of \$7,500 per student, whereas charter schools receive only approximately \$3,880 per student. These are ASD's numbers, not mine. No ASD school could exist on this \$3,880, if from this amount the individual school must also pay for a facility. Put another way, "regular" schools receive an average of \$3,880 per student plus housing. And just as no ASD school can survive on this amount, neither can a charter school.

We are not, however, asking the state to spend even one penny more on charter schools. What we are asking is for the Legislature to insert language into FB 191 that compels the school districts to pass on local monies in an equal, proportionate amount per student. Inserting the words "includes all" is intended to accomplish that result.

Nor should HESS or anyone within the Legislature assume that ASD, at least, will treat charter schools fairly, unless compelled to do so. One need look no further than the facility issue. Every ASD student except those attending charter schools are provided with housing, at no cost. Both Family Partnership and Walden Pond charter schools, however, must pay for their own housing. And while previously ASD has provided Aquarian Charter School with seven portables, for the Fall 1999 semester Aquarian is losing these portables (the land is being reclaimed by the Municipality of Anchorage, to expand the MOA Public Works building).

To say that charter schools are barely even on ASD's radar screen is an understatement: when Russian Jack burned down this past Christmas, ASD found temporary housing within two weeks, for the entire semester. Yet although for an entire year ASD has known that Aquarian will lose its site come Fall 1999 — and although Aquarian is only half the size of Russian Jack — ASD has offered nothing. This is in spite of our willingness to divide our classes between two schools, or to be flexible in any number of other ways. This is also in spite of our taking from "regular" ASD schools students who, if they were not at Aquarian, would be right back in ASD schools.

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Rep. Fred Dyson
Rep. John Coghill
April 27, 1999
Page 3

On a slightly different note, I recall that at Saturday's session Eddy Jeans, of the Department of Education, testified that this Legislature should not mandate a strict pro rata funding formula for charter schools, because local school districts "may" obtain facility funding for charter schools from local construction bonds. This is a legally correct statement, but does not reflect reality. No individual school - whether a charter school or a "regular" school - is in a position to float a bond. That is one of the tasks properly allocated to the greater resources of the district. But this past winter ASD attempted to pass a four-year bond package, with none of that money allocated for any of the charter schools. ASD did not even consult with any charter school representative prior to issuing ASD's proposal. I repeat that realistically speaking, charter schools are not even on the local school district's radar screen. It is just the sheer energy and devotion of the hundreds of parents and teachers at the charter schools that have kept them afloat. I thus again urge your committee to pass HB 191, with the change I mentioned.

Finally is a change that would perhaps benefit the school districts more directly than charter schools. Notwithstanding my comments above, I am in complete agreement with Carol Comeau that Section 5 of HB 191, which requires school districts to itemize costs, is overkill, and will only create additional headaches. I instead suggest that since both the school districts and the charter schools seem to be quite comfortable with the existing language of subtracting the "indirect cost" (now at 4.31 percent) from a charter school's budget as a proper measure of a charter school's costs, this existing language should be retained.

While charter schools could live with the proposed changes, I would recommend against the proposed language of Section 5. Itemized cost accounting will just create more work for the school district. Second, I have no doubt but that ultimately the school district will attempt to pass on to the charter schools the district's costs for tracking such expenditures. If an accounting system like this is passed, however, language should be inserted giving the charter schools the right to unilaterally elect, before any costs are charged by the district, what district-provided "services" or "costs" the charter school wishes to use or incur. With that said, I repeat my recommendation that the much simpler 4.31 percent "indirect cost" language now in existence continue to be used to reflect all such costs.

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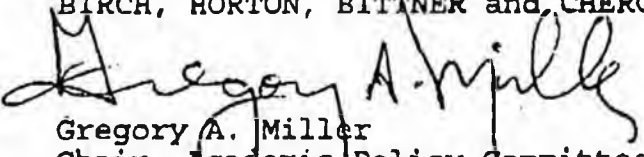
Rep. Fred Dyson
Rep. John Coghill
April 27, 1999
Page 4

Rep. Dyson, you said it best at the April 24 hearing: "the sheer genius of charter schools comes from their independence." That independence exists on a curriculum level, but not otherwise. While ASD has certainly spent hours upon hours "dealing" with charter schools, and while I believe ASD's heart is in the right place, charter schools are always dead last in considering who gets what. Inserting language that school districts must "include all" state, local and other funding will go a long way toward curing this problem.

I will call your office tomorrow to discuss this letter and HB 191. Of course, I welcome your calls prior to then, and I again thank you for your efforts in passing HB 191.

Sincerely,

BIRCH, HORTON, BITTNER and CHEROT


Gregory A. Miller
Chair, Academic Policy Committee
Aquarian Charter School

GAM/jap

cc: Mr. Jack Miller
Mr. Glen Biegel
Aquarian Charter School
Academic Policy Committee ✓
Ms. Carol Comeau



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April 27, 1999

Representative Fred Dyson (Via FAX 465-4587)
Representative John Coghill (Via FAX 465-3258)
Co-Chairs, House HESS Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representatives Dyson and Coghill:

Thank you very much for holding the hearing on HB 191, the Charter School Bill, on Saturday, April 24, when it was convenient for us to attend and testify. As I stated at the audio-conference, the Anchorage School District has the following comments and concerns relating to the proposed changes in the Charter School Law.

Section 1: The Anchorage School District does not object to the removal of the cap on the number of charter schools for the Anchorage School District. At the current time, there are four charter schools in the ASD and one other charter school approved, but not operational at this time. Removing the cap will allow the Alaska DOE and the State Board of Education to approve more charter schools in the State.

Section 2: The Anchorage School District supports this addition if it is necessary to reinforce the importance of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. Our Charter School Policy 333 clearly states that the Anchorage School District charter schools must take all required state and local tests required by Alaska Statute, DOE Regulations, and ASD Policy. The ASD feels that the charter schools must participate in the Benchmark Exams, the HSGQE and CAT tests as long as they are required for all other students.

Section 3: The Anchorage School District has significant concerns about the intent and implications to the ASD if this section is implemented. What is meant by "the itemized costs of administrative or other services to be provided"? This would be cumbersome and take valuable time and resources on the part of the ASD staff and the charter school staff to account for all of this time. For example, I have spent the equivalent of approximately 300 hours since July 1, 1998, working on charter school issues; this amount of time does not take into account the time spent by the

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Fax #	276-3670	Fax #	

Superintendent, Budget Director, the Chief Financial Officer, the Controller, the Purchasing Director, the Executive Director of Special Education and all Supervisors, the Warehouse, and many other departments as well as various School Board members. Last year, our first year with charter schools, I would say that the time spent was double that of this year for all of us! At the current time, these services are covered by the Indirect Cost of 4.31% for this school year which is subtracted from the allocated budget for the charter school; there are no additional administrative charges. The ASD has worked out a charge-back system for services for students, such as special education, related services, and Bilingual services delivered by ASD staff, rather than charter school staff for those charter schools who have elected to retain the 20% special needs funding under the Foundation Program. Classes at the King Career Center and at other schools taken by charter school students, etc. are also charged to the charter school budgets through the charge-back system.

Another issue concerns allowing the charter schools to opt out of services not required by law or regulation. Our ASD Charter School Policy 333 requires that charter schools use our purchasing and procurement procedures so that their funds can be audited in a manner similar to all of our schools. The District takes its public accountability very seriously and feels that charter schools should not be able to "opt out" of our financial accounting procedures. If waived by the School Board, charter schools do not have to use some of our services if they do not require them.

Eliminating the five-year term limit will help the charter schools find housing more easily. The annual reporting mechanism and the ability of a local School Board to terminate the contract on an annual basis for cause or for failing student achievement is sufficient protection to a school district. Landlords and possible contractors as well as financial lenders would be more willing to lease facilities if the terms could be negotiated for a longer term.

Section 4: The ASD believes that the 4.31% Indirect Cost rate is a better method to calculate administrative costs. We believe, based on our two-year experience in the ASD, that this is less financially than a department by department accounting of time spent on charter schools.

Anchorage School District Charter School Policy 333 now allows our charter schools to keep the funds raised by the school and to accept donations of money and materials to supplement the program budget. It is reported as part of the revenue for

accounting purposes. All donations of equipment or furnishings which are permanent become the property of the ASD as per School Board Policy.

We request clarification of the additional language which states that the "amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district and must reflect state, local and other funding for that school district. Not every school incurs the same expenditures as other similarly sized schools. For example, new buildings may have improved heating systems, and those cost savings are recognized in their budgets. Not all schools offer community education or have swimming pools. Each school is a separate entity from the others, and their annual budgets reflect these differences. A listing of the individual school budgets and per student costs at each school is provided on Attachment A. In addition, charter schools, as do the other ASD schools, receive services such as curriculum and instruction, training and development, audio-visual, community resources, etc., that are not charged to individual school budgets or provided for in the indirect cost rate. These services, in addition to other services not provided to charter schools such as transportation and district-wide maintenance of plant in a non-District facility, are funded by state and local revenues. These amounts are included in other department budgets, not in the charter schools budgets or in other schools budgets.

In the ASD, charter schools have an option to retain the special needs and intensive needs Foundation funding in their budgets. If they choose to retain the funding, then they are required to provide the service, either directly or through the ASD charge-back system. If the charter school chooses not to retain the special needs funding, then the services are provided by the ASD at no additional cost to the charter school. It is important to recognize that special needs services, district-wide services and other qualified programs are not included in the individual school budgets, and require funding from the state and local sources.

Section 5: This new section would become a book-keeping nightmare for our district. The ASD provides many of the services listed in this section at no cost: audio visual services, curriculum support and training, staff development and training, etc. are free and available. The ASD does NOT provide special needs and intensive services unless the charter school pays for the service through a charge-back arrangement; if the charter school provides the service, they are able to retain the 20% foundation revenue.

Transportation is not provided to any of our alternative schools and programs and should not be provided at no cost to the charter schools due to the excessive cost which would not qualify for reimbursement from the State of Alaska. Facility rental is the responsibility of the charter school at this time since there is limited space available in the Anchorage School District. At the current time, charter schools are charged a pro-rata square footage rate for utilities and custodial services in any ASD facility used by the charter school. If the charter school leases a facility, the lease is paid out of the revenues generated for the program budget. At the current time, the ASD School Board Policy 333 allows for additional funding, but the School Board and Administration have not chosen to pay for leasing and associated housing costs. The ASD believes this is a local control issue and should not be made part of State law since it is the local School Board who controls how the revenue is expended.

More information is requested as to the intent of which services a charter school would be permitted to opt out of; again, this should be a locally-determined issue. The Anchorage School Board is in the best position to determine which costs and services are required for the charter schools in the ASD.

Page

Section 6: The Anchorage School District has no objection to dropping the sunset clause and the extension of the duration of the contract for the charter schools.

Section 7: The Anchorage School District supports the charter school being treated as a separate school as long as the ASD would not be penalized by the DOE in calculating allowable square footage for debt reimbursement in school construction projects. We do not believe that it should be combined with the largest school in the District (Service High School) and funded at .84. If a charter school is processed through the School Size Factor, their revenues should be sufficient to address many of their housing and other issues. If a charter school is housed within another school, which is highly unlikely in the ASD due to space constraints, then their funding could remain at .84 since they will only be charged for utilities and custodial services on a pro-rata square footage basis.

Section 8: No objection.

Section 9: No objection.

Section 10: No objection.

Again, thank you for allowing the Anchorage School District to provide you with additional comments to those made on Saturday, April 24, 1999.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (907) 269-2290 if you have need for more information.

Sincerely yours,

Carol Comeau

Carol Comeau
Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Attachment

- cc Bob Christal, Superintendent
Janet Stokesbary, Chief Financial Officer
Larry Wiget, Government Relations
School Board members
Glen Biegel, Alaska Charter School Assn.
Greg Miller, Aquarian Charter School
Jack Miller, Family Partnership Charter School
Craig Naylor, Walden Pond Charter School
Linda Sharp, Village Charter School

Anchorage School District
 Anchorage, Alaska
 Revised FY 1998-99
 Budgeted Cost Per Student in School Budgets

ATTACHMENT A

Org	Elementary Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
100	Abbot Loop	530	1,609,923	3,044
110	Airport Heights	374	1,333,784	3,566
112	Alyeska	576	1,903,328	3,304
114	Aurora	499	1,658,625	3,323
115	Barter	499	1,710,881	3,429
116	Bayshore	527	1,928,848	3,658
118	Bear Valley	501	1,641,761	3,277
120	Birchwood ABC	331	1,330,118	4,019
125	Donovan	386	2,042,917	5,292
130	Campbell	528	1,781,249	3,372
140	Chester Valley	323	1,194,363	3,698
150	Chinook	528	1,768,732	3,348
160	Chugach	246	972,336	3,953
170	Chugach	508	1,933,565	3,806
174	College Gate	491	1,870,712	3,810
180	Crescent Park	374	1,360,669	3,638
190	Denzel	547	2,132,013	3,898
200	Eagle River	387	1,402,386	3,624
210	Fairview	430	1,830,843	4,258
215	Fire Lake	354	1,347,660	3,764
220	Girdwood	152	763,858	5,025
230	Government Hill	423	1,635,471	3,848
235	Homesend	470	1,632,106	3,473
237	Huffman	486	1,654,458	3,404
240	Inlet View	233	993,567	3,896
242	Karman	639	2,032,375	3,181
244	Kennedy	223	1,030,600	4,580
245	Klara	524	1,927,703	3,679
246	Kinesid	459	1,588,357	3,459
248	Lake Hood	514	1,766,504	3,437
250	Lake Ops	566	2,110,658	3,729
257	Mt. Spurr	287	1,092,764	3,808
260	ML View	425	1,765,457	4,154
270	Maldeon	412	1,689,108	4,100
280	North Star	496	1,937,112	3,905
290	Northern Lights ABC	546	1,739,304	3,186
300	Norwood	370	1,348,446	3,644
310	Nunaka Valley	365	1,455,787	3,988
315	Ocean View	399	1,455,408	3,648
320	O'Malley	489	1,641,983	3,358
324	Orion	424	1,752,898	4,134
328	Partridge	379	1,334,995	3,522
330	Rabbit Creek	435	1,489,630	3,424
335	Reverwood	426	1,476,189	3,465
340	Rogers Park	616	1,982,898	3,219
345	Russian Jack	385	1,579,358	4,102
350	Sand Lake	598	1,914,411	3,201
360	Seaside Park	536	1,742,590	3,251
362	Spring Hill	616	1,939,939	3,149
364	Stanton	617	2,099,056	3,402
365	Taku	430	1,482,349	3,447
370	Tudor	525	1,753,091	3,339
380	Ternagain	389	1,387,219	3,566
384	Tyson William	353	1,562,209	4,426
386	Uma Major	208	1,159,040	5,572
388	Uma Minor	216	958,267	4,436

Cost-Per-Student Report

4/27/99 12:56 PM

390	Willow	611	2,217,539	3,678
400	Willow Cross	504	1,663,404	3,300
410	Wander Park	516	1,955,584	3,790
418	Gladys Wood	527	1,768,824	3,356
499	Unallocated *		5,118,848	
		<u>26,907</u>	<u>\$ 102,696,090</u>	<u>\$ 3,817</u>

Org	Charter Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
510	Aquarian **	111	\$ 426,377	\$ 3,841
540	Village	494	2,015,232	4,079
585	SPYDER			
585	Village **	21	81,719	3,891
590	Walden Pond **	153	517,193	5,341
		<u>779</u>	<u>\$ 3,340,521</u>	<u>\$ 4,288</u>

Org	Middle Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Cost Per Student
450	Polaris K - 12	475	\$ 1,872,308	\$ 3,942
700	Central Middle School of Science	831	3,536,298	4,245
710	Clark Middle School	779	3,463,747	4,446
730	Crumming Middle School	593	2,909,005	4,906
740	Rumshaw Middle School	937	3,982,758	4,251
750	Mims Middle School	1,002	4,201,770	4,199
755	Mirror Lake Middle School	711	3,252,766	4,575
760	Roswig Middle School	774	3,461,288	4,472
770	Wendley Middle School	939	3,990,603	4,250
780	Goldensview Middle School	816	3,559,444	4,351
799	Unallocated *		454,635	
		<u>7,861</u>	<u>\$ 34,690,622</u>	<u>\$ 4,413</u>

Org	High Schools/Alternative Schools	Total Enrollment	Revised Budget	Per Student
800	Burden High	1,816	7,168,803	3,943
805	King Career Center	475	3,296,304	6,940
810	Chubbak High	1,943	7,282,988	3,748
820	Diamond High	2,017	7,412,176	3,675
830	East High	1,847	7,134,887	3,863
835	S.A.V.E.	229	1,130,308	4,936
840	Service High	2,244	7,859,014	3,502
845	Stellar	295	1,130,881	3,833
850	West High	1,490	6,272,706	4,210
875	McLaughlin	167	1,467,136	8,785
880	Becky Remson	200	1,028,971	5,145
881	S.E.A.J.C.H.	105	421,319	4,013
885	A.V.A.L.L.	64	261,887	3,779
899	Unallocated *		4,623,846	
		<u>12,894</u>	<u>\$ 56,476,261</u>	<u>\$ 4,380</u>

Note: * These funds are distributed to the schools throughout the year. For example, distribution is based on enrollment for additional staffing allocation for large class sizes, textbook adoptions, and emergency supplies and equipment.

** Aquarian, Village, and Walden Pond Charter Schools have chosen to include special needs funding in their school budgets. Walden Pond and Village have been provided funding based on the old formula which provided a higher amount of funding for FY 1994-95.

A variety of schools have grade levels that cover more than one level - elementary, middle and high school level. Each school is shown only one time regardless of school grade level configuration.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HFIN
committee name
 committee on HB 191, dated 5-12-99
bill/subject

I Am a parent of 6 kids that have gone or are going through the public system. I really wish I had a choice for all my kids not just the youngest one. The need for the charter schools is great. We need to have these choices. I really think charters are here to stay. Good thing because of the changing times. I really think it is a nessesary improvement in education. We can't achieve these goals if we haven't got the support that we need from our government. Looking at the outcome of Charter Schools that have been in exsistance for some time, it is a great addition to education. Why is such a great addition to our system, meet with so much opposition. All we do is fight for every bit of \$ and building space we get. All we are asking for

Signed: Ann Ripp
Testifier

Academy Charter School
Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 1432 Palmer Ak. 99645

Address
746-3332
Phone No.

is our fair share not special treatment,
just equality.

I was one of the parents that was working
to make a school for our kids at the academy
Charter school. I only wish it was work
we were doing on a permanent facility.

Charter school supporters are dedicated
people, please vote for these changes and
work with us not against us. Education
has got to move forward with the changing
times. Remember, the better these kids
are educated the better our leaders will
be in the future.

Thank you,

Ann Riggs

Academy Charter School
Palmer, AK.

HFIN

HB 191

FAX
TESTIMONY

Rep. Eldon Mulder
Rep. Gene Theriault
Rep. Alan Austerman
Rep. Con Bunde
Rep. Gary Davis
Rep. John Davies
Rep. Richard Foster
Rep. Ben Grussendorf
Rep. Vic Kohring
Rep. Carl Moses
Rep. Bill Williams,
Members, House Finance Committee
Room 519
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: HB 191

Dear Representatives:

This follows my audio testimony on April 24 in front of the HESS committee. Charter Schools need to have a strong law to protect and force Districts to provide equal and fair treatment in funding and housing. I implore you and your colleagues to act in a manner which will provide equal and fair treatment of Charter School students, teachers, and parents! PLEASE move HB 191 out of your Finance Committee. This bill is vital in enabling Charter Schools to truly be the catalysts for school reform!

Through out the state, Charter Schools are demonstrating successful strategies and innovations for education. Sadly enough, the committed, dedicated parents and teachers, (willing to sacrifice time, money, physical labor, emotional support and continuous effort,) have had to bear the burden of the costs to JUST for the Charter School to SURVIVE! This burden was forced upon these parents and teachers by the District's unwillingness to provide equal funding and equal housing. Charter Schools have been and are still the "step child". As the step child, we have to fight for every scrap, every dollar to just meet our needs. We are fighting for equal funding and physically building our own make shift sites just to open the doors. We must constantly fight against "the bad guy" view of other schools within the district, other teachers and other parents. We believe this condition, that of the step child or bad guy, largely comes from the fact we are challenging status quo, adding competition and stimulating innovation to public education.

Change causes fear. Fear causes discrimination and inequity. I am asking you, each and every one of you, our Representatives, to stop the discrimination, stop the inequity and provide us with some PROTECTION to do the jobs you have asked us to do...improve education and provide parental choice in education! A strong law which delineates that Charter Schools are in fact "a

school", (their own site). A strong law which delineates that an equal portion of the federal, state, and local revenues shall be given to the Charter Schools. HB 191 does a great job of strengthening and improving the current law! Please, please, move this Bill through your committee so that it can be voted upon by the House!

I find the cost estimates on this bill by DOE inflated. We cannot continue to make parents, teachers and students of charter schools personally bear the burden and be punished monetarily for having chosen choice in education!

The funding issue, equal revenue, is of great importance for our school and all rural schools. Our goal is to stay a small school. A small school in which every student is acknowledged for their individual talents and skills. Since the horror of Colorado, our belief in small schools are even greater! SB 36, sentencing schools under 200 to have their funding calculated at the nearest largest school level, causes Charter school, specifically small charter schools of under a 200 student population, to be penalized! Specifically, this school year, a student at Academy Charter School in Palmer, Alaska was valued at or funded at a per pupil rate of approx. \$5900.00. Since the SB 36 sentencing, this next year, a student at Academy Charter School in Palmer, Alaska will be valued at or funded at a per pupil rate of approx. \$4817.00. Moving of HB191 from your committee, specifying that Charter Schools are in fact "a school!" will make our per pupil amount back to \$5900.00, the same as this year. Our students deserve to be valued at the same funding rate! Equity is a must!

The removal of the sunset clause contained in HB 191 is very important! Longer contracts would allow for banks to consider our school for a building loan. This bill has so many vital aspects to the future of Charter Schools. The specific language in the revised law will stop the current trend of discrimination in funding.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance. Students, teachers and parents should not be punished monetarily, or ill treated in order for their students to have equal treatment. I thank you in advance, for your efforts in beginning a new trend, equity.

Thank you for all of your efforts and assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gerard,
Secretary, Alaska Charter School Association
Principal, Academy Charter School

Juneau Community Charter School

430 4th Street, Suite 100
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 586-2526



The Juneau Community Charter School has been successfully operating as a member of the Juneau School District since 1997. We would like to take this opportunity to offer our support for House Bill No. 191. Motivated individuals deserve the right to explore innovation and to become directly involved with education. Charter Schools have allowed diverse talents to enrich Alaska's educational process and will provide models for future programs. Listed below are items we feel are important to be considered:

- ◆ Length of Contract should be extended to July, 2010 as proposed. It would be preferable to eliminate the "sunset clause" altogether. If the Charter School program needs to be eliminated in the future, it should be based on problems with the program not an arbitrary calendar date.
- ◆ Number of Charter Schools should be increased as proposed. It would be preferable to eliminate the artificial cap on Alaskan Charter Schools altogether. These schools are very difficult to start and operate, therefore it is unlikely there will be an explosion in the number of new Charter Schools if the cap is removed.
- ◆ Requiring Districts to provide an accounting for services both provided and not utilized would give charter schools in regions where districts are not supportive the ability to clearly evaluate their budget options. The Juneau School District already provides this service and it has been mutually beneficial. Both the District and our school have been able to better plan our programs as a result. For those Charter Schools who do not feel this provision is necessary, it should be made optional. There is no reason a District should provide extra documentation if the local Charter School does not need or desire it.
- ◆ Enhancing options for Charter School facilities will provide significant help for Charter Schools who are trying to form. Locating and securing an adequate facility remains the most difficult obstacle for a newly forming Charter School. The Juneau Community Charter School has had great difficulty obtaining a facility for our modest school of 60 students. We are exploring expansion however without space which meets Building Codes for school occupancy our program remains more limited than originally envisioned. The proposed bill provides minimal help in this regard but it is a step in the right direction.
- ◆ Charter School students should receive funding equal to other students in the same school district. This issue is not addressed in the proposed bill but is vitally important to us. Under SB-36 our students receive 0.8 of the state funds compared to other students in our district. This 20% per student reduction has led the Juneau School District to take a less than enthusiastic stance on providing equal funding to our students compared to other students in the district because our students cause the district to lose state funds. We request equal treatment under the state funding formula.

Thank you for listening to our concerns. We welcome you to visit the Juneau Community Charter School's facility anytime. We are located just four short blocks from the Capitol Building. Just walk out the front steps, turn left and walk for less than 5 minutes and you'll be there! Call ahead or drop in anytime.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg Chaney". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Greg Chaney, Juneau Community Charter School Academic Policy Committee Board Member

FEB 04 '00 01:10PM FNSB SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. 1/1

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 4, 2000

TO: House Finance Committee

FROM: Nick Stayrouk, Director of Program, Planning and Evaluation
Mike Fisher, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance MF

RE: HB191

Please consider our concerns regarding HB191 "An Act relating to charter schools."

We currently subsidize both Charter Schools operating within the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District above "basic need" as determined under AS14.17.410, and do not charge the Charter Schools our State approved indirect rate or for any specific services. We have a good working relationship with our Charter Schools and feel the changes included in Sec 4 of CSHB191 are unnecessary and will negatively impact our relationship with charter schools in the future.

Sec 4 (e) of CSHB191

Requires each service or program provided by the local school district be itemized on a per student value.

This section should be deleted or amended to allow for compliance with Federal guidelines. The State needs to research the implications of this revision as it relates to Federal Circular A87 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments. Defining the cost of indirect services on a per student value may conflict with this federal guideline. Federal guidelines are fairly clear in that your basis for allocation is the ratio (expressed as a percentage) of the indirect costs to a direct cost base.

The concept of the per student value is ambiguous. Is the per student cost of each service computed by taking the total cost of the service divided by the total District enrollment or is the per student cost the total cost of service divided by the number of students receiving the service?

The administrative burden and inevitable disagreements over what is a reasonable cost may lead to an adversarial relationship with our Charter Schools that does not currently exist.

Sec 4 (f) of CSHB191

Requires allocation of the Borough's local contribution to education based on adjusted ADM.

Our position is this additional allocation should be the portion of the local contribution above the required 4 mills, which is already included in the basic need computation.

Please consider our concerns before passing this out of the Finance Committee.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance
committee name

Committee on HB 191 Charter Schools, dated Feb. 4, 2000
bill # / subject

Charter school students are members of the school district population count. Each charter school student generates funding for the district from State and Local sources. Please support legislation that will ensure that the dollars generated by the charter school students end up funding the charter school.

Thank you

Signed: Larry Semmens
Testifier

Aurora Borealis Charter School
Representing (optional)

36574 Mackey Lake Rd
Address

(907) 262-9022
Phone number

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH**

144 N. BINKLEY · SOLDOTNA, ALASKA · 99669-7599
BUSINESS (907) 262-4441 FAX (907) 262 1992

DALE BAGLEY
MAYOR

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 108

At the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly meeting on February 1, 2000, the assembly passed a motion supporting section 5.25.055 of House Bill 108. They also directed the Borough Administration to provide testimony supporting HB 108 and explaining the importance of the bill to the borough and the cities located within the borough. Since the Assembly's legislative committee has only had time to discuss this section, they have not taken a position on the remainder of the bill.

HB 108 is extremely important to the Kenai Peninsula Borough because the registration and ownership records of watercraft located within the borough provide the current address for assessment notices and tax billing.

In December 1997, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly established a flat tax for all Coast Guard registered watercraft. The Assembly was under the assumption that the Coast Guard would help the Assessing Department identify ownership of all watercraft within the Borough. After several months of requesting the ownership information, the Coast Guard informed us they would no longer provide the requested information because they are prohibited from releasing the information under the Privacy Act of 1974(PA) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Their refusal to provide information to us was also based on the fact we were using the information to generate income for the borough.

Kenai Peninsula Borough assessment roll currently lists a total of 4,182 watercraft. The Assessing Department conducts monthly situs inspections of approximately 3,300 vessels during the months of September through February to determine annual taxability. These vessels are located in the harbors, various storage yards and private property throughout the borough. Many of the vessels do not display identification numbers which makes identification difficult or impossible to establish ownership. Those that we are unable to identify are then able to avoid paying their share of the tax burden thus shifting the cost of services to other taxpayers. With the cities and borough facing reduced revenues, it is necessary for those receiving services within the borough to be on the tax rolls.

I would like to make specific reference to the subsections of 05.25.055.

1. Subsection (A) refers to undocumented boats placed on the water must be registered and numbered.
2. In subsection (B) the department of administration authorizes agents, including boat dealers, to register boats.

• **Hearing on House Bill 108****Page 2**

3. Subsection (C) requires the purchaser of a boat from a dealer to register and pay the registration fee before the boat leaves the premise.
4. Subsection (D) prohibits a person from operating a boat on the water of the state unless they have a valid certificate provided by the Department of Administration and must display the validation decals on the boat.
5. Subsection (F) requires vessels operating on waters of the state for more than 90 consecutive days and hold an out of state certificate of numbers must apply for a certificate of number in the State of Alaska.
6. Subsection (H) reads, all records of ownership of boats that are kept by the Department of Administration under this section are public records. **[and upon request shall be made available to the municipalities without charge.]**

These sections will eliminate many of the problems now being experienced by the Kenai Peninsula Borough. Many of the vessels located in the Harbors and storage yards do not hold a "current registration" and therefore do not reflect current ownership due to the sale of the boat. There are approximately 30 to 40 boats that have been in the borough for several years and display out of state certificate of numbers.

In conclusion, we feel that HB 108 provides adequate provisions for registration and ownership identification of vessels located throughout the State of Alaska. Ownership information will be public record, research costs will be reduced and all boats within the borough will be easy to identify and the cost of services will be distributed equally.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough is encouraging the passage of House Bill 108 and specifically Section 05.25.055 as it is currently written with only the suggested modification to subsection (H).

Testimony by Kenai Peninsula Borough Assessor Jim Lawyer

HB

191

SFIN

FILE

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

REPORTED OUT OF
4/14/00

DATE: 4/11/00

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 14 April 00

Finance Committee considered

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 191(FIN)

"An Act relating to charter schools."

and recommends:

- be replaced with S CS CS HB 191 (FIN)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to the _____ Committee

- Senate Bill:**
- same title
 - new title
- House Bill:**
- same title
 - technical title
 - new: SCR# _____

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
<i>Linda Green</i>	✓	<i>Bill & ...</i>	✓		
<i>Loren D. Leman</i>	✓	<i>Al Adams</i>	X		
		<i>Gary White</i>	✓		
Co-Chair: <i>[Signature]</i>		Co-Chair:			
Co-Chair: <i>[Signature]</i>	✓	Co-Chair:			

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):*

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
Education	1/31/00		161.3

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

FISCAL NOTE

Bill Version: CSHB 191 (FIN)

(H) Publish Date: 2/11/00

STATE OF ALASKA
2000 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

REPORTED OUT OF
SFC 411400

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction) _____ Dept. Affected Education & Early Development
 Title An Act relating to charter schools BRU Teaching and Learning Support
 Component Quality School

Sponsor Rep. Dyson
 Requester House Finance Component No. 2147

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Personal Services	102.3	105.0	107.0	109.0	111.0	113.0
Travel	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Contractual	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Supplies	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	161.3	164.0	166.0	168.0	170.0	172.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2000) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time	1				
Part-time					
Temporary					

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Please refer to the attached sheet for a detailed description.

Prepared by: Barbara Thompson
 Division: Teaching and Learning Support
 Approved by: Richard S. Cross, Commissioner
 Agency: Department of Education & Early Development

Phone: 465-8727
 Date/Time: 01/28/00
 Date: 1/31/2000

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Fiscal Note Description for CSHB 191
Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
1/28/00

Section 1 of CSHB 191 removes the former requirements that the State Board of Education & Early Development may not approve more than 30 charter schools to operate in the state at one time and shall approve charter schools in a geographically balanced manner. Amended language raises the cap on the number of charter schools to be allowed from 30 to 60. Language related to approval of charter schools geographically is eliminated.

Section 2 requires the inclusion of a statement showing itemized costs or administrative or other services provided by a district to its charter schools.

Section 3 states that the annual charter school budget shall be not less than the basic need for the charter school and must reflect the itemization and per student value.

Section 4 requires districts to itemize services provided to the charter schools and itemize services and programs whose costs are allocated districtwide. Charter schools may elect not to receive services, except for administration, districtwide programs or services or other services required by law.

Section 5 extends allowable charter school contract time from 5 years to 10 years.

Personal Services - 102,205

One new full-time Education Specialist II, Range 21, is needed to administer the charter schools application process; provide technical assistance to school districts and charter school staff who are planning for or initiating a charter school; assure compliance with state charter school statutes and regulations, assure quality programs are developed and supported, develop and maintain a charter schools regulations process; and evaluate the effectiveness of Alaska's charter schools. (\$77,000)

Funds for one .15 FTE Grants Administrator II will be needed to address fiscal issues and complete fiscal documents related to charter schools grant applications and billings. (\$8,205)

Funds for one .50 FTE Administrative Clerk II will be needed to provide clerical support to the Education Specialist and for the application process. (\$17,000)