

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY OPPOSING SENATE BILL 277 AND URGING THE PROTECTION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS, CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING, AND CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION.

AGENDA OF: April 7, 2026

Assembly Action: Adopted with Assemblymember McKee opposed
04/07/26 - BJH

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: Present to the Assembly for consideration.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	3 / 2 3 / 2 0 2 6 X N S f o r A s s y m B o w l e s S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s
Borough Attorney	3 / 2 3 / 2 0 2 6 X N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s
Borough Manager	3 / 2 3 / 2 0 2 6 X M i c h a e l B r o w n S i g n e d b y : M i k e B r o w n
Borough Clerk	3 / 2 4 / 2 0 2 6 X B r e n d a J . H e n r y f o r S i g n e d b y : B r e n d a H e n r y

ATTACHMENT (S) : Resolution Serial No. 26-028 (4 pp)
School District Resolution 26-005 (2pp)
SB277 (10 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: This resolution is sponsored by Assemblymember Bowles to fully support the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board in opposing SB 277. The resolution urges the protection of parental rights, charter school funding, and correspondence education.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION: Consider resolution.

SENATE BILL NO. 277

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Introduced: 3/13/26

Referred: Education, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to education; relating to charter school budgets; relating to
2 correspondence study program materials, funding, and student counts; relating to
3 student transportation funding; relating to cooperative arrangements for
4 correspondence study program services entered into by school districts; relating to the
5 base student allocation; relating to eligibility for teacher certification; relating to
6 reemploying retired members of the teachers' retirement system at regional resource
7 centers; relating to reading proficiency incentive grants; requiring the Legislative
8 Budget and Audit Committee to procure an education funding study; and providing for
9 an effective date."

10 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

11 * **Section 1.** AS 14.03.260(a) is amended to read:

12 (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 up to eight [FOUR] percent or the specified administrative costs, whichever is less. Costs directly related to charter school facilities, including rent, utilities, and maintenance, may not be included in an annual program budget for the purposes of calculating the four percent cap on administrative costs under this subsection. A local school board shall provide a charter school with a report itemizing the administrative costs retained by the local school board under this section. 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 and includes funds generated by grants, appropriations, federal impact aid, the required local contribution, the local contribution under AS 14.17.410(c), special needs under AS 14.17.420(a)(1), and secondary school vocational and technical instruction under AS 14.17.420(a)(3). A school district shall direct state aid under AS 14.11 for the construction or major maintenance of a charter school facility to the charter school that generated the state aid, subject to the same terms and conditions that apply to state aid under AS 14.11 for construction or major maintenance of a school facility that is not a charter school.

* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.300 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(c) A student who ceases to be enrolled in a correspondence study program may retain textbooks, equipment, and other curriculum materials provided to the student through the program, including materials purchased through an annual student allotment provided to a parent or guardian of the student under AS 14.03.310.

* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.09.010(a) is amended to read:

(a) A school district that provides student transportation services for the transportation of students who reside a distance from established schools is eligible to receive funding for operating or subcontracting the operation of the transportation system for students to and from the schools within the student's transportation service area. Subject to appropriation, the amount of funding provided by the state for operating the student transportation system is the amount of a school district's ADM,

less the ADM for the district's correspondence programs during the current fiscal year, multiplied by the per student amount for the school district as follows, for the school years beginning July 1, 2026 [2025]:

DISTRICT	PER STUDENT AMOUNT
Alaska Gateway	<u>\$2,694</u> [\$2,529]
Aleutians East	<u>402</u> [377]
Anchorage	<u>564</u> [529]
Annette Island	<u>236</u> [221]
Bering Strait	<u>63</u> [59]
Bristol Bay	<u>3,459</u> [3,247]
Chatham	<u>364</u> [341]
Copper River	<u>2,054</u> [1,928]
Cordova	<u>435</u> [408]
Craig	<u>548</u> [514]
Delta/Greely	<u>2,144</u> [2,013]
Denali	<u>2,340</u> [2,197]
Dillingham	<u>1,577</u> [1,480]
Fairbanks	<u>1,057</u> [992]
Galena	<u>330</u> [309]
Haines	<u>811</u> [761]
Hoonah	<u>387</u> [363]
Iditarod	<u>274</u> [257]
Juneau	<u>781</u> [733]
Kake	<u>352</u> [330]
Kashunamiut	<u>7</u> [6]
Kenai Peninsula	<u>1,185</u> [1,112]
Ketchikan	<u>941</u> [833]
Klawock	<u>757</u> [710]
Kodiak Island	<u>1,035</u> [971]
Kuspuk	<u>846</u> [794]
Lake and Peninsula	<u>497</u> [466]

1	Lower Kuskokwim	<u>359</u> [337]
2	Lower Yukon	<u>2</u> [1]
3	Matanuska-Susitna	<u>1,178</u> [1,106]
4	Nenana	<u>761</u> [714]
5	Nome	<u>805</u> [755]
6	North Slope	<u>1,450</u> [1,361]
7	Northwest Arctic	<u>32</u> [30]
8	Pelican	<u>94</u> [88]
9	Petersburg	<u>485</u> [455]
10	Saint Mary's	<u>250</u> [234]
11	Sitka	<u>554</u> [520]
12	Skagway	<u>47</u> [44]
13	Southeast Island	<u>1,496</u> [1,404]
14	Southwest Region	<u>774</u> [726]
15	Unalaska	<u>840</u> [788]
16	Valdez	<u>953</u> [894]
17	Wrangell	<u>907</u> [851]
18	Yakutat	<u>963</u> [904]
19	Yukon Flats	<u>342</u> [321]
20	Yukon/Koyukuk	<u>388</u> [364]
21	Yupiit	<u>3</u> [2].

22 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.14.110(a) is amended to read:

23 (a) When necessary to provide more efficient or more economical educational
 24 services, a district may cooperate or the department may require a district to cooperate
 25 with other districts, state-operated schools, or the Bureau of Indian Affairs in
 26 providing educational or administrative services. However, if a cooperative
 27 arrangement requires pupils to live away from their usual homes, the school board
 28 shall provide classes within the attendance area when there are at least eight children
 29 eligible to attend elementary and secondary school in the attendance area. **A**
 30 **cooperative arrangement related to providing correspondence study program**
 31 **services must specify the amount of the administrative services fee paid to the**

entity providing the correspondence study program services. The administrative services fee shall be the indirect cost rate approved by the department up to eight percent and may not include costs incurred by the entity providing the correspondence study program for providing special education services, in-person classes, career, technical, or vocational course fees, or extracurricular fees. In this subsection,

(1) "administrative services" includes supervisory, maintenance, purchasing, or other services that are required for unified administration;

(2) "educational services" includes boarding and tuition arrangements, pupil or teacher exchanges, special education services, or curriculum development.

* **Sec. 5.** AS 14.17.430 is amended to read:

Sec. 14.17.430. State funding for correspondence study. Except as provided in AS 14.17.400(b), funding for the state centralized correspondence study program or a district correspondence program, including a district that offers a statewide correspondence study program, includes an allocation from the public education fund in an amount calculated by using [MULTIPLYING] the ADM of the correspondence program **reported under AS 14.17.500(a) and 14.17.600(a)** [BY 90 PERCENT].

* **Sec. 6.** AS 14.17.470 is amended to read:

Sec. 14.17.470. Base student allocation. The base student allocation is **\$6,786.54** [\$6,660].

* **Sec. 7.** AS 14.17.500 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(h) A district shall include in the ADM of a statewide correspondence study program offered by the district a student who is enrolled in the program and resides in the district. If a student is enrolled in a statewide correspondence study program but does not reside in the district offering the program, the district in which the student resides shall include the student in the ADM of the school in that district with the lowest ADM, as determined by the most recent student count data for the district.

* **Sec. 8.** AS 14.20.015(a) is amended to read:

(a) The department shall issue a preliminary teacher certificate to an out-of-state teacher who meets the requirements of this section. To be eligible for a preliminary teacher certificate, a person shall

(1) have received at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized **institutional** [REGIONAL] accrediting association or approved by the commissioner;

(2) hold a valid teacher certificate issued by another state;

(3) have submitted fingerprints to the department to be used for a criminal history background check and been found by the department to be suitable for employment as a teacher under AS 14.20.020(f);

(4) have paid the fee required by the department under AS 14.20.020(c).

* **Sec. 9.** AS 14.20.020(b) is amended to read:

(b) A person is not eligible for a teacher certificate unless that person has received at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized **institutional** [REGIONAL] accrediting association or approved by the commissioner and, if applicable, has passed the examination or examinations required by (i) of this section. However, this subsection is not applicable to

(1) persons employed in the state public school system on September 1, 1962;

(2) persons issued an emergency certificate during a situation that, in the judgment of the commissioner, requires the temporary issuance of a certificate to a person not otherwise qualified.

* **Sec. 10.** AS 14.20.022(b) is amended to read:

(b) To be eligible for a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate, a person shall

(1) hold at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized **institutional** [REGIONAL] or national accrediting association or approved by the commissioner and

(A) have majored or minored in the subject that the person will be teaching; or

(B) have at least five years **of** experience in the subject matter that the person will be teaching;

(2) have submitted fingerprints and the fees required by the Department of Public Safety under AS 12.62.160 for criminal justice information and a national criminal history record check to the department; the department must have submitted the fingerprints and fees to the Department of Public Safety for a report of criminal justice information under AS 12.62 and a national criminal history record check under AS 12.62.400 and the person must have been found by the department to be suitable for employment as a teacher under AS 14.20.020(f); and

(3) be currently enrolled in an approved post-baccalaureate teacher education program at an [A REGIONALLY ACCREDITED] institution accredited by an institutional accrediting association meeting the requirements of AS 14.20.020(b) that provides for completion of the regular teacher certificate education requirements within two years after receipt of a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate under this section.

* **Sec. 11.** AS 14.20.136(a) is amended to read:

(a) Subject to (b) - (d) of this section, a school district or regional resource center established under AS 14.12.150 may reemploy a member who is retired under a retirement plan established in AS 14.25.009 - 14.25.220, or a member who is retired under a retirement plan established in AS 14.25.310 - 14.25.590. In this subsection, "school district" has the meaning given in AS 14.30.350.

* **Sec. 12.** AS 14.20.136(b) is amended to read:

(b) A member who is retired under AS 14.25.110(a) may not be reemployed under (a) of this section unless the member

(1) certifies that the member and the school district or regional resource center did not arrange before the member retired from the school district or regional resource center for the member to be reemployed by the school district or regional resource center after the member retired; and

(2) has been retired for at least

(A) 60 days if the member is at least 62 years of age; or

(B) six months if the member is less than 62 years of age.

* **Sec. 13.** AS 14.20.136(c) is amended to read:

(c) Before reemploying a retired member under (a) of this section to fill a

1 position, a school district **or regional resource center** shall

2 (1) by resolution, adopt a policy that describes the circumstances of a
3 shortage or anticipated shortage of applicants, other than retired members, who are
4 qualified for particular positions and permits rehiring that complies with the
5 requirements of this section; and

6 (2) publicly advertise the position for 10 business days and actively
7 recruit to fill the position by hiring a person other than a member who is retired.

8 * **Sec. 14.** AS 14.20.136(e) is amended to read:

9 (e) A school district **or regional resource center** that reemploys a member
10 under this section who is retired under the defined benefit retirement plan established
11 in AS 14.25.009 - 14.25.220 is required to

12 (1) provide the administrator with

13 (A) a copy of the resolution and policy adopted under (c) of
14 this section; and

15 (B) for every retired member who is rehired, a report
16 identifying the member by name and describing the

17 (i) circumstances of the shortage that necessitated the
18 rehire; and

19 (ii) actions taken by the school district **or regional**
20 **resource center** to comply with [SCHOOL DISTRICT] policy adopted
21 under (c) of this section and the requirements of this section; and

22 (2) make contributions under AS 14.25.070.

23 * **Sec. 15.** AS 14.25.043(f) is amended to read:

24 (f) If a member who retired under AS 14.25.110(a) is reemployed by a school
25 district **or regional resource center** under AS 14.20.136,

26 (1) the member does not become an active member;

27 (2) the member shall continue to receive retirement benefits from the
28 plan as though the member were not reemployed by the school district **or regional**
29 **resource center**;

30 (3) deductions from the member's salary may not be made under
31 AS 14.25.050; and

(4) the member may not receive credited service in the plan during the period of reemployment.

* **Sec. 16.** AS 14.25.043(g) is amended to read:

(g) Notwithstanding (f) of this section, a member who is retired under AS 14.25.110(a) and reemployed by a school district or regional resource center under AS 14.20.136 is eligible to receive the group health plan coverage provided to active members employed by that school district or regional resource center.

* **Sec. 17.** AS 14.30.773(a) is amended to read:

(a) A [SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION, A] school district is eligible to receive a reading proficiency incentive grant of not less than \$450 for each student in kindergarten through grade six who, at the end of the school year,

(1) performs at grade-level reading proficiency; or

(2) demonstrates improvement on a reading screening tool approved by the department, on a standards-based assessment in language arts approved by the department, or on a student portfolio in language arts approved by the department.

* **Sec. 18.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE STUDY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING. The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee shall procure a study to be completed not later than January 1, 2027, by an entity or entities with expertise in school finance to evaluate the current education funding provisions and either recommend changes to the current funding provisions or recommend alternative methods of education funding. The study must

(1) be produced in consultation with the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage; and

(2) include consideration of

(A) stable and predictable funding for basic education needs and an ancillary system of providing funding above basic education needs;

(B) geographic location and specific student subpopulations, as appropriate;

(C) appropriate proportions and mechanisms for state and local

1 contributions to public school funding; and

2 (D) methods for funding alternative public school options, including
3 charter schools, residential schools, and correspondence programs.

4 * **Sec. 19.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
5 read:

6 APPLICABILITY. Sections 11 - 16 of this Act apply to contracts made on or after the
7 effective date of this Act.

8 * **Sec. 20.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).



**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL BOARD
RESOLUTION 26-005**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL BOARD OFFICIALLY
OPPOSING SENATE BILL 277 AND URGING THE PROTECTION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS,
CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING, AND CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION**

WHEREAS, the Mat-Su Borough School District School Board is committed to providing robust, flexible, and high-quality educational opportunities for ALL students, recognizing that school choice has long been a cornerstone of Alaska's educational landscape; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Statute 14.03.016 provides for the long-standing tradition of a parent's right to direct the education of a parent's child, including correspondence programs that predate statehood; and

WHEREAS, Alaska law has historically recognized the right of parents to direct the education of their children without unnecessary administrative barriers or compulsory enrollment in a local district; and

WHEREAS, Alaska has historically prioritized funding education closest to the student, rather than expanding administrative structures, to serve remote and diverse populations who seek educational options; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 277 (SB 277) proposes changes that would impose new financial and administrative burdens on families participating in correspondence programs, appearing to remove parents from their present role as primary decision-makers in their children's education; and

WHEREAS, SB 277 allows for up to an 8% indirect cost deduction from education funding allocated to correspondence students, while at the same time does not establish a cap on additional fees or charges that districts may impose on families; and

WHEREAS, Section 4 of SB 277 amends AS 14.14.110(a) to place severe restrictions on cooperative arrangements for correspondence study programs, explicitly prohibiting these funds from being used to provide special education services, in-person classes, career and vocational courses, or extracurricular activities, thereby isolating correspondence students and denying vulnerable students essential support; and

WHEREAS, Section 7 of SB 277 amends AS 14.17.500 to fundamentally alter the state's correspondence funding model by mandating that Average Daily Membership (ADM) funding for out-of-district correspondence students be directed to the student's resident district rather than the district actually providing the educational program; and

WHEREAS, under this model, families may be required to enroll in a district that does not directly provide instructional services, teachers, or resources, raising serious questions about the justification for administrative overhead charges and effectively forcing districts to dismantle their statewide correspondence offerings; and

WHEREAS, brick-and-mortar schools have not historically operated in cooperative partnership with correspondence programs, despite such arrangements already being permissible under current law, and SB 277 does not clearly demonstrate how proposed changes improve or expand these relationships, raising concerns about the unequal treatment of correspondence students and a lack of accountability for districts; and

WHEREAS, SB 277 further amends AS 14.03.260(a) to increase the indirect cost rate districts may retain from charter school annual program budgets from 4% to 8%, directly siphoning critical operational funds away from charter school classrooms and student services; and

WHEREAS, any policy changes should reinforce, not weaken, Alaska's robust educational choice system and the autonomy it provides to families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board officially opposes Senate Bill 277 in its current form due to the severe and negative impacts it will have on charter school viability, correspondence program support services, and statewide educational choice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that lawmakers are urgently requested to:

1. Protect and affirm the rights of parents to direct their children's education without unnecessary requirements.
2. Protect the "funding follows the student" model for statewide correspondence programs to ensure geographic freedom and educational choice for Alaskan families.
3. Preserve Alaska's long-standing correspondence education tradition.
4. Avoid policies that disincentivize or financially penalize correspondence and charter school students.
5. Remove restrictions on cooperative agreements that would deny correspondence students access to special education, in-person labs, and extracurricular activities.

APPROVED by the Mat-Su Borough School Board this xx day of xxxx, 2026.

Kathy McCollum, Board President

Dr. Randy Trani, Superintendent

ATTEST:

Stacy Escobedo, Board Administrative Assistant

