

Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 26-028**

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.

WHEREAS, the Borough Assembly is committed to the concept of providing robust, flexible, and high-quality educational opportunities for ALL students, recognizing that school choice has long been a cornerstone of Alaska's education 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) proposed 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 statement 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 polity 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 Borough Assembly is officially opposed to 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 statement 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.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day of -, 2026.

EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)