

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #190 (98-99) January 25, 1999

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: CHARTER SCHOOL HOUSING IN ALASKA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PERTINENT FACTS:

At the December 14, 1998 School Board meeting during discussion of the First Reading revisions to the Charter School Policy 333, School Board members Debbie Ossiander and Dave Werdal requested a summary of how other large school districts in Alaska are dealing with the housing of their charter schools. Mark Pasier, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, contacted the Fairbanks, Juneau, Mat-Su, and Kenai school districts as to their practices in comparison to the Anchorage School District.

A summary of the practices of the five largest school districts follows:

Anchorage School District

Contact: Carol Comeau, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Janet Stokesbary, Chief Financial Officer

Marie Laule, Director, Budget

Number of Charter Schools: 4

The Anchorage School District has been continually challenged by the charter school proposers to provide housing in District facilities currently occupied by District personnel in support programs. That has not been possible due to many

factors, but most of all due to lack of office space in the various departments and the Administration building and the steadily increasing student population. The District is currently pursuing possible leased space for offices and charter schools due to the rapidly increasing high school student population projected beginning next year. A complete housing analysis was completed in March of 1998 in an attempt to clearly show that there is not space available; the CIP will be updated to include how many relocatables can be located on each District site so that preliminary discussions could be held if the Administration wanted to pursue a charter school location at a specific school site.

Aquarian

Student Population: 114 students (210 approved for 1999-2000)

Grades served: K-6

Facility Description:

This charter school occupies seven relocatables (1 has a set of bathrooms and is used as a faculty lounge and open area; the others are the office and classrooms and computer lab). The site is behind the Pupil Transportation Facility on Bragaw. The Municipality of Anchorage has notified the District that this site must be vacated at the end of this school year so that a Permitting Center can be built in that location. The District has offered the use of the Old Northern Lights School as co-located space to Aquarian, the Village Charter School, and Family Partnership Charter School (1 classroom), beginning in January of 2000. Space still needs to be located for Aquarian from August through December of the 1999-2000 school year. Aquarian pays the cost of utilities and custodial services.

Family Partnership Charter School

Student Population: 496 students (660 approved for 1999-2000)

Grades served: K-12

Facility Description:

The Family Partnership Charter School uses two main sites and many Anchorage School District classrooms after school hours and the homes of individual parents. One classroom at Huffman Elementary School serves as a classroom available on an hourly basis for instruction and meetings; the charter school pays a pro rata share of the custodial costs and utilities costs for the square footage occupied. The co-location with Huffman appears to be working very well, but Huffman will need its classroom back next year so the District has offered one

classroom at Old Northern Lights School beginning in January 2000 for the charter school. In addition to Huffman, this charter school leases an office site on Fairbanks Street which also serves as the meeting space and distribution center for the charter school's supplies, equipment, teacher selection, and other tasks. Other sites used are in individual parent homes and in community facilities.

Village Charter School

Student Population: 20 students (approved for 120 students for 1990-2000)

Grades served: K-6 (K-8 next year)

Facility Description:

The Village Charter School currently occupies space in the Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church after an unsuccessful start at the Campbell Creek Science Center in the fall. This charter school received authorization from the School Board to pursue housing at the Viking Hall in the future. The District has offered them office and classroom space at the Old Northern Lights School, along with Aquarian and Family Partnership, beginning in January of 2000; they have not responded to that offer definitively. There are no costs for utilities or custodial services charged to the Village Charter School for housing this year.

Walden Pond Charter School

Student Population: 156 (approved for 210 for the 1999-2000 school year)

Grades served: 7-12

Facility Description:

This charter school has leased classroom and office space in the Dimond Center Mall at a charge of \$185,000 per year. This charter school also uses the recreational facilities at the Mall for physical education and other activities as well as the community. The Walden Pond Charter School is assessed for the cost of custodial services; utilities are covered as part of their lease. This charter school has requested District space if some becomes available in the future so that they can use more of their revenue in the classroom rather than for a lease.

Mat-Su Borough School District

Contact: Mr. Bob Doyle, Director of Business Operations

Number of Charter Schools: 2

Midnight Sun Family Center

Student population: approximately 91

Grades serviced: K-8

Facility description:

This charter school utilizes 9,000 square feet of commercial property as its school facility. It pays approximately \$38,000 for the lease. In addition to the \$38,000 the charter school receives for the lease of the property, the MSBSD also forwards the full Foundation formula amount as determined by the school's FTE.

The Academy Charter School

Student population: approximately 83

Grades serviced: K-3

Facility description:

This charter school utilizes six relocatables. One relocatable is being leased/purchased by the charter school with the other five provided by the MSBSD. The cost of the lease/purchase relocatable is approximately \$11,000 per year with a purchase price of approximately \$35,000. (Upon purchase, the relocatable will become the property of the MSBSD.) The lease funds are provided by the MSBSD in addition to the full Foundation formula amount as determined by the charter school's FTE. (Specifics of the contractual lease/purchase arrangement between the charter school and the owner of the relocatable were not available at the time this request for information was made.) The rented relocatable is equipped with plumbing facilities. All relocatables are set up at the Palmer Fire Training Center. The city of Palmer leases the land on which the relocatables sit to the charter school for \$1 a year. However, the city may not be able to provide this location to the charter school after the 1999-2000 school year. Options for the future location of the charter school are under review. The MSBSD transported the relocatables for the charter school to the school site but, by agreement, is not responsible for their maintenance. The charter school had volunteers install the utility connections to all relocatables but after receiving concerns of safety infractions from the public, the school district provided technicians to ensure all utility connections were properly installed. (There is a concern by the MSBSD that under the guise of "safety concerns" their obligation to provide technical maintenance for the relocatables may be a long-term obligation.)

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

Contact: Dr. Stayrook, Director of Program Planning & Evaluation

Number of Charter Schools: 2

Chinook Charter School:

Student population: approximately 95

Grades serviced: K-8

Facility description:

The facility utilized by the charter school is a portion of a FNSBSD school located on Fort Wainwright. The local military commander has authorized the charter school to co-exist with the public school on the base. Six classrooms contained in a wing of the public school have been made available to the charter school. A separate entrance/exit door was constructed to separate the students attending the charter from those attending the district school. Likewise, the door adjoining the two portions of the building was sealed. This facility is currently being provided by the District and Fort Wainwright at no charge to the charter school. The District also pays for the utilities and the snow removal. The FNSBSD's school board provides the charter schools with the full Foundation formula amount based on the school's FTE. The charter schools within the FNSBSD negotiate with the school board for extra funding or services in addition to their "share" of the Foundation funds. Next year the public school on Fort Wainwright will be closed and the building will be used as a community center. Talks between the charter school and officials at Fort Wainwright, regarding the continued use of the facility as well as the costs to the charter school, are underway.

New Beginnings Charter School:

Student population: approximately 21

Grades serviced: 7-12

Facility description:

The facility utilized by this charter school is owned and managed by the Fairbanks Native Corporation. The building also holds a residential drug treatment center. The school's charter is aligned with the Fairbanks Native Corporation's attempt to address the student population that also uses the

service of the drug treatment center. New Beginnings used their charter grant monies to renovate the portion of the building to comply with building guidelines used for public schools. The funding for their facility as well as for the charter school's budget, is established under the same guidelines as the Chinook Charter School — they negotiate with the FNSBSD's school board for extra funding and service in addition to their "share" of the Foundation funds.

Juneau Borough School District

Contact: Mr. Gary Bader, Lead Finance Administrator

Number of Charter Schools: 1

Juneau Community Charter School

Student population: approximately 55

Grades serviced: K-5

Facility description:

The charter school rents office space in a former state office building as its school facilities. It maintains three classrooms and uses restrooms within the building that are shared with the general public. The charter school utilized their start-up grant monies to complete the required facility improvements. The school pays for their own utilities and has a maintenance allocation within their budget to maintain the facility. The maintenance allocation is based on a prorated amount the District would incur if the number of students attending the charter school were attending a district facility (i.e. the District's maintenance budget is divided by the number of students attending school which provides a "by-student maintenance allocation.") The JBSD also provides administrative services (i.e. accounting services and human resource) for the charter school. As a side note, funding for the charter school is determined by a separate agreement between the District and the school (based on the former instructional funding formula). The JBSD believes this provides slightly more than the current formula would allow however, the District does not intend to continue to provide increasing amounts to address the growing expense of the charter's leased facility.

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Contact: Mr. Ed McLain, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Pat Hickey, Assistant Superintendent, Operations

Number of Charter Schools: 3

Bayview Charter School:

Student population: approximately 20

Grades serviced: primary grades (admittance determined by age)

Facility description:

This charter school utilizes one, very large, high school classroom and has limited access to multiple use areas within the building and access to the playing fields as coordinated with the school. The charter pays the District \$3,600 per year for rental of this space.

Homer Charter School:

Student population: approximately 20

Grades serviced: intermediate grades

Facility description:

This charter school is located in two relocatables located at a KPBSD elementary school. The charter school has limited access to multiple purpose rooms as coordinated with the school. The charter pays the District \$6,000 per year for rental of this space.

Aurora Borealis Charter School:

Student population: approximately 91

Grades serviced: K-8

Facility description:

This charter school's facility is located on church property. The charter pays \$70,000 per year for rental of this space. The rental fees derive from the charter's budget.

Prepared by: Mark Pasier, Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Carol Comeau, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Approved by: Carol Comeau, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction