

**Fairbanks North Star Borough School District**  
**Charter Contract 2024 - 2025**  
**Chinook Montessori Charter School**

THIS AGREEMENT is made between Chinook Montessori Charter School, hereinafter "Charter School" and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board, hereinafter "School Board".

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District  
520 - Fifth Avenue  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

*Chinook Montessori Charter School*  
*3002 International St*  
*Fairbanks, AK 99701*

WHEREAS, Charter School desires to operate within the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (hereafter "School District") in conformance with Alaska Statutes 14.03.250 - 290 and School District policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, the School Board reviewed and approved Charter School's charter renewal on November 17, 2020 for a period of ten years, including school years FY21 to FY30;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements contained in this annual contract, the parties agree as follows:

Charter School shall provide an educational program in the School District subject to the terms and conditions of this Contract, commencing on the 1st day of July for school year 2024. Services will be provided in accordance with the Charter School Calendar identified herein.

Annually, any modifications to the approved Charter Renewal proposal will be submitted in writing to the School District by April 01 prior to the annual report to the school board.

**Compliance with Regulatory Requirements:**

The Charter School warrants that it will comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations applicable to public schools and all requirements imposed by School District policies and regulations.

1. **Description of Educational Program:**

The Charter School shall provide an education program that shall advance students' mastery of basic skill areas including mathematics, science, health, reading, language arts, and social studies, appropriate to the age of students in the program. Provision will also be made for physical education, music, art, and instructional technology within the education program. The educational program shall be designed utilizing the curricula as defined by the Charter School application.

interference. We support our mentor students' social and academic development by providing volunteer opportunities and independent project completion.

Our teachers develop weekly and monthly work plans for each child to guide them in their discovery. These plans meet the child at their developmental level and are based on the ability to follow directions, learning styles, and special needs. Work plans follow the Montessori curriculum while ensuring that our students meet (or exceed) state standards. Students archive their completed work both digitally and in student binders. They then reflect on their favorite pieces and display these works in *Portfolio Presentation*, a student-directed parent conference. This design helps students to gradually develop time management, reflection, and organizational skills.

### **Program Description**

#### **1. Literacy**

Our reading instruction is meaning based and includes whole group, small group and individual instruction. We read and write for real purposes. We are aware that not all children learn to read at the same time and the multi-age structure allows for individual growth. Chinook teachers review the Alaska State English Language Arts Standards to ensure we are teaching the standards.

#### **2. Math**

At Chinook, math concepts are fostered through the use of manipulatives~ art, music, and journals. Montessori math climbs in sophistication from concrete to abstract. We emphasize authentic learning through projects and through analyzing patterns found both in natural and artificial settings. We encourage physical math skills, mental math skills, problem-solving and flexible thinking. In the early years, we focus on using Montessori math curriculum through 3rd grade. During the upper elementary and adolescent years, we use Montessori curriculum paired with additional resources as needed. Starting in the 6th grade and through middle school, students begin to use textbooks in order to prepare for high school. Chinook teachers review the Alaska State Math Standards to ensure we are teaching the standards. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are infused into our lessons.

#### **3. Social Science**

Geography is the study of the earth on which man lives and history is the study of the man who lives on earth. "The study of history, geography, and world cultures forms the cornerstone of the Montessori curriculum" (Selden, 1999). A sense of living history is presented at every level through direct hands-on experience. Children learn that all people throughout time and around the world have the same basic needs and that how they satisfy these needs is determined by the geographical environment and historical events. By understanding the history of the past, the children learn who they are today and will see themselves as citizens of the world. They start to see that their thoughts, actions, and work will become part of the past.

#### Essential Concepts of History

- A. Understands that history is a record of human experiences that links the past to the present and the future

### Essential Concepts of the Arts

- A. Demonstrates the creativity and imagination necessary for innovative thinking and problem solving.
  - a. develops an inventive and creative spirit
- B. Expands thinking skills.
  - a. refines artistic skills through rehearsal, practice and revision
- C. Is able to persevere until pride of accomplishment is achieved.
  - a. becomes self-disciplined
- D. Appropriately uses new and traditional materials, tools, techniques and processes in the arts.
- E. Develops thoughtful analysis and interpretation skills.
  - a. engages in a process of organized investigation

### 6. The Sciences

The purpose of science is to investigate and understand the world. Children have a need and opportunity to observe things they haven't experienced before. From the knowledge comes a sense of peace, confidence and understanding. At Chinook, we study zoology, botany, earth science, biology, physics, chemistry, functional geography and ecology. Chinook teachers review the Alaska State Science Standards to ensure we are teaching the standards.

### Essential Concepts of the Sciences

- A. Possesses and understands the skills of scientific inquiry.
  - a. uses the processes of science; these include observing, classifying, measuring, interpreting data, inferring, communicating, controlling variables, hypothesizing, predicting and experimenting
- B. Understands scientific facts, concepts, principles and theories.
  - a. understands observable natural events
  - b. understands the interdependence between living things and their environments
  - c. understands the basic structure of living things
- C. Knows that living things are made up mostly of cells and that all life processes occur in these basic units.
- D. Distinguishes the patterns of similarity and differences in the living world in order to understand the diversity of life.
- E. Understands how the earth changes because of plate tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, erosion and deposition and living things.
- F. Understand scientific facts, concepts, principles and theories.
  - a. understands the physical and chemical changes in the properties and characteristics of matter.

### 7. Technology

We believe that technology is an invaluable classroom tool that should be integrated into all areas of the curriculum so that students will be prepared for interacting and communicating in the world. Technology

9. **Montessori Training:** 100% of the Chinook educators will participate in ongoing training or continued teacher research. Eighty percent of the Chinook teachers will be Montessori certified.

### **Student Performance Expectations**

Students will take district assessments three times. Testing information is found in 23/24 One-pager (Appendix B).

When Chinook teachers see students struggle to perform at grade level, remediation is given in many forms. These forms include, but are not limited to; collaborating with the staff, using teaching assistants for extra instruction, modifying classwork, enlisting help and advice from the special education staff, involving parent support and knowledge, and giving extra teacher help. Student Support Teams (SST) are used as a first step to meet and discuss student needs formally. The team will then choose to move forward with special educational testing or will come up with intervention strategies to best support students in the classroom.

3. Admission Policy and Procedures:

*Describe your admission policy - this includes specific criteria for eligibility of students, lottery process if applicable, including dates of the application period, exemptions to the lottery (sibling preference, staff's children, currently enrolled students), include a copy of the application if used.*

### Admission Criteria

Chinook Montessori Charter School is a school of choice. A student enrolling at Chinook must be within the age of five and fourteen and a resident of the FNSBSD. In order to be eligible to apply to attend kindergarten, children must be five years old on or before September 1st. Children must be 6 years old on or before September 1 to attend 1st grade. A copy of the child's birth certificate, proof of immunizations, or a waiver, is required for each student enrolling. Chinook may, upon written notice to the FNSBSD, decline to accept students who have been determined, after due process, to have violated FNSBSD Policies 1042.61 (Firearms and Other Guns) or 1053.3 (Alcohol and Other Drug Violations).

All parents who enroll students in the school must agree to contribute at least fifteen hours per trimester either at the school site or from home. Parents choose from a wide variety of ways to be involved.

Attending Chinook is a long-term commitment. Students applying should intend to complete their entire elementary and middle school program at the school. Prior to the application process, parents and students must attend an orientation meeting about the philosophy, curriculum, and day-to-day operation of the school. At this time they also observe the school in session. Parents and students then complete an application form and their name will be placed in the lottery.

After the lottery, if a placement is offered, the student and family must attend an interview with at least one teacher.

- We have 8 females and 8 males in K-6 and 11 females and 11 males in 7th and 8th grades. When filling open positions with a sibling, we will allow deviations from the 50:50 ratio by 1, in order to admit a sibling.

Prospective families of Chinook Montessori Charter School are guided to complete the following enrollment process:

1. The first step in the lottery process is to visit Chinook and attend an orientation. One session is usually scheduled for the end of February and the second session is scheduled for mid-March. During the orientation, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will learn about the school philosophy, how Chinook operates, and the history of the school. Prospective families will also observe the classes and how they function. The visit is designed to be observational, parents and students are encouraged to walk through the classroom while refraining from interacting with the classes themselves.
2. After observing the school, a parent or guardian fills out a lottery application.
3. Once completed, the application will be reviewed to ensure all information (including sibling applications, contact information, etc.) is complete. If more students apply than can be accommodated (grade levels K-6 is limited to 16 students and grades 7-8 is limited to 22 students), applicants will be drawn by lottery for admission. Due to the course requirements, new 8th graders are not admitted into Chinook.
4. The lottery date is April 15. If April 15 occurs on a weekend, then the lottery occurs on the closest weekday date.

Students are then categorized according to grade level. Students are placed in numerical order on the appropriate grade list, and open positions are offered to the student accordingly.

### **Final Admission**

Parents and students must agree to our policies.

4. Administrative Policies:
  - a. Academic Policy Committee (*describe the make-up of APC, APC election process*)

### **APC Members**

Greg Foster- Chair, Seat G, 2022-2025  
 Rebecca Kegely- Vice Chair ,Seat A, 2021-2024 (teacher)  
 Joanna Mackey- Secretary, Seat D, 2021-2024 (teacher)  
 Ashley Carver- Seat F, 2024-2027  
 Michele Halbrooks- Seat B, 2022-2025 (teacher)  
 Laura Stark- Seat C, 2023-2026 (teacher)  
 Rob Hall - Seat E 2023-2026  
 Christina Carlson- Ex Officio member, Head Teacher

### **Election Process (from Chinook APC Bylaws):**

This is detailed, starting on page 23, in the APC Bylaws (Appendix C).

- b. Administrator (*evaluation of, qualifications, hiring process, termination process*)

and federal requirements for the receipt and use of public money. The Charter School will comply with all District, state, and federal audit requests.

7. Student Fees and Charges:

The Charter School shall not charge tuition to students who reside within the District. Any fees charged to students by the Charter School, including but not limited to supply and activity fees, shall be retained by the Charter School and included in the Charter School program budget. Charter fees must be clearly outlined in their school's charter

8. Method of Accountability for Receipts and Expenditures:

Between December and March, the Charter School liaison will work with the School District Business Manager to develop a budget for the next school year. This will include the salaries of all staff at the Charter School. At this time a "projected" student count for the following year will be given. The estimate may be finalized at the May School Board meeting.

The Charter School acknowledges that adjustment to the Charter School budget may be necessary if the estimated revenues are revised due to School Board, legislative, and/or Borough Assembly action.

All funds will run through the normal School District financial process. The Charter School agrees that it shall comply with all State of Alaska and Federal requirements for the receipt and use of public funds.

9. Location and Description of Facility:

*3002 International St  
Fairbanks, AK 99701*

The facility is approximately 13,500 square feet in size, containing 8 classrooms, an administrative office/library, a small supply/workroom, a storage room, a custodial room, an office, and three restrooms. Chinook has its own parking area for parents and visitors. In addition, students use the existing playground on the site. A connex sits just beyond the playground fence.

The Charter School warrants that the facility shall at all times comply with all local, state, and federal health and safety requirements applicable to public schools in the School District.

10. Teachers and Support Staff:

**Certified:**

Christina Carlson - Head Teacher

Laura Stark - Kindergarten Teacher

Jesse Bartlett - Primary Teacher

Joanna Mackey - Primary Teacher

Wendy Demers - Intermediate Teacher



The Charter School agrees to operate in such a manner as to minimize the risk of injury or harm to students, employees, and others. The Charter School shall comply with all School Board policies and regulations, and comply with all applicable federal and state laws, concerning student welfare, safety, and health including, without limitation, School Board policies addressing the reporting of child abuse, accident prevention, and disaster response, and any state regulations governing the operation of school facilities.

15. Term:

The term of this Agreement shall be one year, effective upon complete execution by the School Board. The School Board will review this Agreement every year.

16. Program Evaluation:

Each year, the school administrator shall oversee the preparation of an annual written report that provides an assessment of the Charter School program. The report will include information about:

- a. Student achievement assessment results
- b. Recommendation for remediation of poor student performance
- c. School goal attainment
- d. Student enrollment
- e. Description of charter school activities
- f. Meeting minutes
- g. List of Academic Policy Committee officers and members
- h. List of officers in any PTA/PTO or other parent organization
- i. Changes planned including changes to the contract and modifications to the charter

The Charter School will make a presentation to the School Board and the public annually each spring. Written reports will be received by the district prior to the Charter School's presentation to the School Board. The presentation will include student achievement results, highlights of the year, and any changes being requested to the contract or charter.

17. Termination:

During the Charter Schools annual review with the School Board, compliance with the provisions of this Agreement will be reviewed. If any allegations of noncompliance with this Agreement are presented either during the annual review or at any other time, then the School Board, through the Superintendent or designee, shall investigate the allegations to determine what remedy is warranted for the alleged noncompliance

The School Board may terminate this Agreement for:

- a. Failure by the Charter School to meet the educational achievement goals;
- b. Failure by the Charter School to meet fiscal management standards;

- 341 Handbooks (Superintendent's approval)
- 546 Supervision (Principal)
- 1143 Principal's Advisory Committee
- 1153 Visitors to the School (Principal's authority)
- 1221 Shared Services (Superintendent)

Rationale:

Chinook has its own school administrative organization and administration team. This governing body for the school is the Chinook Board. The Chinook Board meets on a consistent basis to establish Chinook's administrative policies, responsibilities, and duties. Chinook does not have a principal and is not under the supervision of a superintendent pursuant to the Alaska Charter School Law.

- 1157.3 Collections for School Purposes (Principal's authority)
- 1157.4 Materials Drive (Principal's authority)
- 1156 Gifts & Donations
- 577 Staff Gifts
- 1072 Student Gifts

Rationale:

Chinook is responsible for fund requests as stated in our charter. The Charter School, as a non-profit corporation, is a legal entity, able to accept grants, gifts, and donations. The FNSBSD Board shall be given written notice of all accepted grants, gifts, donations, and any conditions thereof.

- 900 Curriculum & Instruction Philosophy
- 910 Curriculum Development
- 920 Instructional Materials
- 921 Selection of Instructional Materials
- 922 Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Materials
- 923 Disposal of Outdated Instructional Material
- 941.1 School Calendar
- 941.2 School Term
- 945 Allocation and Use of Instructional Time - Field Trips
- 955 Student Activities - Secondary Student Groups (Funding, travel)
- 957 Student Activities - Elementary Student Activities
- 960 Instructional Arrangements
- 971 K-12 Student Assessment
- 972 Elementary Grading
- 973 Junior High/Middle School Grading
- 983 Promotion/retention/acceleration

Rationale:

Chinook is waiving these policies according to the Alaska State Charter School Law, which states that charter schools are exempt from District curriculum and scheduling policies. Chinook has its own school day and instructional year, which provides time and flexibility in organizing



## Appendix C

### **BYLAWS CHINOOK MONTESSORI APC Revision Approved on March 25, 2024**

#### **Article I Name**

The name of the organization shall be CHINOOK MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL.

#### **Article II Purpose**

The purpose of the organization shall be to educate K-8 children under a charter agreement between the Montessori Charter School and Fairbanks North Star Borough School District in accordance with the mission set forth in said charter agreement.

#### **Article III Governance**

Chinook Montessori Charter School shall be governed by the Academic Policy Committee (APC). The APC shall have the maximum power permitted by law, shall establish policy for the school, shall fulfill the duties prescribed in A.S. 14.03.250, et seq., and as set forth in these bylaws, and shall perform the following functions, including, but not limited to:

**Section 1.** Maintain the vision of the Charter, including being aware of the school history, policies, and goals;

**Section 2.** Foster communication throughout the school community;

**Section 3.** Nurture a sense of community;

**Section 4.** Review the school operating budget;

**Section 5.** Be advised prior to making large changes to the school operating budget;

**Section 6.** Review and recommend Charter changes;

**Section 7.** Address major school facility issues and

**Section 8.** Address parental and student issues as requested.

Members of the APC shall have no authority over the school as individuals; they have authority only when acting as a body duly called in session.

Gregory P. Potts June 9<sup>th</sup> 2024  
Signature APC President Date

Christine Ann 6/9/24  
Signature Charter Administrator Date

Blainey Hart 6/10/24  
Signature School District Official Date

## **Article IV Academic Policy Committee**

**Section 1. Membership.** The APC shall consist of seven members until changed by a duly adopted amendment of these by-laws. The APC shall consist of four Charter School teachers (Seats A, B, C, D), two parents who have children attending the Charter School (Seats E, F), and one other parent who has children attending the Charter School or a community member at large who does not have a child attending the Charter school (Seat G). The head teacher shall be an ex-officio member of the APC but shall not be enabled to make motions or vote unless there is a tie vote, in which case the head teacher would cast a vote to break the tie.

**Section 2. Term and Term Limitations.** Each member shall serve a term of three years. Seats A, B, C, and D shall have no restriction on the number of consecutive terms. Seats E, F, and G shall have a maximum of two consecutive terms. The terms shall have staggered expiration dates. All terms shall expire following the fall elections.

**Section 3. Removal.** Members may be removed from office at any regular, annual or special meeting of the APC by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the APC then in office. Attendance at APC meetings is expected. Frequent absences may result in dismissal from the APC.

**Section 4. Resignations.** A member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair or Secretary of the APC. Such resignation shall be effective at the time specified therein and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

**Section 5. Vacancies.** If a position on the APC becomes vacant by reason of death, resignation, retirement, or removal or different inability to serve, then the vacancy shall be filled by appointment based on the affirmative vote of the then remaining members. A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve the unexpired portion of the term.

**Section 6. Expenses.** By resolution of the APC, the members may be paid their expenses, if any, incurred while fulfilling the obligations of their duties.

## **Article V Officers of the Academic Policy Committee**

**Section 1. Appointment and Term of Office.** Officers of the APC shall be nominated and elected by a majority for the APC at its annual meeting. Each officer will hold office until the next annual election, and until a successor is chosen unless said officer shall resign, be removed, or otherwise be disqualified to serve. The elected officers of the APC are Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. One person may hold and perform the duties of any two of the three offices simultaneously except those of Chair and Vice-Chair.

**Section 2. Other officers.** The APC may elect or may authorize the Chair or some other officer or any committee to appoint, such other officers or agents, as the APC may deem necessary or advisable. Such officers hold office for such period, have such powers and perform such duties

- b. In its discretion, nominate individuals who have not submitted an application as candidates for positions on the APC;
- c. Make available digital or print copies of applications candidates submit to the APC.

**Section 4. Election.** Upon receipt of a slate of candidates, the APC shall nominate two candidates for the election. The election shall be held no later than the third week of April. The APC

will then:

- a. Prepare a digital or print secret ballot listing the candidates;
- b. Distribute, collect and count the secret ballots and otherwise oversee the election so that it is conducted in a fair manner;
- c. Advise the candidates and the APC of the election results;
- d. Prepare a report stating the results of the election, which report shall be kept at the principal/head teacher office of the school and be made available for review by the public. The APC shall be responsible for monitoring voter eligibility and resolving any disputes involving the casting of ballots.
- e. Announce results of the election to the parent body.

**Section 5. Eligibility to Vote for Parent APC Positions.** Only parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school during the election are eligible to vote for parent APC members.

**Section 6. Number of votes per eligible voter.** All eligible voters may cast one vote for each vacant position on the ballot, not to exceed one vote per person per open position.

**Section 6. Casting of Ballots.** Secret ballots must be cast on the digital or print form prescribed by the APC by the designated date and time. Proxy, facsimile, e-mail, or other method of voting not expressly authorized above are not permitted or valid.

**Section 7. Exceptions.** In the event that number of qualified candidates is less than or equal to the number of vacant positions, the APC may dispense with an election and, with a 2/3 vote of members present, seat the slate of candidates.

## **Article VI**

### **Meetings of the Academic Policy Committee**

**Section 1. Open Meetings Act.** The APC hereby formally adopts the Open Meetings Act, A.S. 44.62.310 et seq. ("the Act"). All meetings are open to the public and shall be conducted, and all notices and agendas posted, in accordance with the Act. If any portion of these bylaws are more specific than the Act, than that portion of these bylaws shall control over the Act, unless prohibited by law.

**Section 2. Time of Meetings.** The regular meeting of the APC shall be held at the date, time and place as determined by the APC. The APC shall meet regularly to discuss the school's operations and hear reports and updates from each APC member, consider and adopt policies,

contract or any other final action, be approved at any session which is closed to the general public.

Matters discussed during the executive sessions shall remain confidential among those attending. The Secretary of the APC shall maintain topical minutes of all executive sessions.

## **Article VII Committees**

**Section 1. Membership of Committees.** The APC may designate and appoint one or more committees to perform specific tasks assigned by the APC. Members will be selected by the APC from a list of volunteers who are parents of children attending the school, community members at large, the principal/head teacher, teachers, or teachers' assistants.

**Section 2. Instruction and Responsibility.** Each committee shall be clearly instructed as to the length of time each member is being asked to serve, the service the APC wishes each committee to render, the extent and limitations of responsibility, the resources the APC will provide, and the approximate dates on which the APC wishes to receive reports. Recommendations of special advisory committees shall be based on research and fact and shall be advisory to the APC.

**Section 3. APC Powers and Prerogatives.** All recommendations of a committee must be submitted to the APC for official action. The APC shall have the power to dissolve any committee and shall reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

**Section 4. Meetings.** Special committees to the APC shall comply with the Open Meeting Act and notice requirements set forth in Article VII, Section 4 of these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE IX Principal/Head Teacher**

**Section 1. Selection/Removal.** The principal/head teacher shall be selected by the Academic Policy Committee. Removal of the principal/head teacher will require a 2/3 vote of the full APC.

**Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities.** The principal/head teacher shall have those day-to-day management and other duties as assigned and delegated by the APC, or as required by law. The principal/head teacher shall select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the school. The principal/head teacher shall see that all policies, orders, and resolutions of the APC are carried into effect. Upon delegation by the APC, the principal/head teacher shall:

- a. Maintain financial records of the school;
- b. Manage the day-to-day operation of the school;
- c. Meet regularly with parents and with teachers of the school to review, evaluate, and improve operations of the School;

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Parliamentary Authority**

**Conduct of meetings.** The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of meetings of the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws. The Chair may suspend or apply Robert's Rules informally in order to facilitate discussion amongst the members.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**Ethics**

Chinook Montessori Charter School is committed to delivering a quality education for all of its students. The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity or military affiliation. The APC, administration, teachers and staff shall conduct themselves in such way as to promote that ethical standard. No member of the APC, administration, teachers or staff shall take advantage of their position for their personal gain above and beyond that which is made available to all other members of the Chinook Montessori Charter School community and/or reasonable and customary contractual allowances.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**Indemnification**

The school may, to the maximum extent permitted by law and in the absence of School or District insurance, defend, hold harmless and indemnify all current and former members of the APC, all persons who at the request of the APC have acted or not acted, and all persons currently or previously employed by the school, from and against any claims, civil or criminal, in which that person is made a party by reason, in whole or in part, of being or having been an APC member or officer, at the request of the APC have acted or not acted, or being or having been an employee of the school, when that person has acted within the course or scope of his or her duties to the school.

Indemnification shall be provided by a majority vote of a quorum of the APC, on a case-by-case basis.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**Amendments to Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended or revised by a two-thirds vote of the APC present at any regularly scheduled or special meeting provided that the amendments or revisions proposed were submitted in writing to the APC and posted publicly on the APC meeting agenda in advance of voting on said amendment(s).