

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Charter Contract 2025 - 2030
Watershed Charter School

THIS AGREEMENT is made between Watershed 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

Watershed Charter School
4975 Decathlon Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99709

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 January 15, 2019, for a period of ten years, including school years FY19 to FY 29;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements contained in this 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 2025. Services will be provided in accordance with the Charter School Calendar identified herein.

Any modifications to the approved Charter Application/Renewal will be submitted in writing to the School District by April 01 for the following school year.

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.

Mission Statement of Watershed Charter School

Cultivate personal and academic growth through place-based learning and outdoor exploration.

Place-Based Education at Watershed Charter School

Place-based education is a significantly different approach to teaching and learning from that offered in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD). It is an approach that aims to develop connections between students and their community. As a place-based charter school, we strive to help students come to know and care for the place in which they live and take fuller advantage of the unique characteristics of the Tanana Valley.

Place-based education involves using the local community and natural landscape as an ever-present theme to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and the arts. Place-based education relies heavily upon authentic, real-world learning experiences to increase student engagement and achievement.

Relying on this philosophy of place-based education, our curriculum is multidisciplinary and thematic. It promotes team teaching among educators, parent volunteers, and community members. Learning for our children is largely experiential and community-based. This includes projects and service learning components that directly benefit our community. Students are motivated to learn as they see the obvious relevance of the curriculum, and this motivation leads to academic excellence.

Place-based education does not, by any means, promote the elimination of non-local knowledge or the creation of a provincial outlook. When children become intimately connected to and knowledgeable about their place, they can intelligently apply this understanding to the rest of the world. An understanding of self and community is the bedrock on which an in-depth understanding of the greater world is built.

Place-based education recognizes that cultural diversity is as important to human ecology as biodiversity. It is the diversity of human solutions in each terrestrial environment that has been the foundation of our species' success. Within our community, we find a rich spectrum of unique individuals and racial, cultural, and ethnic groups. Diversity does not imply that a healthy community has no common cultural narratives. Rather, it is the shared experiences of a culturally diverse populace that paint a rich mosaic of life in the Tanana Valley. A curriculum of place provides children with a deep sense of the history of their home-place and an intricate understanding of the landscape and culture surrounding them.

Outdoor Learning Experiences

Watershed Charter Schools is dedicated to providing all students with experiences that enhance their outdoor survival and recreation skills and deepen connections to place that are the foundation of the school's academic program. Through ski outings, monthly treks on local trails, extended camping trips, regular walks in the woods, and other adventures, students also develop self-confidence, strengthen their bonds with classmates, and engage in activities that promote healthy lifestyles.

Watershed Charter School comprises nine single-grade classrooms, ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade, and serves a total of 198 students. Each classroom has a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:22. In grades 1-6, a looping model is employed, where students spend two school years with their teacher before advancing to the next loop. Kindergarteners spend one year with their teacher, and middle school students rotate between two teachers: one math/science and one language arts/social studies teacher. Watershed teachers match curriculum and classroom structures with developmentally appropriate pedagogy. Children develop a core framework of understanding starting with themselves, their homes, and families and gradually expanding outward. Each layer of knowledge developed in this model of place-based education lays the groundwork and establishes connections for further knowledge and understanding.

Kindergarten

- Students are provided time to participate in imaginative and cooperative play. Class meetings and outdoor time build a foundation and serve as an opportunity to reinforce the establishment of a kind, learning community both inside and outside the classroom. Science and social studies topics are connected to students' lives, families, and immediate surroundings. Students develop connections to and learn about the life cycle of living things by caring for classroom pets and plants. The duration of direct instruction is limited to meet the student's developmental needs, and it generally occurs in a small group setting. Kindergartners at Watershed engage in regular physical activity and explore nature.

First and Second Grade

- First- and second-grade classrooms at Watershed primarily use small-group instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Whole-class instruction is introduced to students during some portions of the day. These primary classrooms have a strong focus on developing the foundations of literacy and fostering engaged readers. Class meetings foster bonds between students and teachers, helping to establish and maintain clear learning expectations. Science is hands-on and inquiry-based. For example, in their *Exploration of Light and Shadow* unit, students explore the characteristics of light, ask questions based on their observations, and then conduct experiments and record data to draw conclusions. Their social studies units focus on family traditions, civic responsibilities of the classroom, and a study of the school neighborhood. Students build a strong sense of place through the exploration of local trails. Second graders embark on their first Watershed camping trip on the school property.

Third and Fourth Grade

- The geographical scope of science and social studies instruction reaches the greater Tanana Valley and Alaska by fourth grade. For example, students learn about the salmon ecology of the Chena River in partnership with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. They make connections to the cultural importance of salmon in the *Alaska Native Cultures—Then and Now* unit while also learning about various facets of subsistence lifestyles of different Alaskan Native groups in the past and present. By this age, students are ready for more sustained, direct instruction in whole-class and small-group settings. Therefore, students regularly work on multi-week independent and collaborative projects. Reading and writing lessons are typically thematically connected to science and social studies. Third and fourth graders participate in physical activities ranging from structured, daily physical activity classes

to weekly hikes or skis on local trails. Longer, often day-long, treks occur monthly. Watershed third and fourth graders apply and further develop their outdoor recreation skills and wilderness ethic on a 3-day camping trip each spring.

Fifth and Sixth Grade

- Fifth and sixth graders continue the pattern of routine physical activity on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Classes begin biking and are introduced to canoe paddling. Fifth graders embark on at least one camping trip each year, and sixth graders camp out twice a year. Students' increased maturity and academic skills allow for science units to simultaneously become more abstract (ex. *Chemistry of Interior Alaska*) and practical (*Building for the Subarctic*). Social studies instruction is typically thematically based and starts to address topics beyond Alaska. Multi-disciplinary research projects are regularly used to engage students in further developing their sense of place in Alaska and beyond. In addition, fifth and sixth graders often showcase their projects, providing opportunities for these students to share their learning with both younger and older students in the building. In sixth grade, advanced math students are invited to participate in an accelerated class that will prepare them to take Algebra in eighth grade.

Middle School

- As the oldest students in a K-8 school, seventh and eighth graders have the opportunity to serve as mentors and leaders within the school. Middle school students coordinate events such as school spirit weeks, dances, and other social gatherings, as well as the annual talent show. They serve as daily classroom helpers for grades K-6. Students continue with daily outdoor physical activity, weekly excursions to the woods, and more involved multi-day camping trips. On these trips, students collaborate with teachers to prepare necessary gear, plan meals, and make other logistical decisions. Students develop responsibility and independence on their excursions and throughout their educational journey. Middle school instruction features a robust integration of math and science (ex. *Carbon in Our Forest*) and social studies and language arts (ex. *America's Relationship with the Environment – Natural Resource Allocation and Exploitation*). They regularly participate in projects that showcase their research and expertise. Rotating between the two academic teachers for math/science and English/social studies, students develop organizational methods and academic habits that prepare them for high school.

Place-based Science and Social Studies

Place-based curriculum at Watershed Charter School integrates elements from the disciplines of environmental, community-based, and outdoor education into curricular units based on Alaska Content Standards and GLEs in social studies and science, respectively (see Appendix F for samples). These units establish learning themes that incorporate content and skills from other subject areas such as the creative arts, mathematics, and English Language Arts.

Language Arts:

Watershed Charter School's language arts program is directly based on Alaska State Standards. Teachers use a variety of resources relevant to science and social studies learning themes to develop units, projects, and individual lessons that support student learning of the Alaska English Language Arts standards. During the 2014-2015 school year Watershed teachers formally reviewed their instructional practices and teaching materials to ensure alignment and coverage of with ELA state standards and learning targets.

Mathematics:

Watershed Charter School primarily uses the Singapore Math program to address Alaska Mathematics Standards. Staff members have carefully reviewed the program and moved from the *California Standards* edition to the *Common Core* edition of Singapore Math because of its more complete alignment with the state standards most recently adopted in 2012. ALEKS, a computer-based program, is used to supplement and extend learning for students in grades 3-8. Mathematics is also meaningfully integrated into social studies and science units.

2. Specific Levels of Achievement:

The Charter School students participate in the State of Alaska-mandated assessments.

Watershed Charter School uses universal screening and progress monitoring assessments such as mClass (reading skills for kindergarten-3rd grade students), Measures of Academic Progress (reading comprehension, language usage, and math for 3rd-8th grade students), and a kindergarten skills assessment to help measure student progress and identify areas where targeted intervention is required. Data from standardized assessments are viewed in conjunction with classroom-based assessments and teacher observation to guide instructional decision-making.

In addition to differentiated instruction by classroom teachers to support struggling learners, Watershed offers an intervention program to provide targeted instruction, particularly at the elementary level. Students requiring extra support are identified through the process of combining teacher input and universal screening data, as described above. Reading intervention, whether delivered individually or in small groups, consumes the bulk of the morning schedule, especially in the primary grades. Support staff also help provide support and enrichment in math classes. Third through eighth-grade teachers use ALEKS, an online adaptive math program, to supplement general classroom instruction and provide both enrichment and remedial support for students. Middle school students receive study hall time during the week to practice skills, study concepts covered in class, and work on class projects. Teachers at every grade level communicate regularly and partner with parents to address academic concerns.

Watershed's academic achievement results from the AK STAR, AK Science, MAP, and mClass assessments are included in the annual report to the board (below).

3. Admission Policy and Procedures:

Watershed Charter Application and Lottery Process

1. The application window opened on January 8 and closed on April 11.
2. During the application process, parents and guardians were strongly encouraged to attend the informational meeting on March 27 at 6:00 PM to learn about the philosophy, curriculum, daily operation, and unique requirements of the school.

3. If more students apply than can be accommodated (class sizes are set at 22), applicants will be drawn by lottery for admission. The lottery was held on April 16.
4. The results of the lottery were made public on April 17.

Admission Criteria:

The Watershed Charter School is a school of choice within the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. A student enrolling at The Watershed School must be between the ages of five and fourteen. In order to be eligible to apply to attend kindergarten, children must be five years old on or before September 1. Children must be 6 years old on or before September 1 to attend first grade. A copy of the child's birth certificate is required for each pupil entering kindergarten or first grade. All new students must submit proof of immunization or a waiver before being admitted into the school. At least one parent, or legal guardian, must be a resident of the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Selection Process

Enrollment at The Watershed School is voluntary. As per AS 14.03.265 (b) the school shall strive to enroll all eligible students who submit a timely and accurate application. In the event of too many eligible applicants, a lottery will be held. The lottery will be held for enrollment for the following fall and will be conducted in accordance with district policy. The lottery determines the waiting list for the following school year.

The Watershed School keeps a waitlist of students who have applied but were unsuccessful in being chosen through the lottery. When there are openings in the school between the annual lotteries, the wait list is used to fill the vacancies. Waitlists do not carry over to next year's lottery. All unsuccessful applicants are welcome to reapply the following year.

In keeping with the Watershed School's philosophy of long-term connection to family, community, and geographical place, in subsequent years all students who have previously attended The Watershed School are automatically re-enrolled in the program. Siblings are admitted as a unit so that families can attend the same school (ie: when one child in a family is admitted through the lottery, the other siblings will move up to the next available spot in their respective grade). Although all new applicants must meet application requirements, future students who already have siblings enrolled in the school are given priority to enroll in the Watershed School, given that space is available at the sibling's grade level. Siblings are defined as permanent, immediate family members.

In order to accommodate children from the Smith Ranch Subdivision area, when openings arise in a grade level, we will allow preference to Smith Ranch children. This preference will be closed when Smith Ranch children occupy two seats in a classroom.

Once enrolled at The Watershed School, parents or guardians will complete an "Intent to Reenroll" form in February for the following school year and are expected to notify the school of any change in plans.

If students withdraw from The Watershed School to attend another school, they are required to complete the application and lottery process again before readmission to the school. If a parent

pulls a student mid-year and puts them in a different school or homeschool and later on reapplies to Watershed School, the ability to use sibling preference cannot be used. They must go back into the lottery. If a student is withdrawn due to attendance violations, they are put back in the lottery and lose the ability to use sibling preference to get back into Watershed.

Nondiscrimination Disclosure

The Watershed School does not discriminate towards any individual as defined in District Policy 1011 nor does it require any student to attend the program. The Watershed School will not discriminate by race or special needs or other inappropriate criteria. No student shall be denied participation because of a learning disability, handicapping condition, or special need.

4. Administrative Policies:

The APC consists of nine voting members. Five of the members are permanent staff members, at least three of whom must be certified teachers. Four of the members are parents who are not permanent Watershed Charter School staff members of students currently enrolled in the school. The principal is a non-voting ex officio member of the APC, except in the case of a tie vote.

Watershed Charter APC Members	
Sena Gilbert (Chair)	Parent
Sean Walklin (Vice-Chair)	Parent
Janice Martinez	Parent
Jason Gillam	Parent
Erin Otness	Teacher
Dave Merrill	Teacher
Becky Hansen	Teacher
Abigail Paul (Secretary)	Teacher
Chasity Perez	Teacher
Jarrod Decker (ex-officio)	Principal

The Charter School Principal Evaluation Process

The annual Principal evaluation is an essential tool used to ensure a communication link between the responsibility of the school APC and its one direct employee, the Principal. The annual summative evaluation is designed to evaluate the progress and leadership of the Principal with regard to the APC's vision and goals each year. The following list provides the APC with a step-by-step checklist:

- All APC members will participate in the evaluation process.
- The APC will execute the evaluation process utilizing:
 - o the APC adopted evaluation instrument,
 - o the Principal job description,
 - o the Principal contract; and,
 - o Principal/school performance goals.



Watershed Charter School

SY24-25 Annual Report

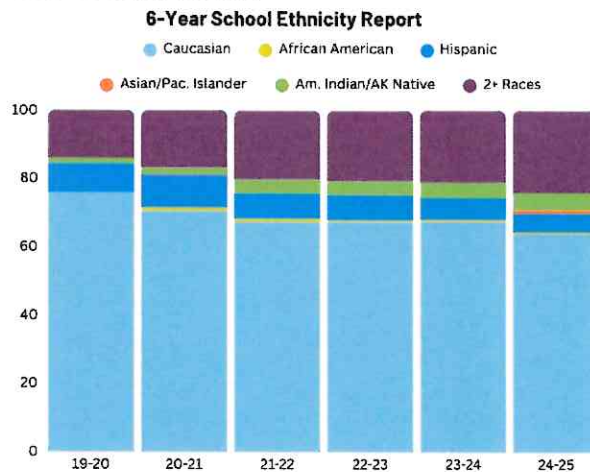
1 Charter Overview & Organization:

VISION: The Watershed School cultivates a strong sense of place and the continual academic and personal growth of all students who will be prepared to serve as stewards of their community.

ORGANIZATION:

- Kindergarten - 8th Grade
- Two-year looping model in 1st-6th grade
- 7th-8th graders loop with two teachers (ELA/Soc. Studies and Math/Science)
- Student enrollment: 199
- Place-based science, social studies, and language arts curricula
- Emphasis on outdoor education and skill development

SCHOOL STATISTICS:



94%
STUDENTS RETURNED
FROM THE PREVIOUS
SCHOOL YEAR

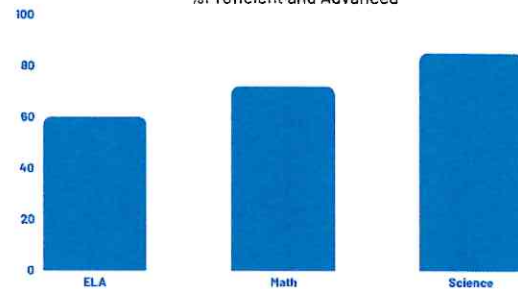
14%
STUDENTS ARE
MILITARY-
CONNECTED

13%
STUDENTS RECEIVE
SPECIAL EDUCATION
SERVICES

100%
STUDENTS EXPLORED
THEIR WORLD ON
FOOT, SKIS, BIKES, OR
CANOES

2 Data Highlights:

2024 AK STAR & Science Results % Proficient and Advanced



mClass Reading (K-3) Data 2023-2024

	Well Below - Below	Proficient - Well Above	% Growth
BOY	58.0%	42.0%	35.6%
MOY	40.9%	59.1%	
EOY	22.1%	77.9%	

Winter 2023 - Winter 2024 MAP **GROWTH**



Reading: Growth at the 58th percentile



Language: Growth at the 66th percentile



Math: Growth at the 72nd percentile

3

APC Goals and Actions

- Engaged in a 2-day workshop presented by AASB.
- Completed and presented a draft strategic plan to the school community.
- Currently reviewing and revising APC bylaws and the school dress code policy.

5. Funding:

The School District allocates funding in accordance with State Law, less administrative costs determined by applying the Department of Education and Early Development approved 4% indirect cost. An annual budget is submitted according to schedules established by the School District. The Charter School's program budget is used for operating expenses of the school's educational program, including the purchase of textbooks, classroom materials, and instructional aids, as well as student allotments.

Funds are made available on July 1 of each year and will continue under this Agreement. The amount of the budget will be adjusted following the ADM count period as established by the State of Alaska.

The Charter School may choose to carry over up to ten percent (10%) of the current, annual expenditures into a Charter School designated ending fund balance to be available for expending the following school year.

The Charter School may also receive revenues from grants and special revenue funds (beyond the per-pupil allocation) approved by the School District. Grants and special revenue funds received by the Charter School from the School District will pass directly into the operating fund and will be used as specified in grant requirements. All donations, gifts, and grants will be utilized to help accomplish the mission and goals of the school.

6. School District Charges:

The Charter School shall account for receipts and expenditures and comply with the FNSBSD's purchasing and accounting systems. The charter school agrees that it shall comply with all state 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:

4975 Decathlon Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99709

The facility is 14,000 square feet in size, containing 9 classrooms, administrative offices, and other facilities as described as follows:

The school building is positioned less than a mile away from the Fairbanks International Airport to the south and the Chena River to the north. The school borders a residential subdivision called Smith Ranch, and commercial properties occupied by a car rental agency and a hotel. Students at Watershed Charter School have access to natural areas of boreal forest, muskeg, and seasonal ponds by walking less than half a mile (approximately two city blocks) to a series of trails that wind through nearly 100 acres of public lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources and the Bureau of Land Management. As a school of choice, it is open to and draws students from a variety of locations across the borough, including distant neighborhoods and communities (over 15 miles from school) such as North Pole and Two Rivers. The school occupies a single-story building of approximately 14,000 square feet with nine classrooms, a special education resource room, library, staff work room, multi-purpose room, and office space.

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:

Shannon Trizzino	Kindergarten
Chasity Perez	First Grade
Peggy Haas	Second Grade
Dave Merrill	Third Grade
Amy Arneson	Fourth Grade
Jenn Duncan	Fifth Grade
Erin Otness	Sixth Grade
Becky Hansen	ELA/Social Studies

Jarrod Decker	Principal
April George	Administrative Assistant
Gideon Wood	Kindergarten Aide
Maria Vilchez	Charter School Assistant
Amy Kulp	Library Media Associate
Jeff Misel	Special Education Aide
Jackie Oakes	Special Education Aide
Tina Fitzpatrick	ELL Tutor/Instructor

Jaliah Roberts	Math/Science
Briana Martinez	Speech Language Pathologist
Nicole Ashby	Occupational Therapist

Danielle Flaherty	Lunch/Breakfast Aide
Lynn Malzahn	Break Aide
Christina Pierson	Reading Tutor

The Charter School shall promptly provide the School District with written notice of any permanent changes to staff. It is agreed and understood that all employees will be recruited and employed through School District processes and that teachers must sign a written contract with the School District before providing services. Unless the School District and any association representing a teacher or support employee agree to an exemption, all provisions of an existing negotiated or collective bargaining agreement applicable to employees shall remain in effect while the employee provides services at the Charter School.

11. Special Education

Providing a Free and Appropriate Public Education is a joint responsibility of both the charter school and school district. Charter Schools are subject to all state and federal laws, including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Specifics related to these responsibilities are outlined in Appendix A.

12. Teacher to Student Ratio:

The Charter School shall maintain the following pupil-teacher ratios:

- *The pupil-teacher ratio shall be 22: 1 in all grade levels.*
- *Pupil-teacher ratio may increase to accommodate newly hired staff with school-aged children per FEA and ESSA negotiated agreements.*
- *Pupil-teacher ratio may increase in classes to make up for vacancies in other classes where there are no students on the waitlist to meet the target school enrollment of 198 students.*

13. Enrollment:

The Charter School shall enroll a minimum of 150 students and a maximum number of 216 students at all times.

14. Retirement:

In accordance with and subject to the requirements of state law, eligible employees of the Charter School shall be members of the Teachers' Retirement System and eligible support employees shall be members of the Public Employees' Retirement System.

15. Risk Management:

The Charter School agrees to provide liability and risk insurance through the insurance program with Fairbanks North Star Borough. The Charter School agrees that it will coordinate all risk management activities through the Borough's risk management office. The Charter School shall not compromise, settle, negotiate, or otherwise affect any disposition of any actual or potential demands, claims, lawsuits, fines, judgments, or liabilities without first consulting with the School District and receiving the School District's written approval.

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.

16. Term:

The term of this Agreement shall be five years, effective upon complete execution by the School Board.

17. Program Evaluation:

During contract renewal, the school administrator shall oversee the preparation of a 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. 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.

18. Termination:

During the Charter Schools 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 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;
- c. Failure by the Charter School to abide by the Board Policies and Administrative Regulations of the School District;
- d. Default by the Charter School in any material provision in this agreement, or
- e. Other good cause as proven by the School Board.

The School Board shall provide ninety (90) days' written notice to the Charter School of its intent to terminate this Agreement. The notice shall include the reasons for its action and the specified time allotted for the situation to be remedied. If the Charter School fails to remedy the cause for termination within the time specified, this Agreement shall automatically terminate at the end of the specified time. The Charter School has thirty (30) days to appeal the School Board's decision to terminate this Agreement.

Upon termination, the Charter School has until a new semester starts which is not less than forty-five (45) contact days from the date of termination, to close the Charter School. For the welfare of the students, the School District shall work with the Charter School's staff and Academic Policy Committee to provide a smooth transition for all students into the appropriate School District schools.

At the close of the Charter School, any unused funds remaining and/or assets shall immediately be returned to the School District.

The Charter School may terminate this Agreement for the following school year by giving written notice to the School District on or before February 1 of a given school year of its intent to cease operations for the following year.

The Charter School will bear any legal costs incurred as a result of an investigation if non-compliance by the Charter School is verified.

19. Federal and State Use of Public Money:

The Charter School agrees to comply with all state and federal requirements for the receipt and use of public money.

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations including without limitation, the constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, age, race, color, gender, national origin, or religion. The Charter School agrees that it shall operate as a nonsectarian public school.

20. Exemptions or Requirements Included in this Agreement (Waivers):

- 310 Administrative Organization
- 325 Line and Staff Relations (Superintendent)
- 330 Administrative Committees (Superintendent's approval)
- 340 Principals (Policy Implementation)
- 341 Handbooks (Superintendent's approval)
- 1143 Principal's Advisory Committee
- 900 Curriculum and Instruction Philosophy
- 921 School Calendar
- 940 Curriculum Development
- 941 K-12 Student Assessment
- 955 Student Activities (Fundraising, travel, competition)
- 960 Instructional Arrangements
- 970 Instructional Materials
- 971 Selection of Instructional Materials
- 972 Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Materials
- 973 Disposal of Outdated Instructional Material
- 978 Elementary Grading
- 979 Junior High Grading
- 1123.5 School Publications
- 1154 Parent Involvement
- 1231 Student Teaching and Internships
- 1250 External Educational Research in Schools
- 741 Building Security
- 742 Use of Building
- 1160 Use of District Facilities
- 1032.1 Establishment of Boundaries
- 1032.2 Attendance Out of Transportation Zone
- 1048.7 Firearms and Other Guns
- 1048.72 Weapons other than Firearms or Guns
- 1049 Alcohol and Other Drug Violations
- 1043 Student Involvement in Decision Making
- 1044 School Clubs
- 1045 Student Behavior
- 1045.2 Student handbooks
- 1063.2 Homebound Instruction
- 1074 Contests and Awarding of Prizes



Sena Gilbert (Jun 2, 2025 22:16 AKDT)

Signature APC President

06/02/2025

Date



Signature Charter Administrator

06/02/2025

Date



Signature School District Official

6/3/25
Date

APPENDIX A

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Charter School/Special Education Services Responsibilities

In an effort to help clarify financial roles and responsibilities for both charter school and Special Education department budget planning, the following guidelines apply. These guidelines do not represent a change in current policy practice but formally document responsibilities for special education services at charter schools within the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

Students with disabilities who attend charter schools are entitled to receive all rights under the IDEA, and may not be denied access to a charter school due to their disability.¹ The obligation to comply with the IDEA is not excused simply because a charter school does not have the infrastructure or staff to ensure IDEA compliance. Students in charter schools must be located, identified, and evaluated in accordance with the IDEA's child find provisions; be provided with IEPs; receive FAPE; be placed in the least restrictive environment; be taught by appropriately trained personnel; and be accorded the complete set of procedural safeguards under this law.²

It is the responsibility of both the Special Education Department and the individual charter schools to ensure compliance with state and federal law, and that these obligations are met.

Charter schools are responsible for:

- Hiring and supervising special education certified teachers and any support staff (including paraprofessionals and counselors) needed to meet the educational/related services needs of students for whom the charter school has been determined an appropriate, least restrictive environment.³
- Staff to ensure compliance with special education paperwork requirements, in coordination with the special education department.
- All instructional materials, assistive technology equipment, instructional technology, and hardware needed for evaluation of students.⁴

The Special Education department is responsible for:

- Providing administrative support for special education students in charter schools. This includes record keeping, long-term file maintenance support, and District coordination of IEPs and the IEP process.

¹ 34 CFR 300.209.

² 34 CFR 300.209.

³ Specialized positions in the related services can be difficult to recruit and hire for. In some cases these services may need to be provided virtually. In the event that a charter school requires more support from related services than outlined herein, it may be possible to make arrangements on a case-by-case basis for the district to make related services staff available on an hourly basis at service cost.

⁴ The Special Education department may assist, when necessary, to provide equipment for charter school special education students.

- Providing access to District electronic tools for evaluation and IEP development (PowerSchool Special Programs and Q-global/interactive).
- Training new special education staff at charter schools, as appropriate to their role, in the use of PowerSchool Special Programs, Special Education policy and procedures, Crisis Prevention Institute training, de-escalation, and special education evaluation instruments.
- Inviting charter school special education staff to District professional development opportunities, as appropriate.
- Consultation from assistive technology staff, as needed, for student IEP support.
- Related Services support for evaluation, IEP development, and supervision/implementation of student IEP services and accommodations support.

Watershed FY26 Charter Contract (1)

Final Audit Report

2025-06-03

Created:	2025-06-03
By:	Jarrold Decker (f266992@k12northstar.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAakuHwJOXPJBKFrK7gR-Mea2hlecbJKRu-

"Watershed FY26 Charter Contract (1)" History

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2025-06-03 - 0:20:12 AM GMT- IP address: 66.223.179.181
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