



February 7, 2024

**Memorandum of Understanding Between:
EXCEL Alaska, Inc. (dba Alaska EXCEL) and North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD)**

Purpose:

This document will serve as the consortium agreement between the parties and sets forth the responsibilities of each party related to the *2024 Federal Alaska Native Education Program (ANE)*, North Slope Borough School District and Alaska EXCEL. The project hereafter will be referred to as the *North Slope Preparation for Graduation Program or North Slope PGP*.

Background:

Alaska EXCEL provides rural/remote Alaska Native Jr. High and High school students with supplementary academic support, transitional life skills and career exploration opportunities, which promote high school completion and transitional success. Through applied project-based learning, each student increases their knowledge in a wide variety of areas including academic (language arts, math and science), leadership, character, life skills, postsecondary and career search, and urban familiarization. Alaska EXCEL students graduate from high school and transition into adulthood with a viable Personal Learning & Career Plan (PLCP), Occupation Endorsement Certificates (OEC), national career readiness certificates, and college credits applicable to a specific Program of Study (PoS).

Alaska EXCEL has a proven track record in making high school graduation a priority for students. The program boasts a record breaking 95 – 98% graduation rate for students who participate in one or more of EXCEL’s hands-on, intensive academic and career and technical education sessions throughout their high school years. EXCEL works closely with partnering school districts, tribal organizations, and parents in building a 360-degree support network which not only makes learning relevant to their current life and how they see their future, but increases school attendance and excites them about transitioning from school to adulthood.

Partners signing this MOU support fidelity and implementation of the *North Slope Preparation for Graduation Program* over the next three years because of their belief in the efficacy of the program for increasing student success in core subjects, raising high school graduation rates, and increasing post-secondary access and success. We agree to the partner responsibilities described in this document.

I. Responsibilities for Alaska EXCEL

- A. Provide adequate funding for full implementation of the *North Slope PGP* including:
- 1) *North Slope PGP* project-management personnel.
 - 2) *North Slope PGP* support staff.
 - 3) *North Slope PGP* graduation coaches for each grade level (7-12).
 - 4) Lodging, instruction, classroom supplies and other expenses for approximately 20 different EXCEL Sessions including a new “EXCEL 9 – How to be a successful high school student”.

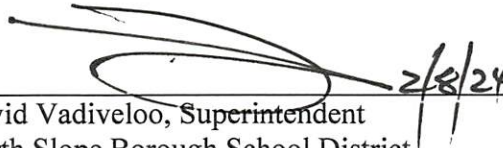
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- 5) Host a yearly Graduation Workshop for district partner personnel who will be working directly with EXCEL Graduation Coaches to ensure student success.
 - B. Ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local procurement rules and regulations and grant reporting requirements.
 - C. Provide fiscal responsibility for the project including oversight of all contracts with specified partners and vendors.
 - D. Provide appropriate graduation counseling to include academic instruction, high school credit recovery, attendance motivation, social emotional well-being, and postsecondary transition planning to ensure students meet district and state requirements for high school completion and graduation.
 - E. Ensure *North Slope PGP* students graduate from high school with a strong and viable Personal Learning & Career Plan, including employment skills known to relate to adult success.
 - F. Guide *North Slope PGP* students in developing valuable leadership skills, such as communication, problem solving, teamwork, motivation, and coping skills.
 - G. Connect *North Slope PGP* students to various post-secondary training opportunities, including the universities, vocational schools, apprenticeships, and work internships.
 - H. Provide *North Slope PGP* students with opportunities to earn high school credits to graduate on time.
 - I. Provide *North Slope PGP* students with opportunities to earn college credit, occupational endorsements, and industry recognized certificates, while still attending high school.
 - J. Provide opportunities for *North Slope PGP* students to earn specific industry-recognized certificates and/or college credit leading to a respective occupational endorsement or degreed program.
 - K. Communicate regularly with *North Slope PGP* students and stakeholders and provide routine, ongoing opportunities for feedback and continuous improvement.
 - L. Collaborate with Alaska Native organizations and partners within the *North Slope PGP* in the development of locally appropriate cultural activities, curriculum, instruction, and assessments.
 - M. Collect and provide *North Slope PGP* student data to an independent evaluator.
- I. Responsibilities for North Slope Borough School District**
- A. Provide a copy of the student's current report card or transcript including any IEP or 504 information a student might have directly to the EXCEL Graduation Coach prior to session attendance. This is to establish and/or update their Personal Graduation Plan and build a robust graduation plan to ensure high school completion on time.
 - B. Honor and accept the EXCEL course transcripts and provide high school academic credit for academic and technical education coursework provided by the Alaska EXCEL for the *North Slope PGP*.
 - C. NSBSD students attending the *North Slope PGP* will not be considered absent from their regular school day and will be allowed to make up missed homework as in any other school trip.
 - D. Ensure NSBSD students are academically and socially prepared to attend the *North Slope PGP* by meeting the session admission requirements.
 - E. Provide student access to the *North Slope PGP* graduation coaches.

- F. Provide NSBSD student data to the Project Director for use during the *North Slope PGP* sessions and at the request of the project evaluator for reporting and evaluation purposes.
- G. Provide school level access to *North Slope PGP* personnel and provide feedback related to individual student participation as needed.
- H. Promote the *North Slope PGP* in local communities and encourage and allow students to participate in all *North Slope PGP* opportunities.
- I. Implement school-level *North Slope PGP* activities with rigor and fidelity.
- J. Provide a point of contact for the *North Slope PGP*, ie, uploading student applications within the EXCEL session deadlines, working the EXCEL Student Services Manager on travel logistics, have accepted and waitlisted students on deck and ready to travel.
- K. Provide a travel coordinator to set up flights for all students traveling to the *North Slope PGP* sessions.
- L. Consistently recruit for students to attend all sessions throughout the course of the year to assist in meeting grant goals.
- M. Provide transportation funding to/from the *North Slope PGP* sessions.

Agreement

The said authorizing official agrees to the above on behalf of their organization under the following conditions:

- If an award notice is received, the NSBSD will have an opportunity to ratify this agreement, or a mutually updated version of this agreement.
- Each year, this agreement will be updated and revised to incorporate any changes in policies and regulations in force in the project partner organizations.
- The *North Slope Preparation for Graduation Program* involves numerous partners and therefore will inherently encounter unpredicted challenges. The signatures below indicate the commitment of the partners, yet do not preclude changes from being made or from a partner terminating the agreement as the team learns more about how best to collaboratively meet the needs of our students and communities or from any unforeseen funding reductions.



David Vadiveloo, Superintendent
North Slope Borough School District



Carol Wilson, Chief Executive Officer
EXCEL Alaska, Inc.