NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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RESOLUTION 27-002

RESOLUTION Supporting Alaska's public residential schools and adequate State of Alaska residential school's stipend funding

WHEREAS, Alaska's public residential schools deliver high-quality career and technical education (CTE) programs of study, as well as collegiate-level coursework through Advanced Placement, dual-credit, and other advanced academic programming;

WHEREAS, Alaska's public residential schools graduate hundreds of young Alaskans every year prepared to enter the workforce, enlist in the armed forces, pursue technical training, or enroll in post-secondary education opportunities;

WHEREAS, Alaska's public residential schools are attended predominantly by Alaska Native students, many of whom come from rural and remote communities where access to advanced coursework, specialized CTE programs, competitive athletics, extracurricular activities, and other educational and life opportunities may be limited or unavailable;

WHEREAS, families make the significant decision to send their children away from their home communities to residential schools because these schools provide academic, career, athletic, leadership, social, and life opportunities that may not otherwise be available to them locally;

WHEREAS, Alaska Native and rural students deserve equitable access to the same high-quality CTE pathways, Advanced Placement courses, dual-credit opportunities, extracurricular programs, athletics, career exploration, and preparation for post-secondary success that are available to students in Alaska's larger urban communities;

WHEREAS, public residential schools help reduce geographic inequities in educational opportunity by providing rural and Alaska Native students access to expanded programs, specialized instructors, career pathways, college preparation, and experiences that can significantly broaden their future educational and employment options;

WHEREAS, these schools provide more than room and board—they provide safe and supportive learning environments, mentorship, independence, leadership development, cultural connections, and opportunities for students to build the skills and confidence necessary to successfully transition into adulthood;

WHEREAS, residential school room and board stipend funding under Alaska Statute 14.16.200 has remained flat since the 2014–2015 (FY15) school year;

WHEREAS, during FY24, the cost of delivering room and board services was approximately $25,700 per student, more than double the revenue provided through the statutory state stipend;

WHEREAS, recognizing the need for additional funding, the Legislature and Governor provided one-time appropriations totaling $3,633,950 over FY23, FY24, and FY25;

WHEREAS, in FY26, the per-pupil monthly stipend intended to cover residential room and board expenses reverted to statutory FY15 funding levels;

WHEREAS, residential schools were the only public schools in Alaska that not only failed to receive an increase in state funding from FY25 to FY26, but instead experienced a reduction in state funding during that period;

WHEREAS, FY27 state funding for Alaska's public residential school stipends remains tied to a statutorily fixed amount established more than a decade ago and, because of significant inflation in food, utilities, transportation, staffing, insurance, maintenance, and other operating costs, now funds substantially less than the actual cost of providing residential services;

WHEREAS, inadequate residential funding threatens the long-term sustainability of programs that provide some of Alaska's most geographically isolated students access to educational opportunities that can fundamentally change the trajectory of their lives; and

WHEREAS, ensuring adequate and sustainable funding for Alaska's public residential schools is an issue of educational equity, particularly for Alaska Native and rural students who should not have fewer opportunities simply because of where they were born or where their families live.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District strongly urges the Alaska State Legislature and the governor to enact legislation similar to Senate Bill 257, introduced during the second half of the 34th Alaska Legislature, that would substantially increase the current residential school room and board stipend and establish a mechanism linking future stipend increases to increases in the Base Student Allocation or another appropriate inflationary measure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District recognizes Alaska's public residential schools as an essential educational pathway for Alaska Native and rural students and urges the State of Alaska to provide sustainable funding that ensures these students continue to have equitable access to rigorous academics, CTE programs, Advanced Placement and dual-credit coursework, athletics, extracurricular activities, leadership development, and meaningful preparation for college, careers, military service, and successful adulthood.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a student's home community or geographic isolation should not determine the educational opportunities available to that child, and that Alaska Native and rural students deserve access to opportunities comparable to those available to students throughout urban Alaska.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2026 by the Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board of Education.

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Margaret Hansen, Board President

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Terri Walker, Superintendent