


NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEMORANDUM

TO: Esther Evikana, President
Members of the Board

THROUGH: David Vadiveloo, Superintendent *DSVadiveloo*

FROM: Qagguna Tenna Pili, Director of Iñupiaq Education 
Tennessee Judkins

DATE: April 6, 2026

SUBJECT: **Contract Under \$50k – Element/Poetica
ILF Book Publication Extension** **Memo No. SB26-129**
(Informational Item)

NSBSD Policy Manual:

Board Policy 3311, Bids: The district shall purchase....services on a competitive bidding basis when required by law and whenever it appears to be in the best interest of the district to do so. All bids under federal awards must be made in accordance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.320.

BP 3312, Contracts: The Superintendent or designee may enter into contracts and memoranda of agreement on behalf of the district. All contracts and memorandums of agreement with a dollar value of \$50,000 or greater must be approved by the School Board.

NSBSD Strategic Plan Summary:

Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Goal 5: Facilitate & maintain culturally, emotionally, & physically safe learning environments

Issue Summary:

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the Board of Education of the timeline extension of the development and forthcoming publication of the Iñupiaq Learning Framework (ILF) book that is being designed by Element and Poetica in an amount of \$21,720.

This publication is intended to serve as a comprehensive resource to support educators, families, and community members in implementing culture-based education grounded in Iñupiaq ways of being, knowing, and learning.

The ILF book operationalizes the district's longstanding commitment to culturally responsive instruction and provides practical guidance for aligning teaching and learning with Iñupiaq values, language, and cultural knowledge systems.

Due to the comprehensive nature of this publication and being the first of its kind from the NSBSD, the Iñupiaq Education Department took the time to revisit all of the information and components included within the book for an extensive review and update that is better aligned with the NSBSD educational philosophy, mission, Manjuqput, and pedagogy. The ILF was developed and adopted over 15 years ago and had not been reviewed or updated since its initial adoption.

Background:

The establishment of the North Slope Borough School District in 1972 marked a significant milestone in self-determination, enabling Iñupiat to exercise local control over the education of their children.



Building on this foundation, the Board of Education formally adopted the Iñupiaq Learning Framework (ILF) in 2010, reinforcing the district's commitment to embedding Iñupiaq knowledge systems into curriculum and instruction.

Since its adoption, the ILF has guided the philosophical underpinnings of instructional content, program development, and district policy. More recently, the Board adopted Policy 0100 (Maṅṅuqput), which further codifies the expectation that all aspects of education within NSBSD are anchored in and responsive to Iñupiaq ways of knowing. The policy introduces the Pauktuutit, representing the foundational principles that ground district practices across curriculum, assessment, professional development, hiring, and student services.

The ILF book publication represents a continuation of this work by translating the framework into an accessible, practical tool for implementation.

Purpose of the ILF Book:

The Iñupiaq Learning Framework book is designed to:

- Support teachers in delivering culture-based instruction through culturally responsive practices that increase student engagement, motivation, and academic success
- Provide students with learning experiences that affirm identity, strengthen belonging, and connect academic content to lived cultural knowledge
- Equip parents, community members, and leaders with a clear understanding of educational expectations grounded in the Iñupiaq worldview
- Foster collaboration between schools and communities in advancing shared educational goals

The integration of students' cultural background—including values, beliefs, and practices—into instruction has been shown to significantly improve both academic outcomes and student well-being. This resource directly supports the district's responsibility to ensure that students are grounded in who they are while being prepared to succeed academically.

Impact:

The publication and implementation of the ILF book will:

- Strengthen alignment between Board Policy 0100 (District Philosophy) and classroom practice
- Advance the district's commitment to culturally responsive instruction as the cornerstone philosophy
- Equip staff with the necessary information and guide for implementation and enhance instructional consistency across schools
- Promote bilingualism and cultural continuity
- Deepen family and community engagement in education

Next Steps:

- Finalize written manuscript and design for publication
- Draft Board Policy and Administrative Regulation for usage of ILF book for the Board of Education to review and adopt
- Distribute the ILF book to all schools, educators, and stakeholders
- Provide professional development to support implementation
- Engage families and community members through outreach and orientation sessions



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