



**NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Qaiyaan Harcharek, Board President  
Members of the School Board

**THROUGH:** Pauline Harvey, Superintendent DocuSigned by: Pauline Harvey  
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**THROUGH:** Fadil Limani, Chief Financial Officer DocuSigned by: Fadil Limani

**FROM:** Lori Roth, Director Student Services DocuSigned by: Lori Roth  
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**DATE:** April 6, 2021

**SUBJECT: Contracts over \$10,000-Northwest Polar Kids** **Memo No. SB21-166  
(Action Item)**

**2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY**

**1.0 STUDENT SUCCESS:** All students will reach their intellectual potential and achieve academic success through integrating Inupiaq knowledge systems into the core content areas and focusing on the development of the Whole Child.

**4.0 FINANCIAL & OPERATIONAL STEWARDSHIP:** Effectively employ our operational and financial resources to support our strategic goals and long-term stability of the district.

**4.2 FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP/MANAGEMENT:** Ensure financial management based on what is best for our students.

**Issue Summary:**

In accordance with applicable Board policy, contracts and MOA's \$10,000 or greater require Board approval. BP 3312.

**Background:**

Northwest Polar Kids (Sara Ecker) has provided speech/language services and professional development to NSBSD staff for federally mandated related services required in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) to ensure a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with speech/language needs and Board Policy 6164.4. Ms. Ecker is an Alaska licensed provider who administers and completes initial speech evaluations, re-evaluations, or file reviews for student(s) to determine initial or on-going speech/language needs. Ms. Ecker is responsible to provide monthly on-site and/or remote contact with Student Services Staff to support parents, students, and educational staff with individualized program development, materials development, assistive technology, and direct services. Ms. Ecker schedules, and provides, remote direct services on a one-to-one or small group basis as outlined in Individual Education Programs (IEP). Ms. Ecker attends speech related federally mandated meetings such as pre-assessment planning meetings, 90-day transition meetings, initial evaluations, re-evaluation, and IEP meetings.

Please see attached MOA for additional responsibilities.

Ms. Ecker has provided speech/language services for the students of the North Slope Borough School District since 2016. She has established relationships with our students and families and was an essential part of our COVID-19 remote service delivery team. Ms. Ecker's extensive on-site experience within the North Slope region was invaluable during the development of NSBSD's remote service delivery model for speech language services. Ms. Ecker currently provides speech/language services to Tikigaq School, Kali School, Harold Kaveolook School, Nunamiut School, and Nuiqsut Trapper School. Ms. Ecker facilitates monthly site-based professional development meetings for special education staff who support the implementation and progress of speech/ language IEP goals and speech-related assistive technology. Under this MOA, Ms. Ecker will be available to provide up to 5 days of remote speech-related services as required based on student IEP's.

**Length of Contract:** This MOA will be valid August 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2022.

**Funding Source and Contract Amount:**

This MOA is funded through the Title VI-B Special Education grant and the NSBSD General Fund. This MOA will fund up to 150 contractor days and not to exceed amount of \$105,000.00 (may include 5 days of extended school year services). In addition to the contracted days, the MOA includes travel for an amount not to exceed \$7,000.00. Travel will include for up to 2 trips to Nuiqsut Trapper School, Nunamiut School, Harold Kaveolook School, Kali School, and Tikigaq School.

The total not to exceed amount of the contract is \$112,000.00.

**Grand Funding:**

This MOA is funded through the Title VI-B Special Education grant (fund 285. 200.220.000.410) and the NSBSD general fund (100.200.220.000.410).

**Available Budget:**

The respective contract and related services are temporarily being encumbered under the School District Main Operating Fund Budget Code 100.200.220.000.410. Historically, such contractual obligations were encumbered through Grant Funding specifically within 285.200.220.000.410. Currently, there are no Grant Awards and no available budget for the corresponding contract to be encumbered to such Special Revenue Fund. It is expected that the District will continue to receive a Grant Award for such Program Services for FY21-22, in which at that time the identified encumbrance can be transferred over to the respective Special Revenue Fund and alleviate the encumbrance from the School District Main Operating Fund.

**Compliance with BP 3311:**

As noted above, Ms. Ecker is an Alaska licensed speech/language therapist working for a daily rate of \$700.00 per day. She has been an independent contractor with the North Slope Borough School District since 2014. Since that time, Ms. Ecker has successfully fulfilled her MOA requirements resulting in NSBSD and families being pleased with the services provided. Based on Ms. Ecker’s Arctic experience, this rate is within the acceptable range of rates paid across the state of Alaska (neighboring school district rate is \$650.00-\$725.00/day depending on experience). In support of the approval of a sole-source MOA, this contractor will require no training and no adjustment period to provide speech/language services to our students. The continuation of Ms. Ecker as a contractor will provide continuity of services, familiarity for students and parents, continuity of practice, pro-active planning, continued development of remote speech/language services, and on-going compliance with NSBSD special education processes. Not providing a sole-source contract and responding to a bidding process could result in students and families having to re-establish communication, re-develop trusting relationships, compensation for the loss of historical knowledge, and cause a disruption in continuity of student support in the Student Services Department. As such, the District waives such requirements set out in BP3311 as the underlying contract is in the best interest of the District.

**Motion:**

“I move that the NSBSD Board of Education approve the above \$10,000 and greater contract for Northwest Polar Kids, in an amount not to exceed \$112,000.00 as described in this memo and related attachments.”

Motion by \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_

Advisory Vote \_\_\_\_\_ Vote \_\_\_\_\_