



# Chugach School District

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[chugachschools.com](http://chugachschools.com)

January 16, 2019

Chugach School District School Board  
9312 Vanguard Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska, 99507

The Chugach School District School Board writes this letter as a clear and strong statement of its opposition to the formation of a borough in Prince William Sound, and particularly one that includes the town of Girdwood that has no cultural, geographic, or economic connection with the Sound or its people.

The Chugach School District is nationally known for its innovative and successful practices over the course of the last two decades. We have been driven by the needs of our students and the desires and voices of our communities of Whittier, Tatitlek, and Chenega. We are successful because of the close connections that we have to our stakeholders. To ensure an equitable voice for each community, we have recently added a section within our school district to dedicate at least one school board seat from each community.

Each of our communities represents different and unique cultures. Our educational model is to provide strong place-based learning that is taught within the culture of each community to best meet the needs of our students. This letter of opposition coincides with the voice of each of our communities and honors their input in this matter.

We have extensively reviewed the potential impacts of borough formation on our school district. We have looked for positive outcomes for our students and communities and have only found concerns. We have yet to find anyone who can quantify how a borough formation will have a positive impact on the education or the quality of life of our students. What we have determined causes great concern:

- Statute only allows for one school district in a borough. Our unique and effective educational model is at great risk when absorbed into the larger communities of Girdwood, Cordova, and potentially Valdez.
- The local voice of our communities-especially those of Tatitlek and Chenega because of our small size, will be diminished.
- Control of our district will move from the communities we now serve to distant communities not easily accessed by our stakeholders.



Whittier Community School  
(907) 472-2575

Tatitlek Community School  
(907) 325-2252

Chenega Bay Community School  
(907) 573-5123

Valdez FOCUS  
Homeschool  
(907) 835-5528

Anchorage FOCUS  
Homeschool  
(907) 522-7400

Fairbanks FOCUS  
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(907) 457-2545

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(907) 222-2712





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- Through the statutory process, we have recently dedicated a school board seat in Chenega. Our board now has two seats in Whittier, two seats in Tatitlek, and one seat in Chenega. Being absorbed into a large borough, and based on population, our district will lose all but potentially one seat in Whittier.
- Small communities deserve a responsive and similarly sized district to serve them well. The Chugach School District has shown that it can do that. To move the leadership of the school district to a larger unconnected city would be extremely prejudicial to our local and native populations.
- Effective government should function and be performed at the lowest level of government that can function effectively. Our governing school board functions extremely effectively without an additional layer of borough government added.

The formation of a borough in Prince William Sound offers no positive outcomes for our school district, but rather puts our innovative and effective practices at risk. A loss of voice, a loss of control, and a potential loss of our culturally embedded education are all risks that we are unwilling to take. As of yet, no betterment of life or education has been offered our students and our families in consideration of a borough formation. As such, the Chugach School District School Board stands resolutely in strong opposition to borough formation in Prince William Sound.

Signed,

The Chugach School District School Board

Board Chair

Board Vice Chair

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member



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