



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEMORANDUM

TO: John Hopson Jr., President
Members of the Board

THROUGH: David Vadiveloo, Superintendent DSV

FROM: Michael Hautala, Director of Student Services MH

DATE: May 5, 2025

SUBJECT: School Counselor Recruitment and Retention
Incentive

Memo No. SB25-192
(Action Item)

NSBSD Policy Manual:

Board Policy 3300 Expenditures/Expending Authority: The Superintendent or designee may purchase supplies, materials, and equipment in accordance with the law. The Superintendent or designee shall not authorize any proposed expenditure that exceeds the major budget classification allowance against the expenditure is the proper charge unless an amount sufficient to cover the purchase is available in the budget for transfer.

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:

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

Issue Summary:

This memo seeks approval from the Board of Education to implement a one-time signing bonus and retention incentive for School Counselors for the 2025-2026 school year. This incentive is intended to enhance recruitment and retention efforts to attract quality staff into this area.

We propose offering a one-time taxable, non-TRSable signing bonus (for new staff) and retention incentive (for returning staff) of \$5,000 to encourage School Counselor engagement for the 2025-2026 school year. The incentive will be structured as follows:

For new hire and returning School Counselors:

A \$5,000 signing bonus or retention incentive paid in two equal payments:

- \$2500 in January, 2026 after successful completion of semester 1 and return in semester 2
- \$2500 in June, 2026 after successful completion of semester 2

Background:

School Counselor positions continue to represent one of the most challenging job classifications for Districts to fill. Counselor shortages statewide and nationally have been felt more acutely in the rural education space. At the same time, student needs in schools appear to be on the rise.



The District has maintained a focus on recruiting for these positions but is still understaffed. Of the 11 School Counselor positions budgeted for NSBSD schools for next year, more than 50% remain unfilled. Filling these positions is vital as they ensure the District remains able to manage our Tumitchiat Sivunmun Plans, provide Social Emotional Learning, and quality Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports to our students with continuity.

In the current recruiting climate, Districts nationwide are offering financial incentives up to \$10,000 sign-on to attract and retain qualified counselors in these critical roles. To remain competitive in the Counselor marketplace it has become necessary for the NSBSD to offer similar incentives.

Funding Source and Contract Amount:

This initiative is estimated to cost the District \$55,000 and will be funded from the FY26 General Education budget.

Recommendation:

The administration recommends the Board approve this one-time, non-recurring **School Counselor Recruitment and Retention Incentive** to be paid to new-hire and re-hire Special Education teachers of the North Slope Borough School District per the details of this memo.

Proposed Motion:

“I move that the NSBSD Board of Education approve the one time **School Counselor Recruitment and Retention Incentive** for FY26 as described in this memo.”

Moved by _____ Seconded by _____

Vote _____

Signature: DSVadiveloo
DSVadiveloo (May 9, 2025 11:24 AKDT)
Email: david.vadiveloo@nsbsd.org

Signature: Michael Hautala
Michael Hautala (May 9, 2025 17:45 AKDT)
Email: michael.hautala@nsbsd.org

