



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: April 18, 2025

SUBJECT: **Contract \$50K and Over –**
Northwest Polar Kids (Sara Ecker)

Memo No. SB25-170
(Action Item)

NSBSD Policy Manual:

Board Policy 3311, Bids: The district shall purchaseservices 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.

Board Policy 3312, Contracts: The Superintendent of designee may enter into contracts and memoranda of agreement (MOA's) on behalf of the District. All contracts and MOA's 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

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

Issue Summary:

NSBSD staff are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Board Policy 6164.4. to identify students within the District that require special education and related services. *Northwest Polar Kids* (Sara Ecker) has provided speech/language services and professional development to NSBSD staff and students since 2016. Previously, Ms. Ecker worked for Northwest Arctic School District as a contractor providing speech services in the areas of: initial speech evaluations, re-evaluations, and file reviews to determine initial or on-going speech/language needs. Ms. Ecker has provided on-site and/or remote services to support parents, students, and staff with individualized program development (IEP), materials development, and assistive technology needs. Ms. Ecker has provided remote speech services as required by student IEP's to Nuiqsut Trapper, Harold Kaveolook School, Nunamiut School, and Tikigaaq School.

Background:

Based on State and federal law, NSBSD is required to have speech-language pathologists available to screen, evaluate, provide services, and consult with school staff to support students with speech-language needs. Individual and/or small group speech services may be provided in person or remotely based on the Individualized Education Plan. To determine if a speech disability exists, the speech pathologist has input in the following meetings: pre-assessment meetings to explain assessments



being used, Infant Learning Program 90-day transition meetings, initial evaluations, re-evaluations, and IEP meetings.

Length of Contract:

FY26

Funding Source and Contract Amount:

NSBSD will fund this MOA through general fund and the VI-B Special Education Grant. The Contractor will be paid **\$729 (increase of .02%) for up to 175 days (127,575.00)** of professional services. Travel expenses are not to exceed **\$10,000.00** for up to 2 trips from Portland, Oregon to Nuiqsut Trapper School, Nunamiut School, Harold Kaveolook School, and Tikigaq School. Total MOA not to exceed **\$135,575.00**. There are no NSBSD benefits associated with this MOA.

Grant Funding:

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

Compliance with BP 3311.

Ms. Ecker has successfully fulfilled her MOA requirements since 2016 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. 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 implementation of remote speech/language services, and on-going compliance with NSBSD special education processes. For compliance with BP 3311, the continuation of Ms. Ecker's contract meets exemption E. specialized services where the District has established a need for standardization of services of 2 CFR 200.320.

Recommendation:

The Student Services Department recommends passing this MOA. Services are state and federally mandated under IDEA and are required to meet the educational needs of students with a speech/language disability.

Proposed Motion:

"I move that the NSBSD Board of Education approve the above \$50,000 and greater proposal and related contract for **Sara Ecker, Northwest Polar Kids**, in the amount of **\$137,575.00** as described in this memo and related attachments."

Moved by _____ Seconded by _____

Vote _____

Signature: DSVadiveloo
DSVadiveloo (Apr 21, 2025 10:09 AKDT)

Email: david.vadiveloo@nsbsd.org

Signature: Michael Hautala
Michael Hautala (Apr 21, 2025 10:11 AKDT)

Email: michael.hautala@nsbsd.org

