



## NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Robyn Burke, President  
Members of the School Board

**THROUGH:** Tracy Mulvenon, Assistant Superintendent

**FROM:** Chelsie Overby, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

**DATE:** October 19, 2024

**SUBJECT: Employment of Relatives – Debby Edwardson** **Memo No. SB25-078**  
(Action Item)

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#### **NSBSD Strategic Plan Goal:**

7.0 Financial & Operational Stewardship: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations.

#### **NSBSD Policy Manual:**

Board Policy 4112.8/4212.8/4312.8 Employment of Relatives: ... An immediate family member of the Superintendent may be employed by the district with written approval of the Board. (AS.14.14.140)

Board Policy 2300, Conflict of Interest: The School Board recognizes that certain positions may involve an employee's participation in decisions affecting his/her financial interests. Employees shall refrain from participating in official district financial decisions in which they have substantial financial interest.

#### **Issue Summary:**

The District has been unsuccessful in efforts to recruit a permanent communications manager for 2 years. To support communications of the exciting growth and development being demonstrated by our students, in the short term, Administration has identified Debby Dahl Edwardson (who has been volunteering her time assisting Administration in communications) to be a consultant. This will ensure communications are consistent and aligned with the Iñupiaq values that guide the District.

There are many positive stories that the District is achieving to showcase the milestones and successes on student engagement and outcomes that should and could be published but isn't.

As a consultant, Mrs. Edwardson would work with the Superintendent's office, specifically Assistant Superintendent Tracy Mulvenon to avoid conflict of interest, as Superintendent Vadiveloo, is the son-in-law of Mrs. Edwardson.

#### **Recommendation:**

As required under BP 4112.8/4212.8/4312.8, Employment of Relatives, and AS 14.14.140 Restriction on employment; ... (b), Administration is recommending the Board of Education waive the restriction set out in AS 14.14.140 and approve Assistant Superintendent Mulvenon to negotiate and issue a communications consultant contract for Debby Dahl Edwardson to support the District in preparing and publishing the District's achievements on student outcomes.

**Background:**

Debby Dahl Edwardson has previously served on the Board of Education from 1998-2004 and 2005-2017, the Alaska Association of Bilingual Education’s Parent Advocacy Committee, and Alaska Association of School Boards. In relation to communications, she established Edwardson Communications, a media business, and previously worked as a radio reporter, freelance journalist, and public relations specialist. Mrs. Edwardson is an author known for her work that reflects the culture and experiences of Alaska, particularly the Iñupiaq language, culture, and history. Debby’s first book, *Whale Snow* was named Best Book for a Global Society by the International Reading Association and was also listed as a Notable Social Studies Book by the Children’s Book Council and the National Council for the Social Studies. Her second book, *Blessing’s Bead*, was a Junior Library Book Guild selection and was named Best Historical Fiction for Young Adults by Booklist. Her latest book, *My Name is Not Easy* was a finalist for the National Book Award and earned many other awards as well. Her work experience is as Director of Community and Workforce Development and Special Projects at Iḷisaġvik College. She currently serves on the Iḷisaġvik College’s Board of Trustees.

**Proposed Motion:**

“I move that the NSBSD Board of Education waive the restriction set out in AS 14.14.140 and approve Assistant Superintendent to negotiate and issue a communications consultant contract for Debby Dahl Edwardson as described in SB25-078.”

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

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

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

Vote \_\_\_\_\_