



**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-Gerace Consulting** **Memo No. SB21-168  
(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:**

Gerace Consulting (Betsy Gerace) provides school psychology services and professional development as required under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and supported by Board Policy 6164.4 to ensure all students receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

- Ms. Gerace services include, but are not limited to, Initial Evaluations, Re-evaluations (every 3 years or by parent request), Assessments, Evaluation Summary Reports, Manifestation Determinations, Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans for student's eligible, or thought to be eligible, for Special Education services. Ms. Gerace facilitates the pre-evaluation meetings to ensure parents have an understanding of the evaluation process, and have the information needed to provide informed consent as per federal law.
- Ms. Gerace conducts assessments to determination if a student qualifies to receive

enrichment activities as per NSBSD's Gifted/Talented Program.

- Ms. Gerace, along with the educational team, conduct eligibility meetings as required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to determine if a Section 504 Plan is appropriate.
- Upon parent request, Ms. Gerace provides support to building principals to review current data and make recommendations pertaining to student Promotion/Acceleration/ and Retention as described in Board Policy 5123.
- Ms. Gerace assists the Student Services Department by researching, developing, educating, and implementing a hybrid evaluation model supported by on-site and distance technologies. Support is provided to determine documentation needs for post-COVID-19 referrals for special education services. As needed, Ms. Gerace provides individualized training and support to Student Services staff to implement, score, and disseminate standardized and achievement assessments. Please see attached MOA for additional information.

Ms. Gerace has provided school psychology services for the students of the North Slope Borough School District since August of 2014. She spent 5 years developing relationships with our students and families in Utqiagvik and across the North Slope Borough through face-to-face evaluations. She did extensive research with Mr. Stevenson, school psychologist to identifying and set up on-line achievement, social/emotional, and cognitive assessments during COVID-19 remote instruction. Ms. Gerace's NSBSD experience was invaluable during the development of NSBSD's remote service delivery model for pre-evaluation, gaining informed consent remotely, conducting assessments, and facilitating the Evaluation Summary and Eligibility meeting. Ms. Gerace provides district-wide school psychology services in collaboration with Mr. Stevenson, on-site and remote school psychologist.

**Length of Contract:** This MOA will be valid July 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 40 contractor days and not to exceed amount of \$28,000.00 In addition to the contracted days, the MOA includes travel for an amount not to exceed \$2,000.00. Travel will include 3 trips from Anchorage to Utqiagvik.

The total not to exceed amount of the contract is \$30,000.00.

**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. Gerace is an Alaska licensed school psychologist 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. Gerace has successfully fulfilled her MOA requirements resulting in NSBSD and families being pleased with the services provided. Based on Ms. Gerace’s 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). Support the approval of a sole-source MOA, this contractor will require minimal training and no adjustment period to provide school psychology services to our students. The continuation of Ms. Gerace as a contractor will provide continuity of services, familiarity for students and parents, continuity of practice, pro-active planning, continued development of remote school psych 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 relationship, compensating 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 Gerace Consulting, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00 as described in this memo and related attachments.”

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

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