

Knik Cultural Charter School - Initial Application Summary

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD) approved the Knik Cultural Charter School's initial application on December 15, 2021, for ten (10) years, through the end of school year 2031-2032. The primary purpose of the Knik Cultural Charter School is to advance a quality education for children and youth that is grounded in indigenous culture.

Program Information:

Knik Cultural Charter School will strive to provide culturally rich education options for Pre-K through 12th grade students in learning environments that respect and honor indigenous students and their families. With a unique blend of educational options for families that will draw from Alaska Native and American Indian cultural learnings and ways. The school will build a solid foundation of culturally responsive education programs that will be offered through several options including on-site learning, blended learning, and a home-school correspondence program. The school will strive to offer culture-rich education opportunities throughout all programs. The school will also offer world class learning opportunities in career and technical education, advanced academic classes, statewide correspondence, and a residential school. Students will have access to supplemental enrichment and educational opportunities on and off the school's campus to support all those enrolled in our programs.

The Knik Cultural Charter School will utilize the Alaska Content and Performance Standards as a cornerstone of the educational program. In addition, the school community will apply Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Education as the school operates. -- Alaska Native educators have developed standards that schools, and communities can use to examine the extent to which they are attending to the educational and cultural well-being of their students. "Cultural standards" are intended to complement Alaska state content and performance standards. Standards have been developed for five areas: students, educators, curriculum, schools, and communities.

Every Knik Cultural Charter School student will have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to encompass courses and curriculum material that align to state content standards. The Knik Cultural Charter School will use assessment results to help inform overall programmatic decisions as well as utilizing the data to drive instruction and assist in curriculum selection. Students will participate in all federal and state-required assessments at the grade levels required. The Knik Cultural Charter School will also use MAP and AIMSweb assessments at the grade levels recommended. The school may explore other benchmark and progress monitoring assessments to meet the needs of the response to intervention (RTI) program.

Initial enrollment:

The Knik Cultural Charter School is projected to be 250-300 students in grades Pre-K through 12. The pupil to teacher ratios will reflect the following guidelines:

- Grades K-2, 20 to 1
- Grades 3-5, 22 to 1
- Grades 6-12, 24 to 1

The correspondence homeschool will have up to 300 students and there will be a teacher advisor for every 125 students enrolled.

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School Site:

The Knik Tribe has purchased the former Matanuska Telephone Association (MTA) operations center property (12.7 acres) and is currently renovating that property to provide educational services to children and youth. The Knik Cultural Charter School intends to provide statewide correspondence services as well as on site learning for the Pre-K through 12th grades at this site.

The facility will accommodate between 275 and 300 students for in-person learning and space for teacher advisors serving up to 300 correspondence students. Additionally, the charter school will have access to the Knik Tribe's STEAM academy located on the same property. The facility will include a gymnasium. Future growth needs will be provided for through expansion of the educational facilities and through the addition of portable classroom units on the property. The district does not currently have space for lease to house the charter school.

Budget:

The Knik Cultural Charter School budget is built upon the student count of 275 in-person students in grades Pre-K through 12 and another 200 students in the school's correspondence program. Assuming the population is evenly spread among the 13 grade levels, there would be 21 students per grade level for in person learning budgeting purposes. Similar to the district budget, the budget development process is centered on students. The students generate funding on a per pupil basis and these amounts will be used for preliminary budget purposes. Of course, this preliminary budget is built from district averages and will need to be adjusted as actual enrollment numbers are realized.

The Knik Cultural Charter School will work cooperatively with the MSBSD to seek appropriate assistance in the areas of finance, budget, insurance, legal issues, administrative and instructional in-services, and workshops to help ensure the most economical and sensible decision-making process in the utilization of budget funds.

Program Highlights:

- Provide Pre-K through 12th on-site education services beginning in FY2023.
- Provide a culturally enriched state-wide correspondence services beginning in FY2023.
- Culturally relevant teaching and learning utilizing cultural learning opportunities that enhance the relevance and student engagement in achieving and exceeding the state standards.
- Develop and request approval (amendment to contract) to provide a residential option during the term of the contract.
- Utilize the MSBSD curriculum framework and programs, enhancing those with cultural learning opportunities.
- Standards based (including utilizing the district's standards-based report cards in grades K through 5).
- Hands-on culturally relevant project-based learning activities emphasizing collaboration and cooperation.
- Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Follow state graduation requirements and offer support identifying and accessing post-secondary learning opportunities during the junior and senior years.
- Work with partners to identify and offer multiple work-based learning opportunities such

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- as job shadowing, pre-internships, and internships during the junior and senior years.
- Every student will have consistent opportunities to work on grade-appropriate assignments.
 - Students will be provided strong instruction where students do most of the thinking in a lesson.
 - Students will be provided culturally enriched lessons that deeply engage them in their learning.
 - Teachers will hold high expectations for students and believe they can meet their grade level standards.
 - Elementary classrooms may be multi-age and/or provide looping opportunities.

School Mission:

To promote successful self-determination and cultural awareness for our members and our community through better living conditions, education, wellness, and hard work.

Vision:

Knik Tribe and our neighbors will live in a community of opportunity and prosperity with healthy families, cultural pride, and diversity.

Knik Tribe's guiding principles (values): (source: Knik Tribal Council)

Honor Your Elders

Know Who You Are – *Family and Language*

Respect for Others – *People and Land*

Take Care of Others – *Community and Society*

See Connections – *All things are related.*

Have Patience – *Accept Responsibility*

Spirituality–*Pray for guidance.*

Live Carefully – *What you do will come back to you.*

Honesty – *With yourself and others.*

Humility and Humor – *Accept what life brings.*

Share – *Giving makes you rich.*

Work Hard – *Take Responsibility*