



FY25 School Closure Planning

Spring 2024

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Why School Closure

The district's mission is to provide an excellent education - by closing specific schools and increasing utilization of others, the district will be able to provide better services. Staff will be able to provide more services to students in one building than the same number of students in multiple buildings. Additional students in buildings means more teachers as well, which leads to increased instructional options for families in elementary grade bands, and greater class, elective, and activity options for students in secondary grade bands.

The school district, with direction from the Board of Education, is looking into options to close or repurpose a small number of school buildings and find other efficiencies in how district buildings are utilized. Why the district is pursuing these options includes:

Financial Impacts:

- \$29 million dollar deficit
- Closing a school saves the district a significant amount of money year after year
- Fewer buildings to maintain
- Reduced utility costs

Enrollment Loss:

- 2,000 fewer students now compared to ten years ago
- Less brick and mortar students due to rise in BEST homeschool and alternative options

Improved Services:

- Helps with not increasing class sizes even more
- Fewer SPED vacancies - consolidated programs will improve offerings
- Less vacant positions throughout the district - classes taught by highly qualified professionals

When - Timeline

FEBRUARY	
Monday, February 12	Budget Work Session - Departmental Reports
Friday, February 16	Meet with affected schools
Monday, February 19	Budget Work Session - Share list of schools
Thursday, February 22	Budget Committee Meeting
Monday, February 26	Budget Work Session & Public Hearing
Tuesday, February 27	Budget Community Forum at Lathrop High
MARCH	
Monday, March 4	Budget Work Session & Public Hearing
Tuesday, March 5	Regular School Board Meeting - Public testimony
Monday, March 11	Budget Community Forum at North Pole
March 18-20	Action Item - select school(s) for closure

How - Process Behind School Closure

School Selection Considerations:

- **Condition of the Building** - Age, recent investments, status of major systems such as HVAC, electrical, plumbing, communications, roof, pavement, windows, energy efficiency
- **School Utilization** - How many students attend the school compared to the school's total capacity.
- **Cost Savings** - How much would be saved on utilities, deferred maintenance, staffing costs, etc, if the school were closed.
- **Educational Programming** - Are there currently limited educational offerings or services for students.
- **Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location** - What would be the impact on the local neighborhood, transportation, and redistricting. How would nearby school capacity and population be impacted.

Department Information & Processes

Clicking the department name will jump you to their section in the document.

- [Facilities Maintenance](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Information & Technology](#)
- [Purchasing & Warehouse](#)
- [Students Support Services](#)
- [Teaching & Learning](#)

Facilities Maintenance

Departments

- Facilities Maintenance Department (FMD) will provide a Project Manager for this process
- All Departments along with Asst. Superintendent and FMD will meet at each school and do a walk through and identify items they are responsible for.
- All Departments with items in the building will be responsible for the boxing and removal of items. FMD will supply large and XL boxes, and if a smaller box is needed it will be up to the individual department

to come up with them. Each department will be responsible for the storage of these items if not going to another school.

- FMD and Shipping & Receiving will supply pallets when needed. When pallets are used, we will supply a pallet tag that identifies the pertinent information. We will also supply the shrink wrap.

Schools

- Will do an initial walk-through with the principal of school to identify what they are responsible for.
- Will hold meetings to help support and assist staff in the closing of their building. Will inform staff on timelines for individual buildings.
- Will do a count of furniture items and give other schools the opportunity to ask for them.
- Teachers will be responsible for their own personal items and the removal of these items from the building.
- Teachers that will be transferring locations can request boxes and pallets. If a pallet is needed, they will be responsible for filling out a pallet tag and attaching it to the pallet.
- Custodians will NOT be responsible for packing of boxes, BUT will assist in stacking and shrink wrapping the pallets when needed.
- FMD will assign a representative to each location closing to help with the coordination.

FMD and Shipping & Receiving

- FMD will work closely with the Borough during this process.
- S&R will deliver pallets and furniture to their respected schools.
- FMD and the Borough will have a date to do a final walk through of the building before handing it back to them.
- Items that don't find a home will ultimately be surplus.

Human Resources

In light of the possibility of permanent school closures, the Human Resources Department has developed a comprehensive transition plan to support school personnel through this challenging transition period. Our commitment is to ensure that all employees affected by such closures are provided with the necessary resources, support, and guidance to navigate this transition fully informed. This report outlines the strategies and initiatives that the Human Resources Department will implement to assist school personnel during this process.

After the closure of three (3) school locations in 2022, the District entered into bargaining with the respective workgroups. During these negotiations, there was considerable discussion with school closures and the

transition of employees, as there was an awareness that future school closures were likely for our District. The following is a summary of the contractual language surrounding school closures, transfers and reduction in force (RIF) by each respective workgroup, followed by support efforts by the human resources department for employees navigating the school closures.

Districtwide Seniority

Before delving into the specifics of each respective workgroup, it is crucial to grasp the concept of districtwide seniority, which impacts both our support staff and certified teacher workgroups. In these two workgroups, seniority date refers to the date on which the employee joined the bargaining unit. For example, if a newly hired certified teacher started on August 10, 2023, that would be their seniority date. Similarly, if a classroom tutor began on the same date, August 10, 2023, it would also be their seniority date.

However, it's important to note that there are instances where multiple new staff members commence employment on the same date. In such cases, the language in both negotiated agreements includes a lottery system to determine your ranking within that seniority date.

The HR department has taken proactive steps to support our staff to understand the concept of districtwide seniority by creating both a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet and a video explaining the details. These resources will help our employees grasp the intricacies of seniority determination and its interface with our staffing process. They ensure that our staff will be well-informed and equipped to navigate any potential transfers or layoffs with clarity.

Contractual Notations and Summaries by Workgroup

Support Staff (Education Support Staff Association- ESSA)

In accordance with our contractual obligations, support staff members affected by the potential closure of their school building location must be notified with at least a ten (10) workdays notice of any changes in their working conditions, including their working location. This would also apply to any required layoffs. Recognizing the importance of clarity and timeliness in such matters, our objective is to not only to meet but surpass these contractual requirements, ensuring support staff receives notice as soon as possible, thereby ensuring a smooth and respectful transition process for all involved.

Each support staff member is assigned to a particular job classification, with a corresponding seniority date. During the staffing review process, we consider job classification and seniority date when determining reassignments. Employees impacted by the school closure will have the opportunity to select a position within the same job classification at an alternate work location, prioritizing available vacancies. In the event that no vacancies exist, we will proceed with districtwide reductions to meet required staffing levels, issuing layoff notices starting with the most recently hired staff member based on seniority.

[Contractual References](#)

Article 7.1 *Change of Status*

Article 7.2 *Layoffs*

Article 8.3 *Involuntary Transfers*

Certified Teachers (Fairbanks Education Association - FEA)

Through the recent negotiation process, both FEA and the District have reached an agreement on new contractual language pertaining to school closures. The updated language specifies that the District will promptly notify affected certified teachers while reviewing the reassignment process, and allowing for location preferences to be considered.

During the staffing review, considerations such as tenure status, seniority date, certification, and endorsements guide the transfer opportunities offered to teachers, allowing for timely notification of transfer.

Tenured Teachers

Tenured teachers will immediately receive a notice of involuntary transfer, which notifies them of their transfer status, and allows them an opportunity to apply to any position to which they are interested. If the teacher does not have a placement by a specified date, the District places them into a teaching position, with consideration of their stated preferences. In the event of required layoffs, the District will adhere to the Board of Education's adopted Reduction in Force (RIF) plan.

Non Tenured Teachers

Non tenured teachers will be reviewed with the above stated considerations to determine if they will be transferred or laid off, according to staffing needs set forth through the Board of Education's recommended budget. While we always aim to provide notice as soon as practicable, by both Alaska Statute and the negotiated agreement, the District may issue a notice of transfer, nonretention or layoff no later than the last day of the current school term, thus being May 20, 2024.

Any teacher who has been identified for involuntary transfer from their school location due to the closure may also have the opportunity to apply for vacant teaching positions within the District. To apply, they would submit their application and resume through the Frontline applicant portal.

If they do not receive placement through this process, they will be assigned to a position based on their certifications and endorsements. Additionally, teachers interested in pursuing opportunities in different programs or endorsement areas for which they hold certificates may have the chance to fulfill these positions. However, they will be required to meet the program and endorsement requirements set forth by DEED within a two-year period, and must work with the human resources team on the potential transfer.

[Contractual References](#)

Article 401 *Transfer and Reassignment*

Article 406 *Notification of Nonemployment*

Article 407 *Reduction in Force*

Alaska Statute References

AS 14.20.140

AS 14.20.177

Principals (Fairbanks Principals' Association - FPA)

In the event of a school closure, both principals and assistant principals would be impacted. To address potential closures, the District and FPA have recently negotiated contractual language outlining the process for affected principals. Principals may have the opportunity to review and accept proposed assignments. Additionally, if the affected principal chooses to retire, they would be eligible to receive the full retirement

stipend, regardless of whether the retirement notice is received after December 1st. It's important to note that the superintendent reserves the right to transfer or reassign any principal based on district need. Principals are also encouraged to maintain their teaching certificates, as they may be reassigned to a teaching position if certified and endorsed to teach.

[Contractual References](#)

Article 4700 *District Initiated Transfer*

Non Represented Employees

As of the present, the District does not employ any non-represented, certified staff whose working locations would be affected by a potential school closure. However, there is one (1) non-represented position within the district that does not require certification, and this position is currently vacant and not under active recruitment. In the event that these employees are impacted by a school closure, they would be provided notice in accordance with their employment contract terms. As stipulated in the non represented contract, the Superintendent shall review the terms and renewal of the contract no later than May 30th of each year. Should the contract not be renewed, affected employees will receive a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice or severance pay based on the last day worked for the balance of the contract period.

Employee Assistance & Support

As we navigate the contractual framework surrounding transfers and layoffs, it is imperative to understand the commitment of the human resources department to supporting staff members impacted by school closures. While adhering to the negotiated agreements and contractual obligations, our district remains dedicated to providing comprehensive assistance and resources to affected employees.

Our goal is to provide:

Clear Communication: Ensure that affected staff members receive timely and transparent communication regarding the school closure and its implications for their employment. The human resources team will schedule on site visits with any impacted school to provide an opportunity for the staff to meet with us to answer any questions they may have. The on site visits provided valuable resources for employees during our previous school closures. At times, simply having someone to talk to is a great benefit to ensure a clear understanding of the process, including transfers, reassignments and layoffs.

We will also maintain ongoing communication with affected staff members throughout the closure process, keeping them informed of any updates or changes and addressing their questions and concerns promptly.

Individual Support: Provide personalized assistance to staff members, including guidance on available options, such as transfer opportunities, retirement, or retraining programs.

A great feature that we recently added to benefit partnership between the human resources department and employees is the ability to self schedule one on one appointments with our team to discuss needs. In allowing the self schedule feature, employees can ensure their availability, and can choose for appointments to be telephonic, virtual or in person.

Career Transition Services: Our team offers resume writing and job search assistance to help staff members explore other opportunities within our District. Employees can meet with our recruiting team to discuss their career goals and aspirations, and we can find ways to support them, to include tuition assistance.

We have already been in contact with the State of Alaska Division of Retirement & Benefits to be in person soon to meet with employees who are considering retirement in light of the school closures.

Emotional Support: Acknowledge the emotional impact of a school closure and provide access to counseling services or support groups to help staff cope with uncertainty and stress. Our District provides counseling and other support for employees through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Recognizing the complexities of career transitions, we are actively working to ensure that staff members receive the necessary guidance, support, and opportunities for professional growth and advancement. From career counseling and job search assistance to emotional support and continued communication, our HR team is committed to facilitating a smooth and equitable transition process for all affected staff members. By prioritizing the well-being and success of our employees, we aim to uphold our values of fairness, compassion, and inclusivity throughout this transitional period.

Information & Technology

The effort IT must expend to close a school varies by location. Larger schools are significantly harder to close than smaller schools.

Physical Security

- Secure building: Terminate badge access and collect keys (FMD)
- Inventory retrieval and tracking
- Communicate with staff that all devices need to return to IT before reissue

Records Management

- Student records move to secure location

Student Information Systems

- Changes school codes and grade-levels which must be coordinated with the state
- Change hard-coded references to the schools and/or grade-levels, name-changes, etc for reporting and daily data interaction (Registration, Lottery, Filé, GoogleOU's, BusRoutes, etc.)
- Versatrans boundary changes will drive registration changes, Students must be re-registered to their "new" schools based on boundary changes.
 - Transferred to the school in PowerSchool
 - Schedule must be hand-entered
 - Different process depending on whether it's elementary, middle or high school and what courses they offer
 - Different courses by school

Network Services

About 80% of the equipment retrieved can be reused at other locations. Remove all: network switches, wireless access points, security cameras (and bare-bones supporting infrastructure are removed as a last step), servers, phones, UPS units, racks.

Business Information Systems

- Realigning data metadata and work-flows
- Collecting Devices:
 - Teacher rollout devices: Transfer data and wiping the data.
 - Student iPad Collection: Wipe and reassign licenses.
 - Student Chromebooks: Wipe with MDM and retrieve power supply.
 - Apple TVs: Remove Apple IDs.
 - Salvage
 - What devices to sell or salvage
 - Other schools went to grab items. Still finding items from Joy
 - Charging Stations and Carts
 - Disassemble carts
 - Disassemble charging stations
 - Google Data Management
 - Sys Admin Downloads zip and sends it to the user (with approval)
 - Emails
 - Drives
 - Sites
 - Etc.

Information Security

No impacts.

Reporting

- Pending

General / not classified services Ongoing processes:

- Email Forwarding
- Auto Reply
- Groups
- Email Retrieval

Purchasing & Warehouse

- Purchasing procures boxes, tape, shrink wrap, pallets; Shipping & Receiving distributes to schools as needed.
- FMD/Custodians inventory furniture throughout the schools (general description, dimensions) provides the report to Purchasing.
- Purchasing announces which (furniture) items will be redistributed, issues survey to schools so they may request items, (via Google Form).
- Based on priority rating (as determined by Asst. Sup), Purchasing tags furniture items on-site for

routing to schools; Shipping & Receiving performs transfers.

- Schools secure/collect records and archives; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer to Student Records.
- Departments coordinate with Purchasing to send written notice regarding contracts for Outsourced/Professional Service (SpEd, vending, copiers), to be terminated or transferred.
- Bus. Svc. coordinates with Purchasing to submit documentation to USAC regarding E-rate application.
- Schools coordinate with Purchasing to identify any leased equipment on premises; arrange for termination of lease, return to vendor.
- Purchasing reviews open Purchase Orders to close out or perform change orders as needed.
- Schools perform inventory of Central Stores Inventory Items; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer of unopened packages to Central Stores to be adjusted back into inventory.
- Schools collect remaining office and T&L items for retained staff; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer.
- FMD identifies items, supplies, equipment, fixtures that will remain in existing locations; communicates to Shipping & Receiving.
- Ast/Sup/FMD identifies all % for Art and décor to be moved; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer.
- T&L inventories library/curriculum materials/supplies to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer.
- T&L inventories Musical Instruments, PE supplies & equipment to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- T&L/Schools inventory chemicals and hazardous items to be redistributed or disposed, FMD performs transfer with assistance from Shipping & Receiving upon request.
- SpEd inventories special needs items to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- Grants inventory supplies/equipment purchased with Title I funds to be redistributed as needed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- Nursing inventories medical supplies and equipment to be redistributed; ; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- Tech/User Svc inventories all devices to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- FMD inventories building custodial equipment and supplies to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).
- FMD inventories playground equipment to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs transfer.
- FMD/Schools inventory radios/walkie talkies to be redistributed; Shipping & Receiving performs

transfer, (sends notice to Accounting to update location for Asset).

- NSC/FMD inventories kitchen supplies and equipment to be redistributed; FMD & Shipping & Receiving coordinate transfer.
 - Items that are deemed unusable with no value will be disposed of in dumpsters by either FMD or Shipping & Receiving.
 - Items with value will be transferred to the Shipping & Receiving Warehouse, advertised on (Interschool) Up4Grabs first; if not claimed will be disposed of through public auction, recycled, or stored.
-

Student Support Services

We identify Title schools around March/April.

Title School Possibility

- If positions are funded by other Federal Programs/SELP Notify staff of their new school placements
- Analyze new data to see if we will be designating a different school as a Title School.
- If we are not designating a new school, review budgets and update based on estimated student numbers to revise the budget of current Title schools.

Non-Title School Possibility

- One of the schools has an ANE tutor, we would place this tutor at a different school.
- Increase support at the high school level if there is an increase in students.
 - Recommend a thorough look at the Title, Migrant, and ANE budgets to reallocate how we would like to support schools.
 - Calendar invites to follow
- No other supports are at the schools on the recommended list.

Staff/Service Prioritization

- We see an increase in behavior/SELP support of schools that have had an increase in students due to the school closures last year.
 - Prioritize and increase support at impacted schools.
 - Pull reports the first week of school to see who is attending, have programs call, and ensure families have what they need to be successful.
 - Ensure program flyers, brochures, and websites are updated to ensure families have accurate information.
-

Teaching & Learning

Once Decision Has Been Made to Close School(s)

April Work Ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Buy Boxes, and Tape and black markers - nothing larger than medium<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bubble wrap for glassware● Create common packing labels● Create “What to do with textbooks” document<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Elem and HS versions● Identify T&L Point of Contact for each identified school● Create FAQ flier for families that answer curricular concerns<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Elem and HS versions● Schools and T&L pack up Book Rooms of unused items● Create packing lists for: science equipment, art supplies, PE equipment, CTE supplies/equipment, ELL, culinary, non textbook resources● Create “What to do with chemicals” document● Create spreadsheet to show what is being moved from School A to School B● Identify which schools will receive CTE tools/materials in collaboration with CTE department● Library<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Review library collections to determine relocation of materials○ Return all loaned library materials○ Inventory all library materials○ Begin weeding process of library materials○ Assess library furnishings for possible relocation
May 1-20, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teachers begin to take personal items home● Teachers pack boxes of items to go to their next school Elementary teachers begin to bring adopted textbooks to a central location<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Into Reading○ NOT iREADY CLASSROOM-BEING UPDATED○ Nystrom-Where and Why○ Science-A Closer Look○ Health And Fitness○ UFLI○ Heggerty● T&L begin assisting with packing book rooms of T&L adopted materials● Textbooks are checked in and begin packing adopted textbooks using approved T&L labels with assistance from T&L● Approved supplemental novel sets are brought back to book rooms and begin packing with assistance from T&L using approved T&L labels● School ELL Staff pack and label ELL materials● Tutoring classrooms are packed and emptied of all materials/furniture by building staff and cleared with “emptied” sign by last day of school● Teacher shopping days for: science equipment, art supplies, math manipulatives, culinary supplies● Building staff begin packing science rooms/art rooms/math rooms with direction and assistance from T&L using approved T&L labels● Library<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pack items to transfer to other libraries○ “Shopping” days for library staff to add to collections○ Pack “shopped” items for transfer to other libraries○ Pack remaining library books/processing supplies for possible transfer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to “holding” site for surplus/community ○ Collect circulation desk computer (owned by LMS) ○ Destiny data clean up of patron fines and transfer of item/patron records
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organize pallet moves to receiving schools ● Continue packing/labeling boxes ● Contact Star of Gold Readers about picking up book sets and library books ● Set up “shopping” day for teachers at building site ● Transfer textbook/novel records in Destiny ● Transfer textbooks/novels into book rooms at receiving schools ● Schedule library furniture/material transfers with S&R

What Schools Are Recommended For Closure

District administration used the following resources for school selection considerations.

Document	Description	Criteria
Boundary Maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary Schools Middle Schools High Schools 	Google maps showing the neighborhood boundaries for each school at the elementary, middle, and high school level.	Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location
Elementary School Building Information	Google sheet containing building capacity, student population, utilization, building condition, geographical and neighborhood considerations, utility costs, CIP information, and Facility Condition Index	Building Condition
		School Utilization
		Cost Savings
		Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location
Hold Harmless Information	Description of how school consolidation will impact the basic need entitlement.	Cost Savings
Scenario 1	Google sheet containing neighborhood information and building capacity showing how students would shift if Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High and Ticasuk Brown Elementary closed.	School Utilization
		Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location
School Capacity - Fall 2023	List of schools with building square footage, DEED capacity, October 2023 enrollment, seats available, and percentage capacity.	School Utilization
School Programming Considerations	Comparing educational options at Ben Eielson Junior High and North Pole Middle and Ben Eielson Senior High and North Pole High.	Educational Programming

Schools Recommended for Closure in FY25

1. Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High (BEJSH)

- School Utilization** is a significant driving factor for recommendation of BEJSH. A small junior high of 200 students and high school of only 163 students in 2023-24, the building is at 59% capacity.
- Staffing:** BEJSH faces staffing challenges due to its location, with 24.2 certified teaching positions and 17 support staff positions budgeted. The school currently employs 21 non-tenured staff, including six with district-sponsored emergency teaching certifications. Additionally, two teachers have submitted notices of retirement or resignation at the year's end. The school has been unable to fill 2.5 certified teaching positions this school year, along with one

non-represented activities coordinator. Given the school's location on a military installation, the District cannot employ international teacher applicants. Presently, 17 support staff positions exist, with five vacancies.

- **Educational Programming:** BEJSH has been limited in the educational offerings and student activities it can provide students, given the decline in enrollment. Even with additional staff members allocated to the school above and beyond the district's pupil-to-teacher ratio, they are unable to provide as robust a high school experience as North Pole High and North Pole Middle. A certified special education vacancy has persisted at BEJSH for the entire 23/24 SY, and virtual classes have been used to supplement the classes of the onsite resource teacher.
- **Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location:** If BEJSH were to close, all students would transition to North Pole Middle and North Pole High. Current Anderson-Crawford 5th grade students who would have the option to stay at Anderson-Crawford for 6th grade.
 - 87 students out of 363 (24%) live in the North Pole School's attendance areas
 - Based on February 2024 enrollment numbers, North Pole Middle capacity shifts from 69% to 94%
 - Based on February 2024 enrollment numbers, North Pole High capacity shifts from 58% to 75%
- **Cost Savings: \$2,329,750** with hold harmless, **\$1,529,750** without hold harmless
 - Very high utility costs (FY23 - \$532,762)

2. Ticasuk Brown Elementary

- **Building Condition and Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location** are the largest factors driving the recommendation for Ticasuk Brown Elementary. The building has \$13.9 million in deferred maintenance, including the need for a new DDC system, fire panel, and water conditioning. There are also deferred maintenance issues with the parking lot erosion and water drainage.

23% of students at Ticasuk Brown Elementary are military-connected. Due to its location off of Badger Road, some students are able to be shifted to Arctic Light Elementary. This would move those students into the Fairbanks-area secondary school feeder system and would reduce the impact of closing BEJSH on North Pole Middle's capacity by sending students to Ryan Middle.
- **Educational Programming** and hiring for specialized positions has become increasingly difficult across the district. While not specific to Ticasuk Brown Elementary, any reduction to the number of sites the district is providing services to will it easier to staff and serve the students at the remaining schools.

There are four special education teachers at Ticasuk Brown serving two resource classrooms, one district-wide extended resource classroom, and one district-wide preschool classroom. Vacancies in special education paraprofessionals and certified staff can be positively impacted by consolidation of programs when possible. Comparable special education resource services are available at all elementary schools. Students in district-wide preschool or district-wide

extended resource programs will be transferred to other preschool and extended resource programs in other elementary schools.

Student Support Services (SSS) programs including Migrant Education, Alaska Native Education, Social Emotional Learning, McKinney Vento and Foster care provides support to students district-wide including transportation, school supplies, winter gear, tutoring, and summer learning. Families impacted by school closures who transition to non Title Schools will have continued access to support through SSS programming including Bright Futures.

Ticasuk Brown has multiple Student Support Services and staff within their school including 21st Century Community Learning Centers/After School Programs, Social Service Manager, and Title I Funding. The Social Services Manager position assigned to Ticasuk Brown will be moved to another school in need. The 21st Century Community Learning Center/After School Program can be moved to another eligible school following a needs assessment process. Student Support Services will work with the Executive Director team to allocate next year's grant funds and Title I designations to support school closure impacts.

- **School Utilization** is also a significant factor, as Ticasuk Brown is currently at 68% utilization as of October 2023. North Pole area elementary schools were considered in general because of low utilization.
- **Cost Savings: \$1,626,750** with hold harmless, **\$976,750** without hold harmless

Preserving the History of Closed Schools

Both Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High and Ticasuk Brown Elementary Schools have long histories in our community that deserve recognition. If either school is closed, administration would work with that community to ensure those histories receive proper recognition. Building art will be reinstalled in other schools or district buildings whenever possible so it may still be enjoyed by students and families.

Specifically for Emily Ticasuk Ivanoff Brown Elementary, the administration recognizes the honor of being gifted her name for a school building and would like to see that honor be carried forward.

Capacity of Schools After Two Closures

Enrollment numbers pulled from the week of February 12, 2024.

	Gross School Sq .Ft.	DEED CAPACITY	Enrollment FEB 12 2024	Seats Available	% Capacity	% Capacity Change
North Pole Area Elementary Schools						
ANDERSON-CRAWFORD ELEMENTARY	63,532	553	444	109	80%	
MIDNIGHT SUN ELEMENTARY	61,686	537	479	58	89%	+31%
NORTH POLE ELEMENTARY	57,154	495	454	41	92%	+23%
TICASUK BROWN ELEMENTARY	63,761	556	0	556	0%	-100%
TWO RIVERS	22,200	98	62	36	63%	
SALCHA ELEMENTARY	13,608	76	78	-2	103%	
North Pole Area Secondary Schools						
BEN EIELSON JR./SR. HIGH	103,200	616	0	616	0%	-100%
NORTH POLE MIDDLE	113,306	680	639	41	94%	+25%
NORTH POLE HIGH	156,362	946	705	241	75%	+17%
Districtwide Elementary Schools						
ANNE WIEN ELEMENTARY	63,532	553	381	172	69%	
ARCTIC LIGHT ELEMENTARY	68,272	596	494	102	83%	+13%
BARNETTE MAGNET	54,895	417	421	-4	101%	
DENALI ELEMENTARY	49,210	422	309	113	73%	
HUNTER ELEMENTARY	57,047	494	375	119	76%	
LADD ELEMENTARY	63,455	553	385	168	70%	
PEARL CREEK ELEMENTARY	62,982	548	405	143	74%	
UNIVERSITY PARK ELEMENTARY	64,699	564	383	181	68%	
WELLER ELEMENTARY	65,259	569	457	112	80%	
WOODRIVER ELEMENTARY	64,408	561	351	210	63%	

Additional Schools for Consideration

3. Two Rivers K-8

- **Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location** and **Building Condition** are both factors that have brought this school forward for consideration. Two Rivers has \$10.10 million in deferred maintenance. This is both a very high per square foot and per student cost. The max student capacity for the building is 98 and, as of October 2023, 65 students are enrolled (66% capacity).

If this building were closed, students would likely shift to Weller Elementary for K through 5th grade, and North Pole Middle School for 6, 7, and 8th grade. There is already bussing provided from the Two Rivers community to North Pole Middle and North Pole High.

- **Educational impacts** of a small population spanning Kindergarten through 8th grade, means that more teachers cover two or three grade levels and staffing in a remote community can be difficult. Specialty positions, such as library, nurse, music, physical education and counselor are either part-time or shared with Salcha Elementary, and have historically been difficult to fill in a stable, long term capacity.

Special education services are provided by 0.5 FTE teacher, 0.2 special education secretary support based at Two Rivers. Additional itinerant support in specialty areas is shared with other schools. Spreading staff between locations necessitates significant time spent traveling instead of with students.

Title I funding currently supports a classroom tutor, family engagement, professional development, and stipends for certified staff to attend voluntary training at Two Rivers. Students shifting to Weller Elementary would have access to district-wide supports including tutoring, school supplies, winter gear, and social-emotional learning. Students shifting to North Pole Middle would have access to a full-time Social Service Manager and referrals to Alaska Behavioral Health for mental health support paid by Project Aware.

- **Cost Savings: \$1,091,650** with hold harmless, **\$711,650** without hold harmless

4. Pearl Creek Elementary

- **Building Condition** and **Neighborhood Impacts & Geographical Location** are the factors driving the consideration for Pearl Creek. There is \$16.10 million in deferred maintenance on the Pearl Creek building. Students would likely shift to University Park, Woodriver, and Anne Wien, which would help the utilization of those schools.
- **Educational Programming** and hiring for specialized positions has become increasingly difficult across the district. While not specific to Pearl Creek Elementary, any reduction to the number of sites the district is providing services at makes it easier to staff and serve the students at the remaining schools.

There are four special education teachers at Pearl Creek serving two resource classrooms, one district-wide extended resource classroom, and one district-wide pre-k classroom. Vacancies in special education paraprofessionals and certified staff can be positively impacted by consolidation of programs when possible. Comparable special education resource services are available at all elementary schools. Students in district-wide preschool or district-wide extended resource programs will be transferred to other preschool and extended resource programs in other elementary schools.

- **Cost Savings: \$1,626,750** with hold harmless, **\$976,750** without hold harmless

Schools Not Recommended for Consideration

Walk Zone vs Bus Transportation - Schools with high walk-to-school populations are a savings on transportation. To close a school with a high walk-zone attendance area increases our cost of transportation by requiring more bus routes.

Elementary Schools

- **Anderson-Crawford Elementary** - Good enrollment with 427/553 seats filled (77%), strongly impacted by previous school closure of Anderson Elementary, neighborhood school with minimal bus routes and large walking area.
- **Anne Wien Elementary** - Building condition is fair but will improve with the DOE energy improvement grant recently awarded to the borough in the amount of \$7.6 million dollars. Strongly impacted by previous school closures.
- **Arctic Light Elementary** - Building is in good condition and has a large walk zone, fewer bus routes are needed. Highly military-connected and our only school on Ft. Wainwright.
- **Barnette Magnet** - Building is newly remodeled with strong enrollment.
- **Denali Elementary** - Newest elementary school, building is in good condition. A neighborhood school with minimal bus routes.
- **Hunter Elementary** - Building is in good condition and is a neighborhood school with fewer bus routes. Building is centrally located and near Lathrop and Ryan.
- **Ladd Elementary** - Building condition is good and is a neighborhood school with a walk zone, located near Tanana Middle. Impacted by recent school closures.
- **Midnight Sun Elementary** - Building is in good condition. More centrally located for North Pole area students.
- **North Pole Elementary** - Neighborhood school with a large walk zone and fewer bus routes. The only elementary school in the city limits and is on city water. Located near North Pole Middle and North Pole High.
- **Salcha School** - Strong enrollment at the school and with good utilization of the facility.
- **University Park Elementary** - Building is in good condition. One of the district's larger elementary buildings.
- **Weller Elementary** - Building is in fair condition; however, Weller is one of the largest elementary buildings and covers a geographically large area. Maintains a good enrollment with 455/569 seats filled (80%). Impacted by recent school school closures.
- **Woodriver Elementary** - Building is in good condition and is a neighborhood school with a large walk zone and fewer bus routes.

Appendices

Additional Resources



School Closure Employee Information Frequently Asked Questions

When will I know if my school will be affected by a school closure? How will I be notified?

We understand the uncertainty surrounding potential school closures, and we're committed to keeping you informed every step of the way. Currently, the administration is proposing the closure of two schools. If approved by the Board of Education, the closures would go into effect at the conclusion of the current school year. The final decision will be made by the Board of Education throughout the spring budgetary process. Rest assured, once a decision is reached, the administration will promptly communicate with all affected schools and staff members.

When will the closure take effect?

While the proposed closure is slated for the conclusion of the current school year, the final timeline hinges on the Board of Education's vote. We'll keep you updated on any developments as soon as they occur.

Will I be transferred to another school or work location or laid off?

Your well-being and professional journey are of utmost importance to us. Following the Board of Education's decision, our dedicated human resources team will conduct a comprehensive staffing review to determine the status of all affected employees. Your districtwide seniority, as well as your certifications and endorsements for teachers, will be key considerations in this process. We encourage you to reach out to your respective human resources coordinator for personalized guidance and support during this time.

Is there a chance I could be laid off?

While we remain hopeful about retaining our valued employees, it's essential to acknowledge the possibility of staffing reductions districtwide as outlined in the proposed budget. Should layoffs become necessary, we will provide notice in accordance with the Board of Education's Reduction in Force plan and the relevant negotiated agreements.

Why is my districtwide seniority date important?

Your seniority date refers to the date on which the employee joined the bargaining unit. For example, if a newly hired certified teacher started on August 10, 2023, that would be their seniority date. Similarly, if a classroom tutor began on the same date, August 10, 2023, it would also be their seniority date.

However, it's important to note that there are instances where multiple new staff members commence employment on the same date. In such cases, the language in both negotiated agreements includes a lottery system to determine your ranking within that seniority date.

If you want to understand your seniority more, please contact the Human Resources Department at (907) 452-2000 ext. 11326 or human.resources@k12northstar.org.

Can I apply for a voluntary transfer before the school closure is announced?

Yes, if you're eligible per your negotiated agreement, you're encouraged to explore transfer opportunities as they become available.

If I am eligible to seek voluntary transfers, where would I find more information about these opportunities?

For detailed information on open positions and transfer opportunities, please visit our Career & Job Opportunities website. Our recruiting team is also here to assist you every step of the way. Feel free to reach out to us at recruiting@k12northstar.org for personalized support.

Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

For any further questions or concerns, we're here to support you. Please reach out to your respective human resources coordinator, who can provide tailored assistance and guidance. You can conveniently schedule an individual appointment with your coordinator using the provided links for a telephonic, virtual, or in-person meeting

<p>Certified Teachers (FEA) Mechelle Nash, HR Coordinator mechelle.nash@k12northstar.org Extension: 11381 Self Schedule An Appointment</p>	<p>Support Staff (ESSA) Tara Pletnikoff, HR Coordinator tara.pletnikoff@k12northstar.org Extension: 11384 Self Schedule An Appointment</p>
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Here are some additional contacts that may be useful:

<p>Health Plan Benefits Robin Carlson, Benefits Assistant benefits@k12northstar.org Extension: 11311</p>	<p>State of Alaska Division of Retirement & Benefits https://drb.alaska.gov/ 907-465-4460</p>
<p>Department of Education & Early Development 907-465-2831 tcwebmail@alaska.gov</p>	

School Capacity Fall 2023

SCHOOL	School Sq. Ft.	DEED CAPACITY	20-day Count Oct 2023	Seats Available	Current % Capacity
North Pole/Eielson Area Elementary Schools					
Anderson Crawford Elementary	63,532	553	427	126	77%
Midnight Sun Elementary	61,686	537	317	220	59%
North Pole Elementary	57,154	495	332	163	67%
Ticasuk Brown Elementary	63,761	556	379	177	68%
Salcha Elementary	13,608	76	71	5	93%
Schools Sub-total		2217	1526	691	69%
North Pole/Eielson Area Secondary Schools					
North Pole Middle	113,306	680	471	209	69%
Ben Eielson Jr./Sr. High	103,200	616	363	253	59%
North Pole High	156,362	946	571	375	60%
Schools Sub-total		2242	1405	837	63%
Districtwide Elementary Schools					
Anne Wien Elementary	63,532	553	367	186	66%
Arctic Light Elementary	68,272	596	435	161	73%
Barnette Elementary	54,895	417	422	-5	101%
Denali Elementary	49,210	422	282	140	67%
Hunter Elementary	57,047	494	366	128	74%
Ladd Elementary	63,455	553	386	167	70%
Pearl Creek Elementary	62,982	548	390	158	71%
Two Rivers Elementary	22,200	98	65	33	66%
University Park Elementary	64,699	564	365	199	65%
Weller Elementary	65,259	569	455	114	80%
Woodriver Elementary	64,408	561	349	212	62%
Schools Sub-total		5375	3882	1493	72%
Districtwide Middle Schools					
Randy Smith Middle	74,589	422	407	15	96%
Ryan Middle	99,880	594	476	118	80%
Tanana Middle	101,069	602	544	58	90%
Schools Sub-total		1618	1427	191	88%
Districtwide High Schools					
Hutchison High School	87,190	510	367	143	72%
Lathrop High	234,412	1421	846	575	60%
West Valley High	216,884	1314	816	498	62%
Schools Sub-total		3245	2029	1216	63%
GRAND TOTALS		14697	10269	4428	70%

Hold Harmless for School Consolidation

If one or more schools close and consolidate with other schools in the district and decrease the basic need entitlement (per the foundation formula), then there is a provision in state law, similar to Hold Harmless, to offset the decrease for four years. The school consolidation provision defines the process to calculate the change in basic need due to the consolidation and is funded at 100% in the first two years following the consolidation, 66% in the third year, and 33% in the fourth year. The basic need is determined through the student count (Average Daily Membership - ADM), base student allocation (BSA – currently \$5,960 for FY24), and a series of factors: school size, district cost, special needs, career and technical education, and intensive needs. The ADM is adjusted through the factors to determine the Adjusted ADM (AADM), which is multiplied by the BSA to arrive at the basic need. Since larger schools receive smaller adjustments through the school size factor, basic need entitlement may decrease with consolidating schools. If the school district utilizes the provision, it may not reopen a school that was closed for consolidation until seven or more years have passed since the school closure and the district provides evidence satisfactory to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development that the schools affected by the consolidation are over capacity.

See AS 14.17.410(b)(1)(H)-(M) for further details on the school consolidation provision and AS 14.17.410(b)(1)(A)-(D) for further details on calculating basic need

School Programming Comparisons BESH/NPHS & BEJH/NPMS

Building Capacity for North Pole Area Middle and High Schools

During the October 2023 Count, the school capacity utilization for Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High School was 59%, North Pole High School was 60%, and North Pole Middle School was 69%.

Shifting Ben Eielson Junior High students to North Pole Middle would shift their capacity to 94%. Additionally, sixth grade students could have the option to stay at Anderson-Crawford Elementary. Another consideration in the possible rezoning for the closing of Ticasuk Brown Elementary, there could be some sixth grade students currently in the North Pole area shifted to Fairbanks Area Middle Schools, which have additional capacity.

At North Pole High School, adding the Ben Eielson students would increase the school's capacity to 75%.

Educational Programming Comparison for Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High

When comparing Ben Eielson Senior High and North Pole High School, in both core and elective courses, there are almost twice as many courses available for students to choose from each term at North Pole. These additional core courses are important for upperclassmen, in particular, due to the increased diversity in courses to meet graduation requirements.

A significant benefit when comparing the educational offerings of North Pole High are the increased Career and Technical Education pathways available to students. There are currently five active pathways with three more in development stages.

At Ben Eielson Junior High, there has been an added benefit of sharing teachers with the high school with regard to the elective courses available to students. However, in shifting to North Pole Middle, there is a comparable number of courses available and additional electives for students to access.

Districtwide special education programs for Intensive Resource and Extended Resource are available at NPHS and NPMS. There are no districtwide special education classrooms at BEJSH.

	Ben Eielson Sr HS		North Pole HS		Ben Eielson Jr HS		North Pole MS	
Enrollment Projections	169		586		193		487	
	9th	56	9th	161	6th	68	6th	163
	10th	45	10th	162	7th	70	7th	163
	11th	42	11th	162	8th	55	8th	161
	12th	26	12th	101				
Courses Offered	SM 1	SM 2	SM 1	SM 2	SM 1	SM 2	SM 1	SM 2
English	9	10	14	13	3	4	7	7
Science	4	4	11	10	3	3	3	3
Math	5	5	10	10	5	5	4	4
Social Studies	7	8	8	8	3	3	3	3
TOTAL	25	27	43	41	14	15	17	17

World Language	2	2	2	2	1	1	-	-
PE/Health	1	2	4	4	2	2	3	3
Art*	3	3	12	12	3	3	3	3
Music	5	5	7	7	3	5	6	6
CTE*	5	5	19	20	2	4	4	4
JROTC	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	21	22	49	50	11	15	16	16

*Stacked Classes

Career Pathway SM: # of Courses / Enrollment	North Pole HS	Ben Eielson HS
Information Technology		SM 1: 1 / 16 SM 2: 1 / 11
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	SM 1: 5 / 56 SM 2: 5 / 73	
Welding	SM 1: 5 / 61 SM 2: 5 / 81	
Building Trades	Anticipated SY24-25 (Geo in Const)	
Health Science	SM 1: 5 / 97 SM 2: 3 / 59	SM 1: 1 / 16 SM 2: 1 / 17
Science, Technology, & Engineering	SM 1: 2 / 52 SM 2: 1 / 20	
Hospitality & Tourism	SM 1: 5 / 78 SM 2: 5 / 68	SM 2: 1 / 17
Agriculture	Anticipated SY24-25	
Business	Discovery Phase (Amped on Alg)	

Activities Programming Comparison for Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High

With regard to activities, there is minimal difference between North Pole Middle School and Ben Eielson Junior High. However, at Ben Eielson Senior High and North Pole High School, there are additional activities offered, as well as more

consistency in what activities are offered from year to year at North Pole. The addition of the Ben Eielson students would not change the classification for North Pole High

ACTIVITY	BESH	NPHS	BEJH	NPMS
Baseball	●	●		
Basketball - Boys	●	●	●	●
Basketball - Girls	●	●	●	●
Cheerleading	●	●		
Cross Country Running	●	●	●	●
Cross Country Skiing		●		
Drama		●		
eSports	●	●		
Flag Football		●		
Football	●	●		
Hockey		●		
JROTC - Air Force	●	●		
Music Programs	●	●		
Native Youth Olympics			●	●
JROTC Air Rifle	●	●		
Soccer			●	●
Soccer - Boys	●	●		
Soccer - Girls	●	●		
Softball	●	●		
Student Council	●	●		
Swimming		●		
Tennis	●	●		
Track & Field	●	●	●	●
Volleyball - Boys			●	●
Volleyball - Girls	●	●	●	●
Wrestling	●	●	●	●
TOTAL	18	23	9	9

