



SCHOOL CHOICE MATTERS

# Alaska Policy Report

# Introduction

## PURPOSE

A combination of well-designed policies give all students access to the broadest range of educational opportunities, including key core policies and helpful policy enhancers. The purpose of this document is to provide insight to how well your state is doing at implementing the Ecosystem of School Choice Policies. This state report summarizes evidence across the seven policy buckets, with each policy component detailed in individual cells.

## CORE POLICIES

Key policies expand student opportunities.



[Open Enrollment](#)



[Charter Schools](#)



[Private School Choice](#)



[Homeschooling](#)

## POLICY ENHANCERS

Supporting policies enhance those opportunities.



[Part-time Enrollment/Course Access](#)



[Learn Everywhere](#)



[Transportation](#)

CORE POLICIES



Open Enrollment in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Transfers Between Districts	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No policy or policy based on ad hoc agreements</p>	<p>Alaska does not require all school districts to have a mandatory interdistrict open enrollment policy – Alaska does, however, require correspondence study programs to have these policies.</p> <p>Policies relating to the correspondence study program require districts that offer these programs to have an open enrollment policy for the program for the entire school year. A participating charter school, however, may limit its enrollment.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.421 Correspondence study program requirements)</a></p>
Transfers Within Districts	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No policy</p>	<p>Alaska does not require all districts to have a mandatory intradistrict open enrollment policy.</p> <p>Alaska regulations do provide that districts that contain a school that has been designated “persistently dangerous” must allow parents, within 30 days after notice is sent, to request the district transfer the student to the parent’s choice of one of two or more safe schools within the district.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 06.210 District Response)</a></p>
Year-round Transfer Window	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No policy</p>	<p>Alaska does not have a general open enrollment policy.</p>

<p><b>Tuition-Free Public Schools</b></p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b> Tuition can be charged</p>	<p>“(6) in the case of attendance in a district of a pupil whose parents are bona fide residents of another school district in this state where public school facilities of the necessary grade levels are not provided, tuition shall be billed to the school district from which the pupil has come and that district shall accept the billing; in the case of a pupil resident in one school district but optionally attending another school district and where the necessary grade level is provided in the home district, a tuition charge may not be made to the home district unless the district of residence waives attendance requirements for the particular pupil and agrees to accept billing; if the home district will not accept the billing, the school district may bill the parent or guardian for tuition;</p> <p>(7) tuition may not be billed for pupils for whom contractual or other similar arrangements have been made in lieu of tuition”</p> <p><a href="#">Section 4 AAC 09.030 - Tuition costs</a></p>
<p><b>School Capacity Transparency</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b> No transparency policy</p>	<p>Alaska does not require school districts to publicly report capacity by school and grade level.</p>
<p><b>Transfer Data Transparency</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b> No transparency in data reporting</p>	<p>Alaska does not have open enrollment policies.</p>
<p><b>Transparent Appeal Process</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p>Alaska does not have open enrollment policies.</p>

**SOURCE CITATIONS**

**Administrative Code**

[4 AAC 06.210 District Response](#)

[4 AAC 33.421 Correspondence study program requirements](#)



## Charter Schools in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Multiple Charter Authorizers</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>No real authorizer options</p>	<p>Alaska Statute provides that local school boards will approve applications for the creation of charter schools – the local school board must approve or deny an application within 60 days after receipt.</p> <p>Once the local school board approves the application, it is forwarded to the State Board of Education and Early Development for review and approval.</p> <p>If a local school board denies the application, the applicant may appeal this decision to the commissioner of education. If the commissioner approves a charter school application, the application will be forwarded to the State Board of Education and Early Development.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.250 Application for charter school)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A.S. 14.02.280 provides that the State Board may adopt regulations to implement these statutes.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations provide further information on what must be included in the charter school application and the application process.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.110 Charter school application and review procedure)</a></p>
<p>Charter Appeal Process</p>	<p><b>YES</b></p> <p>Independent appeals process</p>	<p>If a local school board denies an application, the applicant may appeal that decision to the commissioner of education. This appeal must be filed within 60 days after the local school board’s decision.</p> <p>If the commissioner of education upholds the local school board’s denial, the applicant may then appeal the denial within 30 days to the State Board of Education and Early Development.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.250 Application for charter school; A.S. 14.03.253 Charter school application appeal)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A.S. 14.02.280 provides that the State Board may adopt regulations to implement these statutes.</li> </ul>

		<p>Alaska regulations provide further information on what must be included in the appeal and the appeals process. The regulations further provide that a decision of the State Board granting or denying approval for an application is a final agency action.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.110 Charter school application and review procedure)</a></p>
<p>Charter Regulatory Flexibility</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Some or no exemptions</p>	<p>Alaska Statute provides that charter schools are exempt from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the local school district’s textbook, program curriculum, and scheduling requirements; and</li> <li>Alaska Statute 14.14.130(c) provides that if the district employs a chief school administrator, the administrator shall select, appoint, and otherwise control all school employees that serve under the chief school administrator subject to the approval of the school board.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska Statute provides that the principal of the charter school must be selected by the academic policy committee and the principal must select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school. The “academic policy committee” is defined in statute as the “group designated to supervise the academic operation of a charter school and to ensure the fulfillment of the mission of a charter school.”</p> <p>Statute further provides that a local school board may exempt a charter school from other local school district requirements if the exemption is set out in their contract.</p> <p>Charter schools are subject to tests required by the department.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.255 Organization and operation of a charter school)</a></p> <p>Alaska Statute provides that <b>all provisions of an existing negotiated agreement or collective bargaining agreement that apply to a teacher or employee of a district will also apply to that teacher or employee if employed at a charter school in the district</b>, unless the district and the bargaining unit representing the teacher or employee agree to an exemption.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.270 Teacher or employee transfers, evaluations, and negotiated agreements)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A.S. 14.02.280 provides that the State Board may adopt regulations to implement these statutes.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations do not address flexibility or exemptions.</p>

<p><b>Equitable Charter Funding</b></p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Disparities exist</p>	<p>Alaska provides for a formula for determining funding for charter schools, as follows:</p> <p>The budget for a charter school that is provided by the local school board shall not be less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school less administrative costs retained by the local school district – this is determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the department up to 4%.</p> <p>According to statute, the “amount generated by students enrolled in the charter school” is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district and includes funds generated by grants, appropriations, federal impact aid, the required local contribution, and others.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.260 Funding for charter school)</a></p> <p>Alaska Statute also provides for a one-time charter school grant, totaling \$500 per student enrolled. These grant funds must be used to provide educational services, including curriculum development, program development, and special education services.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.264 Charter school grant program)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A.S. 14.02.280 provides that the State Board may adopt regulations to implement these statutes.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations provide further details on the state’s charter school grant program.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.110 Charter school application and review procedure)</a></p>
<p><b>Charter Facilities Funding</b></p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Some or no facilities funding</p>	<p>Alaska Statute relating to funding charter schools provides that costs directly related to charter school facilities, including rent, utilities, and maintenance, may not be included in an annual program budget for the purposes of calculating the 4% cap on administrative costs.</p> <p>Statute further provides that school districts must direct state aid for the construction or major maintenance of a charter school facility to the charter school that generated the state aid, subject to the same terms and conditions that apply to state aid under statute for construction or major maintenance of a school facility that is not a charter school.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.260 Funding for charter school)</a></p> <p>Alaska Statute requires the Department to establish a charter school facilities construction, lease, and major maintenance grant program to supplement grant aid and that is based on a per pupil funding formula.</p>

		<p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.11.121 Supplemental charter school facilities construction, lease, and major maintenance grant program)</a></p> <p>Alaska Statute does provide that school districts are required to offer charter schools the right of first refusal for a lease of space in an existing school district facility or in a facility within the district that is not currently being used as a public school.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.255 Organization and operation of a charter school)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A.S. 14.02.280 provides that the State Board may adopt regulations to implement these statutes.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations do not address facilities funding.</p>
<p>Options for High-Performing Charters</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>No opportunities for high-performing charter schools</p>	<p>Alaska does not offer incentives or favorable regulatory environments to attract and reward high-performing charters.</p>
<p>Charter Zoning Exemptions</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Less than full protections</p>	<p>Alaska treats charter schools as public schools within the state – there is nothing indicating that charter schools would not have access to the same exemptions from local zoning and ordinances available to traditional public schools, but statutes are silent on this topic.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

**Statutes**

[A.S. 14.03.250 Application for charter school](#)

[A.S. 14.03.253 Charter school application appeal](#)

[A.S. 14.03.255 Organization and operation of a charter school](#)

[A.S. 14.03.260 Funding for charter school](#)

[A.S. 14.03.264 Charter school grant program](#)

[A.S. 14.03.270 Teacher or employee transfers, evaluations, and negotiated agreements](#)

**Administrative Code**

[4 AAC 33.110 Charter school application and review procedure](#)

**State Department of Education**

[Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Charter Schools](#)

[Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Charter Schools FAQ](#)



## Private School Choice in Alaska

POLICY	OVERALL RATING	PROGRAM OVERVIEW
<p>Universal Eligibility</p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>While Alaska has not clearly established a conventional private school choice program, the state created the Correspondence School Allotment Program through statute to serve students in remote areas. These are district-supported schooling options in the home.</p> <p>Alaska Statute provides that when a district provides for a correspondence study program, the district may provide an annual student allotment for the purpose of meeting instructional expenses for the student enrolled in the program.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.300 Correspondence study programs; individual learning plans; Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Alaska Statewide Correspondence Schools)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alaska has promulgated regulations to implement the Correspondence Program.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations confirm requirements in statute.</p> <p>Alaska’s Acting Commissioner sent a letter to Superintendents in 2022 confirming that the Alaska Constitution “supports using allotments to pay for educational services and materials provided by private vendors including paying for courses <i>when the main purpose of purchasing the services and materials is to further the student’s public school correspondence education.</i>” The letter then notes that the constitution does not support paying for sectarian or religious courses or supplanting the public education with a full private school education by paying the tuition for full-time enrollment in a private school.</p> <p><a href="#">(Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Office of the Commissioner, Letter to Superintendents (July 25, 2022))</a></p>
<p>Comparable Student Funding</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Funding below 90%</p>	<p>Alaska Statute provides that funding for the correspondence study program or a district correspondence program “includes an allocation from the public education fund in an amount calculated by multiplying the ADM of the correspondence program by 90 percent.”</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.17.430 State funding for correspondence study)</a></p>

<p>Uncapped Student Access</p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Alaska does not restrict student participation by a funding or enrollment cap.</p>
<p>Extended Application Window</p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Unable to locate information on application procedures for the correspondence study program.</p>
<p>Student Testing Options</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b> Rigid mandates, multiple tests, or no accountability</p>	<p>Alaska Regulations provide that students must participate in the statewide student assessment program. This includes providing for an “ongoing assessment plan that includes statewide assessments required for public schools...”  (<a href="#">4 AAC 33.421 Correspondence study program requirements</a>)</p>
<p>School Autonomy</p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b> Silent language or adverse regulations</p>	<p>The correspondence schools are district-supported only; however, parents may purchase nonsectarian services and materials from a private or religious organization, so long as the services and materials are required for the course of study in the individualized learning plan.  (<a href="#">A.S. 14.03.320 Student allotments</a>)</p>
<p>Accessible School Participation</p>	<p><b>YES</b> No accreditation requirement</p>	<p>The correspondence schools are district-supported only; however, parents may purchase nonsectarian services and materials from a private or religious organization, so long as the services and materials are required for the course of study in the individualized learning plan.  State policy does not require participating schools to have accreditation.  (<a href="#">A.S. 14.03.320 Student allotments</a>)</p>

ESAs and Parent-Directed Spending		
Freedom to Customize	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Must attend private school, or spending options limited</p>	<p>Funding from the correspondence study program may only be used for services or materials that “reasonably relate to the delivery of the students’ instructional needs.” The teacher who has the primary responsibility for the course must approve the expenses, which may include textbooks, curriculum materials, school supplies, tutoring services, athletic equipment, and technology expenses.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.421 Correspondence study program requirements)</a></p>
Freedom to Access	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>While parent-directed funding is available for families who choose to homeschool their children and for independent learning – this funding is available for students regardless of school type.</p> <p><a href="#">(Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Explore Options)</a></p>
Carry-Over Funding	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Most or all unused funds revert to the state</p>	<p>Alaska regulations provide that all textbooks, equipment, and other curriculum materials purchased with state money, including money provided to the parent through a fund account, are property of the district and must be returned to the district when the student leaves the program for any reason.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 33.422 Fund account)</a></p> <p>Policy does not specify whether funds may be carried over from year to year.</p>
Tax Credits		
Full Tax Credit	<p><b>N/A</b></p> <p>No Tax Credit Program</p>	<p>Alaska does not have an education tax credit program.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes	Administrative Code	State Department of Education	Other Resources
<p><a href="#">A.S. 14.03.300 Correspondence study programs; individual learning plans</a></p> <p><a href="#">A.S. 14.03.320 Student allotments</a></p> <p><a href="#">A.S. 14.17.430 State funding for correspondence study</a></p>	<p><a href="#">4 AAC 33.421 Correspondence study program requirements</a></p> <p><a href="#">4 AAC 33.422 Fund account</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Alaska Statewide Correspondence Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Office of the Commissioner, Letter to Superintendents (July 25, 2022)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Explore Options</a></p>	<p><a href="#">EdChoice, The ABCs of School Choice: Alaska (2024 Edition)</a></p>



## Homeschooling in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Homeschool without Prior Approval</p>	<p><b>YES</b> No permission required</p>	<p>Alaska’s compulsory attendance laws provide that students are excused from compulsory attendance in certain circumstances including where students are being educated in the child’s home by a parent or legal guardian.</p> <p>Alaska Statutes do not require parents to receive permission from a local school board or administrative body in order to practice homeschooling.</p> <p>Alaska does provide that students may be excused from the compulsory attendance law if they are “equally well-served by an educational experience approved by the school board as serving the child’s educational interests despite an absence from school.” This request to be excused must be made in writing by a parent or guardian and it is approved by the principal or administrator of the school that the child attends.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.30.010 When attendance compulsory)</a></p>
<p>No Extra Homeschool Notifications</p>	<p><b>YES</b> One-time or no notification</p>	<p>Alaska does not require families to notify state or local officials of plans to homeschool.</p> <p>(See <a href="#">HSLDA, How to Comply with Alaska’s Homeschool Law</a>)</p>
<p>No Certification to Homeschool</p>	<p><b>YES</b> No certification requirement</p>	<p>Alaska policy does not require homeschool parents to possess state teacher certification.</p>
<p>Flexible Assessment Options</p>	<p><b>YES</b> Flexible academic accountability</p>	<p>Alaska policy is silent on academic assessment requirements for students.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

**Statutes**

[A.S. 14.30.010 When attendance compulsory](#)

**State Department of Education**

[Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Alternative Schooling Options](#)

**Other Resources**

[Alaska State Library, Homeschooling Resources](#)

[HSLDA, How to Comply with Alaska’s Homeschool Law](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS



## Part-time Enrollment in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Resident Course Access	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Alaska Statute requires districts, upon request, to allow students, including nonpublic school students, correspondence students, and homeschool students to enroll as a part-time student in the district. Alaska Statute does not distinguish between participation in core and elective courses.</p> <p>Statute does provide, however, that enrollment is limited where such enrollment would be denied even if the enrollee were a full-time student or where the enrollment would result in an expenditure of funds for the direct benefit of a private educational institution.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.095 Part-time school attendance)</a></p>
Nonresident Course Access	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Districts only serve resident students or can impose other restrictions</p>	<p>Alaska policy is silent on allowing nonpublic and homeschool students access to courses outside their district of residence.</p>

<p><b>Virtual Course Access</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p> <p>The state has one or more fully accessible virtual providers</p>	<p>Alaska statute requires the Department to establish a virtual education consortium in order to make virtual education and professional development resources available to students and teachers in the state.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.30.800 Virtual education consortium)</a></p> <p>Alaska has created the Alaska Digital Academy, which delivers distance courses to middle and high school students. This program was designed to serve students statewide.</p> <p>Any student in the state qualifies, with no limits on school type. Credit for any high school course, however, is contingent on an agreement with the Academy and the student’s regular school. This is through the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District.</p> <p><a href="#">(Alaska Digital Academy)</a></p> <p>Alaska also has the AKChoice Virtual Learning Program, an alternative pathway for students to earn both core and elective credits and it allows students to enroll part-time or full-time. This is part of the Anchorage School District</p> <p><a href="#">(AKChoice Virtual Learning, About)</a></p>
<p><b>Extracurricular Access</b></p>	<p><b>LIMITED</b></p> <p>Access denied to some resident students, or students must take at least one class in a public school</p>	<p>The Alaska Statutes that provide for part-time enrollment are clear that these sections do not apply to interscholastic or extracurricular student activities.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.03.095 Part-time school attendance)</a> (see subsection (d))</p> <p>Alaska Statute does establish, however, that a full-time student who is eligible and enrolled in grades 9-12 in an alternative education program that is located in the state and that does not offer interscholastic activities is eligible to participate in any interscholastic activities program available in a public school. Students must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in interscholastic activities at the school the student would be eligible to attend, based on the residence of the parent or legal guardian; or</li> <li>• Request to participate at a school by showing good cause and the governing body of the school approves.</li> </ul> <p>The statute defines “alternative education program” to mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public secondary school that provides a nontraditional education program, including the Alaska Military Youth Academy; a public vocational, remedial, or theme-based program; a home school program that is accredited by a recognized accrediting body; a charter school authorized under AS 14.03.250 - 14.03.290; and a statewide correspondence school that enrolls students who reside outside of the district in which</li> </ul>

the student resides and provides less than three hours a week of scheduled face-to-face student interactions in the same location with a teacher who is certified under AS 14.20.020.

[\(A.S. 14.30.365 Interscholastic activities; eligibility\)](#)

SOURCE CITATIONS

**Statutes**

[A.S. 14.03.095 Part-time school attendance](#)

[A.S. 14.30.800 Virtual education consortium](#)

**Other Resources**

[Alaska Digital Academy](#)

[AKChoice Virtual Learning, About](#)



## Learn Everywhere in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Provider Qualification Standard	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No program</p>	Alaska does not have a Learn Everywhere program.
Course Credit Standard	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No program</p>	
Core Course Opportunities	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No program</p>	
Central State List	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p>No program</p>	



## Transportation in Alaska

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Open Enrollment Transit	<b>NO</b>	<p>With no general open enrollment policies, Alaska also does not provide for transportation services for these students.</p>
Fair Transportation Access	<b>YES</b>	<p><b>Nonpublic School Students</b>                      Alaska Statute provides that where the department or school district provides transportation for children attending public schools, the department or districts must also provide transportation for students who attend nonpublic schools, where the student must travel distances comparable to, and over routes the same as, the distances and routes over which the children attending public schools are transported.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.09.020 Transportation of Pupils)</a></p> <p><b>Charter Students</b>                      Alaska Statute provides that school districts that provide transportation services to students must also provide transportation services to students attending charter schools operated by the district, under policies adopted by the district.</p> <p>If a district does not adopt a policy relating to charter school student transportation, the district must allocate the money received for each student to each charter school operated by the district, based on the number of students enrolled in the charter school.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.09.010 Transportation of Pupils)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alaska has promulgated rules to implement this statute.</li> </ul> <p>Alaska regulations provide further details on what the charter school transportation policy must include.</p> <p><a href="#">(4 AAC 27.057 Charter school transportation policy)</a></p>

<p><b>Vehicle Flexibility</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b> Strict vehicle requirements</p>	<p>Alaska Statutes require the Department of Education and Early Childhood to establish equipment requirements for each type of school bus that is used to transport school children to or from a public school.</p> <p><a href="#">(A.S. 14.09.030 School buses)</a></p> <p>The state’s Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses 2017 Revised Edition requires schools to follow the requirements in the <a href="#">National School Transportation Specifications &amp; Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition</a>. The school buses identified in this document do not provide for flexible vehicle options for student transportation and Alaska policy is silent on the topic.</p> <p><a href="#">(Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses 2017 Revised Edition)</a></p>
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SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes	Administrative Code	State Department of Education	Other Resources
<p><a href="#">A.S. 14.09.020 Transportation of Pupils</a> <a href="#">A.S. 14.09.030 School buses</a></p>	<p><a href="#">4 AAC 27.057 Charter school transportation policy</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Alaska Department of Education &amp; Early Development, Pupil Transportation Funding</a></p>	<p><a href="#">National School Transportation Specifications &amp; Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition</a></p>

