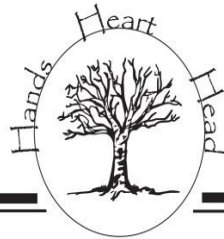


Charter Renewal Application

For Fiscal Years 2015-2025



Birchtree Charter School

Application Date: June 1, 2014

School Contacts Regarding Application:

Jamey Duhamel, APC Board Chair

907-746-6038

jameycasa@hotmail.com

Cathy Busbey, Principal

907-745-1831

cathy.busbey@matsuk12.us

Brandt Bowen, Assistant Principal

907-745-1831

brandt.bowen@matsuk12.us

Table of Contents

1a. Academic Policy Committee.....5-8
 Academic Policy Committee and Contact Information
 Academic Policy Meeting Information
 Birchtree Parent Guild

1b. Independent Academic Policy8-24
 Mission
 Program Philosophy
 Description of Need
 Performance and Programs
 Assessment and Evaluation
 Reporting Progress
 The BCS Learning Plan
 Parent and Community Involvement
 Exemptions and Waivers
 Other Policies and Provisions

2. Law Provisions 24-58
 Nonsectarian Statement
 Charter Contract
 Law Provisions
 Charter School Bylaws for APC
 Charter School Bylaws for BPG

3. Education Programs59-70
 Mission Statement
 Program Philosophy
 Assessment in Decision-Making in Curriculum
 Curriculum Alignment to Measurable Outcomes and Assessments
 Benchmark Goals & Performance Standard Alignment

4. Program Achievement71-85
 Creating a Diverse School Population
 Needs of Students Not Proficient in Statewide Assessment
 Parent Notification of Child’s Performance
 Assessment Participation Rate
 Comparison of Assessment Data
 Disaggregated Scores
 Proposed Staff Development
 Progress Over Time

5. Admission Procedures	86-90
Admissions Criteria	
Admissions Procedures	
Eligible Students	
Accommodation of Additional Students	
Lottery	
Mid-year Vacancies	
6. Alternative Option	91-91
Explanation	
7. Administrative Policies	92-97
Administrative Policy	
Administrator	
Leadership	
Organizational Challenges	
Conflict Resolution	
MSEA Grievance Procedure	
CEA Grievance Procedure	
MAT=SU Principals Association Grievance Procedure	
Non-Employee Conflict Resolution Form and Procedure	
8. Funding Allocation	98-110
Budget Summary	
Proposed Budget	
Indirect Costs	
Local Revenue	
9. Fiscal Solvency	111-115
Explanation	
10. Facility Plans	116-118
Explanation	
11. Teacher to Student Ratio	119-123
Projected Teacher to Student Ratio	
12. Enrollment ,,.....	124-126
13. Teaching Method/Curriculum	127-132
Whole Child Curriculum	
Curriculum Chart	
Monitoring of Curriculum Implementation and Curriculum Quality	
Review and Revision	
“At Risk” Students	
Special Education Plans	
“At Risk” Students & ESL/ Bilingual	
14. Collective Bargaining	133-133
Explanation	

15. Contract Termination134-135
Termination Clause
Termination Notice and Procedures
Disposition of the Charter School Assets

Appendixes

Appendix A.....136-141
Standards Based Report Cards
Second Grade
Fifth Grade

Appendix B.....142-153
Alignment of Waldorf Standards with the Alaska State Standards
English/Language Arts
Math

Appendix C.....154-155
Transportation

Appendix D156-159
Mat-Su Borough School District Policy on Charter Schools

1a. Academic Policy Committee

Operation of the APC on Acceptable Level

The Academic Policy Committee (APC) of Birchtree Charter School (BCS) is currently composed of seven (7) parent/legal guardians of students currently enrolled at BCS, two (2) BCS teachers and our principal as a non-voting member. The Academic Policy Committee supervises the academic operation of the charter school and ensures the fulfillment of the mission. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: establishing and approving all major educational and operational policies, approving all major contracts, approving the schools fiscal affairs, and selecting and evaluating the principal.

Presently, the APC holds monthly meetings the 2nd Wednesday of every month with special sessions, when deemed necessary. The APC participates in a yearly retreat in December to develop and plan implementation of a strategic plan. The APC has developed and implemented an administrator evaluation. To date, the BCS APC board has held more than 75 meetings. Over the past 3 school years, the APC board meeting dates have been:

2011: October 13, November 17, December 2-3 (retreat).

2012: January 4, January 12, February 2, February 6, March 22, April 5, April 25, May 2, June 6, July 31, August 30, September 20, October 18, November 1, November 15, November 30, December 1 (retreat), December 18.

2013: January 16, February 20, February 25, March 20, April 5, April 10, May 15, June 7, August 28, September 6, October 2, November 18, December 16.

2014: January 8, February 5, February 22 (retreat), March 19, April 2, May 7.

Minutes and Agendas to the above meeting dates can be found online at Birchtreecharterschool.org. Dates, minutes and agendas for meetings held prior to October 2011 can be found on file at BCS. A copy of the March 19, 2014 APC Board meeting minutes are on the following page:



Board Meeting Minutes

Date: March 19, 2014

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Birchtree Charter School

Mission of Birchtree Charter School: to nurture and promote the development of healthy, responsible, and creative human beings.

The Birchtree Learning Plans includes:

- that the personal behavior of adults and teachers at BCS will be an example to the pupils.
- that each class will be a learning community for respect, tolerance, and understanding.
- that BCS is designed to function as a living system that balances initiative and accountability.

All teachers, staff and participants will be asked to make a commitment to develop him or her along with the pupils.

APC MEMBERS PRESENT: Kirsten Gerrish, Anna Folsom, Lori Berrigan, Jamey Duhamel, Abigail Sheldon, Rob Catlett, Debbie McKimmey, Cathy Busbey

I. Call to Order at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Sheldon moved, Folsom seconded approving the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

III. Mission Moment

The mission moment was provided by Anna Folsom.

III. Standing Agenda

A. Approval of February 4, 2014 APC Meeting Minutes The minutes were not approved and will be rewritten with corrections.

B. Principal Report – Cathy Busbey Reviewed.

C. Pedagogical Council Report – Donna Levesque Reviewed.

D. Treasurer’s Report – Rob Catlett Report discussed.

E. BPG Liaison Report – Anna Folsom

Liaison position discussed. Report reviewed.

F. Committee Reports

1. Communication and Bylaws - No Report

2. Building Expansion – Discussed.

3. Charter Rewrite – No report.

4. Principal Evaluation –

Discussed the survey and timeline. Berrigan moved and McKimmey seconded approving the proposed surveys with changes. Unanimously approved. Surveys could be out by 3/21/14. APC wants them available for two weeks.

There will be a brief meeting on 4/5/14 with Debbie McKimmey, Anna Folsom and Lori Berrigan to compile the raw data.

There will be an executive session meeting of APC on 4/15/14 to review the raw data from 5:30 to 8pm. There will be no teachers present for the executive session.

IV. Persons to be Heard on non-agenda items

Cathy Lee had some concerns about the proposed calendar for next year, specifically changing the day of early release from Friday to Thursday. She requested the documents prepared for hearings be made available to parents ahead of time so parents have ample time to review them before APC meetings.

V. Old Business

A. Charter School Legislation

We discussed bills currently being proposed to the legislature. We have, so far, taken no position on the current pending legislation.

B. Board Development

The board will read "Creativity in Education. The first meeting to discuss the book will be led by Lori Berrigan, date to be announced.

VI. New Business/Action Items

A. Budget

Discussed. Berrigan moved and Catlett seconded approving the 2014-15 school year budget of \$3.9 million with a student count of 345. Passed unanimously.

The new PTR will be new business for our next meeting.

B. Debrief of the strategy meeting

This will be included in new business for the next APC meeting.

Summary of Motions:

Agenda – approved

Minutes – not approved

2014-15 Budget – approved

Survey – approved with changes

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Board of Directors

A Jamey Duhamel, Chair

B. Lori Berrigan, Vice Chair

C. Cathy Busbey - Principal

D. Rob Catlett, Parent, Treasurer

E. Abigail Sheldon, Parent, Secretary

F. Anna Folsom, Teacher, BPG Liaison

G. Kirsten Gerrish, Parent

H. Brandt Bowen, Teacher

I. David Ralph, Parent

J. Debbie McKimmey, Parent

The APC holds elections annually in November. BCS community members are encouraged to attend and participate in all monthly APC meetings. The APC has been successful in transitioning from its original founding board to a strong and stable governing board. Parents and staff of BCS are encouraged at events, in our weekly newsletter and through individual interactions to participate with and even serve on the APC. Current and past members of the APC recognize the role of the APC at BCS and have implemented Board 101 training (usually provided by the Foraker Foundation) for all new and current APC members. It is our goal to be a successful organization using the tools that are available to us throughout the community.

During the last four years, the APC, in partnership with the administration, has been successful in hiring and retaining all current teachers, passing administrative policies as needed, and hiring two principals. Also, in working with the Birchtree Parent Guild (BPG), a 501(c) 3 non-profit, we were able to obtain the Federal Charter School Start-Up Grant. Grant funds were used to train all hired staff in Waldorf Methods. Currently 13 of our 18 classroom teachers are Certified Waldorf Teachers. It is our design for the administrator of BCS to be the liaison between the APC and MSBSD.

1b. Independent Academic Policy

The Independent Academic policy currently on file at BCS is presented below:

Mission

Mission Statement: Birchtree Charter School's mission is to nurture and promote the development of healthy, responsible, and creative human beings through the holistic approach of Waldorf Education.

Purpose: Birchtree Charter School provides an innovative, standards based education, enhancing the growth of student creativity and imagination through the arts. Our aim provides a holistic learning environment and demonstrates that all children are natural and inspired learners who can achieve. To do this, we use the Whole Child Curriculum, based on the Waldorf educational philosophy. We aim to enliven and support families in our local community. Specially trained teachers use developmentally attuned approaches and the arts to encourage academic achievement, creativity, social intelligence and ecological awareness.

Philosophy

At the heart of the Waldorf based whole child curriculum is the recognition of how much children change from year to year. Our lesson plan places pivotal importance on the mental, emotional and physical nature of each grade level. The curriculum ensures that the material presented, and how it is presented, is developmentally attuned to the appropriate age at every grade level. This model values the stages of childhood

development, greater interaction between child and teacher, and the integration of the arts into a rigorous academic program.

Description of Need

A. Advantages

Waldorf inspired education is based on the whole child. The rich curriculum provides a well-rounded education using academics, art, music, foreign language and movement that responds and enhances the child's developmental phases. It encourages children to have an imaginative inner life. Children who attend Waldorf programs are typically able to connect to nature, have a life-long passion for learning, and have a high emotional and social intelligence. According to a recent study of Waldorf graduates listed on the web site "Why Waldorf Works"

(www.whywaldorfworks.org), 94% attended college, 47% chose humanities or arts as majors, 42% chose science as a major, 89% are highly satisfied in their occupation choice, 91% are still active in lifelong education, 90% highly value tolerance and other viewpoints. As our children move forward into a world of many unknown variables, it will be imperative for them to become critical thinkers; analyzing and creating solutions to our everyday social problems.

B. Limited Opportunities

At this time BCS is the only school in the Mat-Su Borough School District that offers a Waldorf inspired or whole child curriculum. In contrast, Anchorage has a Waldorf inspired program as well as two other whole child programs. These programs are Chugach Optional and Denali Montessori.

C. Support

At this time BCS has 320 students enrolled and are slated to have 345 students for the 2014-2015 school year. The APC recently conducted a parent survey and found that 99% of the 113 families that answered the survey would recommend BCS to their friends and families. For many in the MSBSD, BCS offers a choice in education that is needed and wanted.

Performance and Program Goals

A. Student Performance Goals

- 1. Goals:** 80% of all students are able to meet the standard in subject areas on the standard based report card at the end of the school year (examples of standard based report cards are in Appendix A). There is continuous practice and assessment throughout the school year to determine the progress and status of students in the program. BCS teachers are currently developing rubrics to align with the standards based report cards.

2. **Student Assessment and Parent Conferences:** A standards-based report card, aligning Waldorf grade level standards to the Alaska State Standards, was created for BCS. Samples of two grade levels are in Appendix B. Additionally, a comprehensive assessment is prepared and provided to parents at the end of each school year for each child. This includes an overview of the course work for the year and a discussion of the child's achievement, performance, and growth in each of the various curriculum blocks, specialty subjects (foreign languages, handwork, music, movement), as well as social skills and work habits. Parents will receive a review of the student's work in subject areas at the parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first and third quarter. This will include a review of main lesson books and short summaries from language and handwork instructors. At the end of the first semester and second semester, parents will receive the standards based report card. Parents may also request a conference with the teacher if desired or deemed necessary.
3. **Portfolios:** Comprehensive student portfolios include samples of main lesson books, practice papers, written work, reports, artwork etc.
4. **Teacher Observation:** A record of teacher observations of each child is maintained. Included in the record is information of individual growth and achievement in all three main areas of concern (intellectual, physical and emotional).
5. **Exhibitions:** An open house curriculum night occurs at least once a year, during which student work will be exhibited and samples of the class work will be demonstrated.
6. **Assemblies:** School-wide assemblies are planned bimonthly as a showcase of each grade's classroom work (recitations, songs, poems) starting at 1st grade. This gives parents, administrators and board members a glimpse of students' work throughout the year.
7. **Grade Level Benchmark Skills:** Students also demonstrate their overall progress toward graduation readiness through a series of standardized tests to be given per DEED testing schedule.

B. Program Goals

1. **Attendance:** All students must be at school each day to reap the benefit of instruction and to participate in learning opportunities. The yearly attendance rate is 90% or higher.
2. **Enrollment:** The re-enrollment of current students is at or above the rate of 90%.

3. **Parent and Family Participation:** Parents volunteer 36 hours a year. We expect all families to participate in conferences, programs, celebrations and special projects. A computerized log is kept of volunteer hours in the school office.
4. **Community Involvement:** We have forged lasting relationships within the community that will help us both serve the community and meet our goals for our students. Current community relationships include the Palmer Arts Council, AT&T Sports Center, Curtis Menard Sports Complex, and Palmer Lifeways.
5. **Academic Excellence:** BCS delivers highly motivating, enriching curriculum, and provides appropriate resources through capable teachers and staff. Supporting materials and other additional resources are provided, as deemed necessary to achieve the greatest gain for the students. Class teachers and the principal will keep records to show student growth and achievement. The APC reviews these records regularly, as do teachers, to determine curriculum and resource effectiveness and ways to improve instruction.
6. **Parent Classes:** BCS has offered educational classes to the parent community working in conjunction with the Birchtree Parent's Guild (BPG). Out-of-state presenters have offered classes on Waldorf education on two occasions during the past year. Additionally, school staff has offered workshops for parents throughout the previous four years. The school is committed to offer more classes for our parents and the community. We recognize that ongoing education for parents increases the likelihood of success for students.

Assessment/Evaluation

A. Foundations of Assessment

The foundations of BCS's learning plan rests on the following beliefs about assessment:

1. 100% of all students will participate in all assessment techniques.
2. Assessment is an ongoing process that helps identify, at various stages in the learning process, what a student knows, understands, and can do.
3. Assessment is a collaborative process.
4. Assessment is a process that encourages, challenges and motivates students to higher levels of learning and awareness.
5. Multiple types of evidence must be used to better understand each learner's strengths and needs, and to plan for support and enrichment.
6. Students are given authentic opportunities to display their accomplishments and demonstrate their learning.

B. Types of Assessment

At BCS, varieties of assessment methods are used to measure and guide progress towards achievement of the school's performance standards. When deciding what type of assessment to use, the school/teachers will consider why they are doing the assessment, what they are assessing, and what the criteria for success are.

- 1. Standardized Tests:** While a true Waldorf program does not utilize standardized testing as a way to measure student progress, BCS is willing to participate in all federal and state required assessments. However, student scores at BCS in grades 3, 4, and 5 will in all likelihood be at, or below, district and state standards. The reason is that students in Waldorf inspired programs do not begin formal academics (e.g., reading instruction) until 1st grade. This approach to teaching reading, for example, is in alignment with brain studies that have demonstrated that, "There is no absolute timetable for learning to read. Differences of three years are normal. Some children will be ready to read at 4 years; others, just as normal, will be ready at 7 or even 10 years. The child who reads at 7 might not be 'developmentally delayed' as many have been diagnosed. In many countries, including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and New Zealand (all with high literacy levels), formal reading instruction begins as late as age 7 or 8." (Jensen, 1998). Because of delayed formal reading instruction, traditional standardized tests would not be an accurate measure of academic progress for a K, 1st or 2nd grader in a Waldorf inspired program.
 - a. **Participation in Testing:** BCS will participate in all federal and state required assessments at the grade level required except as allowed by approved waivers.
 - b. **Local Waiver Request:** BCS requests not to participate in any district mandated testing.
- 2. Classroom Assessment:** The following types of assessment methods and tools are utilized at BCS:
 - a. **Summative Assessments:** These assessments are given periodically by individual classroom teachers. Summative assessments give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned over a period of time and are usually given at the end of a block or unit of study. They are given as part of the grading process and are an accountability measure. Block tests/quizzes are examples of summative assessments.
 - b. **Formative Assessments:** The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. Formative assessments are interwoven into the instructional process. They check for understanding along the way and guide teacher decision making about future instruction; they also provide feedback to students so they can

improve their learning. Examples of formative assessments that BCS teachers utilize are as follows:

1. Drawing – Students can draw a visual representation of a topic.
2. Questioning - Teachers ask questions that allow students an opportunity for deeper thinking and provides teachers with significant insight into the degree and depth of student understanding.
3. Discussion - Classroom discussions are initiated with open-ended questions by the teacher. This allows the teacher to gain greater understanding about student learning and comprehension of basic concepts.
4. Self and Peer Assessment - Students are involved in setting learning goals for themselves. This tool allows students to become more aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses. Using peer assessment, students begin to see each other as resources for understanding and learn to check for quality work against set criteria (rubric).
 - Anecdotal teacher records/teacher observation - The anecdotal records demonstrate individual growth of each child in all three main areas of concern (intellectual, physical, and emotional).
 - Oral recitations – Oral recitations, presentations, reports, performances and demonstrations occur regularly by both individuals and groups.

c. Performance Based Assessments: Performance based assessments require students to perform a task or generate their own response. These types of assessments employ rubrics. The rubrics give clear standards for the performance. Examples of performance based assessments used at BCS are as follows:

- Portfolios - Comprehensive student portfolios include samples such as main lesson books, practice papers, written work and reports, artwork etc.
- Exhibitions - An open house occurs at least once a year, during which student work is exhibited and samples of the class work is demonstrated. Completed student projects/artwork, both individual and group, may be used in public exhibitions.
- Assemblies - School-wide assemblies are planned bimonthly as a showcase of each grade's classroom work (recitations, songs, poems) starting at 1st grade. This gives parents, administrators and board members a glimpse of the students' work throughout the year.
- Class Plays – Artistic performances by the students through class plays is demonstrated on a yearly or every other year basis.

d.1st Grade Readiness - Academic, social, and physical assessment for kindergarten students to ascertain if the students are ready to enter 1st grade. Assessment occurs in the spring for the following school year.

e. 2nd Grade Assessment: Cognitive, gross motor and fine motor development is assessed in the second semester of 2nd grade to determine the achievement of Waldorf benchmarks.

Reporting Progress

A. Reporting on Student Performance Goals

The staff at BCS uses assessment in a variety of forms to drive and inform instruction. On a quarterly basis, teachers review student assessments, portfolios and other evidence, and meet with students and/or student's parents/guardians to discuss progress, growth, challenges and needs, and set new goals.

1. Progress Reports/Report Cards

A comprehensive assessment is prepared and provided to parents at the end of each school year for each child. This includes an overview of the course work for the year, and a discussion of the child's achievement, performance, and growth in each of the various curriculum blocks, specialty subjects (languages, handwork, recorder, movement), as well as social skills and work habits. In addition, the parents receive a summary of the student's work in subject areas at the parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first and third quarters. This includes a review of main lesson books and short summaries from language and handwork instructors.

A standard based report card utilizing a grading system of 1, 2, 3, 4 for grades 1-8 is given to parents at the end of the first semester and second semester. The report card standards reflect the Waldorf grade level standards as aligned to the Alaska State Standards. Levels reflect progress toward achievement of performance standards. Levels also show individual effort and responsibility towards reaching these goals. Please refer to Appendix B for samples of grade level aligned standards.

In addition, BCS uses an individualized action plan to help improve the performance of low achieving students. We are especially committed to working with such students because we are committed to keeping all students together with their peers of the same age group. The Waldorf based whole child curriculum approach avoids retention or skipping a grade except in the rarest of circumstances.

2. Conferences

Various types of conferences take place through the year including student-teacher, student-peer, student-parent, and student-parent-teacher. Parent-teacher

conferences are held at the end of the first quarter and the end of the third quarter or as requested by parents.

Conferences have a variety of purposes which include: celebrating accomplishments, guiding students to reflect on their own learning, providing/receiving feedback on specific assessments or performance tasks, and sharing information on progress towards student learning goals.

Additionally, at BCS an important supplement to the regular parent conferences are “child studies.” Faculty or members of the faculty meet during the regular weekly faculty meetings to discuss an individual child’s situation. The impressions of several teachers who know the child will be sought.

B. Annual Report of Student Achievement

BCS staff devotes time to review yearly assessment data. In addition, the staff meets during monthly grade level meetings to review non-standardized and standardized information to plan and improve instruction, plan for remediation, and determine individual learning needs.

The Principal provides the APC with an annual report reviewing the results of standardized testing and other measures of student achievement.

C. Reporting on Program Goals

An annual report is made to the APC to review the school’s data and progress towards achieving the schools objectives. In addition, a report of progress is provided to the MSBSD School Board.

BCS Learning Plan

Whole Child Curriculum: The whole child curriculum based on the Waldorf educational approach at BCS is child-centric. It includes 14 learning strategies that attune what is taught, when it is taught, and how it is taught to the cognitive, psychosocial, and kinesthetic phases of child development:

A. Community Learning and Teaching:

BCS uses the classic “loop” model in which one teacher stays with his or her class from grade to grade. This structure of continuity helps create a gradual transition from home to the school community. BCS class teachers will make a commitment to remain with their class through 5th grade. Some master teachers stay with their class through 8th grade. The class teacher welcomes each child individually with a handshake and brief check in at the beginning of each day. Children are then taught the academic main lesson for the first two hours and other lessons later in the day. He or she ends the pupil’s day with another handshake and check in. This daily bonding and oversight ritual is the foundation of what

is possible for individual students at BCS. The class teacher is not the only teacher the pupils see each day. Specialist teachers teach foreign languages, music, movement, and handwork. Interesting guests will be integrated into the living system of the school. Besides their parents or guardians, relationships with teachers are the most consistent children have. BCS teachers will endeavor to work together as a group to support each other's individual work.

Because formal education takes place in a community setting, it is essential for teachers to work collaboratively with each other and students' parents to cooperatively shape pupils' relationship to learning. This is a solemn public responsibility that requires mutual collegial support. BCS will work outside the classroom to build our larger pupil/parent/teacher community through the use of regular seasonal festivals. These festivals provide an opportunity for the larger community to come together, as a whole, around a central seasonal theme. The centerpiece of these events is usually the presentation of student work in the form of music, drama or dance.

B. Focused Concentration:

The structure of the school day at BCS is attuned to pupils' inherent biorhythms. The most intense and focused learning happens at the beginning of the day when the students are most receptive. Each day begins with a two-hour period known as the main lesson. This teaching unit is integrated and cross-curricular and includes activities to awaken and focus attention. Forty to forty-five minute subject lessons follow the main lesson. Academic subjects take priority in the morning. The afternoons are usually used for arts and crafts, outdoor activities, sports and practical work. Subjects such as music, movement, and foreign languages that benefit from regular practice are evenly spaced throughout the middle of the day whenever possible.

C. Thematic Learning:

Teachers present each subject in blocks of time lasting several weeks. Teachers use the main lesson format to address a progressive range of competencies in mathematics, language arts, science, and humanities. Meaningful connections link subject areas and previous and future main-lessons – even main lessons years ahead or long in the past. The main lessons are part of a block scheduling system of themed learning that centers the schedule and organization of the day from 1st to 8th grade. Within the requirements of the curriculum, class teachers choose the material, presentation, and activities to suit the needs of the specific class. They aim to make each lesson an interesting and artistic whole that has rhythm, structure and purpose. Main lesson activities and content meets pupils' cognitive, affective, and practical modes of learning.

D. A Stimulating Learning Environment:

A regular change of activities stimulates students' interest. Like any living system, BCS will create a rhythmically structured school day, week, and year with a built-in pressure-release system that keeps everything lively. Teachers will balance concentration and

relaxation, mental and practical work, movement, listening and participating, observing and doing. Each lesson will balance cognitive, emotional/social, and active learning. Teachers will plan activities to suit the attention span of a given class and pay attention to the rhythm of the week.

E. Deep Learning:

A rhythmic approach to teaching enhances learning and memory. Information can be absorbed and later remembered within a wider context that includes the pupil's own experiences. Teachers introduce new experiences allowing time for pupils to assimilate previously taught material. Teachers distinguish between subjects that need regular practice (foreign languages, music, spelling, etc.) and subjects focusing on new content. Topics are dropped following a period of concentration of around 3-4 weeks. This allows for information to settle, and time for data and information to become knowledge and eventually understanding.

F. The Whole Class Dynamic:

Teachers focus on the class as a dynamic whole. Teachers constantly work to shift and reintegrate smaller groups, such as ability groups for math and reading, back into the whole class. A class of mixed ability children is a model of community. Pupils learn from each other. The whole class dynamic celebrates differences. Teachers avoid giving rewards for being first or best. Teachers are aware that rewards and prizes make pupils compete for prizes rather than working from inherent motivation. Teachers aim for a creative balance between cooperation and competition among pupils, aiming for them to be enlightened and inspired by each other as well as the teacher.

G. Teaching Through Narrative:

The use of narrative gives pupils a conceptual framework within which they can orientate themselves and understand their experiences. Younger pupils listen to stories told by the teacher in his/her own words, not read from a book. Teachers inspire pupils to identify with characters in stories and develop linguistic and listening skills. Teachers use story as a classroom management tool with younger pupils. Inspirational or thought-provoking stories take the place of moralizing or lecturing older pupils.

History is taught initially through narrative and stories from a wide range of sources: fairy and folk tale, legend, fable, parables, mythology, and literature and then moves on to recorded history and historical fact. Teachers share content in oral form, not through written textbooks, especially in the earlier grades. Teachers use biography to strengthen pupil identification with people who have made contributions. Communicating, exchanging viewpoints, dialogue and debate are part of lessons. The groundwork for these communication skills is begun in the younger classes. Teachers cultivate the quality of listening and speaking in class.

H. The Use of Imagery:

The use of imaginative mental pictures is an essential element of the whole child curriculum. When presenting factual information, teachers will strive to present information with both a pictorial and emotional element. Teachers avoid abstract concepts throughout the primary years (ages 6- 12) and stress the pictorial element that grows with pupils' changing understanding of the world. Teachers use imagery that evokes strong sensory impressions and stimulates the imagination wherever appropriate in speaking to the children up to the ages of 8 or 9. Teachers transition to more abstract intellectual processes after the age of 10, when the ability to think in abstract and causal terms begins to emerge. From 10 until puberty, teachers adopt metaphor, simile, and comparison to create mental images. In adolescence, teachers construct imagery from history and current events.

I. A Living Classroom:

Teachers use a wide variety of materials and resources including prepared worksheets, texts, vocabulary lists, maps, diagrams, and multimedia. Pupils are not taught by mass produced textbooks but by live teachers. Teachers and pupils together develop the main lesson from a variety of sources. Pupils use blank journals to write and illustrate what they have learned and observed into their main lesson books. As a matter of course, books such as dictionaries, atlases and other reference materials are an integral part of the classroom. Assignments and projects arising out of the lesson theme require that the pupils develop competence in a range of information retrieval skills by the time they reach age 12.

J. Learning to Lead:

The personal behavior of adults and teachers at BCS will be an example of leadership to pupils. In addition, pupils will learn leadership skills in different manners throughout stages of their development:

- Kindergarten teachers will endeavor to be a model of kindness, strength, and daily rhythm to the pupils, knowing that children at this age imitate adult behavior on their path towards becoming their own individual.
- Class teachers of grades 1 to 5 will endeavor to set clear guidance and boundaries for the class as a whole, knowing that children at this age rely on guidance and boundaries to continue developing their individuality.
- Class teachers of grades 6 to 8 will endeavor to be experts in their subjects knowing that at this age pupils want to be led by teachers they respect as experts in order to develop in themselves a desire to become enthusiastic lifelong learners.

K. Respect, Tolerance, and Understanding:

Each individual class within the school will be a multicultural, mixed ability educational environment that offers equal chances for all. Each class, moving through the years together, will be a learning community for respect and understanding of different individual academic and social gifts and challenges as well as for varied social and cultural backgrounds. The class – which includes the parents as an inextricable part of the whole – will develop principles that will enable the class to overcome and deal with the kind of

crises that occur as part of normal development. Kindness, sharing and the ability to listen to others will be actively encouraged.

Pupils are inspired to take pride in their work and to achieve the highest standards possible. Teachers will work to balance an atmosphere of positive competition and collaboration. Pupils will evaluate their fellow pupils' achievements in an objective, though positive and constructive way. Teamwork and problem solving will be practiced and the school community, as a whole, will work to reflect these principles.

L. The Continuous Learning Community:

BCS is designed to function as a living system that balances initiative and accountability. All teachers, staff, and participants will be asked to make a commitment to develop him or her along with the pupils. Our fundamental assumption is that there is always room for improvement. We will endeavor to make planning, review, and ongoing educational research a creative, fruitful and effective process.

M. Living Systems Learning:

At BCS it is our intention to educate the whole child to see him or herself as living within the context of a whole environment. Developing the capacity to think ecologically is not just a matter of teaching about the importance of recycling or our reliance on fossil fuels. We intend to teach pupils to become aware of the inherent ecology of life, as something that is connected to everything we do. It may be from a baby's exhalation to the ozone, from a lit match to an exploding volcano. In the same way that each child must be taught as a whole human being, so the multidimensional, complex issue that makes up our world ecology must first be seen as a single unit with many interconnected parts. From there, specific aspects of ecology are woven into our curriculum, our building site, and our world view so that the child will fully understand the individual and collective relationship each child and every other person has with the planet.

N. Community Service:

One of our goals at BCS is to educate children in such a way that they are able to envision and create a peaceful world as adults. Doing things for others contributes to a sense of self-sufficiency, self-esteem, and accomplishment. It also strengthens qualities of self-discipline, perseverance, patience, and imagination. Community service is an intrinsic part of that goal. Bringing children into contact with those less fortunate than themselves and caring for the environment helps broaden their understanding of the realities of our society. It helps them develop compassion and empathy for others as well as a desire and will to help. A class service project helps build a spirit of community within the class. Working together towards a common goal develops skills in cooperation, team work, and compassion. This is one reason why service projects are important even in the early grades. Our children learn to work together and to trust one another.

Parent and Community Involvement

At BCS, we believe that there needs to be a strong partnership between home and school in order to accomplish the goal of educating children. When parents make the choice to send their child to our school, they have decided to be an active participant in their child's education. At BCS, we believe that active involvement needs to include a commitment by parents to both support their child's academic and social learning at home, and to support the larger BCS community through volunteering at the school.

A. Volunteer Requirements

Parents of BCS students volunteer a minimum of 4 hours per month or 36 hours per year, per family. This consideration is given so that volunteer time does not become a burden to families with more than one child attending the school. However, parents are encouraged and welcome to increase their volunteer time as they are able and willing.

B. Community Partnerships

BCS partners with community organizations and businesses, to help achieve its goals and better the Mat-Su community. BCS will actively seek involvement from members of the Mat-Su Valley to:

- Provide learning opportunities in specialized areas such as dance, music, drama, art and foreign language.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for students to apply their learning.
- Provide opportunities for service.
- Help broaden students understanding and acceptance of diverse people and perspectives.
- Increase students' knowledge of sustainability in nature through hands-on work within the Mat-Su Valley.
- Incorporate Native Alaskan Studies and increase knowledge of the native peoples of Alaska and their culture.

Other Policies and Provisions

BCS has adopted the MSBSD's administrative policies and regulations, with the exception of any waivers/exceptions listed in Section 14 Collective Bargaining of the Charter Renewal Application.

A. Personnel Policies/Compliance

The principal, teachers and other staff at BCS are employees of BCS, as well as employees of the MSBSD, and are covered by the personnel policies of the district. The BCS principal is responsible for supervising, evaluating, acting as the APC's agent in hiring and terminating its employees and other responsibilities as deemed appropriate. District guidelines and policies regarding terms and conditions of employment, with exception as to items noted in the charter, will be followed.

BCS is subject to all federal and state rules and regulations concerning recruitment of applicants, including without limitation, requirements concerning recruitment and use of background and criminal checks. BCS employees will follow the MSBSD procedures utilized in administrating salary and retirement programs.

BCS will adopt MSBSD’s written policies and will operate in compliance with federal and state law, concerning the recruitment, promotion, evaluation, discipline, and termination of personnel.

B. Insurance

BCS is covered under the district insurance coverage as any other public school in the MSBSD. Coverage will be provided for the building and employees through the district recommended insurance broker. BCS has reserved money in its budget to pay for this policy.

C. Risk Management

BCS shall adequately protect against liability and risk through an active risk management program. BCS shall operate in such a manner as to minimize the risk of injury or harm to students, employees and others as per MSBSD policy. School operations and activities shall be reviewed by the MSBSD Risk Manager for compliance with appropriate local, state, and federal safety practices/codes and all school board policies.

D. Proposed Charter Contract Term

As provided under the Alaska State Charter School Law (AS 14.03.255), Birchtree requests the term of the re-application contract to be ten operating years commencing in 2015.

Exemptions and Waivers / Exceptions to Common Practice

BCS has adopted the MSBSD’s administrative policies and regulations with the following proposed waivers/exceptions:

A. Policies and Operations

- 1. Power of Operation:** BCS is responsible to operate with the allocated funds it receives, consistent with law, and has the authority to independently exercise the following powers: prepare a budget; accept and expend donations, gifts, or grants according to the specifications of the donor. The school board will be given written notice of all accepted gifts, donations, and grants that are channeled through the school’s operating budget along with associated conditions.

2. **Conduct Code:** BCS bases their student code of conduct and behavior established by the school district in compliance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. **Curriculum/Instructional Materials:** Charter schools are allowed autonomy in choosing the curriculum, texts, and instructional materials for use in the school. This may be done without school board approval providing it meets or exceeds content standards accepted by the state and school district. This allows BCS to better meet the unique needs of our program and student body.
4. **Health Services:** BCS has an on-site nurse one day per week. The nurse establishes and maintains records for our students. This includes: immunizations, testing, screenings, and administration of medications. Medication will be dispensed only with written parental permission and according to accepted health and safety guidelines. District, state and federal laws and policies will be followed.
5. **Travel Policy:** BCS involves students in day excursions or trips of a longer duration. Longer, more costly trips are demonstrated to be thoughtfully prepared with safeguards, security, and liability issues covered according to school district regulation. These trips would be a tool for extending learning and would have direct connection to educational outcomes.
6. **Assessment and Report Cards:** BCS is requesting exemption from any mandated testing required by the MSBSD School Board. BCS will participate in all federal and state required assessments at the grade level required, except as allowed by approved waivers.

B. Structure of Program

1. **School Day:** The school day commences at 8:30 am and end at 3:15.
2. **Calendar:** BCS reserves the option to alter their calendar by changing start and end dates, vacation days, parent conference days, and building development days when these changes better meet the goals and mission of BCS. BCS will fulfill the requirements of state law regardless to the number of attendance days; BCS will inform the district promptly of any changes to the calendar.
3. **Planning Time/Early Release:** In order to provide teachers critical time for collaborative planning and professional development, BCS schedules one early release day per week. In order to compensate for the time, students attend school an additional fifteen minutes per day. Students attend school the required number of hours on an annual basis as per state statute.

4. **Lunches:** Parents are responsible for providing students with lunch each day. Staff supervision will ensure that no student goes without food.

5. **Transportation:** Parents/guardians are responsible for providing reliable transportation to and from school each day. BCS offers limited bussing for students to arrive at school. Please refer to Appendix C for detailed bus information. Bus transportation is contracted to transport students to and from field trips.

C. Employee-Related

1. **Personal Leave:** There shall be no time limit in the number of teachers who can take personal leave at the same time. As a small school, it is impractical to enforce the rule that only a small percentage of teachers be allowed leave on a particular day. Prudence and good judgment is our guide.

2. **District Building Development:** BCS provides Waldorf specific training to all teachers on staff. Professional development in Waldorf specific curriculum is essential to support the school philosophy, and the goals and objectives of BCS. Building Development days are scheduled differently than the district's dates when there are appropriate conferences, workshops, or instructions available to meet the needs of our staff.

3. **Hiring:** BCS is a Waldorf inspired program. We ask that we be able to advertise for Waldorf-trained/certified teachers within and outside of Alaska utilizing the media and technology at our disposal.

4. **Unit Administrator/Principal/Advisor:** This individual will be the teachers' immediate supervisor as determined by the APC and MSBSD. The designated administrator with a Type B certificate shall aid in the recruitment and selection of teachers, and will have the responsibility for evaluating teachers, advising and mediating in the school. A qualified person that the APC approves, and the MSBSD agrees to, shall evaluate the Principal before March 1st.

5. **Involuntary Transfer:** Per Alaska State Statute, a teacher may not be involuntarily transferred to a charter school. At BCS, this is particularly important, due to the specialized nature of the teaching staff.

2. Law Provisions

A. Contract

The APC will continue to administer the contract with the MSBSD for the operation of BCS pursuant to the terms therein.

The current charter contract addresses the 14 provisions listed under AS 14.03.255 (c) (114), and follows this section.

B. Responsibilities of the Academic Policy Committee

The roles and responsibility of the APC and the Parent Guild and their members are clearly laid out in the Bylaws. A copy of the bylaws for both Birchtree Parent Guild and Academic Policy Committee follows this section.

Additionally, the APC board must comply, where applicable, with any and all provisions of the MSBSD regarding charter schools, Alaska Statute regarding charter schools, and the Mat-Su Education Association. When in doubt of any responsibilities regarding any provisions of the law or of union contract, the APC will consult with the MSBSD and with MSEA.

BCS operates within the bounds of AS 14.03 and 4AAC 33.110 in their most recently adopted forms.

Furthermore, the APC has been a member of the Foraker Group for three years. The Foraker Group has provided BCS Boards with on-going board training.

C. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

The APC oversees all aspects of BCS and is responsible for the establishment and management of policies for the school, and fulfills the duties as prescribed in A.S. 14.03.250. These are fully addressed in the APC bylaws under Article II.

Nonsectarian Statement

BCS offers a nonsectarian, multi-cultural curriculum. In this curriculum, a variety of cultural traditions throughout history are presented through story, enlightening the children at each developmental stage. World traditions and religions are examined through the context of history, and are connected to the curriculum, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of mankind's evolution over time.

Charter School Contract with the MSBSD School Board and Birchtree Charter School

THIS AGREEMENT is between Birchtree Charter School (hereafter “Charter School”) Academic Policy Committee (hereafter “APC”) on behalf of Charter School, whose physical address is 7107 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy, Palmer, Alaska 99645 and with the Matanuska Susitna School Board (hereafter “ School Board”), whose address is 501 Gulkana, Palmer, Alaska 99645.

WHEREAS, Charter School desires to operate within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (hereafter “School District”) in conformance with Alaska 14.03.250.290 and applicable School Board policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, the School Board has reviewed and unanimously approved Charter School’s application amended in accordance with conditions noted by the School Board;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements contained in this contract, the parties agree as follows:

AS 14.03.255 (b) A Charter School shall:

1. Charter School will keep all financial records of the Charter School.
2. The APC will select a full-time principal. The principal will possess a current Alaska Type A Teaching Certificate and a current Type B Administrative Certificate and be either an existing principal in School District, be on the School District’s Eligible for Hire list for administrators, or be a retired administrator in good standing with School District. Additionally, the principal will be selected based on experience, vision, and commitment to the principles of Waldorf education. The principal shall be the liaison between School District and the APC. The APC agrees to oversee its operations with Charter School to ensure the terms of the contract are met.
3. The APC is responsible for the educational outcomes and to ensure the overall educational practices and quality of participation is consistent with the vision of the school. One of the standing committees of the APC is the Legal Compliance Committee. This committee will be responsible for tracking overall school performance as it pertains to School District standards. If school academic performance is in need of improvement, this committee will work with School District in a plan of improvement. This plan will undergo approval by both School District and APC.

4. APC will meet yearly to monitor progress in achieving the committee's policies and goals.

AS 14.03.255 (c) A charter school shall operate under a contract between the charter school and the local school board. A contract must contain the following provisions:

1. **Educational Program:** Charter School provides an innovative, standards based education, enhancing the growth of student creativity and imagination through the arts. The Charter School provides a holistic learning environment and demonstrates that all children are natural and inspired learners who can achieve. To do this, we use the Whole Child Curriculum, based on the Waldorf educational philosophy. Our mission is to nurture and promote the development of healthy, responsible and creative human beings. We aim to enliven and support families in our local community. Specially trained teachers use developmentally attuned approaches and the arts to encourage academic achievement and creativity, social intelligence and ecological awareness.

Charter School provides an educational program in the School District subject to the terms and conditions of this contract that shall commence with the first day of school of the school year. The contract becomes effective on the date of its execution.

2. **Achievement Levels:** Charter School's educational program shall commit itself to attaining the levels of achievement specified in the Charter School proposal.
 - A. **Evaluation/Assessment:** Charter School offers kindergarten through eighth grade and evaluates students using objective and subjective assessment tools. Multiple assessment tools are used to document student achievement including but not limited to: standardized tests, performance assessment, rubrics, student portfolios, and teacher assessment. All assessment remain in compliance with Alaska State Standards and testing, except as allowed by approved waivers. A combination of these assessments is used to develop an individual student monitoring plan wherein a collaborative effort is made by students, parents, and teachers to continue to track and evaluate individual progress.
 - B. **Achievement Standards:** Charter School assists each child in achieving his or her maximum potential. Individual student plans will be developed and utilized to record and monitor growth/progress over time. Success will not be defined by single test scores but through the measurement of individual growth/progress over a minimum of three years, and achievement of individual goals.
 - C. **Reporting:** The APC conducts an annual review of academic progress in meeting its performance goals. The APC reviews formative and standardized assessment information. Staff uses assessment data to drive decisions made in

curriculum and instruction. Report of results is given to the School Board on an annual basis as per Board Policy 6190.

3. **Admission Policies and Procedures:** Charter School shall determine students' eligibility for admission to its program using the criteria in Section 5 (pp.75) of this application. Charter School affirms that any eligible student who applies in a timely manner in accordance with Charter School's published application process will be admitted up to the maximum number of students that can be accommodated by the program, and under the conditions specified in **Section 5**. If more students apply than can be accommodated, then a random lottery is initiated to determine eligibility as specified in the application.
4. **Administrative Policies and Procedures:** Charter School warrants that it complies with all state and federal laws and regulations applicable to public schools and all requirements imposed by School Board Policy and regulations on the operation of charter schools except in circumstances when Charter School has been granted a waiver or autonomy such as, but not limited to, the following policies: absence policy, first grade readiness policy, testing policy and additionally the school calendar.
5. **Funding:** School District allocates funding for Charter School based on a per-pupil proportional share of funding received by School District for students attending Charter School, less administrative costs retained by the School District, determined by applying the DOE approved indirect cost rate. Projected funds will be available to Charter School at the beginning of the school year. Enrollment Adjustment to Actual will happen on November 15th of each school year. Charter School student who transfers after final count day will be handled in the same manner as other student transfers in the School District.

A. School District Charges:

School District charges follow Alaska Statute 14.03.260(a) which reads as follows:

A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an annual program budget. The budget shall be not less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school less administrative costs retained by the local school district, determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the

Department of Education and Early Development. 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.

Additionally, materials and services provided directly by School District to Charter School shall be charged to Charter School at School District cost as per current procedure for all School District schools. These costs shall be charged

only if the School District incurs a cost, if it is not addressed elsewhere as an agreement, and it is not included in the administrative costs retained by the School District.

B. Student Fees and Charges: No tuition shall be charged to Charter School students who reside in the School District.

6. **Budgeting and Accounting:** Charter School accounts for receipts and expenditures by using and complying with district accounting, audit and fiscal procedures. Charter School allows district personnel or district auditor's access to financial information to perform the annual or special audit and accounting information. Charter School cooperates with the School Board and the Department of Education in complying with applicable State Law.
7. **Location and Facility:** Charter School is located at 7107 East Palmer-Wasilla Highway, Palmer, Alaska. Charter School is approximately 30,000 square feet. The building has a lower level, main level, and an upstairs level. Charter School covenants and warrants that the facility complies, with all federal, state, and local health and safety requirements applicable to the operation of the charter school. Any lease agreement may not exceed the term of this contract. Charter School reserves the right to seek or acquire new property as needed for growth.
8. **Teachers and Staff:** Charter School includes twenty-three (23) full time certified teachers as follows: three kindergarten, two 1st grade, two 2nd grade, two 3rd grade, two 4th grade, two 5th grade, two 6th grade, one 7th grade, one 8th grade. Also, there are the following specialist teachers: one german teacher, one handwork teacher, one orchestra teacher, and one movement teacher. The Charter School has two and one-half special education teachers, one half-time counselor, and one half-time instructional coach. The Charter School has two full-time administrators, two full-time secretaries, seven classroom assistants, one parent partnership coordinator, and three special education aides. Additionally, teachers are selected based on experience and commitment to the principles of Waldorf education. Waldorf teacher training is provided for those teachers who do not possess a teaching certificate from a recognized Waldorf teacher training college or institute. All certified positions will be advertised, interviewed and selected by the Principal and APC, and in a manner consistent with School District policy and procedures.

Charter School shall promptly provide the School District with written notice of any proposed changes to the school's staff. It is agreed and understood that all teachers must sign a written contract with the School District before providing services. All hires, retentions, and non-retentions of Charter School employees must be approved by the School Board.

A. Evaluation: Type B Principal/Administrator evaluates teachers in a manner equivalent to that used for other district teachers.

B. Collective Bargaining: Unless the School District and any association representing an employee agree to an exemption, all provisions of any existing negotiated or collective bargaining agreement applicable to any employee will remain in effect while the employee provides services at Charter School.

C. Retirement: All employees of the Charter School are members of the Teacher's Retirement System or the Public Employee's Retirement Association and subject to the requirements of those systems, if they are eligible.

9. **Teachers to Student Ratio:** Charter School maintains a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:18 in kindergarten; 1:24 in grades 1-6; and 1:20 in grades 7 and 8.

10. **Number of Students Served/ Enrollment:** Charter school has projected enrollment of 345 students for 2014-15 school year. Charter school expects to continue to grow over time to a maximum of 422 students.

11. **Term of Contract:** This contract shall be effective upon execution for a period of ten (10) years, and shall expire on _____, unless terminated as provided elsewhere within. This contract will be reviewed annually, and may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties for a term not to exceed ten (10) years.

12. **Termination:** This contract will be terminated by School Board for Charter School's failure to meet educational achievement goals or fiscal management standards, for a default in any material provision of this agreement or for other good causes. If there is evidence of a breach of contract, the School District administration or the legally designated representative of the Charter School will have a right to investigate this breach of contract and make recommendation to the School Board regarding remedy. Based on this recommendation, the School Board actions could include but are not limited to:

- 1) Immediate corrective action for the situation at either the Charter School or School District
- 2) Charter School on probationary status for a specified time period to correct deficiencies
- 3) Provide 30 days written notice to Charter School of its intent to terminate this contract and the reasons therefore.

If Charter School fails to remedy the cause for termination within the time provided in this notice, this contract will automatically terminate at the end of the stated time. Charter School's contract may be terminated by the School Board for the Charter School's failure

to meet educational achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause. During the Charter School's annual review with the School Board, each party's compliance with the provisions of the contract will be reviewed. If any allegations of noncompliance with the charter school contract are presented either during the annual review or at any other time, then the School Board, through the Superintendent or designee, shall investigate these allegations. Prior to terminating the Charter School contract, the School Board and the APC shall attempt to remedy any violations of the contract. The School Board shall provide written notice to the APC of its intent to terminate the contract and the reasons therefore.

Should the Charter School contract be terminated all unused funds and/or assets shall remain with the School District. Dissemination of funds and/or assets will be determined by the Superintendent or designee.

13. **Receipt and Use of Public Money:** Charter School covenants and agrees that it complies with all state and federal requirements for receipt and use of public money.

14. **Exemptions/Waivers:** Charter School requests the following exemptions:
 - A. Current and future mandated testing requirements implemented by the School Board or School District. Charter School will participate in state mandated testing, except as allowed by approved waivers.

15. **Academic Policies:** The academic policies and goals for the Charter School are established by the APC. The APC will include teachers, parents, and school administrators and will meet at least four (4) times per year to assess and monitor progress in achieving the APC's policies and goals. These policies are subject to review by the APC and may be changed by a 2/3 vote of the APC.

16. **Budgeting and Accounting:** The Charter School budget and accounting information is set forth in Section 8 and 9 of this application. Charter School provides an annual budget to the School Board for approval at a time designated by the School District. Charter School accounts for receipts and expenditures by using and complying with the School District's accounting, audit, and other fiscal procedures.

17. **Conflict Resolution:** Charter School has adopted a conflict resolution policy. Conflicts not resolved may be appealed to the APC.

18. **Contract Compliance:** The APC agrees to oversee operations of Charter School to ensure the terms of this contract are met. The APC agrees to meet regularly with members of the APC (the current parents, teachers, staff and community members who have applied and been approved) and students (where appropriate) to review, evaluate, and improve operations of BCS.

In addition to the mutual covenants and agreements set forth above, the charter will bind Charter School to its stated purpose, goals, operational procedures and all other aspects of the approved proposal, excepting the APC Bylaws and the Independent Academic Policy, which may be changed by a 2/3 majority vote of the APC.

19. **Notice:** Any written notice required to be given to the Charter School shall be sent certified mail or delivered to the following person(s) or at the following addresses:

Birchtree Charter School
APC Chair
Jamey Duhamel
P.O. Box 2787
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Any applicable deadlines or identified time periods shall run from the date of receipt of such notice.

Dated: _____

Susan Pougher, School Board President

Dated: _____

Jamey Duhamel, Birchtree APC Chair

STATE OF ALASKA
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT ss.

Subscribed and sworn to me this _____ day of _____, 2014.

NOTARY PUBLIC in and for Alaska

My commission expires: _____

Birchtree Charter School

Bylaws

Adopted by the Academic Policy Committee on

September 28th, 2009 Adopted October 2nd, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

ARTICLE I	NAME, OFFICE, FISCAL YEAR, AND GOVERNANCE
Section 1	Name
Section 2	Office
Section 3	Fiscal Year

Section 4	Governance
ARTICLE II	ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
Section 1	General Powers
Section 2	Members of the Academic Policy Committee
Section 3	Terms
Section 4	Term Limitations
Section 5	Vacancies
Section 6	Compensation
Section 7	Resignation
Section 8	Removal
Section 9	Conflict of Interest
ARTICLE III	ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE ACADEMIC POLICY
COMMITTEE	
Section 1	Elections Committee
Section 2	Eligibility to Vote
Section 3	Casting of Ballots
ARTICLE IV	OFFICERS OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
Section 1	Officers
Section 2	Election and Terms of Office
Section 3	Removal
Section 4	Vacancies
Section 5	Chair
Section 6	Vice Chair
Section 7	Secretary
Section 8	Treasurer
Section 9	Conflict of Interest
ARTICLE V	MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
Section 1	Annual and Regular Meetings
Section 2	Special Meetings
Section 3	Place of meetings
Section 4	Notice of meetings
Section 5	Informal Action by Members
Section 6	Quorum
Section 7	Manner of Acting
Section 8	Executive Sessions
Section 9	No Proxies
Article VI	PRINCIPAL
Section 1	Selection/Removal
Section 2	Duties and Responsibilities
ARTICLE VII	COMMITTEES

Section 1	Membership of Committees
Section 2	Instructions and Responsibilities
Section 3	APC Powers and Prerogatives
Section 4	Meetings
ARTICLE VIII	CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS
Section 1	Contracts
Section 2	Bank Accounts, Checks, Withdrawals, ETC.
Section 3	Accounting
ARTICLE IX	INDEMNIFICATION
Section 1	Indemnification
ARTICLE X	AMENDMENTS
Section 1	Amendments
SIGNATURES	

ARTICLE I

Name, Office, Fiscal Year, and Governance

SECTION 1. Name. The name of the organization shall be "Birchtree Charter School" and shall hereinafter be referred to as "the School" or "Birchtree Charter School."

SECTION 2. Office. The principal office shall be at the facility of Birchtree Charter School located in Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska.

SECTION 3. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of Birchtree Charter School shall coincide with the fiscal year of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (July 1 through June 30).

SECTION 4. Governance. The School shall be governed by the Academic Policy Committee.

ARTICLE II

Academic Policy Committee

SECTION 1. General Powers. Birchtree Charter School shall have an Academic Policy Committee (**APC**), which is the primary governing body designated to oversee and supervise all aspects of the School. No members of the APC shall act on his/her own in the name of the APC unless so authorized by these bylaws or by resolution of the APC. The APC shall have the maximum power permitted by law, shall establish policy for the school, shall fulfill the duties prescribed in A.S. 14.03.250, et sec., and as set forth in these Bylaws, and shall perform the following functions, including, but not limited to:

- A. Ensure the fulfillment of the mission of Birchtree Charter School as stated in the Birchtree Charter School/Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District contract;
- B. Oversee and have ultimate accountability and responsibility for academics, curriculum, legal/risk management, personnel issues, finances, operations /maintenance and budgeting issues, and as otherwise permitted or required by the above-mentioned contract or by law;
- C. Promote professional conduct in accordance with Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District policies;
- D. Contract with a Type B certificated administrator;
- E. Delegate to the Principal those tasks deemed appropriate by the APC and render to the Principal and/or Teacher-In-Charge opinions regarding the hiring, evaluation, and/or termination or non-retention of teachers, staff, and other personnel to the extent permitted by law;
- F. Review contracts;
- G. Review, upon request by any parent, teacher, or staff, requests for any purchase of materials initially denied by the Principal or Teacher-In-Charge; and
- H. Review and rule on any other questions, issues, or policies that may from time to time arise, to the extent permitted by law.

SECTION 2. Members of the Academic Policy Committee. The number of APC members constituting the entire board shall be between seven (7) to ten (10) voting members. Four (4) to eight (8) of the members shall be founding parents and/or parents of the students currently enrolled in the school; one (1) of the members shall be a founding teacher or teacher currently under contract to the School; one (1) of the members shall be a teacher or teacher's aide then under contract to the School. Teachers and teachers' aides who are then under contract to the School and who also are parents of one or more children enrolled in the School shall be eligible only for the two teacher/teacher's aide APC positions, not the

four to eight parent APC positions. The Principal or Acting Principal then under contract to the School shall be a perpetual "ex official member of the APC, but shall have no vote.

(Approved October 2, 2013)

SECTION 3. Term. The term of all elected members of the APC shall be two (2) years. It is the goal of these Bylaws that at any regular election one (1) of the APC teacher positions and four (4) of the APC parent positions shall be open for re-election, and that the remaining one (1) teacher and four (4) parent positions shall come up for re-election at the following year's regular election. If at any time this balance is not maintained, the APC may extend (but not shorten) the term of any APC member(s) until this balance is achieved. A majority vote of the APC shall be required to extend any term. The APC members as of the date of adoption of these bylaws shall consist of the following members.

Cathy Busbey	Principal
Kirsten Gerrish	Parent
Lori Berrigan	Vice Chair
Jamey Duhamel	Chair
Abigail Sheldon	Secretary
Debbie McKimmey	Parent
Anna Folsom	Teacher/BPG Liaison
Rob Catlett	Treasurer

SECTION 4. Term Limitations. There shall be no limitation on the number of consecutive or non-consecutive terms that any member of the APC may serve.

SECTION 5. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring on the APC shall be filled by majority vote of 100% of the remaining members of the APC. The replacement member of the APC shall be elected for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office.

SECTION 6. Compensation. Members of the APC shall not receive any salaries for their services to the APC Board.

SECTION 7. Resignation. Any APC member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair or Secretary of the APC. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein and, unless otherwise stated, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

SECTION B. Expectations and Removal. Expectations and Removal: APC members are expected to attend, at a minimum, all regular monthly APC meetings. Although absences at times cannot be avoided, the APC may remove any APC member who fails to attend three such meetings during he/her term. Additionally, the APC may remove a member with or without cause when it determines that the best interests of the APC and the school

would be served thereby. Removal shall require a super majority vote of the APC, including the APC member who is subject to removal.

(Approved July 21, 2011)

SECTION 9. Conflict of Interest. Service on the APC is a trust created in the interest of the common good and for the benefit of the School. It is the intent of these Bylaws to maintain confidence and prevent the use of this membership for private gain or any other improper purpose. To avoid conflict of interest, excepting the two teacher/teacher's aide APC positions no voting member of the APC shall be a paid staff member of the School, inclusive of the Principal and any other person who receives any monetary compensation from the School. APC Members may work as part-time subs at BCS. APC members may not work as long term subs at BCS.

ARTICLE III
Election of Members to the Academic Policy Committee

SECTION 1. Elections Committee. In September of each year, the Chair of the APC shall appoint an Elections Committee of three (3) persons. One person shall be a parent member of the APC, one person shall be a teacher member of the APC, and one person shall be a parent of a student enrolled in the School but who is not a member of the APC. The Elections Committee shall oversee the election process for positions on the APC. The Elections Committee shall do the following:

- A. Solicit and accept applications from candidates for membership to the APC;
- B. In its discretion, **nominate individuals who** have not submitted an application as candidates for positions on the APC so to meet the requirements of the matrix developed by the APC;
- C. Will bring the full list of candidates to the APC meeting held prior to the elections. The Elections Committee will also present their recommendations for final ballot so that all matrix requirements are met.
- D. Make available within the School office copies of any statements approved candidates choose to submit to the parents, students, or personnel;
- E. May establish a forum for public introduction of approved candidates. Write-in candidates may petition the APC to participate in forum;

- F. Prepare a secret ballot listing the approved candidates, **plus** a space for write-in candidates;
- G. Distribute and collect the secret ballots and otherwise oversee the election so that it is conducted in a fair manner;
- H. Set date for election. Results of election must be reported no later than December 1st.
- I. Advise the candidates and the APC of the election results;
- J. Prepare a report stating the results of the election, which report shall be kept at the principal office of the School and be made available for review by interested parents, teachers, or staff members of the School.

(Approved February 6th, 2012)
 (Approved October 2, 2013)

SECTION 2. APC Role in Elections.

The APC shall do the following:

- A. At the regular meeting prior to elections, approve final election ballot
- B. At the Annual meeting, the APC shall swear in new members.

(Approved October 2, 2013)

SECTION 3. Eligibility to Vote. Only parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the School on the day of the election, the principal, teachers, teachers' aides, school staff employed by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, each with a current contract for the School which is effective on the date of the election, not to exceed one vote per family per open position, are eligible to vote in elections. By way of example, if a family has two children enrolled at the School, only one parent or legal guardian may vote. The parents or legal guardians shall decide amongst themselves how to cast their family vote. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for monitoring voter eligibility and resolving any disputes involving the casting of ballots.

SECTION 3. Casting of Ballots. Voting may occur in three ways:

(1) at any time during the date of the annual meeting up until 1 hour before the annual meeting, by obtaining from and submitting to the School office the secret ballot prepared by the Elections Committee, (2) by completing the secret ballot in person as stated above, or (3) by absentee ballot completed according to procedures established by the Elections Committee.

- A. Write-in candidates may be added to the secret ballot by any voter.
- B. Proxy, facsimile, e-mail, or other method of voting not expressly authorized above is not permitted or valid.
- C. All eligible voters, as defined in ARTICLE III, SECTION 2 above, may vote for both parent and teacher positions on the APC. By way of example, if there are three parent positions open and seven parent nominees, and one teacher position open and three teacher nominees, a parent or legal guardian may cast three votes for the parent positions, and one vote for the teacher position. Likewise, a teacher may also cast three votes for the parent positions, and one vote for the teacher positions.

ARTICLE IV

Officers of the Academic Policy Committee

SECTION 1. Officers. The officers of the APC shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, each of whom must simultaneously be a member of the APC. The APC may elect or appoint such other officers, including one or more assistant secretaries, as it shall deem desirable, such officers to have the authority and perform the duties prescribed, from time to time, by the APC.

SECTION 2. Election and Term of Office. The term of all officers of the APC shall be one (1) year. The officers of the APC shall be elected annually by a majority of a quorum of the APC at the first regular meeting following the annual meeting of the APC. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, elections shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently may be held.

SECTION 3. Removal. Any officer elected or appointed by the APC may be removed from office by a majority vote of the full APC whenever in its judgment the best interests of the School would be served thereby.

SECTION 4. Vacancies. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise may be filled by a majority vote of the full APC for the unexpired portion of the term.

SECTION 5. Chair. The Chair shall be a parent member of the APC, and shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the APC. The Chair shall have such authority and perform such duties as shall be directed by the APC from time to time.

SECTION 6. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall be a parent member of the APC. In the absence of the Chair, or in the event of his/her death, inability or refusal to act, the Vice Chair or other APC member designated by the Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chair. Any Vice Chair shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the APC.

SECTION 7. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the APC in computer files and/or one or more books provided for that purpose, see that all notices and agendas are duly given and posted in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law, keep an updated list of the mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers of each member of the APC, and in general perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the APC.

SECTION 8. Treasurer. Each October, the Treasurer shall present to the APC the annual budget for the forthcoming year which has been prepared by the School, and shall ensure that it justly supports the mission and goals of the School. The Treasurer will present an update on the budget at each APC meeting, and in all ways shall be accountable to the APC and the School Board. The Treasurer shall cause to be completed the audits specified in ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 3 of these Bylaws. The Treasurer will serve as the coordinator of all School funds.

SECTION 9: APC/BPG Liaison: one (1) of the APC members shall be a board member of Birchtree Parent Guild elected as BPG Liaison by a majority vote of the APC. The term of the Liaison shall be one (1) year. The Liaison shall be elected annually by a majority of a quorum of the APC at the first regular meeting following the annual meeting of the APC. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, elections shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently may be held. The Liaison will attend all APC and BPG meetings and will report back to each board.

ARTICLE V

Meetings of the Academic Policy Committee

SECTION 1. Annual and Regular Meetings. The APC hereby formally adopts the Open Meetings Act, A.S. 44.62.310 et sec. ("the Act") . All meetings shall be conducted and all notices and agendas posted in accordance with the Act. If any portion of these Bylaws are

more specific than the Act, than that portion of these Bylaws shall control over the Act, unless prohibited by law.

The annual meeting of **the APC shall be held** on the second Thursday of November in each year, beginning at the hour of 6:30 p.m., for the purpose of electing members of the APC and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. If the annual meeting or election of membership to the APC shall not be held on the day designated herein for any annual meeting and election, the APC shall cause the annual meeting and election to be held at a special meeting as soon thereafter as conveniently may be held. The APC shall also hold regular meetings typically monthly but at least four (4) times a year. Parents, teachers, and staff members of the School are hereby invited to such meetings.

SECTION 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the APC may be called by the Chair, Principal, or any three members of the APC.

SECTION 3. Place of Meetings. The APC may designate any place within the Matanuska Susitna Borough as the place of meeting for any annual meeting, regular meeting, or special meeting. If no designation is made, the place of meeting shall be at the School.

SECTION 4. Notice of Meetings. Notice of annual, regular, or special meetings stating the place, day, and hour of any meeting shall be delivered, either personally, by mail, by facsimile, or by e-mail, to each member of the APC not less than one (1) day before the date set for such meeting. In addition, at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to each meeting, notice of and the agenda for each meeting shall be hosted at the School. New issues not posted on the agenda may nonetheless be raised, discussed, and voted upon at any meeting.

SECTION 5. Informal Action by Members. Any action that otherwise may be taken at any meeting of the APC may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is signed and unanimously agreed upon in writing or e-mail by 100% of the members of the APC entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof

SECTION 6. Quorum. Greater than fifty percent (50%+1) of the voting members of the APC constitutes a quorum. Telephonic participation is permitted.

SECTION 7. Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the members of the APC at a meeting at which a quorum is present either in person or telephonically shall be the act of the APC, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these Bylaws.

SECTION 8. Executive Sessions. All regular and special meetings of the APC shall be open to the public, except that, upon a vote of a majority of the members present, an executive session may be held to discuss matters including but not limited to:

1. Attorney-client matters;
2. Contract proposals or negotiations;
3. Sensitive personnel matters; and
4. Student discipline matters.

The motion requesting the executive session shall state the nature of the matter to be discussed. Only those persons invited by the APC or permitted by law may be present during the executive session. Unless invited or permitted by law, no teacher/ teacher's aide APC member shall be entitled to attend any executive session in which personnel issues specific to a particular employee are discussed, and no teacher/teacher's aide APC member shall be entitled to vote on any such issue in public session. The APC shall not make final policy decisions, nor shall any resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action or any action approving a contract or any other final action, be approved at any session which is closed to the general public. Matters discussed during the executive sessions shall remain confidential among those attending. The Secretary of the APC shall maintain topical minutes of all executive sessions.

SECTION 9: Hiring, selection or appointment of certified employees will be done by a 3 to 6 member hiring committee created by the Principal of BCS that will consist of BCS Principal, at least 1 non-teaching APC member and at least 1 BCS teacher. The BCS Principal will bring all certified hires for approval to the next regular APC meeting.

Hiring of non-certified employees will be done by a hiring committee chosen by BCS Principal.

Classified employees do not need APC approval.

Final grade placement of the teachers will be made by the principal.

SECTION 10. No Proxies. Members of the APC may not vote by proxy.

ARTICLE VI

Principal

SECTION 1. Selection/Removal. The BCS Principal shall be selected by a majority vote of the BCS APC. The hiring committee will be led by a non-teacher APC member and will consist of at least 3 APC members, 1 of whom is a teacher on the APC. The Vice Principal may be included with a majority vote of the full APC. Removal of the Principal will require a majority vote of the full APC when in its judgment the best interest of the School would be served hereby.

The BCS Vice-Principal shall be selected by the BCS APC. The hiring committee will be led by a non-teacher APC member and will consist of at least 3 APC members, 1 of whom is a teacher on the APC. The Principal will be included in the hiring of the Vice Principal when available. (Changes approved May 12, 2011)

SECTION 2. Duties and Responsibilities. The Principal shall have those day-to-day management and other duties as assigned and delegated by the APC, or as required by law. With the advice of the APC, the Principal shall supervise employees of the School: Hiring, selection or appointment of certified employees will be done by a 3 to 6 member hiring committee created by the Principal of BCS that will consist of BCS Principal, at least 1 non-teaching APC member and at least 1 BCS teacher. The BCS Principal will bring all certified hires for approval to the next regular APC meeting.

Hiring of non-certified employees will be done by a hiring committee chosen by BCS Principal. Classified employees do not need APC approval.

Final grade placement of the teachers will be made by the Principal. The Principal shall see that all policies, orders, and resolutions of the APC are carried into effect. Upon delegation by the APC, the Principal shall:

1. Maintain financial records of the School;
2. Manage the day-to-day operation of the School to ensure that the terms of the contract are met;
3. Meet regularly with parents and with teachers of the School to review, evaluate, and improve operations of the School;
4. Meet with the APC regularly and often to monitor progress in achieving the APC's policies and goals;
5. Submit appropriate information as required by the School District, Department of Education or Federal and State Agencies; and
6. Submit for approval or disapproval to the APC all significant policy and financial decisions that may have a substantial impact upon the School.

ARTICLE VII
Committees

SECTION 1. Membership of Committees. The APC, by resolution adopted by a majority of a quorum of the APC, may designate and appoint one or more committees to perform specific tasks assigned by the APC. Members will be selected by the APC from a list of volunteers who are parents of children attending the School, community members at large, the Principal, teachers, or teachers' assistants.

SECTION 2. Instruction and Responsibility. Each committee shall be clearly instructed as to the length of time each member is being asked to serve, the service the APC wishes each committee to render, the extent and limitations of responsibility, the resources the APC will provide, and the approximate dates on which the APC wishes to receive reports. Recommendations of special advisory committees shall be based on research and fact and shall be advisory to the APC.

SECTION 3. APC Powers and Prerogatives. All recommendations of a committee must be submitted to the APC for official action. The APC shall have the power to dissolve any committee and shall reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

SECTION 4. Meetings. Special committees to the APC shall comply with the requirements concerning public meetings that are specific in ARTICLE V, SECTION 4, Notice of Meetings, above.

ARTICLE VIII

Contracts, Checks, Deposits, Funds and Accounting

SECTION 1. Contracts. The APC will use MSBSD policy and resources to enter into contracts, execute and deliver instruments, and otherwise legally bind the School. The APC may delegate this authority, either in specific instances or in general, to the Principal or his/her designee, or to any officer of the APC.

SECTION 2. Bank Accounts, Checks, Withdrawals, Etc. All School monies not held by the District shall be deposited in a bank account(s) in the name of the School. Signatories on any such accounts shall be the Principal and the APC officers. Withdrawals or transfers from any and all District monitored school funds, bank accounts, budget transfers, and any expenditures over five hundred dollars shall be approved by both the APC Treasurer and the Principal, with APC approval obtained for all major expenses over \$1000.00 and budget changes. Any expenditures or changes in the budget less than five hundred dollars require only the approval of the Principal.

SECTION 3. Accounting. The Principal or his/her designee shall present to the APC at each regular monthly APC meeting a ledger itemizing all income, expenses and budget transfers since the prior APC regular monthly meeting, and copies of all accompanying

bank account statements. The APC may at any time cause a full or partial independent audit of School monies to occur.

ARTICLE IX -
Indemnification

SECTION 1. Indemnification. The School may, to the maximum extent permitted by law and in the absence of School or District insurance, defend, hold harmless and indemnify all current and former members of the APC, all persons who at the request of the APC have acted or not acted, and all persons currently or previously employed by the School, from and against any claims, civil or criminal, in which that person is made a party by reason, in whole or in part, of being or having been an APC member or officer, at the request of the APC have acted or not acted, or being or having been an employee of the School, when that person has acted within the course or scope of his or her duties to the School. Indemnification shall be provided by a majority vote of a quorum of the APC, on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE X
Amendments to Bylaws

SECTION 1. Amendments. These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the APC who are present at any regular meeting or any special meeting (where a quorum is present), provided that the proposed change in the Bylaws has been submitted in writing to all of the members of the APC and posted publicly in the School office at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at which the proposed change will come up for a vote. Proposed changes to the Bylaws may be submitted by any member of the APC, by parents with students currently enrolled in the School, or by the Principal, Teacher-In-Charge, or teachers, each then under contract with the School, for consideration by the APC.

Date Adopted: _____
Secretary Chair

Birchtree Parents Guild

Bylaws

Adopted by the Birchtree Parents Guild

On

March 2nd, 2009 Palmer, Alaska

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE

ARTICLE I Name, Office, Fiscal Year, and Governance

Section 1	Name
Section 2	Office
Section 3	Fiscal Year
Section 4	Governance
ARTICLE II	Purpose and General Responsibilities
Section 1	Purpose
Section 2	General Responsibilities
ARTICLE III	Membership
Section 1	Members
Section 2	Associated Individuals
ARTICLE IV	Board of Directors
Section 1	General Powers and Duties
Section 2	Members
Section 3	Non-Voting Director
Section 4	Terms
Section 5	Term Limitations
Section 6	Vacancies
Section 7	Compensation
Section 8	Resignation
Section 9	Removal
Section 10	Conflict of Interest
ARTICLE V	Election of Directors
Section 1	Calls for Election and Nominations
Section 2	Notification
Section 3	Eligibility to Vote
Section 4	Casting of Ballots
ARTICLE VI	Officers
Section 1	Officers
Section 2	Election and Terms of Office
Section 3	Removal
Section 4	Vacancies
Section 5	Chair
Section 6	Vice Chair
Section 7	Secretary
Section 8	Treasurer
Section 9	Provisional Board of Directors
ARTICLE VII	Meetings
Section 1	Annual and Regular Meetings
Section 2	Special Meetings
Section 3	Place of Meetings

Section 4	Notice of Meetings
Section 5	Informal Action by Members
Section 6	Quorum
Section 7	Manner of Acting
Section 8	Executive Sessions
Section 9	No Proxies

ARTICLE VIII Committees

Section 1	Membership
Section 2	Instructions and Responsibilities
Section 3	Powers and Prerogatives
Section 4	Meetings

ARTICLE IX Contracts, Checks, Deposits, Funds and Accounting

Section 1	Contracts
Section 2	Bank Accounts and Financial Transactions
Section 3	Accounting

ARTICLE X Indemnification

ARTICLE XI Limitation of Director Liability

ARTICLE XII Amendments

Certification

PREAMBLE

The Birchtree Parents Guild is a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) affiliated with the Birchtree Charter School. Birchtree Academic Policy Committee (APC) will be the School's governing body; it makes all decisions about the School's staffing, budget and programs. The APC holds the School to the vision stated in its Charter.

The Guild is a parents' group; its mission is to support the Birchtree Charter School and its teachers for the betterment of the children attending the School. The Guild comes together to solve problems, promote communications within the Birchtree community as a whole, and discuss issues and help decide where outside financial contributions are best spent. "Membership" in the Guild is open to all parents and teachers interested in Birchtree Charter School, as well as other such persons interested and accepted by the Guild's Board of Directors.

The Guild is a non-profit organization registered within the State of Alaska and organized under Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Government Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986. The following Bylaws apply to the Guild only; other instruments govern the actions of the Birchtree Charter School and its Academic Policy Committee.

ARTICLE I

Name, Office, Fiscal Year and Governance

SECTION 1. Name. The name of the organization shall be “Birchtree Parents Guild,” hereinafter be referred to as “the Guild” or “BPG”.

SECTION 2. Office. The principal office shall be at the facility of Birchtree Charter School.

SECTION 3. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Guild shall coincide with that of the Birchtree Charter School, which in turn coincides with the fiscal year of the Mat-Su Borough School District (July 1 through June 30).

SECTION 4. Governance. The Birchtree Charter School shall have a Parents Guild, which shall be the Parent Teacher Organization. The Guild shall be governed by the Board of Directors hereinafter described-.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and General Responsibilities

SECTION 1. Purpose. The Guild is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to engaging in charitable and educational activities within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding provisions of any future United States internal revenue law, including but not limited to, supporting the Birchtree Charter School and its teachers for the betterment of the children attending the school, and for any other purpose for which a nonprofit corporation may be organized under the laws of the State of Alaska.

SECTION 2. General Responsibilities. The Guild’s general responsibilities shall include:

- A. Supporting the Birchtree APC in the fulfillment of the mission of Birchtree Charter School as stated in the Birchtree Charter.
- B. Raising funds for the Birchtree Charter School, as provided for in the IRS Code Section 501 (c)(3).
- C. Dispersing funds in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations for purposes consistent with the Guild’s charitable mission.

D. Reviewing contracts for products and services consistent with its mission.

ARTICLE III
Membership

SECTION 1. Members. The Guild Corporation shall have no members.

SECTION 2. Associated Individuals. Association with the Birchtree Parents Guild is open to all parents and teachers interested in Birchtree Charter School, as well as other such persons interested and accepted by the Guild's Board of Directors. Individuals associated with the Guild may be called "members," but common use of this term does not imply legal membership in the corporation itself. No individuals associated with the Guild shall act on his/her own in the name of the Guild unless so authorized by these Bylaws or by resolution of the Guild.

ARTICLE IV
Board of Directors

SECTION 1. General Powers and Duties. Management of the affairs of the Birchtree Parents Guild shall be vested in its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall possess and may exercise any and all powers granted to the Guild under the Alaska Nonprofit Corporation Act and its Articles of Incorporations, subject to the limitations set forth in the Articles and these Bylaws.

SECTION 2. Members and Number of Directors. The Birchtree Parents Guild shall elect from its associated members a Board of Directors to act as its governing body. The number of BPG Guild board members constituting the entire board shall be between five (5) to eleven (11) voting members as follows:

The Directors may be parents or teachers who are interested in helping with the vision of Birchtree Charter School. Once the school is established, One (1) of the Directors shall be a teacher currently under contract to the Birchtree Charter School; one (1) additional Director may be a teacher or teacher's aide currently under contract to the School; and one (1) Director shall be a board member of the Academic Policy Committee ("APC") Executive Committee as elected by the APC (This person shall be designated the APC's "PTO Liaison"). Teachers and teachers' aides who are currently under contract to the School, and who also are parents of one or more children enrolled in the School, shall be eligible only for the two teacher/teacher's aide BPG Board positions.

At the discretion of the Board, one position may be reserved for a corporate sponsor of the School.

No voting Director shall be a paid staff member of the School, nor shall a voting Director be any other person who receives monetary compensation from the School (see also Section 10 below).

SECTION 3. Non-voting Director. The Chosen Principal or Acting Principal, once under contract to the Birchtree Charter School, shall be a perpetual “ex officio” member of the Board, but shall have no vote.

SECTION 4. Terms. All current directors shall be in office until the start of school year 20102011. Once the school is in place, the term of all elected Directors of the Board shall be two (2) years. It is the goal of these Bylaws that at any regular election (see Article III) one (1) of the BPG teacher positions and four (4) of the BPG parent positions shall be open for re-election, and that the remaining one (1) teacher and four (4) parent positions shall come up for re-election at the following year's regular election. If at any time this balance is not maintained, the BPG Board may extend, but not shorten, the term of any Director(s) until this balance is achieved. A majority vote of the full BPG Board shall be required to extend any term. The Board may provide by resolution for staggered terms for its directors.

SECTION 5. Term Limitations. There shall be no limitation on the number of consecutive or non-consecutive terms that any Director may serve.

SECTION 6. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring on the BPG Board shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining Directors. The replacement Director shall be elected for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor.

SECTION 7. Compensation. Directors shall receive no salary or other financial compensation for their services.

SECTION 8. Resignation. Any Director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair or Secretary of the Board. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein and, unless otherwise stated, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

SECTION 9. Removal. Directors are expected to attend, at a minimum, all regular BPG Board meetings. Although absences at times cannot be avoided, the Board may remove any Director who fails to attend three (3) such meetings during his/her term. Removal shall require a majority vote of the Board, including the Director who is subject to removal.

SECTION 10. Conflict of Interest. Service on the BPG Board is a trust created in the interest of the Common Good and for the benefit of the Birchtree Charter School. It is the intent of these

Bylaws to maintain the Birchtree community’s confidence by preventing the use of membership on the Guild’s Board of Directors for private gain or any other improper purpose.

ARTICLE V
Election of Directors

SECTION 1. Calls for Election and Nominations. When positions on the Birchtree Parents Guild Board of Directors become vacant, the Chair or Vice Chair may call for elections of new Directors. Any Director may submit nominations to the Board for any vacancy that is to be filled, and elections may occur at any regular meeting of the Board.

SECTION 2. Notification. At least ten days prior to the meeting during which an election for the Board of Directors will be held and as part of the general meeting notice, the Secretary of the Board shall give notice that an election will take place.

SECTION 3. Eligibility to Vote. Once the school is established, the following are the only people eligible to vote in the elections for the Board of Directors, not to exceed one vote per person:
Parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the School on the day of the election; and the Principal, teachers, and teachers’ aides and staff of the Birchtree charter School employed by the Matanuska-Susitna School District, each of whom must have a contract with the School effective on the date of the election.

SECTION 4. Casting of Ballots. Voting may occur in two ways: 1) The Chair or Vice Chair may call for a voice vote; or 2) The Chair or Vice Chair may call for a secret ballot.

Newly elected directors will assume their duties immediately. The results of elections shall be noted in the minutes of each meeting by the Board Secretary.

ARTICLE VI
Officers

SECTION 1. Officers. The officers of the Birchtree Parents Guild shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, each of whom must simultaneously be a member of the Board. The BPG Board may elect or appoint such other officers, including one or more assistant secretaries, as it shall deem desirable. Such officers shall have the authority and perform the duties prescribed, from time to time, by the members and Board of the Guild.

SECTION 2. Election and Terms of Office. The term of all officers shall be one (2) years. New officers shall be elected annually by a majority of the persons eligible to vote under Article V following the annual meeting of the Guild. The goal of the term is to provide for staggering of terms. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, elections shall be held as soon thereafter as possible.

SECTION 3. Removal. Any officer may be removed from office, but not from the Board, by a majority vote of the full BPG Board whenever in its judgment the best interests of the School would be served thereby.

SECTION 4. Vacancies. A vacancy in any office may be filled by a majority vote of the full BPG Board for the unexpired portion of the term.

SECTION 5. Chair. The Chair shall be a parent member of the BPG, and shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the Guild, including Board meetings. The Chair shall have such authority and perform such duties as shall be directed by the Board.

SECTION 6. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall be a parent member of the BPG. In the absence of the Chair, or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Vice Chair or other BPG Board member designated by the Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to, all the restrictions upon the Chair. Any Vice Chair shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the Board.

SECTION 7. Secretary. The Secretary shall cause the minutes of Guild meetings to be kept in computer files and/or in one or more books provided for that purpose. The Secretary shall also see that all notices and agendas are duly given and posted in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law, keep an updated list of the mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers of each Director and “member” of the Guild, as well as a current list of Birchtree volunteers. In general the Secretary shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the Board.

SECTION 8. Treasurer. Each October, the Treasurer shall present to the BPG Board the annual budget for the forthcoming year that has been prepared by the School, and shall ensure that it justly supports the mission and goals of the Birchtree Charter School. The Treasurer will also present an update on the budget at each Board meeting, and in all ways shall be accountable to the BPG Board. The Treasurer shall cause to be completed the audits specified in ARTICLE IX, SECTION 3 of these Bylaws. The Treasurer will serve as the financial liaison for all fund raising entities and will serve as the coordinator of all School funds.

SECTION 9. Provisional Board of Directors. As of the date of adoption of these Bylaws, a provisional Board of Directors consists of the following Officers and Directors for the terms indicated:

Nancy Black
Laura Sampson
Tiffany Kent
Anna Folsom
Amy Sharrer
Jennifer Budde
Heather Lee, Chair

An official election shall be held after the adoption of the Bylaws to confirm the leadership of the Guild.

ARTICLE VII **Meetings**

SECTION 1. Annual and Regular Meetings. The Birchtree Parents Guild hereby formally adopts the Open Meetings Act, A.S. 44.62.310 *et seq.* (“The Act”). All meetings shall be conducted and all notices and agendas posted in accordance with the Act. If any portion of these Bylaws are more specific than the Act, than that portion of these Bylaws shall control over the Act, unless prohibited by law.

The annual meeting of the BPG Board shall be held during March in each year at a convenient and agreed time, for the purpose of electing members of the Board and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. If the annual meeting or election of membership to the BPG Board shall not be held on the day designated herein for any annual meeting and election, the Board shall cause the annual meeting and election to be held at a special meeting as soon thereafter as possible. The BPG Board shall also hold regular meetings, typically monthly but at least four (4) times a year. Parents, teachers, and staff members of the Birchtree Charter School (once the school is established) are hereby invited to such meetings.

SECTION 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the BPG Board may be called by the Chair, Principal, or any three members of the Board. The Secretary shall notify Directors and BPG “members” as with other meetings.

SECTION 3. Place of Meetings. The BPG Board may designate any place within the Mat-Su Valley as the place of meeting for any annual meeting, regular meeting, or special

meeting. If no designation is made, the place of meeting shall be at the Birchtree Charter School (once the school is established).

SECTION 4. Notice of Meetings. The BPG Secretary shall cause notice of annual, regular, or special meetings to be delivered, either personally, by mail, by facsimile, by posting at the school, or by e-mail, to each member of the BPG Board not less than one (1) day before the date set for such meeting. Notification shall state the place, day, and hour of any meeting. In addition, at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to each meeting, notice of and the agenda for each meeting shall be posted on the Birchtree Charter School website, www.birchtreecharterschool.org. Issues not posted on the agenda may nonetheless be raised, discussed, and voted upon at any meeting.

SECTION 5. Informal Action by Members. Any action that otherwise may be taken at any meeting of the BPG Board may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is signed and unanimously agreed upon in writing or e-mail by all of the members of the Guild entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof.

SECTION 6. Quorum. Greater than fifty percent (50%+1) of the voting members of the BPG Board constitutes a quorum. Telephonic participation is permitted.

SECTION 7. Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the members of the BPG Board at a meeting at which a quorum is present either in person or telephonically shall be the act of the Guild, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these Bylaws.

SECTION 8. Executive Sessions. All regular and special meetings of the BPG Board shall be open to the public, except that, upon a vote of a majority of the members present, an executive session may be held to discuss matters including:

1. Attorney-client matters;
2. Contract proposals or negotiations; and
3. Other matters as determined by the Chair of the BPG Board.

The motion requesting the executive session shall state the nature of the matter to be discussed. Only those persons invited by the BPG Board or permitted by law may be present during an executive session. The BPG Board shall not make final policy decisions, nor shall any resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action or any action approving a contract or any other final action, be approved at any session which is closed to the general public. Matters discussed during the executive sessions shall remain confidential among those attending. The Secretary shall maintain topical minutes of all executive sessions.

SECTION 9. No Proxies. Members of the BPG Board may not vote by proxy. Voting of the Board may be conducted by email or by telephone when necessary at the discretion of the Chair.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

SECTION 1. Membership. The BPG Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of a quorum, may designate and appoint one or more committees to perform specific tasks. Committee members may include members of the BPG Board as well as others selected by the Board from a list of volunteers.

SECTION 2. Instructions and Responsibilities. Each committee shall be clearly instructed as to the length of time each member is being asked to serve, the service the BPG Board wishes each committee to render, the extent and limitations of responsibility, the resources the Board will provide, and the approximate dates on which the BPG Board wishes to receive reports. Recommendations of special advisory committees shall be based on research and fact and shall be advisory to the Guild.

SECTION 3. Powers and Prerogatives. All recommendations of a committee must be submitted to the BPG Board for official action. The BPG Board shall have the power to dissolve any committee and shall reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

SECTION 4. Meetings. BPG Committees shall comply with the requirements concerning public meetings that are specific in ARTICLE VII, SECTION 4 above.

ARTICLE IX

Contracts, Checks, Deposits, Funds and Accounting

SECTION 1. Contracts. The BPG Board shall have the authority to enter into contracts, execute and deliver instruments, and otherwise legally bind the Guild. The Board may delegate this authority, either in specific instances or in general, to the Birchtree Charter School Principal or his/her designee, or to any officer of the BPG Board.

SECTION 2. Bank Accounts and Financial Transactions. All Guild monies not held by the Matanuska Susitna Borough School District shall be deposited in a bank account(s) in the name of the Birchtree Parents Guild. Signatories on any such accounts shall be the Birchtree Charter School Principal and the Officers of the Guild. Withdrawals or transfers from any Guild funds, bank accounts, budget transfers, and any expenditures more than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) shall be approved by both the BPG Treasurer and Chair with BPG Board approval obtained for all major expenses and budget changes. Any expenditures or changes in the budget less than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) shall require only the approval of the Chair.

SECTION 3. Accounting. The Treasurer or his/her designee shall present to the BPG Board at each regular meeting a ledger itemizing all income, expenses and budget transfers since the prior regular meeting of the Guild, and copies of all accompanying bank account statements. The BPG Board may at any time cause a full or partial independent audit of guild monies to occur.

ARTICLE X **Indemnification**

To the full extent permitted by the Alaska Nonprofit Corporation Act, as it now exists or is subsequently amended, the Birchtree Parents Guild may, to the maximum extent permitted by law and in the absence of School or Matanuska Susitna Borough School District insurance, defend, hold harmless and indemnify all current and former members of the BPG Board, all persons who at the request of the Board have acted or not acted, and all persons currently or previously employed by the School, from and against any claims, civil or criminal, in which that person is made a party by reason, in whole or in part, of being or having been an BPG Director or “member,” at the request of the BPG Board have acted or not acted, or being or having been an employee of the School, when that person has acted within the course or scope of his or her duties to the School. Indemnification shall be provided by a majority vote of a quorum of the BPG, on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE XI **Limitation of Director Liability**

To the full extent permitted by the Alaska Nonprofit Corporations Act, as it now exists or is subsequently amended, regarding the limitation or elimination of the liability of directors and officers, a Director or Officer of the Birchtree Parents Guild shall not be liable to the Guild for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director or officer. Any amendment or repeal of this section shall not adversely affect any right or protection of a Director or Officer for or with respect to any acts or omissions of such Director or Officer occurring prior to such amendment or repeal.

ARTICLE XII **Amendments to Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a two thirds vote of the BPG Board who are present at any regular meeting or any special meeting (where a quorum is present), provided that the proposed change in the Bylaws has been submitted in writing to all of the members of the BPG Board and posted publicly in the School office at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at which the proposed change will come up for a vote. Proposed changes to the Bylaws may be submitted by any member of the BPG Board, by parents with students once enrolled in the School, or by the

Principal, Teacher-In-Charge, or teachers, once under contract with the Birchtree Charter School, for consideration by the BPG Board.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Secretary of the Birchtree Parents Guild hereby certifies that the above Bylaws

were duly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Guild on the _____ day of _____ 20__.

Secretary

Chair

3. Education Programs

A. Academic Goals

Birchtree Charter School’s academic goals are to demonstrate that the integrated approach of educating the whole child using the arts will enable our students to perform at a high level academically. Kindergarten students are not taught formal academic instruction because of the Waldorf philosophy. Additionally, although academics are introduced in first grade, the nature of our program focuses on more formal academics/skills block time (use of text books and resource materials) begin in third grade.

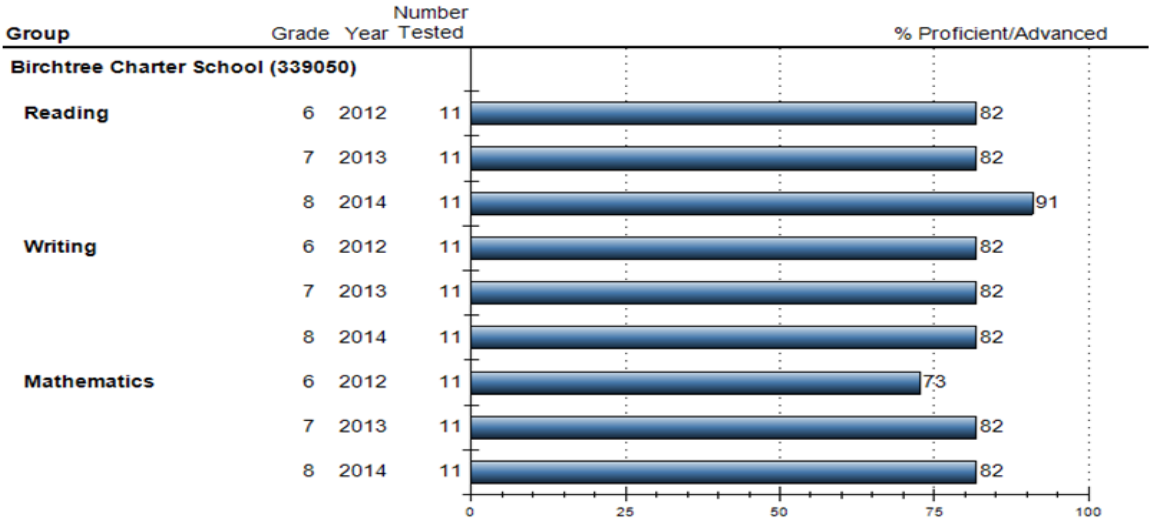
At Birchtree Charter School students in grades 3, 4, and 5 perform at a lower level on standardized tests than other students in the district. However, students in grades 6, 7, and 8 perform higher on standardized tests than other students in the district. The data below demonstrates this trend:

	2011			2012		
<i>SBA - Reading</i>	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Elementary	87	86	78	88	87	79
Middle School	93	86	77	91	89	80
<i>SBA - Writing</i>						
Elementary	87	82	75	86	83	76
Middle School	85	79	72	89	82	73
<i>SBA - Math</i>						
Elementary	75	80	73	83	79	73
Middle School	76	77	69	79	76	68

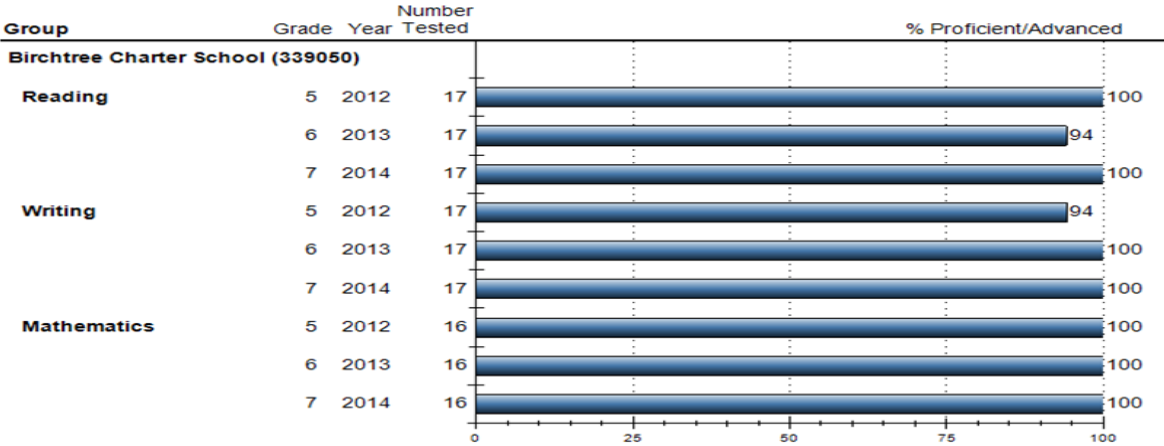
	2013			2014		
<i>SBA - Reading</i>	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Elementary	76	86	78	84	87	80
Middle School	92	88	78	91	88	81
<i>SBA - Writing</i>						
Elementary	74	81	74	73	83	77
Middle School	90	81	73	87	80	73
<i>SBA - Math</i>						
Elementary	77	80	74	66	80	73
Middle School	85	75	69	89	73	67

Additionally, data shows that students who remain at Birchtree benefit in middle school with higher academic scores on standardized tests. The charts below demonstrate how four cohort groups performed at Birchtree over a three year period.

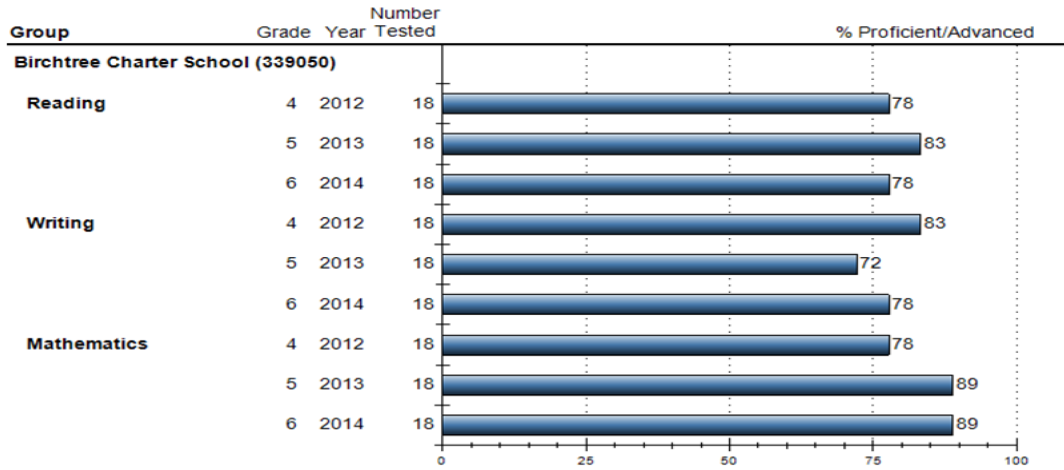
Cohort 1



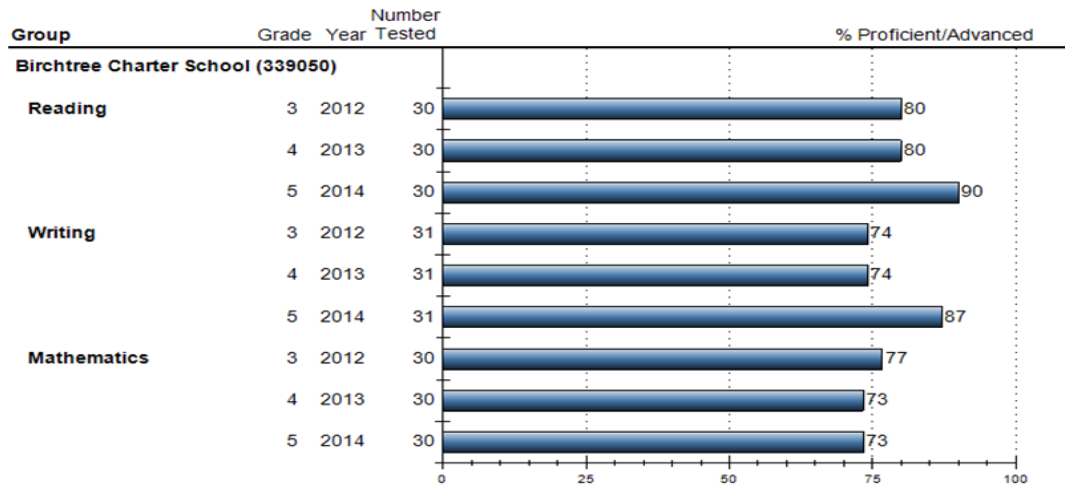
Cohort 2



Cohort 3



Cohort 4



B. Progress on statewide assessment

Again, students at Birchtree Charter School do make progress on statewide assessments over time. The following data shows SBA scores (2011-2014) for students in grades 3 – 8 for reading, writing, and math. Students in middle school generally perform higher on standardized tests than students in elementary school due to the nature of the school's program.

BCS has met AYP in 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. In the 2012-2013 and in 2013-14 school years, the ASPI rating for BCS was a 4.

SBA Data for 2011-12 and 2012-13 School Years

<i>SBA -Reading Proficiency</i>	2011			2012		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	79.2	88.1	81.5	85.4	86.7	80.1
Grade 4	100	83.5	74.3	78.3	85.5	77.1
Grade 5	82.6	88	78.5	100	89.3	80.4
Grade 6	100	85.6	75.1	87	87.1	77.7
Grade 7	85.7	86.7	78	91.3	89.1	79.4
Grade 8				94.4	91.1	82.8

<i>SBA -Writing Proficiency</i>	2011			2012		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	83.3	82	74.4	80.5	81.2	75.1
Grade 4	95.7	81.6	76.1	87	81.9	76.6
Grade 5	82.6	82.8	75.1	91.7	84.9	75.5
Grade 6	91.7	77.5	70.4	82.6	79.5	70.9
Grade 7	78.6	81	72.7	91.3	83.7	74.4
Grade 8				94.4	84.1	75

<i>SBA -Math Proficiency</i>	2011			2012		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	79.2	81.8	74.6	78	81.1	74.5
Grade 4	91.7	80.4	75.2	78.3	78.2	73.9
Grade 5	60.9	77.9	70.1	91.7	76.5	70.2
Grade 6	66.7	77.7	69.7	69.6	74.9	69.5
Grade 7	85.7	76.3	68.8	73.9	75.9	66.2
Grade 8				94.4	77	68.9

SBA Data for 2012-13 and 2013-14 School Years

SBA -Reading Proficiency	2013			2014		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	65.9	88.4	81.1	80.9	87	81.5
Grade 4	79.1	83.9	75.4	86.4	86.9	78.3
Grade 5	83.3	84.6	77.3	83.3	87.3	81.1
Grade 6	96.2	84.2	75.5	78.3	85.7	78.1
Grade 7	85	87.7	77.8	100	88.6	81.3
Grade 8	95.7	90.8	81.6	94.4	90	83.5

SBA -Writing Proficiency	2013			2014		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	70.7	82.1	74.6	68.1	82.2	76.7
Grade 4	75	81.2	75.5	72.7	84.1	76.9
Grade 5	75	79.2	72.8	78.6	82.2	76.8
Grade 6	88.5	76.5	70.1	78.3	74.7	70.4
Grade 7	85	83	73.6	100	81.4	72.9
Grade 8	95.7	84.3	74.4	83.3	83.7	75.7

SBA -Math Proficiency	2013			2014		
	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	70.7	83.7	75.9	57.4	81.1	75.2
Grade 4	72.7	80.3	74.8	75	82.1	74.2
Grade 5	87.5	75.1	70.1	66.7	76.2	70.5
Grade 6	88	73.5	70.1	82.6	71.6	67.3
Grade 7	88	77.7	69.2	100	72.9	65.9
Grade 8	78.3	75.2	66.4	83.3	75	68.3

Lastly, Birchtree has maintained a four rating on ASPI. The following data shows the ASPI rating for Birchtree for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years:

ASPI Rating: ****		ALASKA SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDEX (ASPI): 2012-2013					School Grade Span			
School District		Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District			School		Birchtree Charter School		KG - 8	
Participation Rate Grades 3-10	Number Enrolled	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Met Participation Rate		Points				
	179	178	99%	Yes		None, acts as a trigger to achievement denominator.				
K-8 Performance										
Academic Achievement	Reading		Writing		Math		Points	Weighting	ASPI Points	
	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient				
	145	82%	142	80%	138	78%	80.00	0.35	28.00	
School Progress (Subgroup must have 5+ students to be considered)	Growth All	Growth-AK Native	Growth-Econ Dis	Growth-w/Disabilities	Growth-LEP		99.81	0.4	39.92	
Attendance Rate	91.24%						80.00	0.25	20.00	
							Total K-8 Points	1.00	87.92	
9-12 Performance										
Academic Achievement	Reading		Writing		Math		Points	Weighting	ASPI Points	
	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient	Count Proficient	Pct Proficient				
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.00	
School Progress (Subgroup must have 5+ students to be considered)	Growth All	Growth -AK Native	Growth-Econ Dis	Growth-w/Disabilities	Growth-LEP		N/A	0	0.00	
Attendance Rate	N/A						N/A	0	0.00	
Graduation Rate	4 Year	5 Year					N/A	0	0.00	
	N/A	N/A					N/A	0	0.00	
College Career Readiness	N/A						N/A	0	0.00	
WorkKeys Participation	N/A						N/A	0	0.00	
							Total 9-12 Points	0.00	0.00	
							K-8 Enrollment Ratio:	1.00		
							9-12 Enrollment Ratio:	0.00		
							ASPI Score	87.92		

^ - Results are suppressed to protect individual confidentiality.

N/A - Results do not meet minimum reporting thresholds or no students of the reported grade level were served.

Printed 09/05/2013

PRELIMINARY

ASPI Rating: ****

ALASKA SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDEX (ASPI): 2013-2014

Printed 7/31/2014

School Grade Span

School District **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**

School **Birchtree Charter School**

KG: **8**

Participation Rate	Number Tested	Number Enrolled	Participation Rate	Met Participation Rate	Points
Grades 3-10	194	195	99.49%	Yes	None, acts as a trigger to achievement denominator.

K-8 Performance

Academic Achievement	Reading			Writing			Math			Points	Weighting	ASPI Points
	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient			
	166	194	85.57%	150	194	77.32%	142	194	73.20%	78.69	0.35	27.54
School Progress	Growth All		Growth-AK Nat	Growth-Econ Dis		Growth-w/Disabs		Growth-LEP		98.87	0.4	39.55
(Subgroup must have >5 students to be considered)	100.00		100.00	100.00		88.70		N/A				
Attendance Rate	94.08%									95.00	0.25	23.75
Total K-8 Points										1.00		90.84

9-12 Performance

Academic Achievement	Reading			Writing			Math			Points	Weighting	ASPI Points
	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient	Crit Proficient	Crit Tested *	Pct Proficient			
	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0	0.00
School Progress	Growth All		Growth -AK Nat	Growth-Econ Dis		Growth-w/Disabs		Growth-LEP		N/A	0	0.00
(Subgroup must have >5 students to be considered)	N/A		N/A	N/A		N/A		N/A				
Attendance Rate	N/A									N/A	0	0.00
Graduation Rate	4 Year	Cohorts - 4 Yr		5 Year	Cohorts - 5 Yr					N/A	0	0.00
	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A					N/A	0	0.00
College Career Readiness	N/A									N/A	0	0.00
WorkKeys Participation	N/A									N/A	0	0.00
Total 9-12 Points										0.00		0.00

^ - Results are suppressed to protect individual confidentiality.

* - All eligible students are counted when Participation Rate is not met.

N/A - Results do not meet minimum reporting thresholds or no students of the reported grade level were served.

Per 4 AAC 06.835(b), this designation becomes final unless a review is requested within 30 days from receipt.

K-8 Enrollment Count:	318	K-8 Enrollment Ratio:	1.00
9-12 Enrollment Count:	0	9-12 Enrollment Ratio:	0.00

ASPI Score	90.84
-------------------	--------------

C. Progress on other assessments

As was demonstrated on the ASPI rating, the school attendance rate improved from 91.24% in 2013 to 94.08% in 2014. The increase in attendance supports data obtained from the school connectedness surveys from 2012-2014. Since Waldorf philosophy supports the education of the whole child the goal at Birchtree is not only to increase students’ academic abilities, but also to increase students’ social and emotional learning.

Based on the School Climate and Connectedness Survey our students view BTC as a school that has high expectations, teaches social and emotional learning, and has teachers that care about their well-being.

The following data shows how Birchtree students compare to the MSBSD in the areas of high expectations, social and emotional learning, and caring adults.

High Expectations - student's perception about their own academic expectations as well as those of adults in their school and community.

School Year	2012	2013	2014
BTC	4.48	4.23	4.38
MSBSD	4.09	4.14	4.15

Social/Emotional Learning - the process through which students learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors.

School Year	2012	2013	2014
BTC	4.09	3.92	3.96
MSBSD	3.83	3.86	3.88

Caring Adults - reflect students' perceptions about how close they are to adults in the school.

School Year	2012	2013	2014
BTC	3.76	3.78	3.76
MSBSD	3.47	3.54	3.57

In summary, Birchtree Charter believes that social and emotional learning needs to be taught along with academics. Birchtree Charter School emphasizes the words, “Head, Heart, and Hands.” At Birchtree when academic and social-emotional learning are both taught, we believe that classroom learning is improved and students show a genuine interest in each other and attending school.

The following chart also shows other assessments that are used at Birchtree. Below is a draft assessment plan for the 2014-15 school year. Assessments vary from formal standardized tests to nontraditional, Waldorf assessments.

BCS Draft Assessment Plan:

Kindergarten:

Schedule	Assessment	Purpose	Participants	Administration	Administrator
Fall	Kindergarten Developmental Profile/ Roll-in	State Mandated	K	30 minutes/ student	Classroom teacher
Spring for current kindergarten students	First Grade Readiness	Assess development for first grade	K	30 minutes/ student	Kindergarten and 1 st grade teachers
Spring	Easy CBM	State Mandated early literacy progress	K	2 minutes/student	Interventionists
Daily through year	Teacher anecdotal observation	Measure progress	K	ongoing	Classroom teacher

First-Eighth Grade:

Schedule	Assessment	Purpose	Participants	Administration	Administrator
September and May	Easy CBM	Literacy/State Mandated	1 st -3 rd turn into state	5-10 minutes/student	Interventionists
September and May (January as needed for some)	*MAP (optional for BTC)	Measure growth in reading, writing, math	5 th -8 th grades	30-60 minutes/ student over 3-4 days	Classroom teacher
September	*CORE/Quick Phonics Screener (Optional BTC)	Diagnostic	2 nd -5 th graders who do not read fluently at grade level	5-15 minutes/ student	Interventionist
September	*Phonemic Awareness Screener (optional BTC)	Diagnostic	2 nd -5 th graders who score below avg on phonics screener	5-15 minutes/ student	Interventionist
January	Phonics and Phonemic Screener	Diagnostic	1 st grade for baseline	5-15 minutes/student	Interventionist

Ongoing	Easy CBM	Progress monitor	2 nd -5 th graders reading or comprehending more than 1 year below grade level and in an intervention	2 minutes/student every 1-2 weeks	Interventionist
Ongoing	Standards checklists (Rubrics developed to aligns with standards based report card)	Monitor skills mastered	1 st -8 th grades	Varies based on teacher	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Main lesson portfolios	Monitor skills mastered	1 st – 8 th grades	Time Varies	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Assemblies/performances	Monitor skills mastered	1 st - 8 th grades	Time Varies	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Teacher observation and notation	Monitor skills mastered	1 st -8 th grades	Time Varies	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Exhibitions	Monitor skills mastered	1 st – 8 th grades	Time Varies	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Oral recitations	Monitor skills mastered	1 st – 8 th grades	Time Varies	Classroom teacher
Ongoing	Tests and quizzes	Mastery of skills at end of blocks	3 rd -8 th grades	Time varies	Classroom teacher
April	2 nd grade assessment	Plan for support for 3 rd grade	2 nd grade	30 minutes/student	Assessment team
April	AMP	State Mandated	3 rd -8 th	TBA	Classroom teacher

D. Curriculum and Instruction

BCS uses its assessment data to drive decision-making in curriculum and instruction. Teachers meet in monthly grade level meetings with administration and the instructional coach to review assessment results. Assessments that are reviewed are both formal and informal assessments. These include standardized tests, main lesson book work, portfolios, teacher observations, and unit assessments. Based on the discussions and concerns of the teachers additional curriculum materials may be purchased

Additionally, BCS has hired an instructional coach to provide additional support to teachers and students not meeting assessment goals. BCS has also purchased reading and math curriculum to support remedial and mainstream reading and math instruction.

E. Performance-Based Assessment Criteria

The MSBSD sets criteria for ELA achievement and Math achievement. BCS is committed to meeting those standards. BCS has met AYP and continues to improve over time on standardized tests.

Grade level standards and expectations are aligned with Waldorf Curriculum and the Alaska State Standards. As an emerging K-8 charter school, however, BCS is still working on curriculum development. The merging and teaching of Waldorf Curriculum with the Alaska State Standards is still in its infancy. However, BTC does use performance based rubrics for main lesson book entries. Below is an example of a middle school rubric:

Main Lesson Book Entry Rubric			
Student: _____		Date: _____	
Block: _____	Entry Title: _____	Page # _____	
Is the entry...	Peer-Score	Self-Score	Teacher Score
Complete?			
• Title and page #			
• All required ideas/information?			
• All required art/graphics?			
Correct?			
• Correct information from lesson?			
• Correct spelling/grammar?			
Quality Work?			
• Neat?			
• Legible text in straight lines?			
• Consistent font size and in cursive (when required)?			
• Smooth, consistent shading?			
• Balanced use of space?			
• Border?			
• Artwork shows best effort?			
Does this entry deserve to <i>stay</i> in your main lesson book?		No Yes	No Yes
Is this an example of <i>your very best</i> work?		No Yes	No Yes
		Final Score =	

3=Excellent (all checks) 2=Good (all but 1-2 checks) 1=Average (all but 3 checks) NP=Minimal (missing 4+ checks: redo/finish)
 Created by Dana Phillips

Additionally, for writing the middle school teachers use the 6+1 traits of writing with the program rubrics. Below is an example of organizational structure for one of the rubrics:

Traits Rubric for Organization: Grades 3-12						
Key question: Does the organizational structure enhance the ideas and make them easier to understand?						
Not proficient			Proficient			
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Doesn't use identifiable organization; writing lacks a sense of direction or seems random	Contains mostly ineffective organization with only occasional sections or passages that direct the reader	Has uneven organization that affects the reader's ability to follow text	Has basic organization that moves the reader through the text logically without confusion	Reflects smooth and cohesive organization and varied techniques that build smoothly from one idea to the next to create a unified whole	Uses seamless organization that enhances and showcases central ideas; orders or structures information in a compelling way; clarifies relationships among ideas
A. Lead and conclusion	Has no lead or conclusion	Contains a lead or conclusion, which is unclear or ineffective	Includes a lead that doesn't adequately establish purpose and/or a conclusion that fails to provide closure, leaving the reader with questions	Contains a recognizable lead and conclusion but they may be formulaic or obvious	Features a lead that creates anticipation and a conclusion that ties up loose ends with a satisfying sense of closure	Has an inviting lead that draws reader in and creates a strong sense of anticipation; includes satisfying conclusion that conveys a powerful sense of closure and resolution
B. Transitions	Does not include transitions	Uses weak transitions sporadically that fail to connect ideas or minimize confusion	Uses transitions inappropriately, resulting in weak chunking of paragraphs or ideas	Includes transitions that connect ideas though they may be formulaic or predictable in places; has paragraphs with topic sentences and support	Features logical, varied transitions; uses sequence and transition words/phrases effectively; orders paragraphs to support development of ideas	Uses clear, thoughtful transitions, showing the reader how ideas relate and enhancing meaning and progress throughout the piece; includes paragraphs that ensure ideas build throughout the piece to create a unified whole
C. Sequencing	Has no evident sequencing of ideas	Has ineffective sequencing, making it difficult to see how the piece fits together as a whole	Includes sequencing that fails to showcase ideas or takes over so completely it is formulaic	Provides logical and helpful sequencing with ideas placed in an understandable order	Employs sequencing that moves beyond the obvious, building connections between ideas	Uses highly effective sequencing, making best choices for progression and enriching the reader's understanding



4. Program Achievement

A. Plan for Equal and Bias-free Access

BCS was established for students in grades K-8 who would benefit from a Waldorf inspired education. The school emphasizes the integration of the arts into all subject areas. BCS does not discriminate against students based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic group, marital or parental status, and physical and mental disability as per AS 14.18.010. Students with various learning styles and backgrounds and abilities benefit through a Waldorf approach to education.

The school's annual lottery is used to select new students in grades K-8 in a random drawing which does not allow a preference or bias. Student recruitment will represent the diverse population of Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Parent outreach is a goal of the Parent Guild. Additionally, BCS will distribute information about the school via brochures in day care centers, local churches, military bases, optional school fairs and local Head Start facilities. We will also use the newspaper to share information about the school.

Our outreach will include networking with school and community agencies.

B. Plan for Lower Performing Students

Through assessments and observations, teachers determine which students require reinforcement in order to achieve academic success. Teachers utilize creative scheduling, differentiated instruction, modified groupings, and teaching assistants. Any students who either consistently struggle to meet grade level expectations, have particular behavior issues, or need further challenge, may be referred to the school's intervention team. The intervention team may recommend classroom accommodations or interventions for specific learning goals and/or targeted assistance by qualified staff members.

When designing and evaluating intervention plans, BCS follows a three tiered plan as shown on the following page:

Birchtree Tiered Plan of Services: Elementary Academic Guidelines

Updated 8.19.14

Tier I	Goal: Students at grade level will maintain or exceed grade level.	Universal Access
<p>Instructor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waldorf aligned standards implemented with fidelity ▪ LindaMood Bell Seeing Stars implemented with fidelity ▪ 1st-8th grade-165 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instruction/strategies differentiated to meet individual needs 	
<p>Grouping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole group ▪ Flexible small groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing assessment driven ▪ Based on daily main lesson work 	
<p>Progress monitoring (PM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Checklists ▪ Rubrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher observation ▪ Universal screener 	
<p>Programs/Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waldorf aligned standards and LindaMood Bell (Gr. 1st-5th) • Pre-teach and reteach as needed • Tutoring (teacher, aide, or volunteer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual modifications • Small group differentiation • Criteria for a Healthy Waldorf Classroom Reflection (Fidelity Check) • Parent communication 	
Tier II	Goal: Students somewhat below grade level should be at grade level within one year.	
<p>Instructional Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In addition to Tier I instruction ▪ Materials targeted to student need ▪ Duration of 20 to 30 minutes ▪ Ongoing assessment driven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differentiated instruction strategies ▪ Instruction connected to classroom learning ▪ Intense pre-teach ▪ Formats: push in, skills block 	
<p>Grouping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs-based homogeneous groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students regularly regrouped as needs change 	
<p>Progress monitoring (PM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use EasyCBM PM module ▪ Use PM probe closest to targeted instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM every two weeks ▪ PM monthly with grade appropriate probe 	
<p>Programs/Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring with teaching partner and documenting strategies implemented • Criteria for Healthy Waldorf Classroom reflection with Pedagogical Dean • CARE Team consultation • Implement a School Intervention Strategies Plan • Implement a Home Intervention Strategy Plan with parents • Implement a Support plan if determined necessary by the Care Team • Continue parent communication with documentation 		
Tier III		
<p>Instructional Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RTI Referral ▪ In addition to Tier I and II instruction ▪ Duration of 45-60 minutes ▪ Instruction and materials based on student need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instruction connected to classroom learning ▪ Format: pull out ▪ Parent communication 	
<p>Grouping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs-based homogeneous groups of 3-6 students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students regrouped or added only at semesters 	
<p>Progress monitoring (PM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use EasyCBM PM module ▪ Use PM probe closest to targeted instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM every week ▪ PM monthly with grade appropriate probe 	
<p>Programs/Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corrective Reading ▪ Read Naturally ▪ Rewards ▪ Movement and Take Time Exercises ▪ Saxon Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LindaMood Bell ▪ Read Naturally GATE ▪ Sunday 1 and 2 ▪ Step Up To Writing 	

The tiered plan of service is explained in more detail on the following pages:

Birchtree Charter School RTI Process



Tier I

What it looks like: General Education (all students):

- Waldorf curriculum taught with integrity
- Ongoing assessments and screeners monitor student progress (see Birchtree Assessment Plan)
 - General notification letter sent home each Fall
- Criteria for a healthy Waldorf classroom practiced
 - completed twice a year with Pedagogical Dean

If there is a Concern (at least one of the following is present):

- Student is performing below grade level on ongoing assessments and/or class/school behavior expectations
 - Easy CBM screener 2nd-5th grade Fall and Spring
 - MAP test 5th-8th grade Fall and Spring
- School/teacher or parent concern

What the Classroom Teacher is responsible for:

1. Implement classroom Tier I strategies (see Birchtree Tiered Plans of Services)
 - Waldorf curriculum
 - Pre-teaching and re-teaching
 - Small group differentiation
 - Individual modifications
 - Tutoring
2. Criteria for a Healthy Waldorf Classroom teacher reflection
3. Communicate with parents and begin parent contact logs
4. Monitor progress (teacher observations, checklists, rubrics, work samples)

Is student responding to classroom instruction and Tier I strategies?

Yes? Student continues to participate in general education in Waldorf classroom.

No? Teacher accesses Tier II support.

Tier II

What it looks like: Tier II Circle of Support for the Classroom Teacher and student:

1. Educational Support Team Consultation
 - Mentoring with teaching partner
 - Criteria for Healthy Waldorf Classroom reflection with Pedagogical Dean
 - CARE Team consultation (Thursdays 11:45-1:30)
 - School Intervention Strategies Plan
 - Home Intervention Strategies Plan
 - Support plan (support in classroom set up with Educational Support Coordinator)
2. Review of School Core Values and Culture
 - Virtues Project
 - Review classroom and school-wide expectations
 - Set up Meaningful work
3. Fidelity to Waldorf Pedagogy check
 - Observation from Pedagogical Dean
4. Professional Development
 - Seek PD in area of need
5. Communication with Family
 - Home Intervention Strategy Plan (meet with parents and Care Team)
6. Leadership consultation
 - Seek help from Pedagogical Dean and/or Asst. Principal

Support and Intervention Strategies Plans

School and Home Intervention Strategies Plans

- Classroom teachers choose *at least 3* strategies to implement
- Parents choose *at least 1* strategy to implement
- Log implementation in Log Book
- Parents accountable to Classroom Teacher (every 3 week)
- Classroom Teachers accountable to Educational Support Coordinator (every 3 weeks)

Support Plans ("push in" academic support)

- Set up with Care Team and Educational Support Coordinator
- Document progress in Easy CBM PM (academic) monthly or other format (behavior)
- Develop plan then revise or continue every six weeks

What the Classroom Teacher is responsible for:

1. Mentoring with teaching partner and documenting strategies implemented
2. Criteria for Healthy Waldorf Classroom reflection with Pedagogical Dean
3. CARE Team consultation (Thursdays 11:45-1:30)

4. Implement a School Intervention Strategies Plan
5. Implement a Home Intervention Strategy Plan with parents
6. Implement a Support plan if determined necessary by the Care Team
7. Continue parent communication with documentation
8. Bi-weekly progress monitor with EasyCBM (academic) and/or monitoring plan (behavior)
9. Repeat intervention plan cycle as necessary (at least two 6 week cycles)

Is student responding to Tier II support strategies?

Yes? Student continues to participate in general education with Tier II support in Waldorf classroom.

No? Teacher requests Tier III RTI Meeting through an RTI referral process.

Tier III

What it looks like: RTI process initiated

- RTI Referral Packet
- RTI/Care team meeting
- Document in iPlan RTI
- Outside the classroom intervention plan initiated (see Birchtree Tiered Plans of Services)

Intervention or Behavior Plan

- Develop a plan *with goals*
- Complete minimum of 1 cycle (cycle=6 data points...2 weeks for behavior and 6 weeks for academic)
- Repeat a minimum of 1- 2 cycles (3 data points)
- Weekly progress monitor with EasyCBM (academic) and/or monitoring plan (behavior)

What the Classroom Teacher is responsible for:

- Completing RTI referral packet
- Attending RTI/Care team Meeting
- Ensuring regular attendance in out of classroom interventions

What the RTI/Care Team is responsible for:

- Documenting RTI/Care Team Meeting
- Sending parent letter to inform of intervention
- Implementing and documenting intervention with fidelity (see Tiered Plan)
- Weekly Progress Monitor with EasyCBM and/or monitoring plan (behavior)

Is student responding to Tier III intervention by showing progress/meeting goal?

Yes? Student continues to participate in general education with Tier II support and Tier III intervention.

No? Referral to Special Education Services initiated

Eligible
Special Education Services

or

Not Eligible
Repeat/modify Tier III intervention cycle

Additionally, when a student is performing poorly in academics and/or behavior, a faculty member will initiate a child study that will be discussed as part of the regular weekly faculty meeting. The impressions of several teachers who know the child will be sought. During Child Study, suggestions and possible interventions will be shared with the teacher by other staff members. Parents will be informed of the team's recommendations and kept apprised of intervention implementation. Parent advice and insight regarding the issue will also be sought.

C. Reporting Student Progress to Parents

BCS teachers report progress to parents in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Parent-teacher conferences occur at the end of the first quarter and the third quarter. This includes a review of main lesson books and short summaries from language, movement, orchestra and handwork instructors. The children may also present their work at child-led, child-parent-teacher conferences.

Parents also receive standards based report cards at the end of the first semester and second semester. Additionally, at the end of the year a comprehensive assessment is prepared and provided to parents for each child. The assessment includes an overview of the course work for the year, and a discussion of the child's achievement, performance, and growth in each of the various curriculum blocks, the specialty subjects (languages, handwork, recorder, movement), as well as social skills and work habits. Parents may request a conference with the teacher if needed.

D. Adequate Yearly Progress Participation Rates

Participation rate data was collected from the Department of Education for Adequate Yearly Progress. The 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2014-15 school years were analyzed as the data was the most recent provided by the Department of Education at the time that this charter application was developed. The following information was compiled:

School Year	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Birchtree Charter School	100%	98.08%	99%	100%
Matanuska-Susitna Borough SD	99.04%	99.13%	99.12%	99.0%

E. & F. Comparison of School, District, and State Assessment Outcomes

The first class to fully complete the BCS program will be the 3rd grade class of 2014. Grades 4-8 are composed of students who entered BCS from a variety of programs. It will not be until the year 2019 that we will be able to fully demonstrate the growth of our students through our program from start to finish.

It is not unusual to see lower standardized test scores in grades 3 and 4 as compared to district and state scores because of the philosophy of the Waldorf program.

A comparison of our school's assessment outcomes with district and state outcomes is as follows:

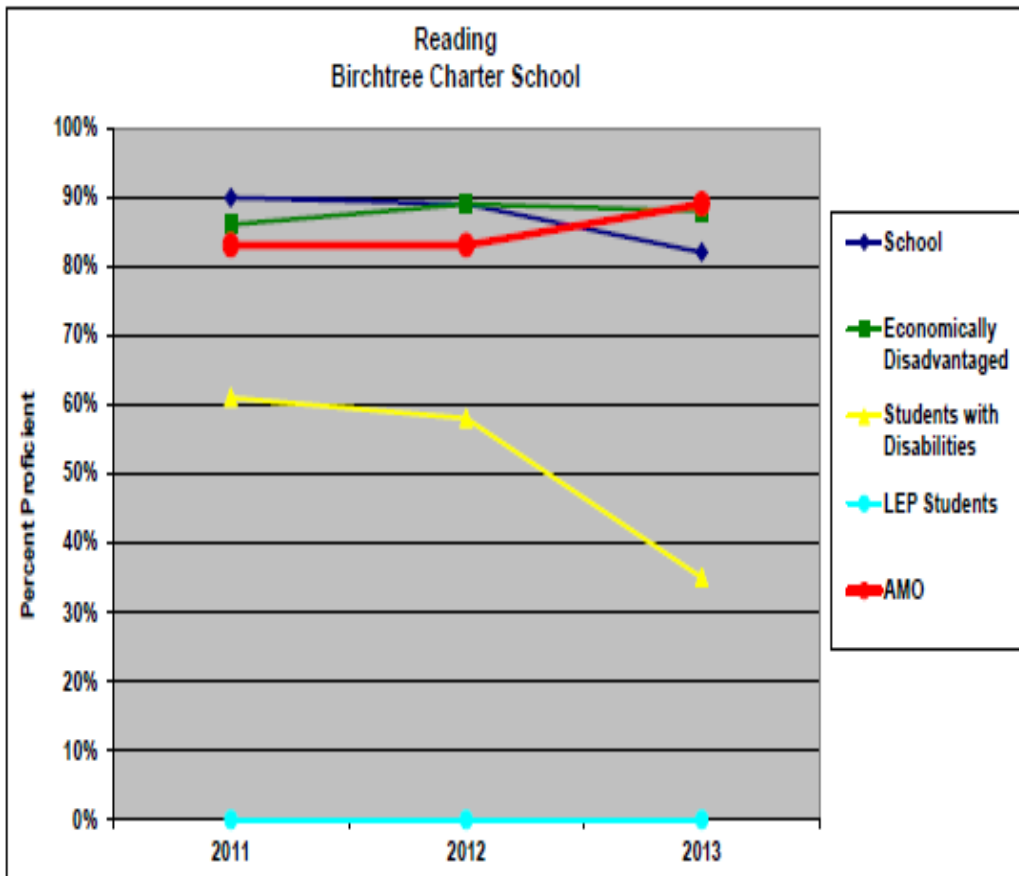
	2011			2012			2013			2014		
SBA -Reading	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	79.2	88.1	81.5	85.4	86.7	80.1	65.9	88.4	81.1	80.9	87	81.5
Grade 4	100	83.5	74.3	78.3	85.5	77.1	79.1	83.9	75.4	86.4	86.9	78.3
Grade 5	82.6	88	78.5	100	89.3	80.4	83.3	84.6	77.3	83.3	87.3	81.1
Grade 6	100	85.6	75.1	87	87.1	77.7	96.2	84.2	75.5	78.3	85.7	78.1
Grade 7	85.7	86.7	78	91.3	89.1	79.4	85	87.7	77.8	100	88.6	81.3
Grade 8				94.4	91.1	82.8	95.7	90.8	81.6	94.4	90	83.5
	2011			2012			2013			2014		
SBA -Writing	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	83.3	82	74.4	80.5	81.2	75.1	70.7	82.1	74.6	68.1	82.2	76.7
Grade 4	95.7	81.6	76.1	87	81.9	76.6	75	81.2	75.5	72.7	84.1	76.9
Grade 5	82.6	82.8	75.1	91.7	84.9	75.5	75	79.2	72.8	78.6	82.2	76.8
Grade 6	91.7	77.5	70.4	82.6	79.5	70.9	88.5	76.5	70.1	78.3	74.7	70.4
Grade 7	78.8	81	72.7	91.3	83.7	74.4	85	83	73.6	100	81.4	72.9
Grade 8				94.4	84.1	75	95.7	84.3	74.4	83.3	83.7	75.7
	2011			2012			2013			2014		
SBA -Math	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide	Birchtree	Mat-Su	Statewide
Grade 3	79.2	81.8	74.6	78	81.1	74.5	70.7	83.7	75.9	57.4	81.1	75.2
Grade 4	91.7	80.4	75.2	78.3	78.2	73.9	72.7	80.3	74.8	75	82.1	74.2
Grade 5	60.9	77.9	70.1	91.7	76.5	70.2	87.5	75.1	70.1	66.7	76.2	70.5
Grade 6	66.7	77.7	69.7	69.6	74.9	69.5	88	73.5	70.1	82.6	71.6	67.3
Grade 7	85.7	76.3	68.8	73.9	75.9	66.2	88	77.7	69.2	100	72.9	65.9
Grade 8				94.4	77	68.9	78.3	75.2	66.4	83.3	75	68.3

G. Disaggregation across student categories

The tables below show BCS’s performance by sub-category and student ethnicity. The population size for these sub-categories and ethnic groups at BCS is small.

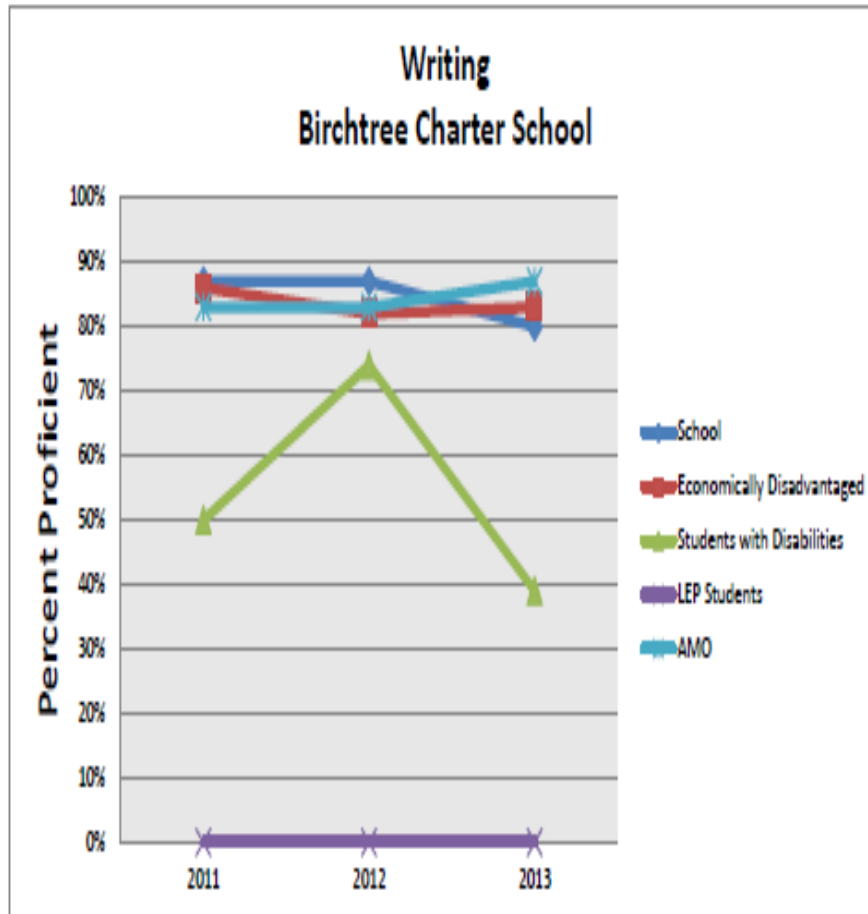
Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

Reading			
	2011	2012	2013
School	90%	89%	82%
Economically Disadvantaged	86%	89%	88%
Students with Disabilities	61%	58%	35%
LEP Students	NA	NA	NA
AMO	83.00%	83.00%	89.00%



Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

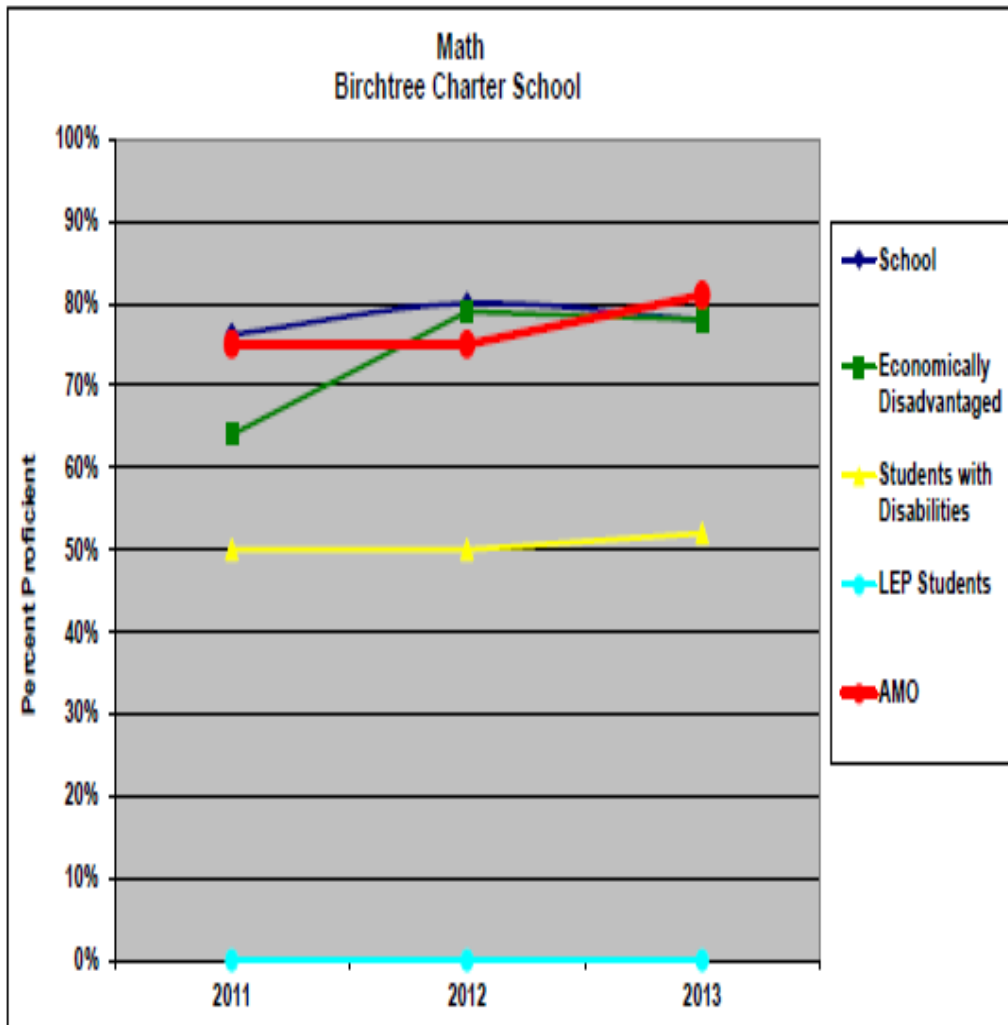
Writing			
	2011	2012	2013
School	87%	87%	80%
Economically Disadvantaged	88%	82%	83%
Students with Disabilities	50%	74%	39%
LEP Students	NA	NA	NA
AMO	83.00%	83.00%	87.00%



Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

Math

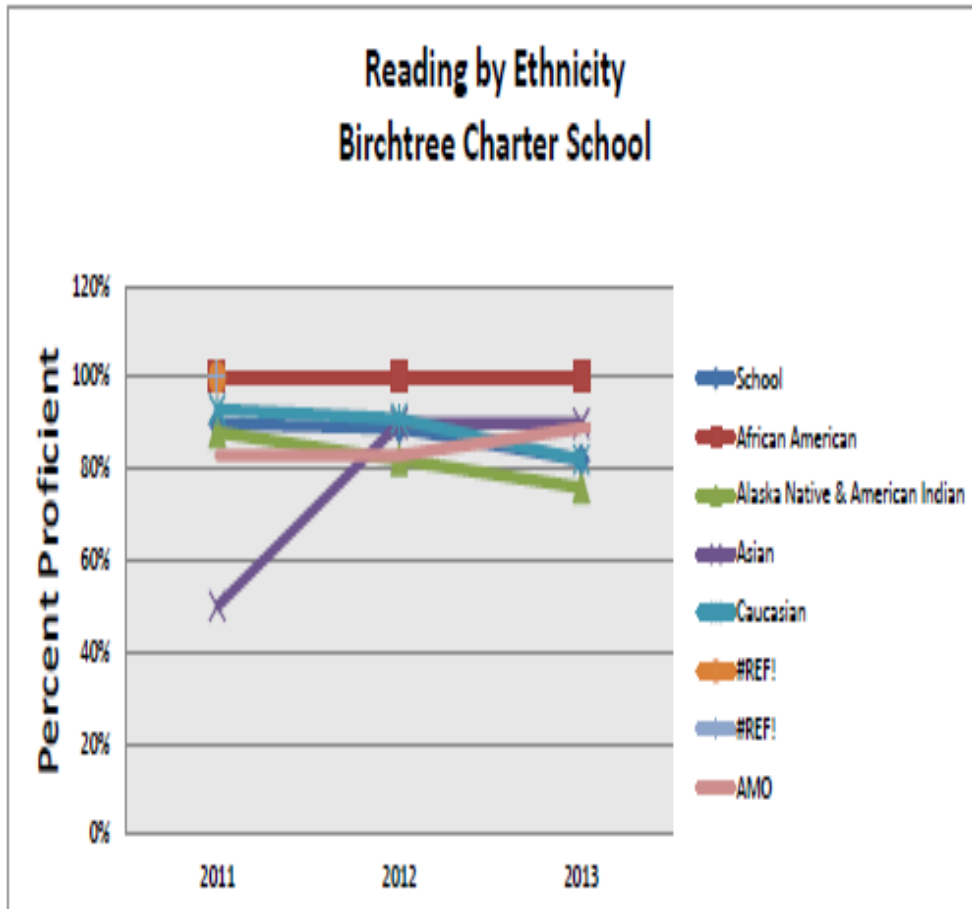
	2011	2012	2013
School	78%	80%	78%
Economically Disadvantaged	64%	79%	78%
Students with Disabilities	50%	50%	52%
LEP Students	NA	NA	NA
AMO	75.00%	75.00%	81.00%



Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

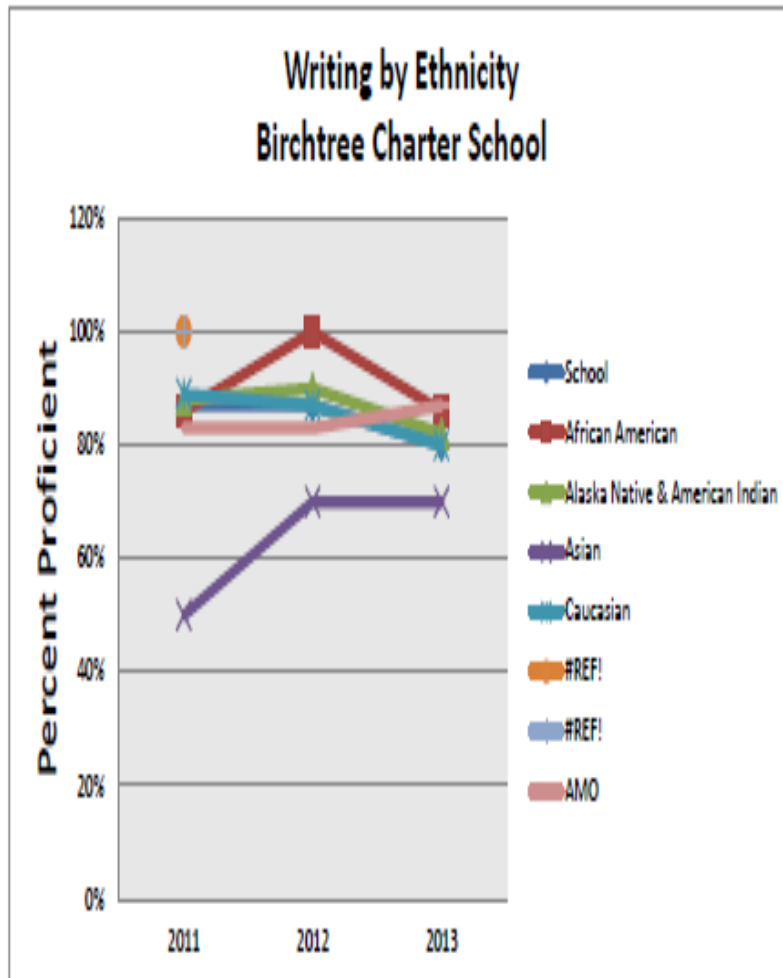
Reading

	2011	2012	2013
School	90%	89%	82%
African American	100%	100%	100%
Alaska Native & American Indian	88%	82%	76%
Asian	50%	90%	90%
Caucasian	93%	91%	82%
AMO	83.00%	83.00%	89.00%



Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

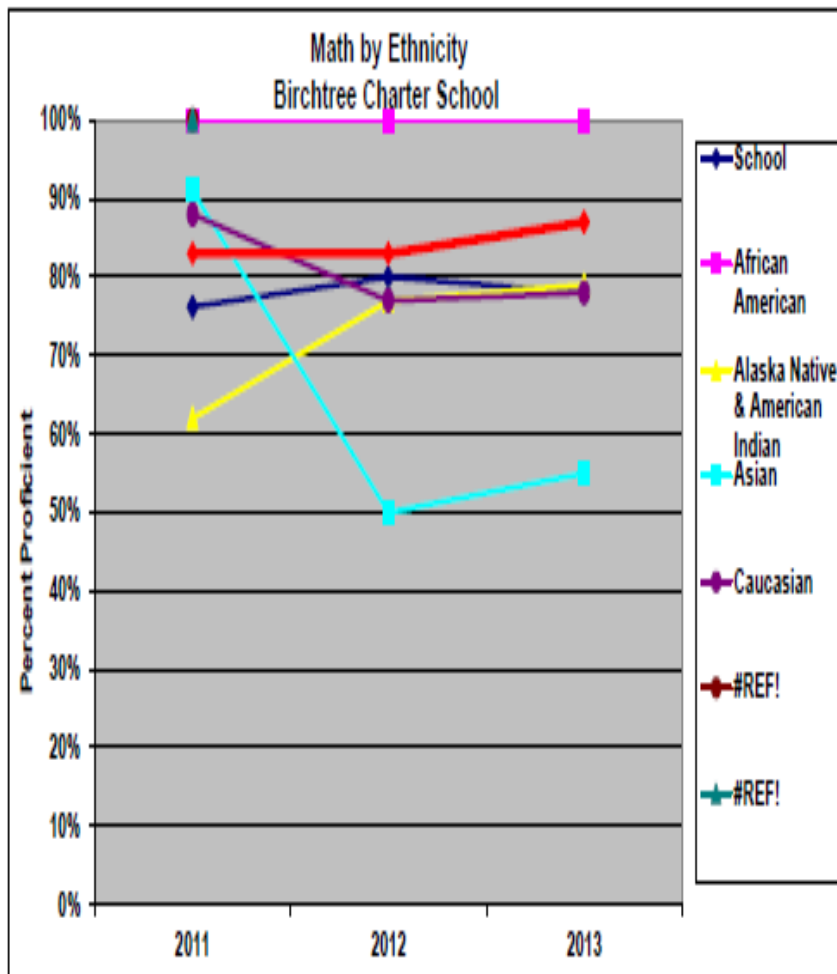
	2011	2012	2013
School	87%	87%	80%
African American	86%	100%	86%
Alaska Native & American Indian	88%	90%	82%
Asian	50%	70%	70%
Caucasian	88%	87%	80%
AMO	83.00%	83.00%	87.00%



Birchtree Charter School 2011 - 2013

Math

	2011	2012	2013
School	76%	80%	78%
African American	100%	100%	100%
Alaska Native & American Indian	62%	77%	79%
Asian	91%	50%	55%
Caucasian	88%	77%	78%
AMO	83.00%	83.00%	87.00%



H. Professional Development

Decisions regarding professional development are made in conjunction with the pedagogical council, staff, and principal. Professional development decisions are directly connected to the BCS mission, philosophy, learning plan and/or performance/program goals. In scheduling professional development, staff focuses on training improving performance and knowledge in the classroom. Overall, increased staff training enhances increased learning for students. Over the past four years several Waldorf presenters have provided professional development for the staff. The presenters focused on giving the teachers additional knowledge about Waldorf education, observing the teachers and then offering feedback on their teaching, and additional information about the social skills curriculum that is integrated in Waldorf education.

Assessment data is reviewed by administration and staff. Main Lesson rubrics are reviewed and Waldorf presenters with specialties in different areas of Waldorf education are sought after in order to assist the staff with professional development in regards to Waldorf education. Additionally, in order for the staff to be most effective as educational leaders in a Waldorf inspired charter school, we feel it is also important and beneficial for staff to travel to other Waldorf schools in other states to observe and learn.

For skills block times, more traditional data is reviewed and decisions regarding curriculum and professional development are based on the data. In the past two years Birchtree has purchased curriculum materials for middle school math, elementary reading, and school wide writing. Professional development has involved training with the purchased programs. Staff also attends out-of-state conferences and in-state conferences when the material presented would be beneficial. Staff members have attended the RTI conference as well as other trainings offered by the district. It is the expectation that staff share information when returning from a conference or other training.

The weekly early release day will allow opportunities for staff planning, review of Waldorf curriculum, discussion of assessment data, collaboration and professional development.

I. Progress Over Time

The program philosophy of BCS is based on the whole child curriculum, a child centric curriculum that recognizes how much children change from year to year. Our lesson plan places pivotal importance on the mental, emotional and physical nature of each grade level. The curriculum ensures that the material presented – and how it is presented – is developmentally attuned to the appropriate age at every grade level. This model values the stages of childhood development, greater interaction between child and teacher, and the integration of the arts into a rigorous academic program.

In a Waldorf charter school it is not uncommon for students in grades K-5 to be at or below grade level expectation since formal academics do not begin until 1st grade. We expect that students will meet grade level expectations at about 5th grade and will continue to excel as they move further along through our program. To date, our data supports that students in grades 6 and above meet or exceed grade level expectations and district and state testing expectations.

5. Admissions Procedures

A. Admissions Criteria

BCS does not discriminate toward any individual on the basis of race, creed, sex, gender, national origin, religion, or need for special education services.

BCS welcomes any eligible student whose families are willing to make a commitment to follow the expectations outlined on our Family Commitments Form and in the Family Guide. The expectations are presented in our Intent to Enroll form and the Family Commitments Form is signed during the registration period. These requirements include attending a Prospective Parent Night before enrollment, volunteering for 36 hours a year per family, limiting media exposure for children, paying a school supply fee of \$50 per semester, and providing their students lunch and transportation.

Admissions Procedures

BCS encourages prospective families to familiarize themselves with our program and to apply if they fit the admission criteria, and can commit to our school's philosophy. BCS offers many opportunities for prospective parents to learn about our program. These include presentations to prospective parents about Waldorf inspired education, school tours, and information about Waldorf education presented in flyers and on the school website. If parents believe that our school program is a good fit for their family and are interested in enrolling their children, they will fill out an Intent to Enroll form for their child and submit it by the posted deadline.

BCS's open enrollment period and lottery procedure will take place in the spring of the year of enrollment. All prospective students, grades Kindergarten through 8th, will be given the opportunity to enroll. The following shall be given preference for admission to the school:

- Children of founding families
- Siblings of students currently enrolled in the school (siblings are defined as any two students who share a legal parent/guardian)
- Children of school faculty and staff

Intent to Enroll forms will be available no later than the last week of March from the BCS office and may be downloaded or submitted from the BCS website. These Intent to Enroll forms should be completed and returned as soon as possible but no later than the announced due date.

After the due date, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school's capacity, enrollment, except for preferences listed above, shall be determined by a lottery (a random drawing) as described below.

Families will be notified by phone if their student is selected for a spot in the lottery. Families of students who have been placed on the waitlist will be notified by email. Annual fall registration will take place at the beginning of August.

Enrollment Policy - Withdrawals

Children of the originators of the school (Founding Families) and siblings of current BCS students who submit an Intent to Enroll form to BCS at the April lottery will have a priority for enrollment for each child in their family.

If a family chooses to withdraw a child from BCS, that child will no longer have sibling or Founding Family priority for enrollment should the family want to re-enroll the student in the future. Removing the priority enrollment status for a child who has been withdrawn does not disallow their inclusion in the lottery and potential reenrollment. It simply removes the priority status. The child could still be re-admitted through the regular lottery process.

Any family may petition the APC to re-instate their priority status.

Admissions Timeline

- Intent to Enroll and Intent to Return forms available: End of March
- Intent to Return forms due: First week of April
- Intent to Enroll forms due: Second week of April
- Lottery: First Wednesday following April 15th @ 7pm.

B. Eligible Students

BCS student body will represent the diverse population of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough area. All students living within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are eligible. Enrollment policies, access to curriculum, services and activities of the program are nondiscriminatory with regard to race, creed, sex, gender, national origin, religion, or need for special education services.

Students will be placed in classes heterogeneously following the MSBSD's Enrollment Policy, including giving attention to pupil/teacher ratio guidelines in place at the time of the lottery, to gender balance, and to student behavior patterns.

Following MSBSD Policy, the minimum age of the children entering the school will be:

Kindergarten: Age 5 by September 1st.

First Grade: Age 6 by September 1st.

Kindergarten Retention and Enrollment Policy

In September of each year the Kindergarten teachers will meet with the Kindergarten parents to go over 1st Grade Readiness. This will include 1st grade readiness skills that the teachers will be looking for in students over the course of the Kindergarten year. These are skills that children meet once they are developmentally ready (during the 5-7 year shift) vs. skills that are met due to practice. These skills and where a child is developmentally in this 5 to 7 year shift will be discussed in November at the first parent meeting.

If a recommendation for retention is made by the Kindergarten teacher for a child born before June 1st at the March parent/teacher conference, the school will hold a spot for that child in both Kindergarten and First grade for the following school year, allowing the parent to have their child re-evaluated in late July. In most situations the school will honor the parent's decision to move the child up to first grade. As per MSBSD, final decision for grade placement will be the principal's.

Parents with children in the lottery for 1st grade born after June 1st will need to schedule a meeting with the school to have their child evaluated for 1st grade readiness. If the evaluator feels that the child is not ready for 1st grade, the family will be told they may put their child's name in the Kindergarten lottery.

C. Enrollment Provisions for additional students

Based on the following plan, BCS will maintain an average PTR of 22.5: 1. The PTR will be broken down by grade level, as follows:

K – 18: 1
1 – 24: 1
2 – 24: 1
3 – 24: 1
4 – 24: 1
5 – 24: 1
6 – 24: 1
7 – 20: 1
8 – 20 : 1

The principal, with input from the classroom teacher, will have final discretion in regards to enrollment in a class.

If available spaces within any grade level are not filled by students who have submitted Intent to Return Forms, then those seats open up to students who have submitted Intent to Enroll Forms. If the number of seats available for a grade level is equal to or less than the number of openings, then those students will be offered the seats available without a lottery.

If the number of students who fill out an Intent to Enroll form exceeds the grade level capacity, a lottery will occur. All the students listed on Intent to Enroll forms that are turned in by the announced deadline will be placed into the lottery. The lottery process fills any open seats in a grade and creates the waitlist for each grade. Any Intent to Enroll forms submitted after the deadline will be added to the bottom of the waitlist in the order they are received. In the event that a grade level is not filled during the lottery, seats will be offered to those who submit an Intent to Enroll form in the order they are received.

As openings occur mid-year, families on the waiting list will be contacted regarding the vacancy. They have 48 hours to accept the available opening. If they decline the offer, their name is removed from the waiting list. If they are interested in enrolling in the future they must resubmit an Intent to Enroll form the following spring and participate in the stated admission procedures.

BCS has maintained a waitlist in most grades from its first year. The waitlist numbers for each year are as follows:

Historical waitlist data:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2010/2011				19	5	14	8		
2011/2012	25	2	16	23	26	18	20	7	
2012/2013	8	19	23	6	3	27	25	5	2
2013/2014	3	5	27	10	14	14	23	12	
2014/2015	31	0	6	25	14	16	3	17	6

D. Lottery

If the number of intent to enroll forms exceeds the school’s capacity, enrollment - except for preferences listed above, shall be determined by a lottery (a random drawing). The lottery will be held on the first Wednesday following April 15th at 7pm in the school foyer. The results will be witnessed and parents will be notified of the results. BCS commits to making the lottery and enrollment procedures and practices clear and transparent to parents, staff and community.

Any applications received after the deadline will be dated and timed. Children listed on these applications will be added to the list for their grade in the order they are received. If openings are available, the children will be given a spot in BCS. If there are no openings, they will be added to the wait list.

If a family participates in the lottery and does not get a spot during one school year, but remains interested in enrollment for the next school year, a new Intent to Enroll form must be completed the following spring. Waitlists do not carry over from year to year.

Intent forms will be available no later than the last week of March and will be available at the BCS website. These intent forms should be completed and returned as soon as possible, and no later than the announced deadline. It is important to receive all intent forms from interested parties on or before April 15th, so that should the need arise, those names will be included in the lottery. They will be dated and the time recorded according to when they are received.

E. Mid-Year Vacancies

As openings occur mid-year, families on the waiting list will be contacted regarding the vacancy. They have 48 hours to accept the available opening. If they decline the offer, their name is removed from the waiting list and they must resubmit an intent form the following spring and participate in the stated admission procedures, including a possible lottery and interview.

Intent to Enroll forms will be accepted year round, and names will continue to be added to the waitlist. However, enrollment after the first quarter will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Alternative Option

A. Provision for Attendance at Other Schools

This does not apply to BCS because it is a charter school offering school choice to the community. Students who do not choose to attend BCS may attend their local neighborhood school (Pioneer Peak Elementary or Cottonwood Elementary), or another optional program or charter school.

7. Administrative Policies

A. Compliance

BCS will comply with Alaska State Statutes applicable to charter schools and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District Charter School policy. The Bylaws of the APC adhere to applicable laws, policies and regulations of the District, Borough and State. The MSBSD Board Policy related to charter schools can be found in Appendix D.

B. Obligations of the Principal/Administrator

The APC will interview and select a type B school Principal/Administrator as outlined in AS 14.03.255. The principal serves at the pleasure of the APC, and will be expected to work cooperatively with the APC and BCS employees to serve the Birchtree community and to ensure that the terms of the contract are being met.

The principal will facilitate the day to day operations of the school, keep financial records of the school, interview (with participation from the APC), hire, supervise and evaluate certified and non-certified staff members, and support school discipline policies. She/he will attend district-wide principal meetings when possible, and will advise the staff and APC of MSBSD policies and procedures. Further duties and responsibilities of the principal are outlined in the Bylaws, Article VI, and Sections 1-2.

C. Strong Leadership

A charter school is a school of choice. It is a school of choice for parents, teachers and staff. This fact ensures that strong and interested leaders naturally choose to participate in the operation of Birchtree Charter School. This can be said for both the administrative leadership and the governing board. The principal serves the school out of a specific interest for our program. Due to the growth of the student body and staff, the job responsibilities of the administration have increased. During the past four years the leadership of the school has increased from one full time administrator to two full time administrators. Principal turnover rate has been low with only one administrator leaving the position over the past four years.

Just as the administration has chosen Birchtree, the APC Board is comprised of parents, staff, and community members who have chosen to become involved. Our board, which includes our administrative leader, is comprised of very committed, hard working parents, teachers, and staff with a wide array of skills. Over the past four years, the APC Board has dedicated thousands of volunteer hours towards the development of our program. It also requires a great deal of organization and good management to function properly. We feel that the leadership at BCS is comprised of strong, capable, dedicated individuals who share a common vision and a long-term goal of working diligently for the school to succeed. Every effort will be made to hire the most highly skilled,

industrious, and enthusiastic employees who will demonstrate the leadership necessary for success.

Governing Leadership

BCS is led by a dual system of governance and management. Such a bicameral system requires the development and maintenance of healthy and strong working relationships between the two branches of leadership. The BPG serves the greater BCS community and works to help the principal, APC and BCS parents achieve their goals.

It is through this strong leadership that BCS continues to grow and mature. BCS is the largest charter school in MSBSD and is on track to continue growth for the next three years. After three years, BCS will offer dual tracks of grades K-8. BCS continues to attract talented teachers that are willing to donate time and resources to achieve the goal of becoming a Waldorf Certified Teacher.

Administrative Leadership

Charter schools require a very diverse type of principal with a high degree of commitment. In addition to the typical qualities one might find in a non-charter public school leader, being a principal of BCS requires the ability to:

- ❖ Develop and manage a multi-million dollar school budget
- ❖ Effectively manage Waldorf Education Instruction while working with the Pedagogical Council
- ❖ Select, manage and assess targeted marketing efforts
- ❖ Solicit and retain quality instructors who are either trained or willing to train in Waldorf Education
- ❖ Manage a high volume of volunteers
- ❖ Work cooperatively with the APC
- ❖ Lobby at local, state, and federal levels on behalf of their students and school

Charter schools go through a natural progression as they grow and mature. Typically, there are two stages that mark their growth. The first stage is the organizational phase. During this phase, charter schools work towards the development of an original charter, find an initial facility, develop plans for future growth, and begin early operational development. As is common in this phase, the APC was heavily involved in the day-to-day management of the school. As the school has matured and grown, we have moved out of this organizational stage and entered into the operational stage of development. The APC will continue to provide Board 101 training to all new and current APC and BPG members to insure that this dual system of governance is maintained. Research continues to show that for a charter school to be successful, the APC and principal must be strong and work functionally.

D. Organizational Challenges and Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses

Developing a charter school from the ground up is not unlike starting a new business. When and where necessary, adjustments have been made to our staff, curriculum, and facilities. School and personnel challenges have been successfully resolved through staff reassignment and additional hiring.

Two major organizational challenges that Birchtree has encountered over the past two years have been met successfully. The first involved hiring a new administrator for Birchtree. The second involved a large board turnover because of expiring terms or resignations.

In December of 2013 the principal of Birchtree resigned. An interim principal was hired until the position was posted in the spring of 2013. The APC Board sought input from the MSBSD in regards to hiring a principal. After discussion it was determined that the full APC Board would be the hiring committee. The hiring committee interviewed five candidates and selected the candidate that best met the goals and visions of Birchtree Charter School. That candidate is our current principal.

Additionally, in the summer of 2013 five vacancies occurred on the APC Board. As a result in November a largely new APC Board was seated. Board Chair, Pete Houston stepped down and was replaced by our new board chair, Jamey Duhamel. Since a majority of the new board was not involved in the hiring of the principal the working relationship of the board and the principal was inconsistent during the first year. However, with board training and support from a Waldorf mentor the relationship has improved greatly and is now very stable.

Under the leadership of the APC Board and the principal the school is trying to expand the building and/or secure a new sight for the school.

E. Conflict Resolution

We are prepared to meet unforeseen challenges and issues. The BCS Principal will have responsibility to assist in this area. The APC formed a committee to help in this endeavor. The Conflict Resolution Procedures of BCS follow this section.

Grievance procedures will operate in accordance with other MSBSD complaint/grievance policies. Grievance procedures for BCS employees can be found in the negotiated agreements between the MSBSD and the Matanuska–Susitna Education Association (MSEA), the Classified Employees Association (CEA) and the Matanuska-Susitna Principals Association (MSPA).

**Birchtree Charter School
Conflict Resolution Form (Non-employee)**

Please try to resolve all conflicts directly and at the lowest level through informal means utilizing peaceful discussion, whenever possible. Should the conflict remain unresolved, please fill out this form and turn it in to the appropriate person:

- Conflict with teacher – turn this form in with the Principal
- Conflict with Principal – turn this form in to the APC Governing Board
- Conflict with a member of the staff – turn this form in to the Principal
- Conflict with another parent on a school issue – turn this form in to the Principal

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email address:

1. Who or what is your complaint against?

Person/Personsinvolved? _____

Position: _____

2. Has this been discussed with him/her? Yes/ No (if no, please explain)

Dates _____	Discussed _____
-------------	-----------------

3. Has the complaint been discussed with the Principal or Supervisor? Yes / No

Dates _____

Discussed: _____

Description of Complaint: Please include all important information such as location, names, dates, who was present, and to whom it was reported. Please use additional paper if more space is required.

WHAT REMEDY OR ACTION DO YOU SUGGEST?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Conflict Resolution Procedures

It is a fundamental constitutional right to have the freedom of expression, including criticism of public agencies and their employees. Public employees are also entitled to various rights including the right to the protection of due process of law. In order to satisfy these conflicting rights, the following procedures are established by BCS for processing complaints against employees or employees' practices of the school district.

Most complaints can be resolved by informal discussions between the complainant and the employee or the employee's Principal/Supervisor. This formal complaint process is reserved for complaints that are not resolved after the informal process has been attempted and must be filed by May 1st of the current school year. For extenuating circumstances, the deadline may be extended. Even when this formal complaint procedure is initiated, efforts may occur at any point to accomplish satisfactory informal resolution. In no case is there to be retaliation from either party.

Directions for processing complaints against employees, policies, practices, and procedures at BCS:

1. First, (always try to resolve at the lowest level) a person lodging a complaint against a district employee or employee practices should meet with the person with whom you have a conflict in an attempt to reach a solution.
2. Second, if you feel you have not reached a solution, you may want to informally meet with the principal to discuss the problem in an attempt to reach a solution.
3. Any person who still feels dissatisfied with the result of such a meeting may wish to complete a Conflict resolution Form.
4. Turn the form into the office. A letter of receipt stating who will be working with you to resolve this complaint and their contact numbers will be sent to you.
5. A copy of the complaint form will be provided to the employee against whom the charge is made with a request that the employee respond in writing to the appropriate administrator within ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint. The employee shall cooperate in resolving the complaint.
6. If the complaint is not resolved at the lowest level, the appropriate next level will review the complaint and related material, interview parties, and submit findings back to the complainant.
7. The Principal, APC President or designee will notify the person filing the complaint and the employee in writing of the final determination. A final decision will be issued in a timely manner, not to exceed 45 working days, after the filing of the formal complaint. **It is to be understood**

numerous opportunities have existed to resolve the conflict and that the decision is final.

8. If the person filing the complaint is not satisfied with the results, an appeal may be made to the Birchtree APC.
9. Employees impacted by use of the Conflict Resolution Form may choose to exercise rights given to them by law or by employment agreement. Both the employees and the complaining party may have representation of their choice throughout the process.
10. At any point after the complaint process is initiated, if the person filing the complaint indicated a desire to pursue formal litigation, or does in fact file suit, the district's conflict resolution process will be terminated. The Birchtree APC will then turn the matter over to counsel.

Possible Outcomes

The following information is listed neither to encourage nor discourage the filing of a complaint. Rather, it is intended to inform you of the possible outcomes of a formal complaint proceeding:

- I understand that Birchtree Charter School APC President or Principal may request additional information from me regarding this matter, and I agree that I will provide such information as is available to me. I also understand that as the complainant, I may also be required to testify and be subject to cross-examination.
- I understand that while my requested resolution of this matter will be carefully considered, the responsibility for selecting action taken may ultimately be more or less severe than the remedy I have proposed.
- If the complaint is directed toward actions of an employee, I understand that Birchtree Charter School will give a copy of this complaint to the individual(s) about whom I have complained. The person will be given the opportunity to respond to this complaint.
- I understand that I may request to withdraw this complaint at any time. However, in the event that the BCS views the matters raised in this complaint as being sufficiently serious, BCS may pursue this matter despite my desire not to proceed. I also understand that if any judicial proceeding arises from the matters that I have raised in this complaint, both the person I have complained about and I would be entitled to all the rights and protections available in such judicial proceedings.
- It is understood that a complaint should be of a serious nature. Numerous frivolous complaints from the same party may be considered void.

8. Funding Allocation

Budget Summary

Revenue:

- 1. Allocation from District:** BCS's funding is based on the per pupil allocation received from the MSBSD. Below is the foundation formula summary that designates the funding allocation.



Birchtree Charter FY 2015 PROJECTED Revenue

State Foundation Formula Applied to Birchtree Charter			
Projected Count			345.00
Intensive Count		4.00	
1 Adjusted for School Size *			418.25
	Factor	Amount	Adj. ADM
2 District Cost Factor	0.070	29.28	447.528
3 Special Needs	0.200	89.51	537.034
4 Voc Ed Factor	0.015	8.06	545.090
5 Correspondence Count	0.800	0.00	0.000
6 Intensive Needs	13.000	52.00	597.090
Total Adjusted ADM		Per Pupil	597.090
7 Base Student Allocation	597.09 x \$	5,680.00	\$ 3,391,471.00
8 Less Minimum Local Funding		\$ 869.87	\$ (519,273.00)
Total Basic Need			\$ 2,872,198.00
9 Quality Schools Funding	\$ 462,491	\$ 16.00	\$ 9,553.00
Total State Foundation Formula			\$ 2,881,751.00

TOTAL REVENUE			
		Per Pupil	Total
Total State Foundation Formula	\$	4,826.33	\$ 2,881,751.00
Governors One-Time Funding	-	\$ 100.00	\$ 59,709.00
Local Funding			
8 Minimum Required Local	25,982,579	\$ 869.87	\$ 519,273.00
Contribution Above Minimum	26,847,893	\$ 1,525.97	\$ 526,459.00
	52,830,472	\$ 2,395.84	\$ 1,045,732.00
Total Gross Funding	\$	7,321.97	\$ 3,987,192.00
Less Indirect	5.58%	\$ 408.57	\$ 222,485.00
Net Projected Revenue	\$	6,913.40	\$ 3,764,707.00

* (250-400) School Size
 345 - 250 = 95
 Base = 326.1
 Factor = 0.97
 (95 x 0.97) + 326.1 = 418.25

2012-13 State Foundation Formula

Calculation of Projected Average Daily Membership (ADM)

A	345.000	Projected 20-day Average Count
B	418.250	Adjusted for School Size (less Correspondence)
C	0.070	District Cost Factor
D	29.278	= B x C
E	447.528	= B + D
F	0.200	Special Needs Factor
G	89.506	= E x F
H	537.033	= E + G
I	0.015	*Vocational Education Factor
J	8.055	= H x I
K	545.088	= E + G + J
L	-	Correspondence Count
M	0.800	Correspondence Factor
N	-	Adjusted Correspondence Count
O	545.088	= K + N
P	4.000	Intensive Needs Count
Q	13.000	Intensive Needs Factor
R	52.000	= P x Q
S	597.088	Total ADM (= O + R)

2013-14 PROJECTED State Foundation Formula

Calculation of Foundation Funding

S	597.09	Total ADM (= O + R)
T	5,680.00	Base Student Allocation
U	3,391,460.00	Basic Need (= S x T)
V	519,273.00	Minimum Required Local
W	2,872,187.00	= U - V
X	16.00	Quality Schools Factor
Y	3,553.41	= X x S
Z	2,881,740.41	Total Foundation Funding (= W + Y)
AA	345.00	Funded Student Count (Includes Correspondence)
AB	8,352.87	Total Per Pupil Funding (= Z / AA)

2. Grants, Gifts, Donations, Special Revenue Funds

BCS's revenue may also come from grants that are applied for and managed according to MSBSD policy. The Birchtree Parent Guild, an independent 501c3, may also pursue funding that may benefit the school, and will manage their grants independently. The BPG was able to secure a federal start-up grant for charter schools. The list below explains how the monies were used to benefit the teachers and the school.

BPG Federal Start-up Grant Accomplishments:

The BPG worked in partnership with BCS administration to manage the two-year federal grant, the Charter School Program Grant, for \$322,352. With the grant, the school was able to accomplish the following:

- 14 teachers completed a 2 year Waldorf training program
- All teachers participated in mentoring
- A volunteer management system was put in place
- Work was completed to align Waldorf curriculum to Alaska State Standards. This document is not being used in many public Waldorf Schools.
- The APC and BPG worked to develop a strategic plan for the school.

Grants monies available:

\$190,761 – Year 1

\$131,591 – Year 2

\$322,352 – Total

Money Expended:

Year One:

\$116,960 - Tuition for Waldorf Training

\$52,950 - Staff travel for Waldorf Training

\$3183 - Attendance at Grant Project Directors meeting

\$4640 – Independent grant evaluator

\$1561 – Waldorf mentoring for all teachers

\$1650 – Laptop and database software for Volunteer management

\$4126 – Board retreat to develop strategic plan

\$4191 – Work on curriculum standards development

\$1500 – carried over to year 2

Total = \$190,761

Year Two:

\$70,563 – Tuition for Waldorf Training

\$41,739 – Staff travel for Waldorf training

\$3,446 – Attendance at Grant Project Directors meeting

\$7002 – Independent grant evaluator

\$10,341 – Waldorf mentoring for all teachers

Total = \$133,091 (minus \$1500 carried over from year 1 = \$131,591)

Grand Total = \$322,352

3. Fees

BCS is free and open to all students residing in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. BCS requires a fee of \$50 per student, per semester, in lieu of requiring students to purchase school supplies at the beginning of the year. BCS may also charge fees for fieldtrips or after school activities, following MSBSD policy.

Budget

BCS uses a budget worksheet provided by the MSBSD to develop its budget each year. BCS then uses the MUNIS database, also provided by the MSB School District, to manage the accounts. The Administrative Secretary at Birchtree Charter School works with the APC Treasurer to create a budget summary every month, which is presented at each APC meeting. Below is an example of the budget report that was presented during the April 2014 meeting:

Budget Report 4/01/2014					
Non Discretionary					
	Approved budget*	Actual budget	Revised Budget		
Regular Education	1,794,251	1,794,251	1,809,751		
Special Education	340,505	340,505	340,505		
Recess Monitors	42,990	42,990	42,990		
Guidance Counseling	29,858	29,858	29,858		
Health Services	18,845	18,845	18,845		
School Administration	186,594	186,594	186,594		
Admin Support	199,418	199,418	199,418		
Operations and Maintenance	43,862	43,862	43,862		
Student Activities	17,071	17,071	10,868		
Total Non Discretionary	2,673,392	2,673,392	2,682,689		
Discretionary					
	Approved budget	Actual budget	Revised Budget	Expended	4/1/14
<i>Regular Education</i>					
Staff Travel	74,000	74,000	74,000	24,529	
Student Travel	5,000	5,000	8,000	3,844	
Purchased Services	44,800	44,800	44,800	10,606	
Supplies	108,659	108,659	168,659	61,577	
Supplies > \$500	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	
Other Expenses	0	0	15	15	
Contingency	146,897	146,897	100,644	0	
Total	382,697	382,697	399,459		
<i>Admin Communication (Postal)</i>	500	500	1,000		507

Budget Report
4/01/2014

<i>Indirect</i>	213,954	213,954	215,259	215,259
<i>Admin Contingency</i>	30,000	30,000	30,000	0
<i>Operations and Maintenance</i>				
Communications	15,000	15,000	0	0
Purchased Services	27,000	27,000	37,000	24,935
Rental/Lease	443,400	443,400	439,721	378,321
Ins/Bond	295	295	295	0
Supplies	8,250	8,250	8,250	3,888
Supplies > \$500	6,014	6,014	6,014	6,014
Total	499,959	499,959	491,280	
<i>Student Activities</i>	19,185	19,185	0	
<i>Utilities</i>	38,000	38,000	38,000	23,075
Total Discretionary	1,184,295	1,184,295	1,174,998	755,909
Total Operating Budget	3,857,687	3,857,687	3,857,687	

*Current approved budget is based on salary and additional fund estimates. Actual additional funds and other staffing situations caused the actual budget to look slightly different than the estimated budget.

Budget Report 4/01/2014					
Non Discretionary					
	Approved budget*	Actual budget	Revised Budget		
Regular Education	1,794,251	1,794,251	1,809,751		
Special Education	340,505	340,505	340,505		
Recess Monitors	42,990	42,990	42,990		
Guidance Counseling	29,856	29,856	29,856		
Health Services	18,845	18,845	18,845		
School Administration	186,594	186,594	186,594		
Admin Support	199,418	199,418	199,418		
Operations and Maintenance	43,862	43,862	43,862		
Student Activities	17,071	17,071	10,868		
Total Non Discretionary	2,673,392	2,673,392	2,682,689		
Discretionary					
	Approved budget	Actual budget	Revised Budget	Expended	4/1/14
<i>Regular Education</i>					
Staff Travel	74,000	74,000	74,000	24,529	
Student Travel	5,000	5,000	8,000	3,844	
Purchased Services	44,800	44,800	44,800	10,806	
Supplies	108,659	108,659	168,659	61,577	
Supplies > \$500	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	
Other Expenses	0	0	15	15	
Contingency	146,897	146,897	100,644	0	
Total	382,697	382,697	399,459		
<i>Admin Communication (Posta</i>	500	500	1,000		507

Additionally, on the following pages is the budget information from the MSBSD for the FY 13 and FY 14 school years:

MatSu Borough School District			
HISTORICAL ACTUALS COMPARISON REPORT			
		FY 2013	FY2014
By Function & Object		ACTUALS	ACTUALS
110 REGULAR ED INSTRUCTION			
310	CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$ 974,535	\$ 1,179,785
315	CERTIFICATED LONGEVITY	\$ 5,940	\$ 7,920
316	CERTIFICATED EXTRA DUTY PAY	\$ 31,718	\$ 15,046
317	CERTIFICATED SUBSTITUTES	\$ 25,339	\$ -
319	CERTIFICATED LEAVE CASH IN	\$ 4,866	\$ 5,355
320	NON CERT SALARIES	\$ 66,598	\$ 67,842
328	NON CERT STIPEND-SCH BRD-EXCON	\$ -	\$ 1,765
329	NON CERT SUBS	\$ 3,761	\$ 39,863
333	NON CERT LEAVE CASH IN	\$ -	\$ 66
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$ 253,258	\$ 322,469
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$ 4	\$ 1,311
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$ 9,577	\$ 21,106
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$ 14,481	\$ 17,188
365	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$ 127,148	\$ 151,030
366	PUBLIC EE'S RETIREMENT SYS	\$ 8,418	\$ 5,124
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$ 5,947	\$ 6,500
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ 455	\$ 471
420	STAFF TRAVEL	\$ 15,484	\$ 33,600
425	STUDENT TRAVEL	\$ 11,523	\$ 8,235
440	PURCHASED SERVICES	\$ 39,453	\$ 22,685
450	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$ 172,289	\$ 142,649
457	EQUIPMENT OVER \$500	\$ 42,638	\$ 3,341
471	TEXTBOOKS	\$ 12,761	\$ -
490	EXPENSES NOT CLASSIFIED	\$ 931	\$ 4,059
527	CONTINGENCY	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL REGULAR ED INSTRUCTION		\$ 1,827,123	\$ 2,057,409

130	TALENTED & GIFTED INSTRUC.			
317	CERTIFICATED SUBSTITUTES	\$	198	\$ -
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$	3	\$ -
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$	3	\$ -
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$	12	\$ -
TOTAL	TALENTED & GIFTED INSTRU	\$	216	\$ -
200	SPEC ED INSTRUCTION			
310	CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$	137,467	\$ 128,910
315	CERTIFICATED LONGEVITY	\$	1,980	\$ 1,980
316	CERTIFICATED EXTRA DUTY PAY	\$	-	\$ -
317	CERTIFICATED SUBSTITUTES	\$	3,917	\$ -
320	NON CERT SALARIES	\$	88,262	\$ 98,758
325	NON-CERT LONGEVITY	\$	2,290	\$ 4,934
328	NON CERT STIPEND-SCH BRD-EXCON	\$	5,398	\$ 7,472
329	NON CERT SUBS	\$	253	\$ 8,697
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$	49,987	\$ 52,401
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$	0	\$ 227
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$	2,157	\$ 3,654
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$	3,407	\$ 3,554
365	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$	17,515	\$ 12,833
366	PUBLIC EE'S RETIREMENT SYS	\$	21,109	\$ 23,879
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$	6,137	\$ 7,260
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$	93	\$ 102

301 SCHOOL & STUDENT SAFETY			
320	NON CERT SALARIES	\$ 34,732	\$ 31,317
329	NON CERT SUBS	\$ 627	\$ 137
333	NON CERT LEAVE CASH IN	\$ -	\$ 404
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$ -	\$ 4,310
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$ 0	\$ 24
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$ 412	\$ 392
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$ 513	\$ 453
366	PUBLIC EE'S RETIREMENT SYS	\$ 875	\$ 2,307
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$ 2,167	\$ 1,953
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ 99	\$ 69
TOTAL SCHOOL & STUDENT SAFETY			
		\$ 39,425	\$ 41,367
320 GUIDANCE COUNSELING			
310	CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$ 35,691	\$ 28,874
317	CERTIFICATED SUBSTITUTES	\$ -	\$ -
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$ -	\$ -
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$ 0	\$ 29
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$ 377	\$ 473
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$ 517	\$ 419
365	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$ 4,483	\$ -
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ 23	\$ 19
TOTAL GUIDANCE COUNSELING			
		\$ 41,091	\$ 29,814
330 HEALTH SERVICES			
310	CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$ -	\$ 12,960
315	CERTIFICATED LONGEVITY	\$ -	\$ 396
317	CERTIFICATED SUBSTITUTES	\$ 2,321	\$ -
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$ -	\$ 3,799
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$ 0	\$ 13
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$ 29	\$ 215
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$ 30	\$ 186
365	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$ -	\$ 1,678
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$ 125	\$ -
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ -	\$ 4
450	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$ 1,465	\$ 56
TOTAL HEALTH SERVICES			
		\$ 3,970	\$ 19,307

351 IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION			
410 PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SVC	\$	-	\$ 887
TOTAL IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTI	\$	-	\$ 887
400 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION			
310 CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$	159,276	\$ 147,147
315 CERTIFICATED LONGEVITY	\$	4,600	\$ -
316 CERTIFICATED EXTRA DUTY PAY	\$	6,919	\$ 4,889
319 CERTIFICATED LEAVE CASH IN	\$	6,305	\$ -
361 HEALTH INSURANCE	\$	28,594	\$ 18,994
362 UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$	0	\$ 125
363 WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$	1,833	\$ 2,018
364 FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$	2,517	\$ 2,172
365 TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$	19,115	\$ 13,387
371 LIFE INSURANCE	\$	395	\$ 196
421 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	\$	1,466	\$ 720
TOTAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	\$	231,019	\$ 189,649

450 SCHOOL ADMIN SUPPORT			
320	NON CERT SALARIES	\$ 80,706	\$ 109,059
328	NON CERT STIPEND-SCH BRD-EXCON	\$ 3,767	\$ 5,007
329	NON CERT SUBS	\$ 2,074	\$ 6,118
330	NON CERT OVERTIME	\$ -	\$ -
333	NON CERT LEAVE CASHIN	\$ -	\$ 3,438
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$ 6,127	\$ 41,087
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$ 0	\$ 115
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$ 848	\$ 1,999
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$ 1,244	\$ 1,712
366	PUBLIC EE'S RETIREMENT SYS	\$ 16,904	\$ 24,392
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$ 5,305	\$ 7,578
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ 67	\$ 62
433	COMMUNICATIONS	\$ -	\$ 641
450	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$ 510	\$ -
457	EQUIPMENT OVER \$500	\$ -	\$ 629
527	CONTINGENCY	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL SCHOOL ADMIN SUPPORT			
		\$ 117,552	\$ 201,837
550 DISTRICT ADMIN SUPPORT			
445	INSURANCE & BOND PREMIUMS	\$ 4,250	\$ -
495	INDIRECT COST	\$ 248,867	\$ 215,259
TOTAL DISTRICT ADMIN SUPPORT			
		\$ 253,117	\$ 215,259

Page 6

600 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE				
320	NON CERT SALARIES	\$	21,553	\$ 22,598
328	NON CERT STIPEND-SCH BRD-EXCON	\$	3,521	\$ 2,175
329	NON CERT SUBS	\$	-	\$ 874
330	NON CERT OVERTIME	\$	147	\$ -
361	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$	-	\$ 14,773
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$	0	\$ 25
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$	228	\$ 403
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$	366	\$ 342
366	PUBLIC EE'S RETIREMENT SYS	\$	1,450	\$ 4,703
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$	1,546	\$ 1,572
371	LIFE INSURANCE	\$	36	\$ 17
432	GARBAGE	\$	2,272	\$ 2,348
433	COMMUNICATIONS	\$	789	\$ -
435	ENERGY	\$	30,464	\$ 29,561
440	PURCHASED SERVICES	\$	29,154	\$ 28,453
441	RENTALS	\$	438,924	\$ 439,721
445	INSURANCE & BOND PREMIUMS	\$	-	\$ 410
450	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$	17,720	\$ 6,937
457	EQUIPMENT OVER \$500	\$	4,347	\$ 6,014
TOTAL OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE				
		\$	552,516	\$ 560,927
700 STUDENT ACTIVITIES				
316	CERTIFICATED EXTRA DUTY PAY	\$	9,953	\$ 2,506
328	NON CERT STIPEND-SCH BRD-EXCON	\$	7,777	\$ 7,312
362	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$	-	\$ 13
363	WORKERS' COMPENSATION	\$	192	\$ 207
364	FICA/MEDI CONTRIBUTION	\$	257	\$ 142
365	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	\$	1,160	\$ 315
367	SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS SYSTEM	\$	521	\$ 448
450	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$	-	\$ 34
527	CONTINGENCY			
TOTAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES				
		\$	19,861	\$ 10,977
AND TOTAL				
		\$	3,425,863	\$ 3,682,094

B. School District and Indirect Costs

There is a standard percentage of the per pupil operating revenue retained by the district for routine services, accounts payable, insurance, and other services. In the event that extraordinary services in these areas are required of the district, the parties agree to make an equitable adjustment to fairly allocate the additional costs involved. BCS will use the normal procedures established by the District for its accounting, purchasing and business functions. MSBSD will provide appropriate assistance to BCS in the areas of finance, budget insurance, administrative and instructional in-services and workshops to help ensure the most economical and sensible decision making process in the utilization of BCS's budget funds.

New legislation has recently been passed that states that the standard percentage of the budget that is retained by the district for administrative costs "shall be determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the department up to four percent. 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 four percent cap on administrative costs under this subsection."

Other Services

The District will provide appropriate assistance to BCS in the areas of finance, budget insurance, administrative and instructional in-services and workshops to help ensure the most economical and sensible decision making process in the utilization of BCS's budget funds.

C. Additional Local Revenue

Yes, BCS is eligible for a percentage of the local revenue contribution as determined by the MSBSD. This amount is equal to the amount received by other public schools.

D. Balanced Budget

As required by MSBSD, BCS operates with a balanced budget. BCS has successfully achieved a positive ending fund balance after each fiscal year that it has been open. BCS finished out FY 13 with a positive funding balance of \$148,869.27 that is rolled into a capital improvement fund which may be accessed in the future as the need arises.

BCS has put purchasing and budgeting processes in place that insure financial responsibility and solvency at every step. The principal's signature is required on any purchase over \$500. Purchases under \$500 may be approved by the Administrative Secretary. Purchases may not be made unless there is an adequate amount of money in the appropriate account

BCS holds monthly internal audit meetings in which the finance committee looks at each line item in the budget in detail. The committee discusses upcoming expenses, identifies necessary budget transfers, and draws up a request for budget transfers that are presented at the APC meeting. Budget transfers less than \$5000 are approved by the APC treasurer but must be presented to the APC at the next meeting. Budget transfers over \$5000 require APC board approval.

The committee also presents a budget summary to the APC at every meeting that outlines the current approved budget (which may include new staffing request estimates), the actual budget (reflecting actual costs for any new staff), the new proposed budget including that month's budget transfers, and the fund expended from each discretionary account to that date. An example of this report is in section 8(a).

9. Fiscal Solvency

A. Financial Plan

BCS has established a financial plan to ensure fiscal solvency for the school. We follow all budget processes and procedures as required by the MSBSD. The budget for the following school year is developed by the finance committee in December, approved by the APC in January and presented to the MSBSD. The budget always takes into account any major upcoming expenses and includes a 3% contingency. Any monies that are left in the budget at the end of the year roll over into a capital account which can be accessed by the school to make capital improvements.

BCS has put purchasing and budgeting processes in place that insure financial responsibility and solvency at every step. The principal's signature is required on any purchase over \$500. Purchases under \$500 may be approved by the administrative secretary. Purchases may not be made unless there is an adequate amount of money in the appropriate account.

BCS holds monthly internal audit meetings in which the finance committee looks at each line item in the budget in detail. The committee discusses upcoming expenses, identifies necessary budget transfers, and draws up a budget transfer request that is presented at the APC meeting. Budget transfers less than \$5000 may be approved by the APC treasurer but must be presented to the APC at the next meeting. Budget transfers over \$5000 require APC board approval.

The committee also presents a budget summary to the APC at every meeting that outlines the current approved budget (which may include new staffing request estimates), the actual budget (reflecting actual costs for any new staff), the new proposed budget including that month's budget transfers, and the fund expended from each discretionary account to that date. Below is an example of that report:

Budget Report 4/01/2014					
Non Discretionary					
	Approved budget*	Actual budget	Revised Budget		
Regular Education	1,794,251	1,794,251	1,809,751		
Special Education	340,505	340,505	340,505		
Recess Monitors	42,990	42,990	42,990		
Guidance Counseling	29,856	29,856	29,856		
Health Services	18,845	18,845	18,845		
School Administration	186,594	186,594	186,594		
Admin Support	199,418	199,418	199,418		
Operations and Maintenance	43,862	43,862	43,862		
Student Activities	17,071	17,071	10,868		
Total Non Discretionary	2,673,392	2,673,392	2,682,689		
Discretionary					
	Approved budget	Actual budget	Revised Budget	Expended	4/1/14
<i>Regular Education</i>					
Staff Travel	74,000	74,000	74,000	24,529	
Student Travel	5,000	5,000	8,000	3,844	
Purchased Services	44,800	44,800	44,800	10,606	
Supplies	108,659	108,659	168,659	61,577	
Supplies > \$500	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	
Other Expenses	0	0	15	15	
Contingency	146,897	146,897	100,644	0	
Total	382,697	382,697	399,459		
<i>Admin Communication (Postal)</i>	500	500	1,000		507

Budget Report 4/01/2014					
<i>Indirect</i>	213,954	213,954	215,259		215,259
<i>Admin Contingency</i>	30,000	30,000	30,000		0
<i>Operations and Maintenance</i>					
Communications	15,000	15,000	0		0
Purchased Services	27,000	27,000	37,000		24,935
Rental/Lease	443,400	443,400	439,721		378,321
Ins/Bond	295	295	295		0
Supplies	8,250	8,250	8,250		3,886
Supplies > \$500	6,014	6,014	6,014		6,014
Total	499,959	499,959	491,280		
<i>Student Activities</i>	19,185	19,185	0		
<i>Utilities</i>	38,000	38,000	38,000		23,075
Total Discretionary	1,184,295	1,184,295	1,174,998		755,909
Total Operating Budget	3,857,687	3,857,687	3,857,687		
*Current approved budget is based on salary and additional fund estimates. Actual additional funds and other staffing situations caused the actual budget to look slightly different than the estimated budget.					

B. Audit Reports

BCS's audit reports indicate that the school has been operating with fiscal integrity. Below is an example of the budget audit report at the end of FY13.

								munis a tyler era solution	
05/01/2014 09:03 KN016908		MatSu Borough School District BIRCHTREE FY13 BUDGET AUDIT				PG 1 glytdbud			
FOR 2013 99						JOURNAL DETAIL 2012 1 TO 2012 10			
	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED		
110 REGULAR ED INSTRUCTION	1,889,026	21,796	1,910,822	1,827,122.58	.00	83,699.73	95.6%		
130 TALENTED & GIFTED INSTRUC.	0	217	217	215.77	.00	1.23	99.4%		
200 SPEC ED INSTRUCTION	300,569	44,116	344,685	339,972.65	.00	4,712.02	98.6%		
301 SCHOOL & STUDENT SAFETY	49,721	-8,073	41,648	39,424.79	.00	2,223.29	94.7%		
320 GUIDANCE COUNSELING	54,307	-9,008	45,299	41,091.30	.00	4,208.03	90.7%		
330 HEALTH SERVICES	0	3,701	3,701	3,970.18	.00	-269.18	107.3%		
400 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	212,574	18,872	231,446	231,019.08	.00	426.85	99.8%		
450 SCHOOL ADMIN SUPPORT	90,882	45,102	135,984	117,552.45	.00	18,431.65	86.4%		
550 DISTRICT ADMIN SUPPORT	243,366	9,751	253,117	253,117.00	.00	.00	100.0%		
600 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE	520,280	65,729	586,009	552,516.39	.00	33,492.65	94.3%		
700 STUDENT ACTIVITIES	0	22,752	22,752	19,860.79	.00	2,891.21	87.3%		
GRAND TOTAL	3,360,725	214,955	3,575,680	3,425,862.98	.00	149,817.48	95.8%		

** END OF REPORT - Generated by KELLY NELIUS **

BCS holds monthly internal audit meetings in which the finance committee looks at each line item in the budget in detail. The committee discusses upcoming expenses, identifies necessary budget transfers, and draws up a request for budget transfers that are presented at the APC meeting. Budget transfers less than \$5000 may be approved by the APC treasurer but must be presented to the APC at the next meeting. Budget transfers over \$5000 require APC board approval. Below is an example of a budget transfer approval request:

Operating Budget Transfers Approval

January 8, 2014

Account to be reduced	Account to be increased	Current Amount	Amount to be increased	New Budget Amount	Explanation
Contingency	Staff Travel	9,000	65,000	74,000	Prof. Development: Alliance Conference \$15,000 RSC AOT \$50,000
Contingency	110 Purchased services	25,000	19,800	44,800	Prof. Development: Kim, Bente, Prairie \$9,500 Board 101, \$2000 Retreat, \$2000 Waldorf training, \$6,300
Contingency	450 contingency	0	30,000	30,000	Extended Contracts

Contingency	450 Salaries	174,254	25,000	199,254	New admin secretary
Already transferred to account by district	Indirect	195,574 (prior amount)	18,380	213,954	Indirect rate increase for incoming funds
110 Certified Subs	600 Subs	0	2,000	2,000	Need subs for custodian
200 Certified Subs	200 Non-certified Subs	2,000	3,000	5,000	Need more funds in non-certified
110 Certified Subs	110 Non-certified Subs	7,000	14,000	21,000	Music Teacher
110 Supplies	110 Supplies over \$500	2,000	1,341	3,341	2 Teacher Laptops
600 Supplies	600 Supplies over \$500	1,264	4,750	6,014	Connex

Current contingency balance: 304,701

Balance after approval: 164,901

110 Function = Regular Education

200 Function = Special Education

450 Admin Support

600 Function = Operations and Maintenance

The committee also presents a budget summary to the APC board at every meeting that outlines the current approved budget (which may include new staffing request estimates), the actual budget (reflecting actual costs for any new staff), the new proposed budget including that month's budget transfers, and the fund expended from each discretionary account to that date. An example of this report is in section 9(a).

C. Operational Efficiency

BCS has worked to develop efficient operations during its initial five year charter. Efficiency has been demonstrated over the years as we have maintained a balanced budget, expanded enrollment numbers, and maintained a solid teaching staff. Regarding financial efficiencies, BCS has met all requirements and obligations, while developing and growing a strong academic program, and has ended every year with a positive fund balance.

BCS has the authority to independently make choices about contracts for goods and services, preparing a budget, leasing facilities for school purposes, and purchasing supplies, furniture, and equipment. We have the right to purchase goods and services through MSBSD contracts and vendors. In the event that it is in the best interest of the school to enter into purchasing contracts beyond those in place, BCS may obtain competitive bids for goods and services, which will be procured through a system of competitive bidding as required by district policy and state law.

10. Facility Plans

BCS currently sits on a 15 acres, leased site at 7107 East Palmer-Wasilla Highway in Palmer. Since opening our doors in 2010, our enrollment has grown by nearly 20%. With permission from our landlord, we have made several modifications to the property and existing structures in order to accommodate our growing student population. Each modification has enhanced our school. We have extended the main floor and added an additional floor. This area is now able to accommodate grades 4 and 5. The upstairs accommodates the middle school. However, with the double track the middle school will outgrow the space in the next two years.

In order to accommodate our growing population the current parking lot has been expanded. Additionally, BCS is in process of purchasing two portables for the 2014-15 school year and an additional two portables for the 2015-16 school year. Eventually, the portables will accommodate a growing middle school population and provide needed additional classroom space inside the building.

BCS has devoted a section of the property to the development of a playground. Over the past two years new playground equipment has been purchased and installed.

In March of 2015, the lease for our location on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway will reach maturity. At that time, we will renew the current lease with the additional portables. We recognize that while our current facility meets our current basic needs as a school, meeting longer term program and viability goals makes relocating to a facility designed specifically for BCS an appealing and viable option. Our current facility allows us to educate a double track of students from grades K-8 with the additional portables. However, we have no multi-purpose room and some of the classrooms are of smaller size than other classrooms. In order to achieve the greatest staff to student efficiency and provide the most opportunities for promoting success, our ideal facility would accommodate 420 students. Ideally, this would be within one building with a full size gym for physical education and school assembly.

The APC will be discussing the long-term plans for the school. Part of that discussion will be to determine if staying in our current facility or initiating a site selection process, as allowed for under borough code with the Mat-Su Borough, would be the best option.

Within three to five years, it is our intent and aspiration to occupy a facility that fosters growth and success, contributes to BCS's Waldorf inspired program and ensures to the long-term viability of BCS. In the meantime, our school will continue to provide a positive, secure, and vital atmosphere for staff satisfaction and student success. Our current site plans with two portables are as follows:

Architects
Alaska
 Architects, Inc.
 900 E. 3rd Ave., Suite 403
 Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2327
 Tel: (907) 562-1234
 Fax: (907) 562-1235
 Mobile: (907) 562-1236
 Email: info@architects.com



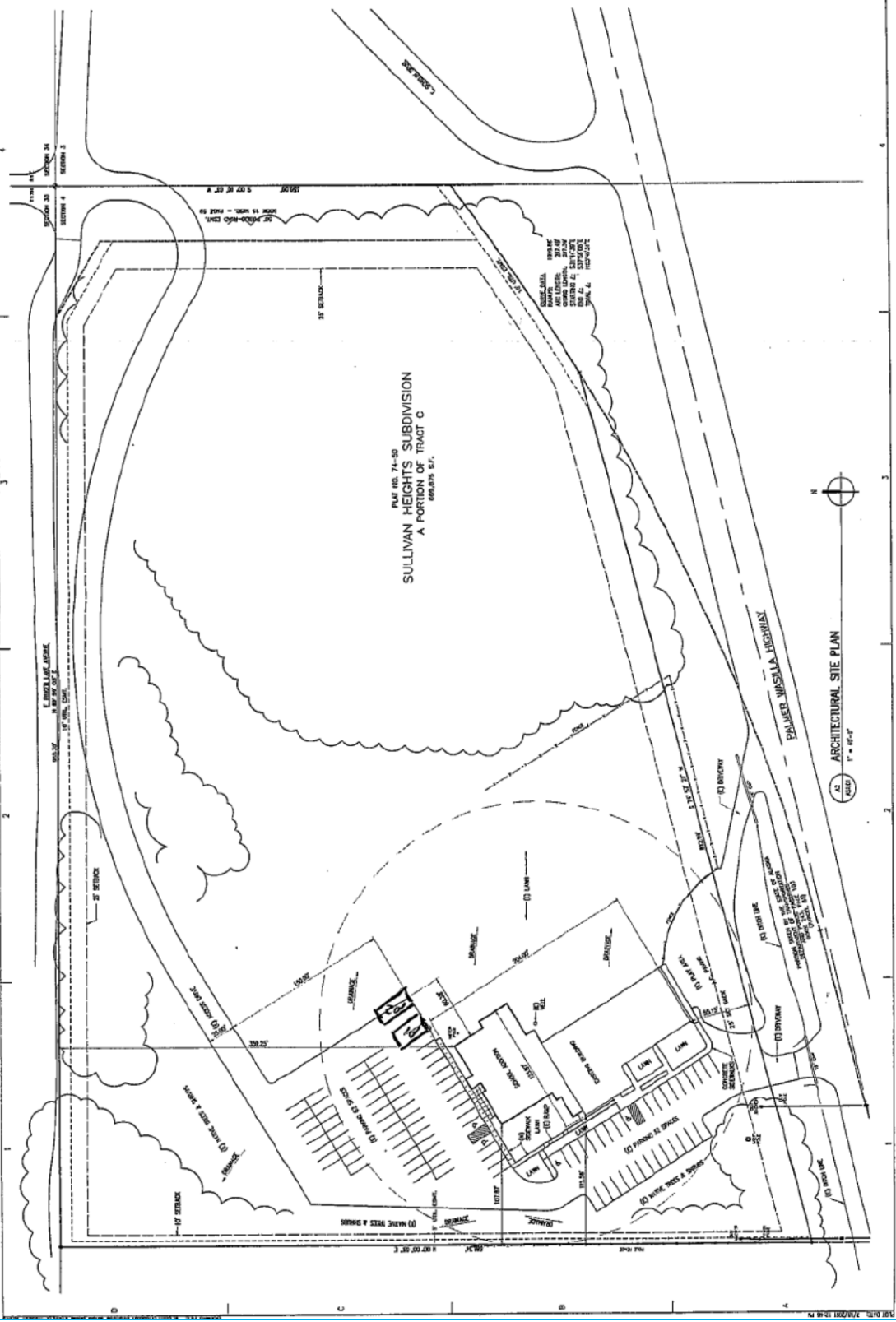
MATANUSKA-SUSTINA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BIRCHTREE CHARTER SCHOOL
PHASE II
 7101 E. Palmer-Wasilla Highway, Palmer, Alaska

Revisions	No.	Description	Date

Drawn by	AS
Checked	AS
Job No.	101
Job Name	ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

Sheet Contents
 ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

Category	AS	Sheet No.	1.01
----------	----	-----------	------



11. Teacher to Student Ratio

A. Teacher-Student Ratio

Based on the following plan, BCS will maintain an average PTR of 22.5: 1. The PTR will be broken down by grade level, as follows:

K – 18: 1
1 – 24: 1
2 – 24: 1
3 – 24: 1
4 – 24: 1
5 – 24: 1
6 – 24: 1
7 – 20: 1
8 – 20: 1

The teacher to student ratio at BCS was selected because we believe that it is important to fill our classes, in the younger grades, with students who will remain with our program through their elementary and middle school years. Because of the unique nature of our program, it is more difficult for students to enter into our program in the later grades. By decreasing our PTR in the upper grades, we avoid adding too many students to our classes that have not acquired an understanding of the skills and philosophy of our program. This allows us to maintain a dynamic of growth and forward momentum for all students in the classroom.

At the April 2, 2014 APC meeting the PTR was approved. The minutes are as follows:

MINUTES



Birchtree APC

Board Meeting

Date: April 2, 2014

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Birchtree Charter School

Mission of Birchtree Charter School: to nurture and promote the development of healthy, responsible, and creative human beings.

The Birchtree Learning Plans includes:

- that the personal behavior of adults and teachers at BCS will be an example to the pupils.
 - that each class will be a learning community for respect, tolerance, and understanding.
 - that BCS is designed to function as a living system that balances initiative and accountability.
- All teachers, staff and participants will be asked to make a commitment to develop him or herself along with the pupils.

APC MEMBERS PRESENT: Anna Folsom, Lori Berrigan, Abigail Sheldon, Rob Catlett, Debbie McKimmey, Cathy Busbey, Brandt Bowen

I. Call to Order at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Sheldon moved, McKimmey seconded approving the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

III. Mission Moment

The mission moment was provided by Prairie Adams, Pedagogical consultant..

III. Standing Agenda

A. Approval of February 4, 2014 APC Meeting Minutes

Folsom moved, Catlett seconded approval of revised minutes. Minutes approved unanimously.

B. Approval of March 19, 2014 APC Meeting Minutes

Bowen moved, McKimmey seconded approval of minutes. Minutes approved unanimously.

C. Principal Report – Cathy Busbey

Reviewed.

D. Pedagogical Council Report – Donna Levesque

Reviewed. Board encouraged putting some of the proposals in our Strategic Plan and consider funding by the APC as needed.

E. Treasurer's Report – Rob Catlett

Reviewed.

F. BPG Liaison Report – Anna Folsom

BPG had a work session. They worked on, among other things, next year’s calendar. They considered the possibility of sending the chair of APC and/or BPG to visit Winterberry. The APC discussed the shared liaison position and decided bylaws will need to be changed for both the APC and BPG to allow for sharing. This will be included in New Business for our next regular APC meeting.

G. Committee Reports

- 1.** Communication and Bylaws - No Report
- 2.** Building Expansion – No report other than there will be a change in leadership and they will address the possibility of portables when we hear from the district as to if and when we will have them.
- 3.** Charter Rewrite – The committee will meet Friday 4/4/14 with people from the district. The school board wants the charter re-write by mid-May.
- 4.** Principal Evaluation – The parent survey has been sent. So far 75 families have responded. The board discussed the staff surveys.

IV. Persons to be Heard

Prairie Adams, consultant, spoke the principal evaluation and offered many valuable suggestions. She will reduce them to writing for us soon.

Jessica Clarkson, parent, expressed concerns about changes to the early release schedule, increased class sizes and portables.

V. Old Business

A. Principal Evaluation Survey

Sheldon moved to encourage staff to include signatures in their surveys. Catlett seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sheldon moved and Folsom seconded distributing the staff survey electronically. Motion approved unanimously.

Bowen moved and Catlett seconded sharing the survey results and names with the Principal. Motion approved unanimously.

B. Board Development

The board currently has two book suggestions. New ones will be added when we’ve read and reviewed the two we currently have.

VI. New Business/Action Items

A. Pupil/Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Catlett moved and Folsom seconded accepting the proposed PTR with a change in the language “grades 6-8” to “grades 7-8.”

B. Lottery

Sheldon moved, Catlett seconded the proposed Lottery Error Procedure. Motion approved unanimously.

C. Budget Transfer Request

Folsom moved, McKimmey seconds approving the proposed budget transfer request. Motion approved unanimously.

D. Early Release

Sheldon moved, Folsom seconded changing the day of early release from Friday to Thursday beginning in the Fall of 2014. Motion approved unanimously.

E. Debrief of Strategy Meeting

This item will be moved to Old Business for the next regular meeting of the APC.

F. Next Regular Meeting

The next regular meeting of the APC will be May 7, 2014 from 6-8 pm. There will be an executive session of non-staff members of the APC on April 15, 2014 from 5:30-8:00pm

VII. New Business/Non-Action

Parent Surveys should be returned by 4/7/14

Staff Surveys should be returned by 4/14/14

APC Executive Committee will review both sets of data 4/15/14

VIII. Future Items/Future Business

A. Next Meeting Items

Debrief of the Strategy Meeting

Changing the bylaws of the APC and BPG to allow sharing the BPG Liaison position among two people.

B. Projected Enrollment

BCS's projected enrollment is based on the PTR listed above.

Projected enrollment:

2014/2015 – 382

2015/2016 – 402

2016/2017 and beyond – 422

The school has shown consistent growth on a year-to-year basis, as well as a very healthy waitlist in most grades.

Historical waitlist data:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2010/2011				19	5	14	8		
2011/2012	25	2	16	23	26	18	20	7	
2012/2013	8	19	23	6	3	27	25	5	2
2013/2104	3	5	27	10	14	14	23	12	

This information leads us to believe that will be able to meet our enrollment goals with the current PTR.

12. Enrollment

A. Enrollment Stability

The enrollment has been stable at BCS. The school opened anticipating 160 students for the 2010/2011, but enrolled 218. Enrollment has continued to grow every year, as illustrated in the following list:

Historical enrollment:

2010/2011 – 218

2011/2012 – 274

2012/2013 – 299

2013/2014 – 318

For the 2014/2015 school year, BCS anticipates having three kindergarten classes, two 1st-6th grade classes, and one 7th and 8th grade class. The following year 1st-7th will be double tracked, and the next year 1st-8th will be double tracked. The PTR is as follows:

K – 1:18

1 – 1 : 24

2 – 1 : 24

3 – 1 : 24

4 – 1 : 24

5 – 1 : 24

6 – 1 : 24

7 – 1 : 20

8 – 1 : 20

Therefore, we project that our enrollment numbers will be as follows:

Projected

enrollment:

2014/2015 – 382

2015/2016 – 402

2016/2017 and beyond – 422

Starting in 2016/2017, we will have three kindergartens and will have a double track in 1st-8th grade. Therefore, we expect our enrollment to remain relatively consistent from year to year after this time.

B. Enrollment Maximum

The following table shows the number of students on the waitlist in each grade for each year that the school has been open. This data shows that most classes have been enrolled at a maximum each year, and suggests that there should not be any problem maintaining our enrollment numbers in the future.

Historical waitlist data:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2010/2011				19	5	14	8		
2011/2012	25	2	16	23	26	18	20	7	
2012/2013	8	19	23	6	3	27	25	5	2
2013/2104	3	5	27	10	14	14	23	12	

Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- BCS is the only whole child curriculum available in the valley.
- Many parents are choosing to home-school as they do not feel the traditional school curriculum is engaging or meeting their child’s needs.
- Many parents feel isolated in their choice to home-school and have stated they would love to have this option and community available to them in the valley.
- Families from Anchorage and Talkeetna have moved to the valley because this education choice is available.
- The community the school leads enables parent education in Waldorf inspired methods. Mainstream research shows the value of whole child education and academics starting in 1st grade when the child is 6 years old.

Challenges

- We are not able to offer the same sports/exploratory programs as an established middle school.
- Parents must provide transportation for their children to attend the school.
- School lunches are not provided. Students bring sack lunches daily.
- Waldorf-trained certified teachers are hard to find. We realize professional development for our teachers is a top priority. We also realize this is an added expense. The BPG did secure a federal grant that covered the cost of training for most of our staff to become Waldorf certified teachers.
- BCS has grown quickly over the past four years. Currently, we will need portables in order to meet the needs of all classrooms. Continued growth will challenge us to either to expand or find another facility.

- Parent volunteers are a must to help the school succeed. We realize that there may be times volunteer rates will drop, but we are confident that all parents want the best for their children and will provide the support they can to help the school succeed.

Plan for Recruitment of Students:

BCS recruits for new students by advertising in the newspaper, word of mouth, community service, local radio advertising, and by outreach at parent nights within our building and outside of BCS.

13. Teaching Method/Curriculum

A. The BCS Learning Plan

In utilizing a holistic approach, BCS employs specific methods and strategies across the curriculum. These include: class-teacher looping, main lesson, thematic units (called blocks), learning rhythms, memory development, collaborative learning, lesson sequence, narrative/lecture format, visual imagery, multisensory approach, and an integrated social curriculum.

Class-teacher looping

In keeping with the Waldorf education model, the class and teachers loop together from grades 1-5, and from grades 6-8. This establishes consistency with the curriculum delivery, provides a continuum of instruction, and builds close parental ties. The class teacher is responsible for all core curricular subjects.

Main Lesson

Main lesson consists of two hours dedicated to teaching the core subjects. Scheduling sometimes mandates that this academic focus occurs in the later part of the day for 6th-8th graders. Main lesson is often followed by skill practice periods and foreign language, music and manual arts.

Thematic Units

Thematic units, called blocks of study, rotate throughout the year. The content of the main lesson corresponds with this rotation of blocks. A block typically runs 3-4 weeks, allowing for an in-depth study of each core subject.

Learning Rhythms

Establishing rhythms is a center point of Waldorf education. These rhythms are divided into annual, monthly, weekly and daily rhythms. The kindergarten curriculum is delivered in conjunction with the seasons. Block schedules determine monthly thematic units. Weekly schedules strike a balance between activity and stillness, focused and generalized work, and intellectual and physical work. These rhythms build a dependable routine in each student's day.

Memory Development

Beginning in the early grades, memory development is largely attained through kinesthetic movement. Gradually, situational memory evolves into reflex memory and finally into the ability to think abstractly. Students are expected to assimilate what they have learned through movement, song, recitation, or hands on projects.

Collaborative Learning

Waldorf education holds teaching to a mixed-ability group as a model for community building. Whenever possible, high expectations are held for the entire class of students. Grouping students into smaller, sometimes ability-based groups, helps all students to attain a goal.

Narrative/Lecture Format

To build concepts, Waldorf teachers initially deliver content with the use of narrative stories or lecture-type formats. This enables students to develop sequence, identify problems and resolutions, and to identify with various personalities.

Visual Imagery

One of the tenets of Waldorf education explains the way in which children's understanding of concepts change as they develop. In the early grades, emphasis is placed on the teacher's creative imaginative pictures for the students to formulate a mental picture. As children become able to think more abstractly, lesson content moves from literal pictures to metaphor.

Multisensory Approach

A goal in every lesson is to appeal to various learning styles and to acknowledge various intelligences. Hands-on projects, drawing and painting, singing, and playing wind and string instruments foster an experiential learning process.

Integrated Social Curriculum

An important aspect of the Waldorf curriculum is the development of social skills and responsibility. BCS calls upon children and adults alike to commit to communicating openly, respectfully, and directly, with little reliance on electronic media. Students are expected to exercise initiative in their activities, to accept increasing responsibility, and to gain independence toward being self-directed. This is referred to as educating the will, a key component in achieving social competence.

The following curriculum chart developed by Birchtree explains the curriculum through grades K-8:

Birchtree Charter School Waldorf Curriculum

10-23-13

In addition to other standards, students at Birchtree learn the following:

CURRICULUM	KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
Language Arts	Literacy through story telling	Consonant & vowel study, beginning writing & reading	Writing/reading, collaborative composition	Writing/reading, cursive script, grammar lessons, parts of speech, independent writing	Writing/reading, grammar lessons, parts of speech, informal letter writing, report writing	Writing/reading, grammar, verb conjugation, parts of speech, business letter writing, report writing	Writing/reading, expanded grammar, verb conjugation, lengthy essay writing, report writing	Writing/reading, grammar, composition, poetry writing, report writing	Writing/reading, grammar, composition, poems, plays, report writing
Mathematics	Counting	4 processes, multiples & other math facts	4 processes, multiples & facts, place value	Money, whole numbers, measurement	Long division, whole numbers, 4 processes with fractions	Whole numbers, 4 processes with decimals	Business math, percentages, interest, money, geometry	Practical applications: geometry, beginning algebra	Practical applications: geometry, beginning algebra
History	Fairy tales & cultural stories	Fairy tales	Fables & legends of the saints	Hebrew stories	Norse mythology	Ancient civilizations: India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, & Greece	History and literature of Rome & Middle Ages	Renaissance, reformation, age of exploration & discovery	United States history & the modern age
Geography	Body geography				Mt-Su & Alaska	North America	World Geography: South America, Europe, Middle East	World Geography: Europe, Africa, Asia, South America	World Geography: North America, Asia, Africa, Europe
Science & Nature	Nature stories	Stories personifying elements of nature	Stories personifying elements of nature	Gardening, farming, building	Zoology: Human and animal	Botany	Physics, chemistry, physiology	Physics, chemistry, physiology	Physics, chemistry, physiology
Visual Arts	Painting, drawing, beeswax modeling	Painting, drawing, beeswax modeling	Painting, drawing, beeswax modeling	Painting, drawing, clay &/or beeswax modeling	Painting, drawing, clay & beeswax modeling	Painting, drawing, clay modeling	Painting, drawing, clay modeling	Painting, drawing, clay modeling	Painting, drawing, clay modeling
Form Drawing	Archetypal Shapes	Straight line and curve	Running forms and symmetry	Horizontal & vertical symmetry	Celtic braiding	Freehand geometry	Geometry with instruments	Geometry with instruments	Geometry with instruments
Handwork	Finger knitting	Knitting flute cases	Knitting- garter stitch	Crochet projects	Cross stitch and embroidery	Knitting in the round socks or slippers	Hand sewing stuffed animals or people	Felting and sewing of larger items	Machine sewing
Instrumental Music	Listening	Pentatonic flute	Pentatonic flute	Recorder	Recorder, violin	Recorder, violin	Recorder, strings	Recorder, strings	Recorder, strings
Vocal Music	Singing with class teacher	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist	Singing with class teacher & specialist
Drama & Speech	Puppetry	Class play	Class play	Class play	Class play	Class play	Class play	Class play	Class play
Woodworking	Sanding					Trees/wood, Sawing bird houses, folk art	Carving- spoons	Hollowing- boxes/bowls	Joining/planning- stools
Foreign Language		German	German	German	German	German	German	German	German

This chart represents curriculum development to date and will be periodically revised.

B. Monitoring Plan

Curriculum is monitored by the principal and the pedagogical council. The principal makes frequent visits to each classroom. Curriculum implementation is monitored both formally through teacher evaluations and informally through principal and peer observations. The pedagogical council is made up of a group of current teachers that meet bi-monthly to review and make recommendations on school-wide curriculum and procedures.

Our staff works collaboratively in several ways to create and share curriculum materials as well as monitor the success of our students. Teachers work within grade-level partnerships; additionally, they work within lower, intermediate, and middle level groupings throughout the school year.

BCS uses MAP testing twice a year in grades 5-8 and takes part in state mandated testing. The results from these assessments are used by teachers and monitored by the principal and the APC, as a means of continually evaluating the results of curriculum implementation.

C. Review and Revision

The pedagogical council works closely with the principal, the instructional coach, and the teachers to review the curriculum and make any necessary changes. The elementary grades have been using the curriculum guide of Saxon math and the curriculum guide of the Spaulding program when teaching during their skills block time. In grades 6-8 the teachers work with the principal to evaluate and choose curriculum materials for skill blocks that are revised to include Alaska State standards.

We have hired a half-time pedagogical dean for the 2014-15 school year to help us continue aligning curriculum to the Waldorf philosophy. Additionally, she will work to align curriculum vertically across all grades and horizontally within each grade level to ensure that standards are being met and that student growth is being achieved. She will work closely with the pedagogical council, administration, and the teachers to help select the best materials, strategies, and methods for students at each grade level.

D. Intervention

BCS will monitor student progress through monthly grade level meetings and by using the RTI process. Students who are struggling either academically or behaviorally will be brought to the RTI team. The team will discuss the students' needs and determine the best interventions for that student.

Interventions range from small group instruction using a researched based program to time with a counselor or peers for behavioral interventions. The RTI team meets two times per month or more if the need arises. After the initial meeting the RTI team will follow-up on individual students to see if the interventions are working. If the interventions are not showing improvement either in academics or behavior then new interventions will be attempted. If after time the interventions are not showing improvement then the child may be referred for a special education evaluation. The RTI team consists of the school psychologist, principal and/or assistant principal, special education teacher; counselor, interventionist and two teachers.

E. Educational Disabilities

Over time the school has increased the number of special education staff. We currently employ 2.5 special education teachers, and three special education assistants. Students entering the school who have a current IEP have a transition meeting in order to review the IEP with the parents, teacher, and special education staff.

In order to meet the needs of the special education students, BCS will use both a “push-in” and “pull-out” model to provide services to students who have an IEP.

Fiscal Responsibilities for Special Education Issues

BCS has elected to be a public school within MSBSD. Therefore, it will receive its equitable share of special education funding and/or services to support the educational needs of students with disabilities enrolled in BCS. BCS will be responsible for providing its own special education services and instruction to the students it serves. BCS will follow MSBSD special education protocol and policy for:

- Identification
- Referral
- Assessment
- Development of IEP
- IEP review
- Due process procedures

F. English Language Learners

BCS will be responsible for providing language rich, contextually based education for English Language Learners (ELL) while simultaneously meeting their needs for academic advancement and community and social awareness. The experiential, active nature of a Waldorf inspired whole child education enables students to acquire language through authentic experiences found most beneficial for students who are learning a new language.

English language learners will thrive within BCS's Waldorf inspired curriculum. Through the integration of science, nature, music, literacy and art, the ELL student will gain English language skills while developing a sense of acceptance in the school culture. Art-centered, community-based learning experiences are valuable for ELL students because they feel more involved, confident, and productive in their learning environment. Respect and community are fostered, classrooms are uninhibited and open to language-learning, all of which contributes to success for the ELL student. Students are able to perform more cognitively demanding tasks. The quality of written and spoken language improves when student-created images are used to promote learning.

Finally, teacher looping is advantageous for ELL students as the teacher is able to stay with the students for a period of years providing them with consistency in instruction. Teachers are able to assess English acquisition and proficiency over time, a span of years, versus one year only. Teachers will provide educational activities that develop the English language. Students' verbal, reading, writing, and listening skills through both whole group and individual instruction improve, at the same time the needs of the whole child are met.

14. Collective Bargaining

A. Waivers and Exemptions

BCS administrators, teachers and staff will follow the collective bargaining agreements held between MSBSD and their individual unions and/or organizations. No exemptions are requested from the collective bargaining contract.

B. Applicable Collective Bargaining Provisions

Employees of BCS are subject to all provisions of the school district's collective bargaining agreements.

15. Contract Termination

A. Termination Clause

BCS agrees to comply with all applicable state, federal and local laws and regulations, and will comply with all MSBSD policies, regulations and procedures.

1. Termination by the District: BCS recognizes the authority and responsibility of the local and Alaska State Board of Education to review the results of BCS. The School Board may terminate this agreement and revoke the charter for the following reasons:

- a. If the Board determines the BCS failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.
- b. If the Board determines that BCS failed to make reasonable progress toward achievement of the performance standards identified in this application.
- c. If the Board determines that BCS violated any provision of the law in which BCS was not specifically exempted.
- d. If BCS otherwise breaches any other terms or conditions of the agreement.

3. Charter School Termination Rights: This agreement may be terminated by the charter school prior to its term in the following situations:

- a. As a result of a failure to reach an adequate enrollment.
- b. With the approval of the district.

B. Termination Notice and Procedures

- a. Each party shall give the other at least thirty (30) days advanced written notice of the termination of this agreement, for any of the reasons described above.
- b. Notwithstanding the foregoing, unless unusual and compelling circumstances warrant termination in the middle of a school year, both parties agree to provide written notification to the other party by February 1, of the intent to terminate the contract at fiscal year-end, and the reasons therefore.

c. A charter school's contract may be terminated by the district school board for the school's failure to meet educational achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause. During the charter school's annual review with the School Board, each party's compliance with the provisions of the contract will be reviewed. If any allegations of noncompliance with the charter school contract are presented either during the annual review or at any other time, then the School Board, through the Superintendent or designee, shall investigate these allegations. Prior to terminating the charter school contract, the School Board and the charter school Academic Policy Committee shall attempt to remedy any violations of the contract.

The School Board shall provide written notice to the charter school Academic Policy Committee of its intent to terminate the contract and the reasons therefore.

- c. Upon notice of the intent to terminate the contract, the school district shall provide BCS no less than thirty (30) days to remedy the breach of contract.
- d. If the Breach is not remedied in a satisfactory manner within the designated time period, the district may terminate the contract. If the charter school remedies the breach of contract, the district may elect to rescind its notice of intent to terminate the contract.

Disposition of the Charter School Assets

Should the Charter School contract be terminated all unused funds and/or assets shall remain with the Mat-Su School District. Dissemination of funds and/or assets will be determined by the Superintendent or designee.

Appendix A – Standards Based Report Cards
Grade 2 and Grade 5 Samples

**Appendix B – Waldorf Standards aligned with Alaska State
Standards
Samples of English/Language Arts and Math**

Appendix C - Transportation

Transportation:

Birchtree Charter School and the MSBSD transportation department have been able to offer limited bussing to students. The bus picks-up and drops-off at two central locations each day. The exact schedule for the bus is as follows:

The bus picks up students at Target in Wasilla at 7:20 AM and then proceeds to Carrs in Palmer. The pick-up time for Carrs is 7:50 AM. The bus leaves Carrs and drops-off students at Birchtree at 8:10 AM.

In the afternoon the bus arrives at Birchtree at 3:00. Students leave Birchtree at 3:25 and are dropped off at Wasilla Target at 3:35. The bus departs Target and arrives at Palmer Carrs at 3:50.

The bus transports about fifty students on a daily basis. Birchtree Charter continues to work with the school district to improve the bus options for our students.

Appendix D – MSBSD Board Policy for Charter Schools

BP 6190 CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Mat-Su Borough School District recognizes that charter schools are a vehicle for implementing innovative approaches to learning, and desires to work cooperatively with parents, teachers, community members, and students to develop viable charter schools as an educational alternative for its students. The District also recognizes its responsibility to safeguard the interests of its students and community in considering whether to grant or deny charter school petitions. The Board shall give appropriate consideration to any charter school petition in light of its overall effect on the district's students and the proposed school's ability to function effectively and meet its goals.

A charter school petition shall be approved if the Board determines that approval of the petition is in the best interests of the district's students, if approval will not cause the number of charter schools operating within District limits to exceed the maximum number permitted under state law, and if the charter petition complies in all respects with the requirements of state laws, regulations, and district policies and regulations.

A charter petition may not be approved if, among other things:

- a) The proposed charter school budget would result in an increase in the level of the district's per pupil expenses relative to its per pupil financial support.
- b) The proposed educational program would discriminate against students based on any protected classification.

Charter school applications for a given school year shall be due by October 1 preceding the school year in which operations are to commence. All charter schools must meet the following requirements, in addition to any other requirements established by law, regulation, or school district policy:

1. A charter school shall comply with all district policies, regulations, and procedures other than those pertaining to textbooks, programs, curriculum, and scheduling, except to the extent that the charter school is specifically exempted from compliance under its charter school contract. For example, a charter school shall comply in all respects with district discipline policies and the district's accounting, audit, and other fiscal procedures.
2. A charter school shall operate in compliance with all laws and regulations applicable to district schools.
3. A charter school shall comply with the provisions of collective bargaining agreements applicable to teachers or employees of the school, unless the district and the affected bargaining unit agree to an exemption from the agreement's requirements.
4. A charter school shall operate under the annual program budget established in the charter school's contract with the district. The budget shall be no less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the school, less administrative costs retained by the district, determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Education for the district. The charter school's program budget shall be used for operating expenses of the school's educational program, including the purchase of textbooks, classroom materials, and instructional aids.
5. A charter school may not be affiliated with a religious organization or promote religion or any particular religious ideology or philosophy.
6. **Facilities:** All charter school lease and purchase agreements will adhere to Borough Code: 19.08.023. No lease agreement or purchase agreement may be entered into without the approval of the charter school's Academic Policy Committee and the Superintendent. A lease agreement will not be approved unless the agreement includes: a provision for termination of the lease agreement, without further financial obligation of

the charter school or the district, in the event of a lack of appropriation/funding for the charter school or in the event of termination of the charter school's authorization to operate as a charter school. A charter school shall conduct its program in a facility that satisfies all health and safety requirements applicable to other district schools.

7. A charter school shall establish an academic policy committee that shall select the principal for the school and supervise the academic operation of the school. The committee shall consist of parents of students attending the school, teachers at the charter school, employees of the charter school, and community members. School district employees may be voting members. All Academic Policy Committee members must abstain from voting if there is a conflict of interest. The Academic Policy Committee will meet regularly and not less than four times during the academic year with teachers and staff to monitor progress in achieving the policies and goals established for the school and to review, evaluate and improve its operations.

8. The principal of the charter school shall select, appoint, and otherwise supervise employees of the charter school. All hires, retentions, and non-retentions of charter school staff shall be subject to the approval of the district school board. No staff member may be assigned to the charter school without his or her consent.

9. A charter school shall enroll all eligible students who submit a timely application. In the event it is not possible to accommodate all eligible students who submit a timely application, students shall be accepted for the charter school program by random drawing.

10. Charter school teachers shall be evaluated in a manner equivalent to that used to evaluate all other teachers in the district. In the event that the principal of the charter school lacks an administrative teaching certificate authorizing him or her to approve the evaluations of certificated personnel, another District administrator who possesses the appropriate certification shall be assigned by agreement between the charter school and the district school board to participate in the evaluation of charter school certificated staff.

11. Assessments: All tests and assessments required by the United States Department of Education, and the State Department of Education and the Early Development, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District will be administered to charter school students; support will be commensurate with that provided to other schools; exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent in writing. A curriculum based measurement aligned and approved with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District will be administered to charter school students; support will be commensurate with that provided to other schools; exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent in writing.

12. Fees: A charter school may not charge tuition to students who reside within the District. If the charter school collects fees for activities the Academic Policy Committee shall adopt an activity fee policy. Supply and activity fees charged to students by the charter school may be placed in a district account for use by the charter school. The indirect cost rate does not apply to activity and supply fees collected by the charter school. The Academic Policy Committee shall develop a procedure for waiving activity fees for families who cannot afford the fee.

13. Non-profit: A charter school may establish a non-profit school support organization to receive donations and/or raise funds in support of the charter school. School-connected organizations automatically grant the district the right to audit their financial records, either by district personnel or by a certified public accountant.

14. Conflict Resolution: Each charter school shall adopt a conflict resolution policy. Conflicts not resolved may be appealed to the Academic Policy Committee.

15. A charter school's contract may be terminated by the district school board for the school's failure to meet educational achievement goals or fiscal management standards, or for other good cause. During the charter school's annual review with the School Board, each party's compliance with the provisions of the contract will be reviewed. If any allegations of noncompliance with the charter school contract are presented either during the annual review or at any other time, then the School Board, through the Superintendent or designee, shall investigate these allegations. Prior to terminating the charter school contract, the School Board and the charter school Academic Policy Committee shall attempt to remedy any violations of the contract. The school board shall provide written notice to the charter school Academic Policy Committee of its intent to terminate the contract and the reasons therefore.

16. Once approved by both the local and State Boards of Education, the charter school will be subject to an annual review of its operations and finances by the School Board. Annually, the charter school will submit a written summary report. This report will include information on the attainment of student performance expectations, meetings of governing bodies of the charter school, descriptions of charter school activities, and other information of interest to the local School Board. The financial report shall also include the budget for the current school year and the proposed budget for the next school year.

Legal References:

ALASKA STATUTES

[14.03.250-14.03.280](#) Charter Schools

ALASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

[4 AAC 33.110](#) Charter Schools

Adoption Date: 05/01/96

Revised Date: 08/20/97

Revised Date: 09/19/07

Revised Date: 11/18/09

Revised Date: 05/02/12

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT