



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEMORANDUM

TO: Esther Evikanna, President
Members of the Board

THROUGH: David Vadiveloo, Superintendent *David Vadiveloo*

FROM: Michael Hautala, Director of Student Services *MH*
MH

DATE: March 13, 2026

**SUBJECT: Special Education Recruitment and Retention
Incentive**

Memo No. SB26-111
(Action Item)

NSBSD Strategic Plan Summary:

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

Issue Summary:

This memo seeks approval from the Board of Education to implement a one-time signing bonus and retention incentive for Special Education teachers for the 2026-2027 school year. This incentive is intended to enhance recruitment and retention efforts to attract quality staff into this area.

We propose offering a one-time taxable, non-TRSable signing bonus (for new staff) and retention incentive (for returning staff) of \$7,500 to encourage Special Education teacher engagement for the 2026-2027 school year. The incentive will be structured as follows:

For new hire and returning SPED teachers:

A \$7,500 signing bonus or retention incentive paid in two equal payments:

- \$3750 in January, 2027 after successful completion of semester 1 and return in semester 2
- \$3750 in June, 2027 after successful completion of semester 2

Background:

Special Education positions continue to represent one of the most challenging job classifications for Districts to fill. Teacher shortages statewide and nationally have been felt more acutely in the Special Education space. At the same time, SPED needs in schools appear to be on the rise.

The District has maintained a focus on recruiting for these positions but is still understaffed. Of the 24 SPED teacher positions budgeted for NSBSD schools for next year, more than 50% remain unfilled. Filling these positions is vital as they ensure the District remains compliant with Federal law regarding students with disabilities and the provision of specialized instruction to our students with continuity.

In the current recruiting climate, Districts nationwide are offering financial incentives up to \$12,000 sign-on to attract and retain qualified educators in these critical roles. To remain competitive in the SPED marketplace it has become necessary for the NSBSD to offer similar incentives.





Funding Source and Purchase/Contract Amount:

This initiative is estimated to cost the District \$180,000 and will be funded from the FY27 Special Education budget.

Recommendation:

The administration recommends the Board approve this one-time, non-recurring **Special Education Recruitment and Retention Incentive** to be paid to new-hire and re-hire Special Education teachers of the North Slope Borough School District per the details of this memo.

Proposed Motion:

“I move that the NSBSD Board of Education approve the one time **Special Education Recruitment and Retention Incentive** for FY27 as described in this memo.”

Moved by _____ Seconded by _____

Vote _____

Signature: *DS Vadiveloo*

Email: david.vadiveloo@nsbsd.org

Signature: *Michael Hautala*

Michael Hautala (Mar 13, 2026 18:39:04 AKDT)

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