

Girdwood Valley School
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Resolving to Support a High School for Girdwood
October 12, 2007

WHEREAS, many of the undersigned individuals, groups and organizations, public and private, participated to date in four Girdwood community meetings held in the summer of 2007, where they agreed to join together to ensure that the Girdwood Valley develop and prosper as a unique Alaskan community that provides both educational opportunity and sustainable community development; and

WHEREAS, Girdwood is the only community of its size in Alaska without a high school; and

WHEREAS, families are leaving the Girdwood community because of the lack of educational opportunities for children in grades 9 – 12; and

WHEREAS, there is a profound lack of year-round economic and educational opportunity for sustaining Girdwood as a vibrant community; and

WHEREAS, Chugach School District's educational model, which has received nationwide acclaim (like the Malcom Baldrige Award for quality and excellence in 2001) can be brought to Girdwood in the form of a state-approved correspondence charter school; and

WHEREAS, the Chugach School District's mission statement demonstrates a commitment to developing and supporting a partnership with parents and business; and

WHEREAS, since Girdwood's educational needs are paramount to its future success, the addition of a high school in the community is supported by local, Municipality of Anchorage, and State of Alaska leadership in this statement of support or Memorandum of Understanding.

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned individuals, groups and organizations, public and private, agree to the following educational principles and pledge their best efforts to implement those principles for the betterment of education in the Girdwood Valley.

- 1. The establishment and operation of a high school in Girdwood is essential for Girdwood's future growth and prosperity.**

2. **Chugach School District has demonstrated operational and financial interest and capability in bringing a secondary school to Girdwood, using its tested and successful Quality Schools Model.**
3. **The establishment of such a high school will provide incentive for overall four-season resort development for the Girdwood Valley that will provide opportunities for commercial businesses, jobs, education, training, recreation, and an expanded tax base for the community and State.**
4. **The Municipality of Anchorage supports the establishment of the school and will use its best efforts to promptly provide land suitable for a school facility of approximately five acres in size.**
5. **A collaborative effort will be made by the undersigned, including local businesses, the Municipality of Anchorage, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, parents, and community to establish the Girdwood high school. In that regard, we pledge our best efforts and mutual support for prompt and successful planning and permitting outcomes, and agree to participate in a public/private task force to achieve those objectives and facilitate the efforts of local, state and federal agencies to establish and operate a high school in Girdwood.**

DATED AT GIRDWOOD, ALASKA, this 12 day of October, 2007.

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Mark Begich, Mayor

Mary Jane Michael, Director, Community and Economic Development

Bill Mehner, Director, Heritage Land Bank

ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY

Dan Coffey, Chair

Jennifer Johnston

Chris Birch

GIRDWOOD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Nick Danger, Chairman

CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bob Crumley, Superintendent

STATE OF ALASKA

Sarah Palin, Governor

Barbara Thompson, State of Alaska, Commissioner of Education

**Roger Sampson, President Education Commission of the States
Former State of Alaska Commissioner of Education**

STATE OF ALASKA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION:

Senator Ted Stevens

Senator Lisa Murkowski

Congressman Don Young

ALASKA STATE SENATE

Senator Con Bunde

ALASKA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Rep. Mike Hawker

ALYESKA RESORT

John Byrne III, Owner

GIRDWOOD 2020

Diana Livingston, Co-chair

John Rense, Co-chair

GIRDWOOD, Inc.

Chris von Imhof, President

GIRDWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Doug Wu, President

ALYESKA SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION

Martin Stewart, President

