

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Principal & WCC Chair, Winterberry Charter School

FROM: Robyn Harris, Senior Director of Choice Schools

DATE: April 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Required Implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at Winterberry Charter School

## **Background:**

Although Winterberry's 2018 charter agreement and contract outlines a clear commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment through the implementation of a positive school wide discipline system, persistent concerns from families and community members over the past eight years have gone unaddressed in a meaningful or measurable way. Over the past several years, Winterberry Charter School has experienced repeated and ongoing concerns regarding school climate, student safety, bullying, and inconsistent behavior management practices. These concerns have been communicated through parent letters and a Title XI complaint dating back to 2017, DEI reports from 2024, and most recently, direct parent emails citing unresolved bullying and emotionally unsafe environments as recently as March 2025.

The Winterberry 2018 charter approved by the ASD School Board specifically states:

### School-wide behavior plan

*The principal and the school's staff are committed to implementing a school-wide behavior plan (such as Foundations or a similar type) that maintains Winterberry's positive climate and culture while effectively addressing student behaviors that disrupt the learning environment. It is expected that the Foundations Behavior Support System will be fully implemented at WCS by the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. (Winterberry Charter p 9)*

This commitment to a positive school wide system at this time was specifically put in place and agreed upon by the Winterberry administration and WCC to address these very same concerns you are facing today. To date there is no evidence that any type of school wide positive behavior supports have been put into practice.

Due to the lack of demonstrated progress and the absence of a consistent system for monitoring improvement, the district will require implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) beginning in the 2025–2026 school year. Additionally, the school will be required to conduct regular meetings with families, staff, and the Winterberry Charter Council (WCC) throughout the year. These meetings will be accompanied by structured district oversight, including staff training, review of behavioral and climate data to ensure transparency, accountability, and improvement.

**Directive:**

Effective immediately, Winterberry Charter School is required to adopt and implement the ASD Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework schoolwide.

**Implementation Timeline:****Year 1 and Year 2 (2025-2026 and 2026-2027):**

Two mandatory staff PBIS trainings per year (Fall and Spring) for all employees, including certified, classified, and administrative staff.

Initial implementation plan submitted to the Office of Choice Schools by June 1, 2025.

**Year 3 and Beyond (2027-2028 and ongoing):**

One mandatory annual refresher PBIS training for all returning staff.

PBIS practices must be integrated into onboarding for all new staff. Annual audits by the Office of School Choice that demonstrate consistent staff training, student and family awareness and implementation of PBIS.

**Additional Expectations:**

PBIS Tier 1 practices must be implemented in every classroom.

Discipline data must be regularly entered into Q and reviewed for patterns.

Behavior interventions must be equitable, documented, and student-centered.

The school leadership team must establish a PBIS team and attend ASD PBIS network meetings.

**Rationale:**

This directive aligns with Anchorage School District Board Policies 5131.43 and 5131.41, which require schools to proactively address bullying and aggression, and to provide safe learning environments for all students. The 2017 letter and the 2024 DEI report both reveal a longstanding pattern of inconsistent conflict resolution practices and a failure to implement school wide prevention systems.

**Legal and Policy Alignment:**

This directive aligns with multiple layers of governance and oversight that apply to public charter schools:

At the district level, Anchorage School District Board Policies 5131.41 (Student Aggression) and 5131.43 (Bullying) require that all public schools, including charter schools, ensure safe and inclusive environments and take immediate action to correct student aggression and bullying. Implementation of PBIS is a district-supported response to these policy requirements.

At the state level, under Alaska Statute 14.03.250–14.03.290, charter schools operate under the authority of their local school district and state board of education. These statutes emphasize accountability, adherence to educational standards, and oversight by the Academic Policy Committee and the district. Required PBIS implementation and data monitoring align with state priorities for continuous improvement.

At the federal level, charter schools must comply with all provisions under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

These federal laws encourage the use of evidence-based practices such as PBIS to support student behavior, reduce exclusionary discipline, and ensure equitable access to education.

School Board Policy 6181 Review of the Charter School states, "If there is evidence of a breach of contract, the School Board shall have a right to investigate and meet with the charter school to discuss possible remedies, including termination of the charter school contract." It is the expectation of the Anchorage School District that our charter schools comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations applicable to public schools and all requirements imposed by School District policy and regulation on the operation of charter schools as well as the adherence to the agreements made within the charter itself.

**Next Steps:**

A meeting will be scheduled within the next two weeks with this office to review PBIS training opportunities and resources, discuss the implementation plan, and establish support structures. Please be prepared to identify your school's PBIS team and submit names by April 30, 2025.

If you have any questions or require immediate support, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robyn Harris".

Robyn Harris  
Senior Director of Choice Schools  
Anchorage School District

cc Jharrett Bryantt, Superintendent  
Sven Gustafson, Chief Academic Officer  
Kersten Johnson, Deputy Chief of Schools