



Alaska Association of Student Governments

Resolution #16

Reinstating the original Indigenous land acknowledgement in Mat-Su Borough Schools.

Submitted by: Tristan Tweto

Submitted: April 23, 2026

Be it Resolved that the Alaska Association of Student Governments supports the reinstatement of the original land acknowledgement stating that all Mat Su Borough School District schools, events and ceremonies reside on Dena’ina and Athna land.

1. **Whereas**, in the 2019-20 school year the MSBSD adopted the following land acknowledgement “ We wish to acknowledge that this school resides on the ancestral land of the Dena’ina and Ahtna people who have stewarded this area for thousands of years. Our community thrives thanks to their continued sharing of vision, wisdom, values, and leadership.”;¹
2. **Whereas**, the original land acknowledgement adopted in 2020 was created through a collaborative process that was written by The Chickaloon and Knik Tribes;¹
3. **Whereas**, in 2025 the MSBSD changed the land acknowledgement to “The Matanuska-Susitna region has been shaped by many people over time — from early

explorers, American settlers, and colonists to the Dena'ina and Ahtna peoples who lived in this area before modern development. Together, their histories form the foundation of our vibrant and growing communities.

We also want to take a moment to thank the many individuals who serve and protect our community each day — including members of the military, veterans, law enforcement, firefighters, emergency responders, educators, and healthcare professionals. Your dedication and sacrifice make gatherings like this possible, and we are deeply grateful.”¹

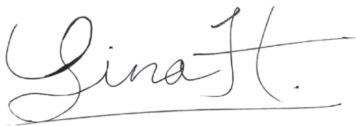
4. **Whereas**, out of the top 6 school districts in Alaska, the Anchorage school district, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Lower Kuskokwim School District and Juneau Borough school district all have land acknowledgements compared to the Mat-Su Borough School District and the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District;
5. **Whereas**, 82.6% of students surveyed out of 144 agree at CTHS support that the MSBSD should reinstate the original land acknowledgement ²;
6. **Whereas**, Land acknowledgements can be used as a first step toward action such as raising awareness, showing respect and combating erasure ³;
7. **Whereas**, Alaska ranks the highest in American Indian/Alaskan Native students (22%) compared to the national average of 1% in K-12 schools. ⁴;
8. **Whereas**, it is important to acknowledge the indigenous peoples who have stewarded land before settlers and the forced adoption of new cultures who have emigrated onto indigenous land;
- 9 **Whereas**, the MSBSD did not consult nor negotiate with local tribes before removing the land acknowledgment plaques as well as rewording the acknowledgement at events to a

“shared histories and service recognition” prior to removal;¹

Therefore, be it resolved that the Alaska Association of Student Governments supports the reinstatement of the original land acknowledgement stating that all MSBSD schools, events and ceremonies reside on Dena’ina and Athna land.

Action Statement: be it resolved by the general assembly of AASG, this resolution will be presented to the AFN (Alaskan Federation of Natives) and ANB (Alaska Native Brotherhood/Sisterhood coalition), and Mat-Su Borough School District

The resolution passes with unanimous consent.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lina Hischer". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

AASG Vice President, Lina Hischer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kassandra Mirosh". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

AASG Executive Director, Kassandra Mirosh

Works Cited:

1. “Mat-Su School District removes Indigenous land acknowledgment signs, halts land statements at events.” *Alaska Public Media*, 2025,
<https://alaskapublic.org/news/education/2025-10-31/mat-su-school-district-removes-indigenous-land-acknowledgment-signs-halts-land-statements-at-events> . Accessed 14 April 2026.
2. Tweto, Tristan Land Acknowledgement Poll Conducted via Google forms by Students in Social Studies Class at Mat-Su Career & Technical High School
3. Veltman, Chloe. “Indigenous leaders want land acknowledgments to really benefit their communities.” *NPR*, 15 March 2023,
<http://www.npr.org/2023/03/15/1160204144/indigenous-land-acknowledgments> .
Accessed 9 April 2026.
4. “Data on Native students.” National Indian Education Association, 2014,
www.niea.org/native-student-data . Accessed 9 April 2026.