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State School Celebrates Last Graduation Ceremony ***Alyeska Central Correspondence School Transfers to Yukon/Koyukuk July 1***

Alyeska Central School – Alaska’s original K-12 correspondence school that has operated since 1939 – will celebrate its last graduation ceremony under the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. The ceremony will take place at 6 p.m., May 29 at the Egan Center in Anchorage. Twenty-five students will receive their diplomas.

The ceremony will be followed by a prom. The school has invited current and prior graduates from across the state to attend.

While the school has held graduation ceremonies before, they typically were for one or two students. This will be the first – and last – statewide graduation ceremony for the school under direct state operation.

The ceremony and prom were conceived and organized by graduating senior Jennifer Wilcox of Gakona. Last fall Jennifer acted on the suggestion of an Anchorage classmate. Although Jennifer’s family lives off the power grid and operates a generator for Internet access, she researched sites to hold the event in the Anchorage area before settling on the Egan Center. Once selected, she was assisted by Egan Center Manager Greg Spears. The Egan Center has provided the space at no cost.

Jennifer spent many months during her senior year planning, organizing and working with the Alyeska Central School staff in Juneau and the president of the school’s Parent Advisory Committee, Paula Williams, to organize the event. Williams resides at Eaglesong Lodge on the Iditarod Trail. Jennifer was recently accepted into the prestigious McDonough Leadership Program at Marietta College in Ohio.

Graduates will attend the ceremony from communities across the state, including Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, Soldotna, Red Devil, Fairbanks, Juneau and Gustavus.

One student who graduated in February 2004 is traveling from Florida, where she now lives, to attend.

Another student who graduated in 2000 had never participated in an ACS graduation ceremony and has elected to receive her diploma at the ceremony.

The state has selected the Yukon-Koyukuk School District to operate Alyeska Central School Beginning July 1. Alyeska will continue to offer quality correspondence and online courses written by Alyeska teachers to meet Alaska’s academic standards for students.

Alyeska Central School is pre-registering new students for the next school year and is also operating a tuition summer school. For more information, contact Alyeska Central School at 1-888-290-3752 or visit www.eed.state.ak.us/Alaskan_Schools/ACS/home.html.

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