

UNIVERSITY
of **ALASKA**

Many Traditions One Alaska

Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools 2012
Prepared for the State of Alaska

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AN ACT
A report to the legislature on teacher preparation, retention, and recruitment by the
Board of Regents of the University of Alaska

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February 8, 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2008, the 25th Alaska State Legislature passed Senate Bill 241. The legislation requires the University of Alaska Board of Regents to deliver a report titled “Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools” no later than the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature that “describes the efforts of the university to attract, train, and retain qualified public school teachers. The report provides a brief overview of teacher education graduates from the University of Alaska, a gap analysis that documents the shortage areas in the Alaska teaching workforce, and a description of some of the University of Alaska’s efforts to attract, prepare, and retain school teachers and educators for Alaska. Highlights of the report include the following:

- Between 2006 and 2011, the University of Alaska graduated about 200 new teachers each year.
- On average, about half of UA teacher education graduates begin teaching in Alaska the fall after graduation; that number rises to over 60% three to four years later.
- University of Alaska graduates made up about 12% of new hires across the state in 2011.
- The number of principals prepared by the University of Alaska has increased substantially with the addition of a new program at UAS as well as growth in UAA’s numbers.
- Special education positions are especially hard to fill in Alaska. Between 2006 and 2011, the University of Alaska system slightly more than doubled the annual number of special education graduates, from 29 in 2006 to 68 in 2011.
- Math and certain science positions are also hard to fill in Alaska. The number of University of Alaska graduates hired in these fields fluctuates some, but in general has remained fairly steady over the past seven years.
- The University of Alaska has a number of initiatives across the three campuses aimed at increasing the number of Alaska Native educators as well as teachers from other underrepresented groups. These efforts include programs targeting Alaska Natives who wish to become teachers, an initiative aimed at helping paraprofessionals in one rural school become certificated teachers, targeted outreach and support for rural students studying education via distance, and rural practicum options for teacher candidates at the main campuses.
- The University of Alaska also oversees the Future Educators of Alaska initiative, operating in 23 school districts, Alaska Teacher Placement which serves as a statewide education job clearinghouse in collaboration with districts statewide, and the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project, which was recently awarded a \$15 million grant by the U.S. Department of Education, which has been matched by \$1.5 in private donations.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2008, the 25th Alaska State Legislature passed Senate Bill 241. The legislation requires the University of Alaska Board of Regents to deliver a report titled “Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools” no later than the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature that “describes the efforts of the university to attract, train, and retain qualified public school teachers. The report must include an outline of the university's current and future plans to close the gap between known teacher employment vacancies in the state and the number of state residents who complete teacher training.”

This is the fourth year this report has been prepared for the legislature. It provides a brief description of teacher education programs in the system, an overview of teacher education graduates from the University of Alaska, a gap analysis that documents the shortage areas in the Alaska teaching workforce, and a description of some of the University of Alaska's efforts to attract, prepare, and retain school teachers and educators for Alaska.

University of Alaska Education Programs

The University of Alaska offers teacher preparation at all three Major Academic Units (MAUs), via both in person and distance education delivery. All three campuses offer programs that lead to elementary and secondary education initial certification. UAA and UAS offer initial certification in early childhood education. UAF offers initial certification in special education, and UAA in early childhood special education. All three campuses also offer special education degrees and certificates for teachers interested in moving into that area.

UAA and UAS offer principal certification programs, while UAA and UAF provide counselor education. In addition, across the three campuses, there are many programs for educators wishing to add endorsements to their licensure or obtain masters degrees or certificates in specialized areas, including (but not limited to) reading specialist and cross-cultural education masters degrees and a superintendents certificate. The majority of these programs are offered via distance education. All three campuses also offer professional development opportunities to educators across the state and beyond, many in collaboration with school districts or professional organizations.

All students in University of Alaska teacher education programs must take the Praxis I and Praxis II exams. Students must pass the Praxis I (Pre-Professional Skills Test) with scores that meet or exceed state standards before they enter student teaching, and they must pass one or more Praxis II content area exams with scores that meet or exceed state standards in order to receive an institutional recommendation for state licensure. This helps ensure that University of Alaska teacher education graduates meet national standards for content knowledge in their areas of specialization.

The UA System Education Schools and College are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and 26 separate programs within those schools and college are nationally recognized by their relevant Specialty Professional Associations (SPAs), thus ensuring that the programs and the institutions in which they operate meet or exceed national standards. NCATE is one of two organizations recognized by the U.S.

Department of Education as an accrediting institution specific to teacher education and it currently represents over 3 million individuals. To meet the necessary standards for initial and advanced programs, education institutions engage in a self-study, followed by a rigorous information review and site visit.

In 2010, the Deans of Education and provosts at the three MAUs developed a “Teacher Education Plan,” which lays out the following shared goals:

- A. Recruit and retain more students in education, particularly Alaska residents
- B. Increase program access through multiple delivery methods.
- C. Enhance educator preparation programs in Special Education and in Math and Science teaching.
- D. Conduct research to identify causes and propose solutions for education challenges in Alaska.

The three Colleges and Schools have taken a number of actions toward achieving these goals, some of which are laid out in more detail in the last part of this report. These efforts include aligning special education program credit requirements and courses, implementing innovative programs aimed at increasing the number of Alaska Native teachers, and collaborating with the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research at the UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) to increase faculty research capacity, among others.

The Teacher Education Plan is available online at:

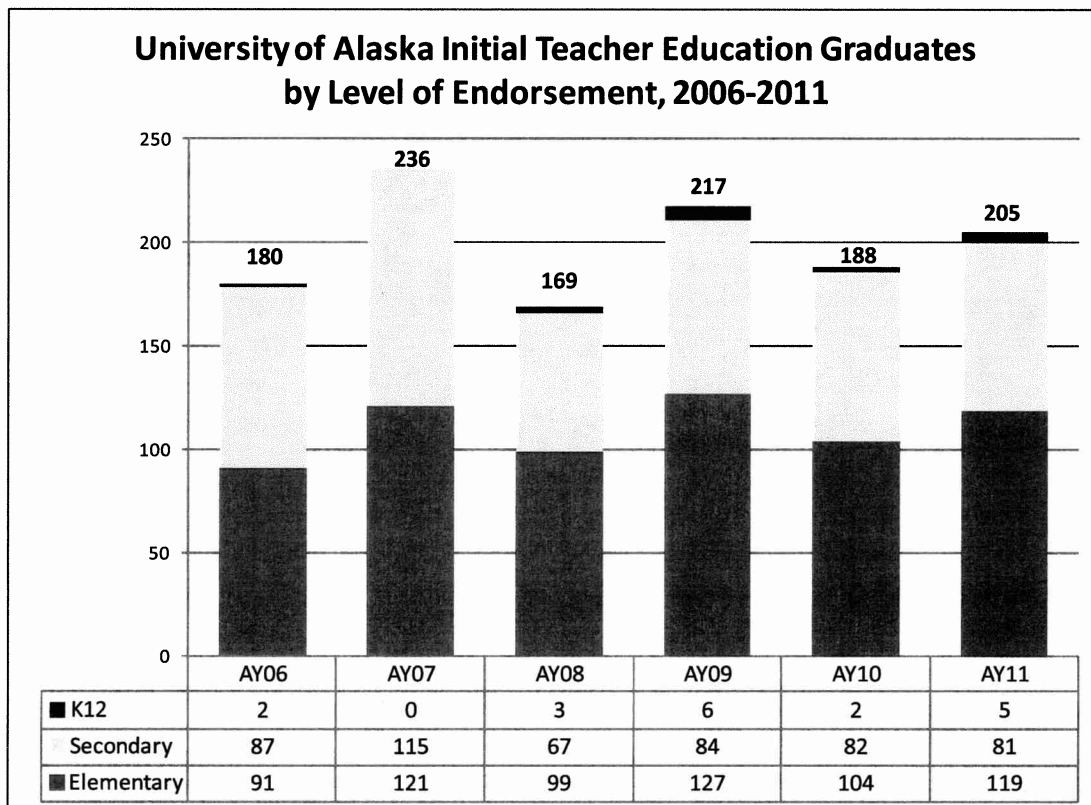
http://www.alaska.edu/files/research/TeachPrepPlan_101112.pdf

EDUCATION GRADUATION DATA

Each year, the University works to improve the accuracy and completeness of the data in this report. Before 2008, several programs for educators didn't result in a formal graduation record in the University's Banner database. Program codes change as programs make changes, and students move in and out of school. It can be challenging to identify all the codes with students enrolled at any given time, as students may return, grandfathered into program codes that are otherwise no longer used. In addition, students are occasionally mistakenly assigned to old program codes. The education deans and data managers have worked both within their schools and with the registrars of their campuses to improve data quality and consistency. As a result, this year we have both updated the report with 2011 numbers and made minor revisions to numbers from previous years.

Initial Teacher Preparation

The graph below shows how many new teachers the University of Alaska system prepared each year from 2006 to 2011. Across the system, the programs that prepare new teachers include bachelor's degree and post-baccalaureate programs for elementary and early childhood teachers, and post-baccalaureate and Master's degree programs for secondary teachers. While the number has fluctuated somewhat, the average number of new teachers prepared annually has been near 200.



The University graduates slightly more elementary than secondary teachers -- on average elementary teachers make up about 55% of the total graduates, secondary teachers about 43%, and K12 teachers (such as art, music, and physical education teachers) about 2%.

Most of the initial program graduates—over 90 percent—obtain an Alaska teacher certification the year that they graduate. Fewer go on to immediate teaching positions in Alaska’s schools—about half in the fall after graduation, rising to over 60% three to four years later. The table below shows the number and percent of UA’s initial teacher preparation program graduates (excluding a few we could not track) who obtained certification and those who were working in Alaska public schools FY2012.

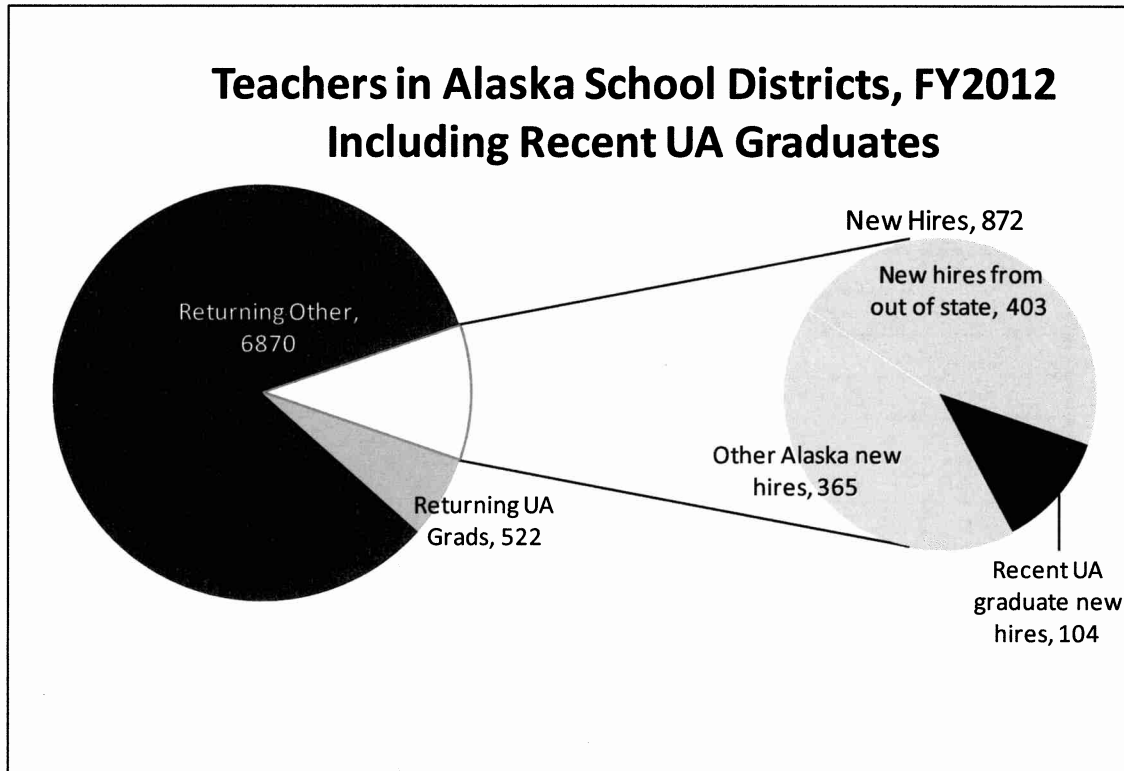
Graduates of UA initial teacher preparation programs, 2006-2011 certification and employment in FY2012					
Academic Year	# program graduates*	With Alaska Certification**		In AK Schools Oct 2011	
		number	percent	number	percent
2006	174	161	92.5%	94	54.0%
2007	232	215	92.7%	137	59.1%
2008	166	158	95.2%	106	63.9%
2009	212	197	92.9%	124	58.5%
2010	176	158	89.8%	91	51.7%
2011	195	n/a**		86	44.1%

*Excludes early childhood special education programs and graduates for whom no SSN was recorded.

**Certification data as of March 2011, which does not include most of the AY 2011 graduates

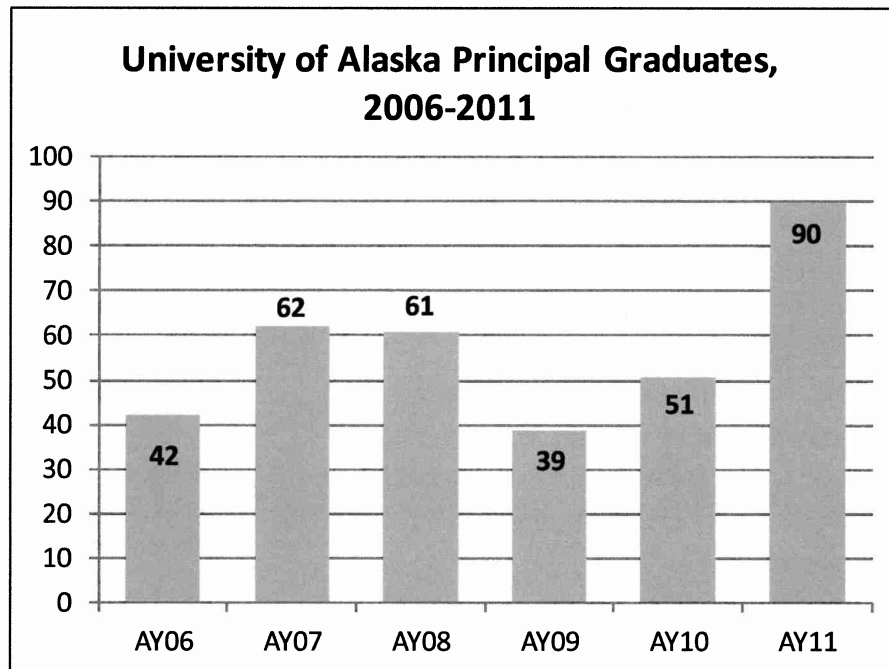
There are many reasons that graduates don’t immediately move into teaching jobs; they may be waiting for an opening in their preferred subject, grade, or location (or all three). Some teacher program graduates don’t enter the teacher profession at all – personal or family reasons may keep them out of the labor force, and some decide after student teaching that the profession is not for them. We cannot tell from our data whether the graduates who did not enter teaching immediately were seeking jobs in education but were unsuccessful in obtaining them, whether they had decided not to teach at all, or whether they had chosen to wait before entering the classroom. The three Education deans, with support from the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR), have committed to supporting a 2012 faculty research project to understand why graduates do or do not teach in Alaska public schools after they complete teacher preparation programs. Of the 654 UA 2006-2011 teacher program graduates teaching in Alaska public schools in the fall of 2011, 530 were located in the five large districts closest to the UA campuses (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kenai, Fairbanks and Juneau) and 124 were teaching in 41 other districts throughout the state.

From the school district perspective, recent university graduates are still a small part of their total hires. As the graph below shows, in October 2011, only about 104 (12 percent) of district's 872 new hires of teachers were recent UA graduates; however, many more of those graduates (522) were already working for the districts.



New Principals for Alaska

The University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Southeast both offer degree programs to prepare principals. Both programs are offered largely through on-line courses. UA Southeast offers a cohort program with on-campus summer courses and on-line courses during the year. UAA offers both a fully on-line principal certification program for educators anywhere in Alaska (and beyond), and district-based cohorts that combine face-to-face sessions with online coursework. The number of students who graduate each year varies widely, and increased in 2010-2011 as the first group from UAS's new Educational Leadership program graduated.

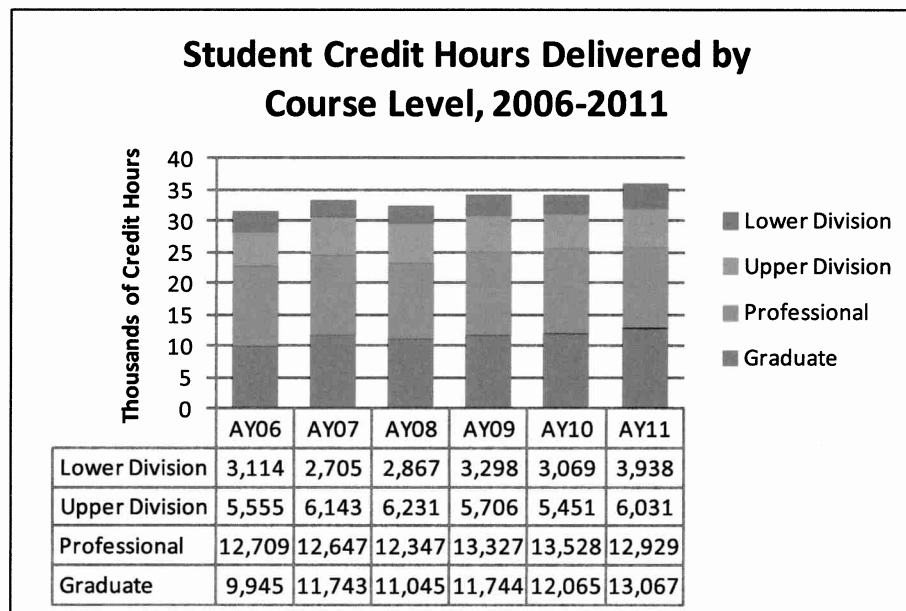
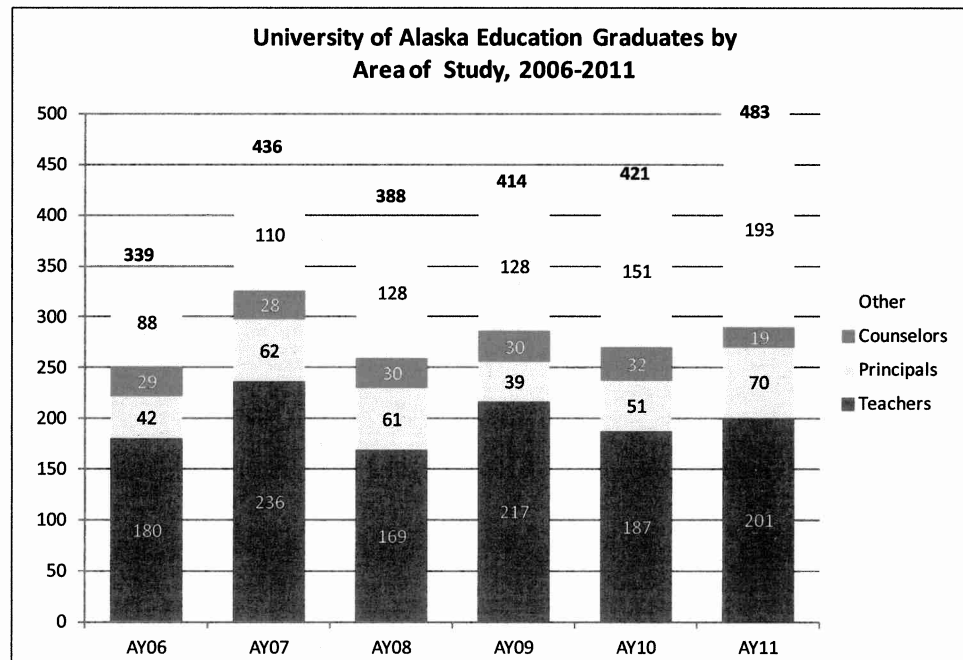


While almost all graduates of the University's principal preparation program are employed in Alaska schools when they finish the program, the percent drops off sharply in subsequent years. Fewer than half actually have positions as principals, assistant principals, or lead teachers; anecdotal evidence indicates that many of these graduates never intended to become principals but wanted to obtain an advanced degree.

Graduates of UA principal preparation programs, 2006-2010 employment and jobs in FY2012					
Year	Total	In Alaska Public Schools, FY2012		In Principal, Assistant Principal and Lead Teacher positions	
		Number	%	Number	%
2006	42	29	69.0%	16	38.1%
2007	62	42	67.7%	21	33.9%
2008	61	42	68.9%	19	31.1%
2009	39	32	82.1%	17	43.6%
2010	51	47	92.2%	22	43.1%

Total Education Graduates

Somewhat more than one-third of all the UA education graduates each year are neither new teachers nor new principals. Many are experienced teachers or administrators seeking a new or more advanced endorsement or degree (such as special education, math, or technology); some are becoming master teachers, reading specialists, counselors or superintendents. In addition to the degree and certificate program graduates shown below, each MAU delivers thousands of credit hours of instruction to teachers who are not enrolled in a formal program of study. That group accounts for most of the “professional” credit hours in the bottom graph, and many of the graduate credit hours as well.

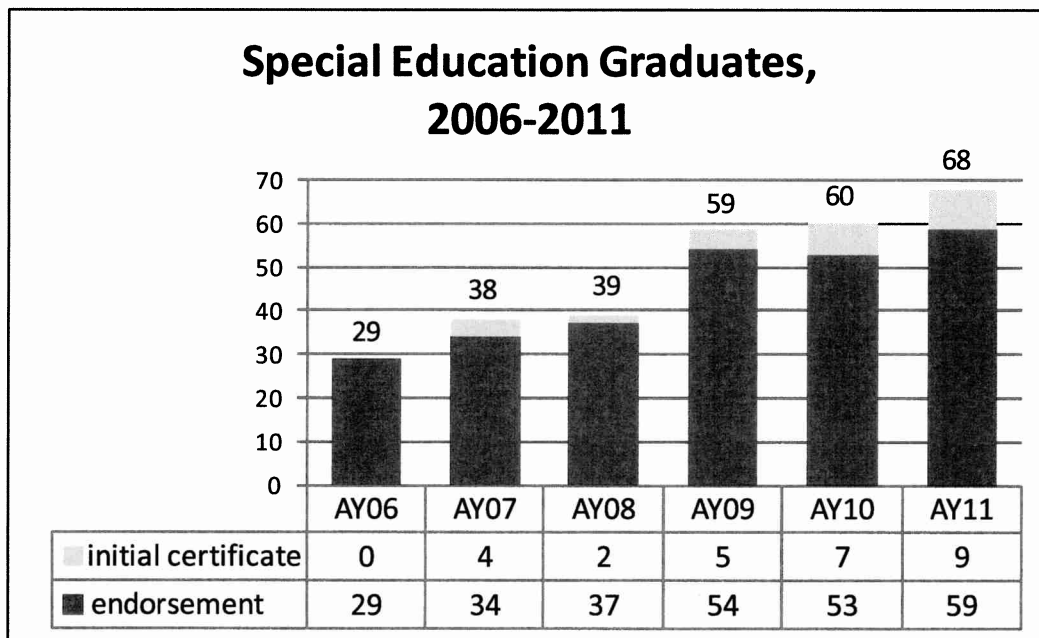


HARD TO FILL POSITIONS

Three fields are consistently the most difficult to fill both nationally and in Alaska: special education, math, and science. We present here data on the numbers of teachers hired from in-state and out of state in each of the fields.

New Special Education Teachers

All of the University of Alaska education units now offer degree programs in special education. From 2006 to 2011, the system slightly more than doubled the annual number of special education graduates. In order to increase the number of graduates, UAA and UAS assisted UAF in developing a Special Education program, so that there are special education programs at all three MAUs. In addition, to address issues of students moving between campuses, the special education faculty and the Deans from each MAU agreed to (1) a common core of courses; (2) the same credit requirements for the Post-Baccalaureate certifications and Master's programs; (3) make it easier to transfer courses between programs, and (4) share supervision of clinical practice students to save on the cost of travel. The group continues to meet on a regular basis and is working on coordinating course schedules to give students across the state more options. Despite the growth of Alaska's special education programs, high turnover in this field (often by teachers moving to regular education positions in the same district) means that special education remains a hard-to-fill area for school districts.

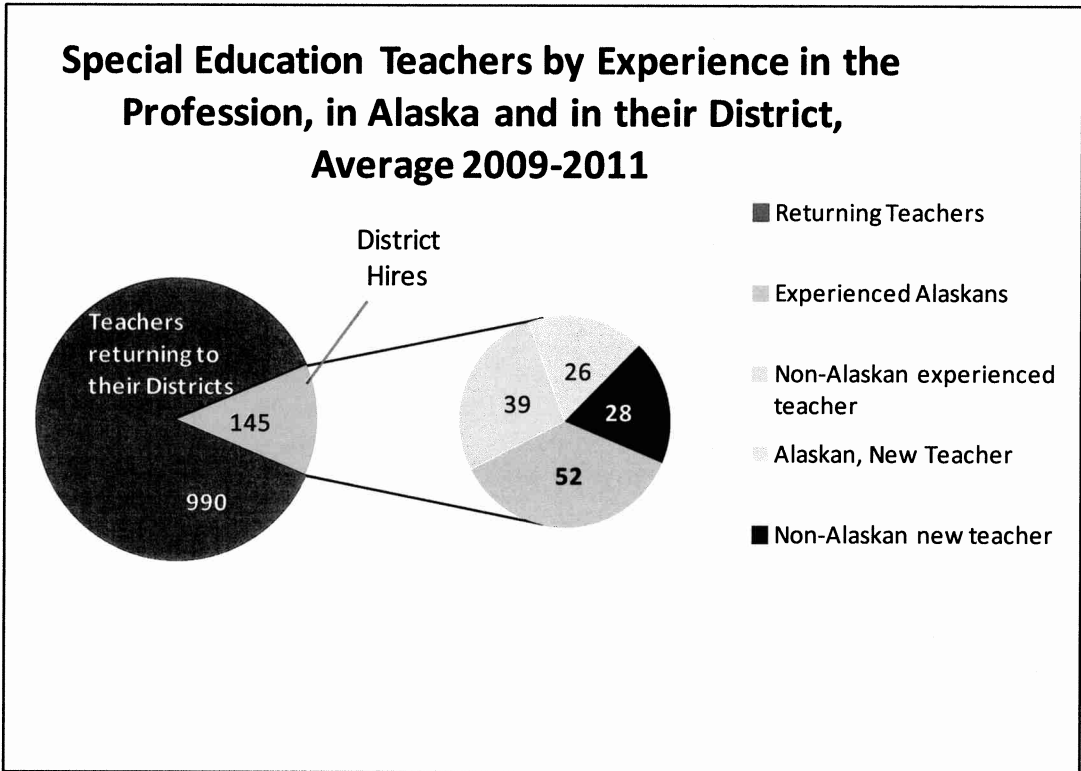


Recent changes in how the University records Special Education endorsements will improve our ability to track these graduates into the workforce. However, only about 70 percent of the graduates between 2006 and 2011 are easily tracked. We used those graduates to estimate the percent of all our graduates who were teaching in Alaska schools in FY2012, and the percent who held positions as special education teachers. As the table below shows, about 60 percent of special education graduates from 2006 to 2011 were working in Alaska's public schools in FY2012, but only 40 to 50 percent held jobs as special education teachers.

Special Education graduates, 2006-2011 working in Alaska public schools and working as special education teachers, FY2012			
	Total Graduates	% in Alaska Schools	% who are Special Education Teachers
2006	29	61.1%	38.9%
2007	38	59.1%	45.5%
2008	39	61.5%	46.2%
2009	59	59.1%	52.3%
2010	60	57.1%	38.1%
2011	68	63.2%	54.4%

As with initial teacher positions, even though the number of UA graduates has grown, they make up only a small portion of district hires. The table and chart below show that most new special education teachers hired in Alaska still come from outside the state.

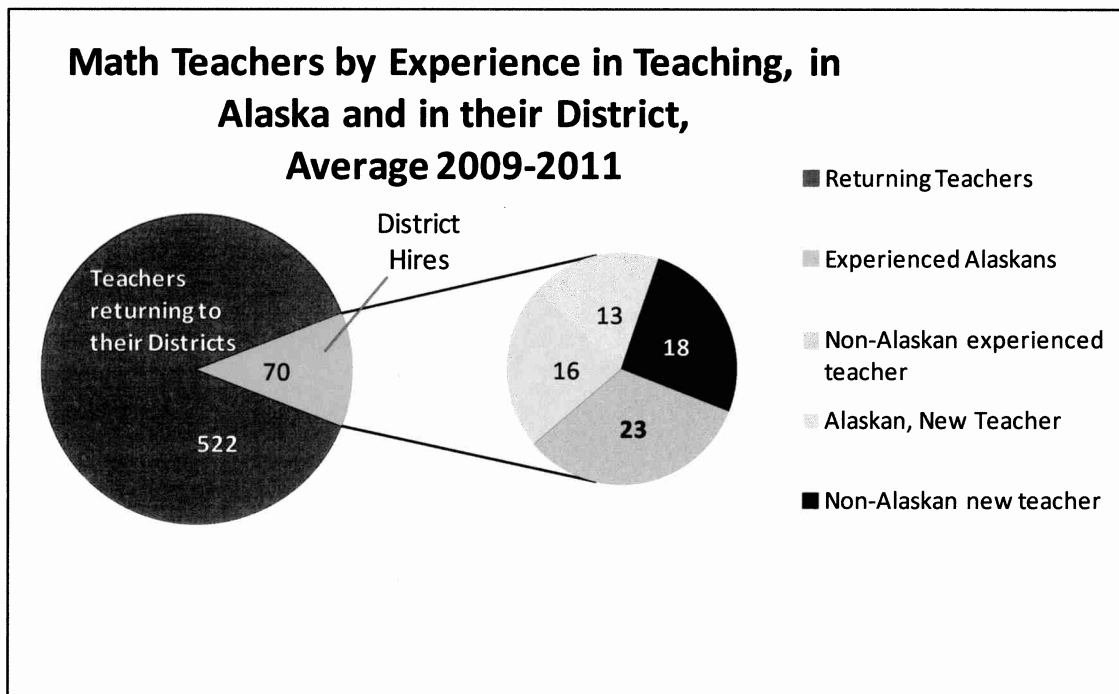
Special Education teachers in Alaska Schools by experience in special education, in Alaska and in their district, FY 2005-2011						
		Returning from previous year		New Hires		
				Alaskan		From out of state
Year	Total	Number	Percent	New teacher	Experienced teacher (movers)	Other new hires
2005	924	799	86.5%	18	34	73
2006	1,077	895	83.1%	24	59	100
2007	1,087	920	84.6%	43	68	57
2008	1,040	906	87.1%	30	61	43
2009	1,111	996	89.7%	13	44	57
2010	1,131	987	87.3%	35	52	57
2011	1,164	989	85.0%	29	60	86



The tables and charts on the following two pages show a similar pattern for secondary mathematics and science teachers. The great majority of those teachers return to their districts each year. To hire the new teachers they need, district still have to bring many from outside Alaska. However, while in 2006 and 2007, the majority of new district hires were from out of state, that has not been the case in 2008-2011.

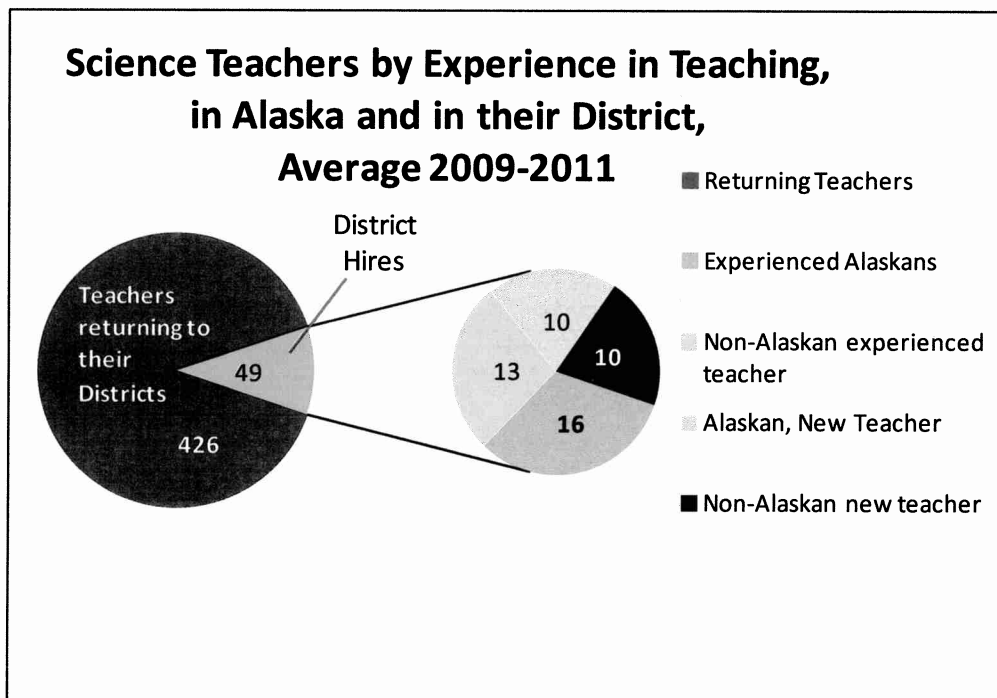
Math Teachers

Math teachers in Alaska schools by experience in teaching, in Alaska and in their district, FY 2005-2011						
		Returning from previous year		New Hires		
				Alaskan		From out of state
Year	Total	Number	Percent	New teacher	Experienced teacher (movers)	Other new hires
2005	532	447	84.1%	12	27	46
2006	596	511	85.7%	12	28	44
2007	595	524	88.1%	15	29	26
2008	588	513	87.3%	17	30	28
2009	598	540	90.3%	9	18	31
2010	588	517	87.9%	13	20	38
2011	588	508	86.3%	16	31	33



Science Teachers

Science teachers in Alaska schools by experience in teaching, in Alaska and in their district, FY 2005-2011						
		Returning from previous year		New Hires		
				Alaskan		From out of state
Year	Total	Number	Percent	New teacher	Experienced teacher (movers)	Other new hires
2005	458	403	88.1%	12	14	28
2006	488	425	87.1%	11	20	32
2007	508	448	88.1%	10	25	26
2008	487	424	87.0%	19	17	28
2009	495	451	91.0%	7	14	23
2010	465	417	89.8%	11	17	19
2011	465	410	88.2%	12	16	27



UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA GRADUATES IN ALASKA SCHOOLS

Teachers who received their initial teacher preparation from the University of Alaska work in 52 of Alaska's 54 school districts. Statewide, UA-prepared teachers make up 28 percent of the teaching force. The percent of all certified staff that received any education degree or endorsement from UA is slightly higher – about 32 percent. The table below shows the 15 districts with the highest number of UA-prepared teachers.

	Number of AY10 teachers whose initial preparation was at UA		
School District	Total UA	Total Teachers	Percent prepared at UA
Anchorage	846	3,020	28%
Fairbanks Borough	416	861	48%
Mat-Su	263	999	26%
Juneau	146	367	40%
Kenai Peninsula	142	615	23%
Lower Kuskokwim	57	296	19%
Kodiak Island	38	195	19%
Ketchikan	28	158	18%
Sitka	28	109	26%
Northwest Arctic	23	145	16%
Galena	21	64	33%
Lower Yukon	20	150	13%
Yukon Koyukuk	20	55	36%
Bering Strait	19	180	11%
North Slope	16	174	9%
Remaining 39 School Districts	256	1,073	24%
Alaska Total	2,339	8,461	28%

EFFORTS TO ATTRACT, TRAIN, AND RETAIN QUALIFIED SCHOOL TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS FOR ALASKA

To increase the number of educators for Alaska's schools, the University of Alaska system provides programs and strategies through the University of Alaska Anchorage College of Education, University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education, University of Alaska Southeast School of Education, Alaska Teacher Placement, Future Educators of Alaska, and the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project. In addition, the university offers a variety of college-bridging programs designed to help students' transition to post secondary education. All of these efforts are an integral part of the system. Programs that serve future education students can be found on both the main campuses and branch campuses. The following is a synopsis of the programs outlined above, as well as a brief description of alternative certification options in Alaska.

Efforts to attract and prepare Alaska Native and other diverse populations

Educator turnover is often cited as a concern in Alaska, especially in rural sites. Since our educator preparation institutions do not meet the current need for educators in Alaska, many districts are forced to recruit educators from outside the state. Often, these educators do not understand Alaska and have difficulty coping with some of the challenges, especially in rural Alaska.

Many initiatives have focused on recruiting rural residents to fill education positions throughout Alaska. There is also a need to provide advanced studies for rural educators. Currently, each MAU has outreach efforts. The advent of distance education technologies has been instrumental in these efforts. As the table below shows, the number and percent of minority students in general and Alaska Native students in particular has been fairly steady since 2006. The average of 8.7 percent Alaska Native new teacher graduates is above the average of Alaska Native teachers currently in Alaska schools (about 4.5% in 2009-2010)

Graduates of UA initial teacher preparation programs by ethnicity, 2006-2011							
Year	Alaska Native		Other Minority		Non-Minority*		Total
2006	18	10.0%	10	5.6%	152	84.4%	180
2007	16	6.8%	11	4.7%	209	88.6%	236
2008	13	7.7%	8	4.7%	148	87.6%	169
2009	21	9.7%	16	7.4%	180	82.9%	217
2010	16	8.5%	6	3.2%	166	88.3%	188
2011	17	8.3%	10	4.9%	178	86.8%	205
Total/Average	101	8.5%	61	5.1%	1,033	86.4%	1,195

*Non-Minority includes 111 students in "other" and "unknown" categories

At UAA, the Department of Teaching and Learning (DTL) is supporting a cohort of paraprofessionals in Chevak who want to become elementary teachers. An advisory group, made up of College of Education, College of Arts and Sciences, Kenai Peninsula College and Chevak

educators works together to provide coursework and support for 12-15 individuals who are pursuing AA and BA degrees. The goal of the program is to develop teachers who can teach through their own language and culture to better reach the students in Chevak. We have learned that it is vital to employ a “concierge” to help students navigate the unfamiliar university structures. This initiative is funded by a private donor who wants to see the program expanded to other rural districts in Alaska. The College is pursuing ways to fund this expansion. The College also offers advanced programs by distance and has, for example, principal and superintendent candidates from districts all over the state.

UAS has two US Department of Education funded teacher education programs for Alaska Natives who are or wish to become teachers. The Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools (PITAAS) program supports both teacher candidates and teachers who are working toward advanced degrees. The Village Teacher program is focused on providing experienced Alaska Native teachers an opportunity to obtain advanced degrees and additional training for supporting students. Approximately 20 Alaska Native teachers will begin the Reading Specialist masters program during the Spring 2012 semester. UAS faculty members supervise teacher candidates in all 54 Alaska school districts.

UAF has a variety of outreach efforts that include:

1. Courses for all certification and degree programs are offered through distance education with the exception of the two counseling courses (Individual Practicum and Group Counseling);
2. Faculty members are continuing to develop online course offerings, including an online M.Ed. concentration in Innovation and Design;
3. SOE maintains staff advisor who works only with rural students;
4. During rural site visits for supervision purposes faculty meet with school/community officials to promote positive working relationships between the university and the school/community;
5. SOE collaborates with Rural Student Services to assist rural students who are both on and off campus to succeed academically;
6. Continue to modernize our IT so as to be able to offer rural students a menu of options for how to participate in distance education courses;
7. One-week rural practicum for Fairbanks-based elementary and secondary education candidates;
8. \$12,000.00 SOE internal grant to new faculty member to study teacher retention factors in northern Alaska;
9. SOE continues to house the Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Project Grant that provides financial support to AN/AI students in the final two years of their education programs, and seeks to develop a “circle of mentoring that includes experienced and new AN/AI educators.” The grant is a partnership between the UAF SOE and the Alaska Native Education Association, the Association of Interior Native Educators, and the UAF College of Rural and Community Development

Alaska Teacher Placement (ATP)

Alaska Teacher Placement was established in 1978 as a partnership between school districts and the University of Alaska to serve as a statewide education job clearinghouse for Alaska. For over 28 years ATP has matched teachers and administrators seeking positions with the districts who need them. Alaska Teacher Placement provides leadership in identifying, attracting, and placing highly qualified educators for our state. ATP works collaboratively with Alaska school districts,

university leaders, and other educational entities to promote the teaching profession in Alaska.

Alaska Teacher Placement provides a wide range of services to job candidates for teaching and school administration jobs. ATP responds to thousands of inquiries annually regarding teaching in Alaska. ATP serves as the official liaison between educators seeking employment and the schools and districts seeking educators.

Future Educators of Alaska – (FEA)

FEA is a statewide collaborative effort to inspire and support Alaska Native K-12 students to go into the education profession – we work to *grow our own educators*. The fostering of prospective Alaska Native teachers and administrators involves a partnership among K-12 school districts, University of Alaska campuses and community organizations, such as Alaska Native Education Association (ANEA).

Funded by the US Department of Education since 2003, FEA works with 23 school districts in every cultural region of the state and has an estimated 600 students participating in the program. Most recently, the program has created and distributed a dual credit curriculum designed to support high school students explore the education profession. The Exploring Education Careers (EEC) curriculum has been approved by all MAUs as an ED 100 level course and is transferrable across campuses. This curriculum is a step for FEA to transition into a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), which would help further FEA's effort to support career development for Alaska Native students and act as a bridge for rural Alaska students to enter college.

Alaska Statewide Mentor Project

The Alaska Statewide Mentor Project exists to enhance and support the profession of teaching in Alaska. The project provides individualized support to first- and second-year teachers with the objective of developing an effective teaching force that is responsive to the diverse academic needs and cultural backgrounds of all students. In the 2011/2012 school year, the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project has 24 mentors (22.5FTE) working with 330 first- and second-year teachers in 34 school districts across Alaska. The project goals include:

- Improved teacher retention
- Enhanced quality of instruction
- Improved student achievement

The Project was recently awarded a \$15 million grant by the U.S. Department of Education, which has been matched by \$1.5 in private donations.

University of Alaska Outreach and College & Career Bridging Programs

In 2011, a survey of University of Alaska Outreach and College & Career Bridging Programs was conducted. 266 program specific reports were collected. Each report includes a program description, the location of where the program is administered, and the funding sources used to administer the program.

- Roughly half of the programs report a combination of funding sources to cover the cost of program implementation.

- 168 programs use UA general funds to fully support or supplement program costs or services; in some cases fees were generated for services.
- 82 programs receive federal funding, 52 of which report federal funding as the only source to support program costs or services.
- 68 programs receive state funding, which could include funding from state departments, school districts, or both.
- Only 34 programs receive private funding, and rarely is private funding the only source of support, in most cases private funding is used to supplement program costs.

Programs were classified as a college/career ready program, a partnership, or an outreach program or activity.

- College Readiness can include college and career preparation programs that typically provide direct academic support to students. Programs may result in college coursework that leads to a degree program. Roughly 72 programs are coded as college/career ready, yet may also be considered a partnership and engage in outreach activities.
- Partnerships include dual credit, collaborations with school districts and/or state agencies, as well as federal agencies. A total of 77 programs are coded as partnerships, many with school districts or state agencies.
- Youth outreach generally includes programs that provide informational publications, services to schools or in the community, and resources to youth, educators, or general public. Most of these programs do not result in credit towards a degree program. Examples include attending local job fairs, participating in college and career awareness activities, and hosting events on campus to promote post secondary education. 117 programs are coded as outreach.

Most programs could fall into two or more categories, or in some cases be considered a partnership designed to promote college and career awareness with an academic component that awarded college credit for participation.

Other program focus areas include:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). STEM was determined by reviewing a list of program descriptions and names. It is estimated that 64 of the 266 programs, 24 percent, focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math as part of their core service.
- Roughly 43 program descriptions note the integration of culture and indigenous knowledge. The University of Alaska is a recipient of federal grants; some grants such as the Alaska Native Education funding and the Indian Education grant from the U.S. Department of Education require a specific emphasis on Alaska Natives or American Indians as a program requirement. That does not mean to imply that other programs do not serve Alaska Native students, nor are programs funded by these grants exclusive to serving only Alaska Natives. The University of Alaska is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution.

Efforts are underway to better track, review and measure the effectiveness of the many outreach programs and college bridging activities that promote post secondary education. Providing these

services is key to the university mission and with so many programs in place, the President is convening a small team to develop a tracking mechanism that will provide both data and information to the general public regarding the outcomes of the various programs being offered across the state.

Alternative Certification in Alaska

There are two alternative certification options in Alaska. The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development runs the Alaska Transition to Teaching (AKT²) program, which focuses on preparing teachers for rural Alaska. This program allows teacher candidates who already hold a bachelor's degree in a secondary core content area¹ to be employed as teachers of record while earning their certificates, and covers most participant costs. Teachers must be willing to work in one of the 15 program partner districts. As of summer 2011, six educators had completed this relatively new program, and twenty-three more were in the process of getting their certificate.

The state also allows individuals in approved post-baccalaureate teacher preparation programs (such as the University of Alaska programs) to pursue initial teacher certification while working as the teacher of record if they hold a bachelor's degree in the field in which they are teaching. The teacher must be enrolled in an in an accredited institution, and must complete the program in no more than two years.

UAF has an ongoing program, and has graduated 51 educators via this alternative route since 2002. These students taught in communities across the state, from Barrow to Buckland to Chevak and even Anchorage. All but one student completed a secondary credential.² UAA operated a program from 2005 to 2010, in partnership with the Anchorage and Mat-Su School Districts, and graduated 21 secondary teachers in the six years of the program.

¹ excluding social studies/government

² The one elementary post-baccalaureate student who completed her licensing requirements while teaching was in a unique situation where the school and district could demonstrate clear need for her skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY RESEARCH

In summer 2010, the University of Alaska Foundation awarded the Institute of Social and Economic Research funding to start the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR).

The Center's mission is:

The Center for Alaska Education Policy Research enhances decision-making by policymakers, education professionals, and the public through collaborative, interdisciplinary research, analysis, and dissemination. The center conducts non-partisan research on policy issues around educational access, equity and excellence in the Alaska context, across early childhood, primary and secondary, higher and adult education.

CAEPR works with an Advisory Board to help determine research priorities for the center, identify potential projects and partners and participate in awarding faculty mini-grants. Advisory board members include the Alaska Commissioner of Education, a representative of the First Alaskans Institute, the chairs of the Education Standing Committees of the Alaska State Legislature, the executive director of the Alaska Association of School Administrators, a representative of the University of Alaska Statewide Administration, school and district administrators, representatives from the Alaska Native Educators Association, a private industry representative, the Association of ANCSA Regional Corporations and others. The University of Alaska's three Deans of Education serve as CAEPR's steering committee. The deans ensure that the center is effectively building education policy research capacity across the university and that CAEPR research is coordinated with and supportive of research conducted in the schools and colleges of education.

The CAEPR Advisory Board met in October 2011, and set the following priorities for research in the coming year. The board determined that CAEPR should identify successful models and identify why they are successful and how they can be implemented accordingly:

- Identify successful learning readiness models, explore why they are successful and what might be implemented accordingly
- Explore models for systemic change in education, in order to better serve all students, especially culturally and socially unique students who are at risk
- Identify successful models for preparing Alaska Native teachers, administrators and superintendents, explore why they are successful and what might be implemented accordingly
- Identify successful educator and administrator retention models, explore why they are successful and what might be implemented accordingly
- Identify indigenous language models that lead to successful learning

REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information on specific items, questions or copies of the report, please contact Paula Donson, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs at the University of Alaska at 907.786.7729.

