

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 18, 2022
9:05 a.m.

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Roger Holland, Chair
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Tom Begich

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Shelley Hughes

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 225

"An Act relating to a paraprofessional training program; creating a teacher resident certificate; creating a teacher residency program; relating to requirements to issue a teacher certificate; relating to subject-matter expert limited teacher certificates; relating to limited teacher certificates; creating a teacher registered apprenticeship program; and creating a teacher registered apprenticeship program fund."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 225

SHORT TITLE: TEACHER REGISTERED APPRENTICE PROGRAMS

SPONSOR(S): EDUCATION

03/04/22	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/04/22	(S)	EDC, L&C, FIN
03/07/22	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
03/07/22	(S)	Heard & Held
03/07/22	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/09/22	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
03/09/22	(S)	Heard & Held
03/09/22	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/14/22	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
03/14/22	(S)	Heard & Held

03/14/22 (S) MINUTE (EDC)
03/16/22 (S) EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
03/16/22 (S) Heard & Held
03/16/22 (S) MINUTE (EDC)
03/18/22 (S) EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

DAYNA DEFEO, Director
Center for Alaska Education Policy Research
University of Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented Alaska's Cost of Teacher Turnover research and answered question on SB 225.

DIANE HIRSHBERG, Director
Institute of Social & Economic Research
University of Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 225.

TRANG TRAN, Research Associate
Institute of Social & Economic Research
University of Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered question on SB 225.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[9:05:14 AM](#)

CHAIR ROGER HOLLAND called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Micciche, Stevens, Begich and Chair Holland.

SB 225-TEACHER REGISTERED APPRENTICE PROGRAMS

[9:05:53 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 225 "An Act relating to a paraprofessional training program; creating a teacher resident certificate; creating a teacher residency program; relating to requirements to issue a teacher certificate; relating to subject-matter expert limited teacher certificates; relating to limited teacher certificates; creating a teacher registered apprenticeship program; and creating a teacher registered apprenticeship program fund."

CHAIR HOLLAND said that the presenters would discuss the University of Alaska's findings on teacher turnover costs. Teacher turnover is important to conversations on teacher recruitment and retention because the savings from strengthening Alaska's educator pipeline can provide a return on investment. There would be an opportunity to use federal dollars to pay the upfront costs, allowing districts to redirect the savings from turnover reduction to maintain their programs.

[9:08:04 AM](#)

DAYNA DEFEO, Director, Center for Alaska Education Policy Research, University of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska, stated she has been studying the topic of teacher turnover for a couple of years and is very comfortable speaking about it. She said that the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) is known for its economic work. However, it is a social science research unit, so the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR) is a unit that serves as a clearing house for all the education research that comes out of ISER. CAEPR always tries to do education policy-related work that is relevant to Alaska. The work at CAEPR is typically described in three areas of expertise: education pathways and workforce development, Arctic and indigenous education, and teacher supply and demand.

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 4 to discuss teacher turnover. General teacher turnover is described in four ways:

[Original punctuation provided.]

- **Retirement** - Teacher ends teaching professional career, usually at certain age or years of service
- **Attrition** - Teacher leaves profession entirely, premature to retirement
- **Migration** - Teacher leaves current job for teaching position in new district
- **Transfer** - Practicing teacher moves to new subject area

MS. DEFEO noted that retirement is good because it means a teacher has spent an entire career teaching in a classroom. It indicates stability. Attrition accounts for a third of teacher turnover nationally. Migration frequently occurs in Alaska, both in-state and out-of-state.

[9:12:59 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO advanced to slide 5 and said teacher turnover is not all bad. Turnover from retirement or a career change allows other teachers to step in with new ideas and skills. Too much

turnover in Alaska leads to an eroded school climate, making teacher collaboration and mentoring difficult. It impacts teacher professional development because schools have limited resources. Resources are taken from continuing teachers when districts hire and train new teachers. Finally, turnover limits instructional quality because it challenges curricular planning and implementation. Teachers need to know what they will be teaching the following year. Also, new teachers have limited experience and become better teachers over time.

[9:16:49 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH asked if there is research that provides an expected norm for turnover.

[9:17:21 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that there is debate about what is optimal. Literature that is not empirically solid suggested 10 percent. The national average is 16 percent, which is high. She opined that the question is difficult to answer because turnover is highly contextualized.

[9:17:53 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH said the answer would provide the committee with a target. In 2011 \$10,000 was an incorrect number given as the cost for a district to hire a new teacher. Three years ago, the committee was told the cost was as high as \$26,000. He asked if research has identified a rule, urban cost, or differential for determining hiring cost and if it would be part of the presentation.

[9:18:44 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that she would share the number calculated in 2017 and could break it down by location. The amount depends on how each school approaches the task of turnover. The cost can be highly variable even between rural communities. There is a menu of tasks, and each district selects varying items from the menu, which affects their cost. For example, some districts offer housing, and others offer professional development. Contracted work also affects costs. Recruitment is more difficult and costly for rural communities but can also be more expensive depending on the position being hired. For example, recruiting an AP Chemistry teacher may be more difficult than an English teacher. She offered to breakdown and categorize costs.

SENATOR BEGICH said it sounds complicated and nuanced.

[9:20:18 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND said he could see how going from high to excessively low turnover could motivate a slight increase in turnover to acquire new teachers and avoid stagnation.

[9:20:43 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS asked whether she would be covering details of migration and the loss of teachers outside the state versus inside the state. He opined that movement within the state is not bad.

[9:21:15 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that she does not know if migration numbers have been calculated very well because it is hard to know where people go. A project is forthcoming with the Department of Labor to look at where teachers go after they leave the teaching profession and how their wages compare to when they were practicing teachers. The permanent fund dividend database will show how many teachers left the state.

[9:22:09 AM](#)

DIANE HIRSHBERG, Director, Institute of Social & Economic Research, University of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska, said that the last look at teacher migration was over ten years ago. She can provide the old numbers as a reference point for whether educators were leaving the state and the profession. Sometimes teachers leave the classroom, but they stay in the education profession. She said the Department of Labor is a perfect partner, and she is excited for the information to be updated.

[9:23:05 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS said it would be good to have the information and know the number of teachers moving into administration or the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

[9:23:23 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH asked if the questions and methodology in the new migration study would be similar to the 2017 study so trends and comparisons could be made.

[9:23:52 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that the methods in the new migration study would be improved and analysis more fine-grained than in the past.

[9:24:05 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 6 and said the report the slide was taken from discusses turnover comprehensively and parsed

turnover between teachers who moved districts in Alaska and those who left teaching jobs in Alaska. Slide 6 shows the overall turnover patterns in Alaska from 2012 - 2018 and the urban, urban fringe, rural hub, and rural remote percentages. Rural remote has the highest turnover at about 35 percent compared to an average of 20 - 25 percent. The chart shows that the policies and strategies needed to solve the teacher turnover problem in Alaska will not be a one-size-fits-all approach.

[9:26:54 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND stated he was surprised by how relatively constant the turnover rates have been over time for each category.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked what the rural dip between 2016 and 2017 was attributed to.

CHAIR HOLLAND replied that the dip is an urban dip, not rural.

[9:27:37 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that while the dip looks big, it is about five percentage points, which might not have a huge statistical significance given that the number of teachers was relatively small.

[9:28:00 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG replied that the largest shifts in Alaska are seen when big shifts occur in the Lower 48. There was a point after the economic crash in 2008 when Alaska's turnover numbers dropped because hiring was not happening in the Lower 48. Alaska's numbers spiked when school districts obtained money and began hiring. Federal funding changes may affect the Regional Educational Laboratory's ability to continue the study; however, CAEPR is hopeful the study will continue as the next two years of turnover were expected to spike.

CHAIR HOLLAND asked if the next two years would be 2019 and 2020 to continue the graph, or two years from today.

MS. HIRSHBERG replied both. Anecdotally CAEPR has heard teacher and administrator announcements of leaving the profession. Furthermore, superintendents could not fill positions at the start of 2020 and 2021. The data has not been systematically analyzed, but they hope it will happen.

[9:29:45 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said she has been asked many times about how Covid affected the national market for teachers. Evidence shows that

more teachers in the Lower 48 are opting for early retirement. There is an increase in turnover from burnout due to pandemic working conditions. There is a lower supply in the teacher workforce, and colleges of education are seeing lower enrollments. She has researched how teacher candidates were impacted trying to learn to be teachers; her findings were not positive. Teacher turnover challenges will not improve following the tough years of trying to educate students during a pandemic.

[9:31:20 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS asked whether teacher turnover could be correlated with changes to the teacher retirement system and whether putting a retirement system back would reduce turnover.

[9:31:49 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO responded that many variables affect teacher turnover. CAEPR has a method in mind to determine the effect of the rapid change from defined benefit to defined contribution in 2007 on Alaska's teacher workforce. However, until a study is done, CAEPR relies on literature that states young new teachers are less affected by retirement systems than older teachers.

[9:32:42 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said some people are concerned about retirement plans, while others enjoy portable plans. The difference may be age-related. Work behaviors of the new generation are changing. Studies indicate that the workplace expectations of 22-year-olds have yet to be discovered in education and across the workforce. It is crucial to learn their expectations sooner than later because schools want to retain good teachers. The "company man" is no longer in place for many corporations. Losing 30-year career teachers would be an enormous loss to the teaching profession. What it takes to retain career teachers needs to be investigated.

[9:34:06 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH described how urban district negotiations operate on a three-year cycle and how BSA increases allow districts more flexibility. He suggested that the two elements be considered when investigating trends in turnover.

[9:35:11 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said she heard anecdotally that Anchorage teachers wanted stability and voted overwhelmingly to ratify their contract to achieve it. Pink slips had been sent out four years in a row. Even though there was some certainty they would be hired back, getting a pink slip every spring was unnerving.

Therefore, they selected stability over a perfect contract to know their job standing for the next three years.

SENATOR BEGICH stated he noted that the trend on the graph was falling in a three-year cycle, and that prompted him to make the connection.

[9:36:37 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO responded to Senator Stevens' retirement question, saying that as a researcher, what she would do to test what happened and how it affects retirement patterns is look at the 2007 shift. However, the past has a limited ability to predict what will happen and what will work in the new world of employment. She stated that she spends much time working with collaborators and colleagues at the superintendent's association, who work with and listen to teachers. They are hearing information firsthand, and while what was said might not be quantifiable, those are the voices she would listen to regarding immediate changes and types of expected impacts. Superintendents and colleagues are talking to the people it matters to most in words, not numbers with limited power.

[9:37:45 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 7 and stated that it is important to put turnover numbers into a national context for two reasons. One reason is to determine optimal turnover through comparison and evaluation of other states. The second reason is that Alaska hires teachers in a national market. The primary employers of teachers are school districts. If districts are not hiring teachers from the local market, they are hiring them from the national market. Most new teachers in Alaska are hired nationally, with a more significant portion hired to work in the rural communities. Alaska competes with other states to hire the most skilled teacher workforce possible. The Learning Policy Institute teacher turnover averages from 2017 show that Alaska's average is higher than the national average. Twenty-one percent is the statewide average, which varies greatly by community type. So while averages are useful to an extent, they do not always tell the whole story.

[9:39:36 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 8 and said there are many reasons why Alaska's turnover numbers are higher, but economic and policy contexts would be the focus since changes could be made to them to effect change. She explained how competitiveness, low teacher supply, and high demand affect turnover in Alaska.

[9:41:23 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS stated he understands that the University of Alaska (UA) was able to make swift adjustments so education students could continue the program when the Anchorage location lost accreditation. He asked if the loss of accreditation significantly impacted the number of teachers in Alaska.

MS. DEFEO deferred the question to Ms. Tran because she ran many of CAEPR's initial licensure surveys of university graduates and would be able to share the denominators. The University of Alaska Anchorage produced about half of the initial licensures in the state at the time its program closed. Some of the students in the program were absorbed into other programs. Although other University of Alaska locations grew to accommodate, there was an immediate loss that was significant that Ms. Tran might discuss.

MS. TRANG TRAN, Research Associate, Institute of Social & Economic Research, University of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska deferred to Ms. Hirshberg.

[9:43:06 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said that when the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) lost accreditation and the Board of Regents closed the education programs, there was an attempt to transfer students to other programs. About 150 students did not continue in teacher education which had an immediate and significant impact. Graduation numbers dropped by over 100 graduates a year, and the programs in Fairbanks and Juneau have not made up the difference. Graduation rates have remained at a lower number.

[9:44:05 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said the 150 students might return to education or other majors, but it was an immediate decline.

[9:44:33 AM](#)

MS. TRAN said she was unable to find the survey data but stated that the University of Alaska at Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau prepare teachers through pathways to receive various types of teacher certifications. UAA produced many elementary special education teachers. University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) offers pathways and place-based teacher preparation. The loss of accreditation at UAA reduced the number of teachers and lost the specialization they provided in serving students in various areas of the state.

[9:45:48 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE asked for a list of the eleven states with higher turnover than Alaska. He had expected Alaska would be higher.

[9:46:19 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said Arizona, New Mexico, Louisiana, and Texas were some of the highest teacher turnover states when the numbers were compiled in 2017. The differences between urban and rural communities are discussed within Alaska. Outside of Alaska, many states' differences are between intercity and suburban communities. There are many different dynamics to teacher turnover, which makes comparison difficult.

[9:47:28 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND asked if it would be like urban flight, where teachers leave high urban concentrations for rural areas.

[9:47:39 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said data shows that teachers tend to leave schools serving high proportions of minority student populations and students of lower income. Those schools tend to be associated with poor working conditions, challenging leadership, large class sizes, and inferior learning materials and buildings. Researchers have found it is not the students but the working conditions that tend to drive teachers out of lower-resource schools.

CHAIR HOLLAND said he could see similarities with Alaska, such as poor housing.

[9:48:34 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH stated that perhaps Alaska should look at turnover through a research lens of factors as opposed to geography because the highest rates of poverty, inadequate housing and indigenous minority populations are in rural Alaska.

[9:49:24 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND asked if there is research showing how test scores are affected.

[9:49:52 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said that a two-year change to Alaska's testing system brought about instability. Assessment instability and minimal testing due to the Covid pandemic have postponed trend analysis for the next couple of years.

[9:50:22 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS stated that children in village schools often do not perform as well on tests as the state would like. However, he learned several years ago that impoverished students in Anchorage do not perform any better. Therefore, poverty may have a more significant impact on test scores than location.

[9:50:55 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO agreed and said Ms. Tran did a good analysis of high school graduation rates. When all variables were taken out except income, it was the biggest factor for predicting outcomes in all states.

[9:51:17 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO advanced to slide 10 and stated that teacher turnover is an area of concern and opportunity. The state needs to know the actual cost of turnover and the cost savings if policies and strategies were implemented to reduce teacher turnover. Literature on teacher turnover and costs is usually placed into six categories which she used to describe the overall process and involvement of hiring a new teacher:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Separation

- Administrative tasks
- Technology & physical plant

Recruitment

- Job fairs (including travel)
- Advertising

Hiring

- Applications, interviews, background checks
- HR processing

Orientation and training

- New teacher orientation and mentoring
- Professional development

Preparation

- Coursework, field placement
- Certification

Teacher productivity

- Student learning

[9:53:48 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 11 and stated that CAEPR wrote a methods paper justifying its calculation for the per-teacher cost of turnover. It was not easy because Alaska has unique processes and procedures that other states do not have. Available instruments needed to be adapted to an Alaska context.

Many partners, such as the National Education Association Alaska and the Alaska Superintendents Association, contributed to CAEPR's work to ensure accuracies. She provided details on the following points:

[Original Punctuation Provided]

- "Ingredients" method
- Interviews with 37 superintendents (or designees)
- Code turnover tasks
- Estimate time
- Classify staff into common names/roles
- Estimate wage • AASB, NEA-Alaska, ALARI
- Estimate fixed costs
- Calculate total cost
- Weight total cost

MS. DEFEO opined that the incredible amount of data gathered showed that districts were working very hard to reduce teacher turnover. Significant opportunities could be undertaken if school district resources were not needed for recruitment.

[9:56:40 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND asked if the numbers to be discussed were created using the method described.

[9:56:51 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied that was correct. She stated that the district was used as the unit of analysis. Hence, there are costs at the school and state levels that were not included in the cost of teacher turnover. She reiterated that the amount does not include the cost of student learning or a four-year degree. It represents a typical teacher turnover number, not extreme circumstances such as expensive and infrequent litigations.

[9:57:24 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 12 and stated that the numbers were conservative estimates from 2017. She noted that recruitment activities are highly variable between districts and positions. The costs are for average materials and do not include the time invested into recruiting. For example, more time may be spent recruiting an Advanced Placement Chemistry teacher than an English teacher. Half of the cost of recruiting is orientation and training. Employee benefits, which can drive up personnel costs by as much as 50 percent, are not included in the cost calculation of employee time.

[9:58:51 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE said there are 7,000 teachers statewide with a 21 percent annual vacancy rate at 1,470 separations per year; Alaska is spending \$30 million annually on recruitment, which does not consider student outcome impacts from separation. He asked if she agreed.

[9:59:24 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO replied yes, but that rough estimate does not include the significant items listed on slide 13 that were not included in the analysis. She described costs not included at the school, district, state, and community levels.

[10:00:33 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said that redirected funds from the university pay for the Alaska statewide mentoring program. It is no longer directly funded. Also, the Alaska Teacher Placement system is run by the University of Alaska system with support from every district in the state. It is a very collaborative initiative.

[10:01:13 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO turned to slide 15 and stated the following are known to affect teacher turnover nationally and in Alaska:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Working conditions

- Physical environment
- School leadership
- Workload
- Compensation

School characteristics

- Income
- Student demographics
- Performance

Teacher characteristics

- Effectiveness
- Subjects
- Gender

Particular to Alaska

- School-community relationships
- Community characteristics
- Place of preparation
- Cultural differences

MS. DEFEO said policies can improve some reasons for turnover, such as working conditions and nicer buildings. Other reasons,

such as weather conditions and student demographics, need to be accommodated through policy. Teachers prefer warm, light climates over cold and dark. Administrators cannot change the weather but knowing that weather matters to teachers allows for consideration of what can be done to entice or incentivize teachers to stay and work in a cold, dark place. Student demographics are another example. Until low income in a community is no longer a challenge, policymakers need to be mindful that it affects teacher movement patterns.

[10:03:04 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said CAEPR research on teacher turnover has shown far lower turnover rates for teachers who are prepared within the University of Alaska system or are Alaska residents educated out-of-state who return to Alaska to teach. Teachers who are prepared in Alaska tend to stay in Alaska, while indigenous Alaskans tend to remain in the area where they feel attachment. Out-of-state teachers tend to move back to warmer, sunnier places.

[10:03:46 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO commented that even Alaska-prepared teachers prefer urban areas within the state. Therefore, one of the most cost-effective strategies for reducing turnover in Alaska would be to increase the number of Alaska-prepared teachers who reflect the diversity of Alaska's communities and are likely to work in areas similar to their homes.

[10:04:29 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE said California has 40 million people. Alaska has 700,000. Alaska can stay within its teacher load; it does not need to exceed it. He asked whether the goal should be to maintain the proportion.

[10:05:21 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said she did not understand the question.

[10:05:30 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE said Alaska's schools should aim to stay above the level needed for teaching positions and determine the gaps that would fill at least half of the 21 percent turnover. Alaska does not need to outperform other states. People are in those states for a reason.

MS. DEFEO deferred to Ms. Hirshberg.

[10:06:05 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG stated that one of the discussions in Alaska is how to recruit educators who want to remain in the state. She anecdotally described a type of teacher that would stay in Alaska and how a teacher might be recruited. Part of recruiting is administrators doing their best to find teachers who are not coming for a two-year adventure or will not quit after finding conditions unacceptable. It is hard to recruit when school districts in other states may pay more, have an easier lifestyle, and still offer hunting and fishing.

[10:07:49 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH referred back to the quality-of-life issue and asked if the fiber optic cable Quintillion installed along the North Slope impacted economies in that area. He opined that broadband reaching rural communities should concomitantly impact their economies. High-speed internet allows for a rural lifestyle with a home-based economy that is still a cash economy. Poverty rates and housing attractiveness could change. He stated he would like to know more about Nome effectively having access to free or low-cost fiber optic, high-yield internet.

[10:08:48 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG replied that a report on broadband costs and issues in Alaska was done last year. Although Quintillion installed the cable, it costs residents \$400 a month for high-speed internet. That is more than double what well-compensated people in urban areas pay. It is not affordable. Although the middle mile problem does not exist, schools in that area cannot afford to upgrade their equipment to take advantage of the high speed. Administrators have issues connecting at midnight when students are home, and there is low internet traffic. While progress with fiber optics and low orbital satellites is happening, costs are still prohibitive, home hookup needs to occur, and adults need to understand how to use the technology. She expressed optimism that in five years her answer would change.

[10:10:28 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO responded to Senator Micciche's previous question on recruitment. She stated that she and Ms. Tran studied how individual superintendents recruit because of the incredible stories of resourcefulness to meet their hiring needs. It is a very place-focused administration philosophy that drives the hiring process. Community fit is the driving concern of administrators when filling positions, if they are lucky enough to have a surplus of applicants.

[10:11:57 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE opined there is a marketing gap and joked that the state needs a national Alaska teacher reality show. Alaska is an amazing place unlike any other. While it is rare to find a person who wants to live in Alaska, once they are found they are hooked. However, they must be found to get them here.

[10:13:24 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said she takes great pleasure in that idea because research shows that while teachers used to be seen as heroes in television shows, they are now portrayed more often as villains. People decide they want to be teachers when they are young. Marketing to teenagers who are not yet in college is an interesting idea. Television would be a great way to reach them.

[10:14:12 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said opportunities ended when federal funding for several initiatives was taken away. One initiative that worked well was a two or three-week experience teaching at a rural school for University of Alaska education students. Many chose to teach in rural communities upon graduating. The Lake and Peninsula Borough has been doing this with teachers from the Lower 48. It brings student candidates or recent graduates to a school to tutor for a semester, and the large investment of hiring a teacher that may not want to stay is avoided.

[10:15:43 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH expressed his appreciation for the informative presentation.

[10:16:04 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE stated that continuity is always underplayed. He opined there is an efficiency in teachers knowing their students' families that is not always appreciated. Most families have more than one child, so when a teacher is in a community for a while, the teacher is already familiar with the family and perhaps the siblings. This is a significant efficiency benefit that is not discussed often and cannot be replaced.

[10:17:29 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG said she and a colleague have written a chapter that primarily addresses continuity. Teachers enter rural communities, and the community does not invest in them because teachers do not stay. Teachers then say the community does not support them. It is a dialogue heard repeatedly in rural areas. It is exhausting for the parents who are trying to know new

teachers, and it is exhausting for teachers who are trying to get their feet under them. School board members need to work with their communities to create mentoring that is not just about having a teacher but a teacher who is part of the community, for example, knowing that a personal invitation is not needed to attend a potlatch. Communities need to learn how to work with the schools so opportunities to build critical relationships are not constantly missed.

SENATOR BEGICH said Jerry Covey, former commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development, and Barbara Adams did a study in 2016 that underscored the importance of feeling included in the community. It was both quantitative and qualitative. The study was done over time, and the researchers noted that the need rose as time passed deeper into winter. The study prompted the department to work with the legislature to provide more teacher support. The study was a template incorporated into SB 111, and the Yupiit School District actually placed a person in the community to help build connectivity.

[10:19:45 AM](#)

MS. TRAN stated she could answer Senator Stevens' previous question regarding the impact of accreditation loss on teacher numbers. In 2016 - 2017 the University of Alaska system (UA) [indiscernible] certificate program graduated 225 teachers. In 2019 - 2020 the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) and University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) graduated 160. She obtained the numbers from CAEPR's files.

[10:20:24 AM](#)

MS. DEFEO said that the preeminent scholar on teacher turnover, Richard Ingersoll, looks at the teacher shortage as a problem with retention, which is valid for Alaska. The mechanism for improvement within Alaska is to increase the supply of Alaska-prepared teachers and provide support and incentives for teachers to continue by engaging communities and effecting policies.

[10:21:18 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND opined that it was surprising to hear how turnover in Alaska compared to other states. While Alaska's high turnover rate of 21 percent primarily occurs in rural areas, other states experience high turnover in urban locations.

[10:21:47 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND held SB 225 in committee.

10:21:59 AM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Holland adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 10:21 a.m.