

HJR

64

HOUSE
COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date referred: 2/17/86

FURTHER REFERRALS: FINANCE

DATE: April 7, 1986.

HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
The SOCIAL SERVICES

Committee has considered

HJR 64

Relating to higher education in the Bristol Bay region."

and recommends:

- do pass
- do not pass
- do pass with attached amendment(s)
- no recommendation
- replace with _____ same title
- _____ new title

and recommends _____

further referral to the _____ Committee

- and attaches:
- letter of intent
 - first fiscal note
 - new fiscal note
 - zero fiscal note

SIGNING DO PASS:

Walter Greenberg

Kate Hurley

Edwin L. Taylor

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Walter Greenberg subject to revenue

Clayce Hawley - No. Sec - pending fiscal note

Walter Greenberg Co-Ch

Chairman

Walter Greenberg co-di.

Introduced: 2/17/86
Referred: Health, Education &
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY HERRMANN

2

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 64

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Relating to higher education in the

6

Bristol Bay region.

7

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8

WHEREAS the 32 villages in the Bristol Bay region are growing in
9 population and causing an increase in the higher education needs of the
10 Bristol Bay region; and

11

WHEREAS the University of Alaska presently administers a number of
12 separate but related higher education programs in the Bristol Bay region,
13 including the Bristol Bay Rural Education program, the Rural Development
14 program, and the Cross Cultural Education Development program; and

15

WHEREAS the higher education and vocational-technical training needs
16 of the Bristol Bay region are not being fully met while state revenue and
17 funding levels are in decline; and

18

WHEREAS there exists the opportunity to increase the efficiency of the
19 university's higher education efforts in the Bristol Bay region through the
20 coordination of program administration that could reduce program costs
21 while enhancing educational service delivery;

22

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the University of
23 Alaska is respectfully requested to review the opportunities that exist to
24 more closely coordinate higher education program offerings and review means
25 of adding additional resources to meet the higher education needs in the
26 Bristol Bay region; and be it

27

FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Alaska is urged to explore the
28 potential for the development of a Community College in the Bristol Bay
29 region as a means to provide for the efficient delivery of basic and

1 necessary postsecondary education in Bristol Bay.

2 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Board of Regents,
3 University of Alaska; Donald O'Dowd, President of the University of Alaska
4 Statewide System; Patrick J. O'Rourke, Chancellor, University of Alaska-
5 Fairbanks; and Marvin Looney, Chancellor, Community Colleges, Rural Educa-
6 tion and Extension.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
RESEARCH AGENCY

Pouch Y, State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-3991

June 21, 1985

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Adelheid Herrmann

ATTN: Deborah Greenberg

FROM: Jonathan Sherwood
Legislative Analyst

RE: Consolidation of University of Alaska Programs in Dillingham
Research Request 85-340

The University of Alaska operates several higher education programs in Dillingham. You requested that we determine what steps would be necessary to place all of these programs under one administration and identify possible advantages and disadvantages of such a move. Before discussing the consolidation of these programs, this memorandum will first provide a brief description of the programs.

Higher Education Programs in Dillingham

Currently, there are four separate University of Alaska higher education programs operating in Dillingham under two major administrative units. All of the programs have personnel physically located in the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center and all of the programs serve other communities in the Bristol Bay region in addition to Dillingham. Each of these programs is described below.

Marine Advisory Program (MAP). The Marine Advisory Program is a non-credit program of the Cooperative Extension Service which, in turn, is part of the Community College, Rural Education and Extension unit (CCREE) of the university. This program offers informal courses related to commercial fishing. Examples of course topics include safety and coldwater survival, net-mending, use of the Loran system, and use of computers to predict fish runs. There is a full-time MAP coordinator for the program in Dillingham. The Rural Education program pays one-quarter of the coordinator's salary to teach credit courses in the Rural Education program. MAP is active for nine months per year.

Rural Education. Rural Education offers both credit and noncredit courses in the Bristol Bay area. There are credit course offerings in vocational education topics such as business, welding, accounting, and office occupations, in addition to general Associate of Arts (A.A.)

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degree requirement courses such as algebra, English, and speech. Although Rural Education is not accredited itself, it is able to offer the A.A. degree through the University's community colleges, which are accredited. According to Margery Walker, Dean of Rural Education, all of the credit courses offered through the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center are taught by part-time instructors.

The noncredit courses are Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Education Diploma (GED) courses funded through a State grant, not through the University's regular budget. Rural Education operates the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center in which all of the university's higher education programs in Dillingham are located.

X-CED (Cross-Cultural Education Development). The X-CED program is a teacher training program offered through the College of Human and Rural Development of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The X-CED is a credit program through which a student may obtain a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. In-service training and other continuing education for educators is also available. In Dillingham, the program is staffed by a coordinator operating out of the Rural Education Center. However, the program is field-based, and individuals in other communities in Bristol Bay need not leave their community to participate through the Dillingham center.

Rural Development. The College of Human and Rural Development also offers a Bachelor of Arts in Rural Development in a program with a structure similar to X-CED. Although the curriculum is not developed enough to permit majors within the field, it is possible to concentrate in native corporations, village government, or natural resources. Like the other three programs in Dillingham, Rural Development also maintains a coordinator working out of the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center.

Consolidating the Administration of Programs

To understand the options for consolidating the higher education programs in Dillingham, it is helpful to understand the way the University of Alaska is structured. There are five different major administrative units (MAU) within the university which offer education programs. These are:

- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Alaska Juneau
- Anchorage Community College
- CCREE (Community Colleges, Rural Education and Extension)

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Each of these units is headed by a chancellor. Within an MAU, there may be several smaller administrative units. For example, CCREE has ten community colleges, Rural Education, the Cooperative Extension Service, and the Fishery Industrial Technology Center. Each of these units may offer different programs.

In Dillingham, two major administrative units--the University of Alaska Fairbanks and CCREE--offer programs. Both of UAF programs are offered by the College of Human and Rural Development; however, one of the CCREE programs is offered by Rural Education, the other by the Cooperative Extension Service.

When a university program offers a degree, it must be accredited to do so. Sometimes, the program which provides the instruction leading to a degree lacks accreditation. In such cases, the degree may be awarded through another unit. For example, Rural Education is not accredited to offer an A.A. degree. Students earning A.A. degrees through Rural Education courses receive their degrees through the community colleges.

Many of the individuals I contacted mentioned several advantages of consolidating the higher education programs in Dillingham under a single administrative unit. The most frequently cited advantage is that it would improve the ability of rural students to obtain financial aid. Currently, a student who is registered for six credit hours of courses with one MAU of the university and six credit hours with another MAU is not considered a full-time student, even though that student is registered for twelve credit hours with the university. To qualify as a full-time student while attending two programs, the student must take at least nine credit hours in one of the programs.¹

Another advantage mentioned by some individuals is it would alleviate the difficulty that results from students having to register with two or more programs and of transferring credits between programs. According to Jerry Mohatt, Dean of the College of Human and Rural Development, it is possible to make arrangements to transfer credits in advance of taking classes; however, it is difficult for students to transfer credits already obtained.

Charles Blood, Coordinator of Rural Education at the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center, mentioned that some problems occasionally arise because the different programs may have different policies and procedures which can conflict with one another. Dr. Blood stated that the programs should all be under the same MAU, with the same chancellor and the same set of policies. Ultimately, programs would be conducted more efficiently this way.

¹Legislation now pending, HB 96, would address this problem.

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Perhaps the best summary of these arguments comes from the Rural Education Task Force, which stated:

The programs being delivered to rural communities/regions need to be consolidated to reduce confusion regarding registration, student financial aid, transcript maintenance to name a few of the problems cited where multiple university units with varying policies, regulations and procedures are operating in the same communities/regions.²

One practical disadvantage to the present system noted by Dean Walker is that one MAU may not give priority to funding items for which the benefits are dispersed among MAUs. For example, she stated that although the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center is crowded and Rural Education would like to expand the facility, CCREE is reluctant to allocate funds on a project where some of the benefits fall outside that administrative unit.

Alternatives for Consolidation of University Programs

While most of the individuals we contacted concurred that a consolidation of programs in the Bristol Bay area would be beneficial, there was no consensus on what form this consolidation should take. In the course of our interviews, three different alternatives were offered.

Dean Jerry Mohatt of the College of Human and Rural Development suggested placing all of the credit programs under the University of Alaska Fairbanks' College of Human and Rural Development, with a single administration at the local level. He stated that UAF is the only major administrative unit in the university system which currently has both the necessary accreditation to award the various degrees involved and a rural outreach program. However, he did acknowledge that there might be some problems with such a move, as UAF has higher academic standards for credit courses than does Rural Education.

In his proposal, Dean Mohatt explicitly addressed only credit courses. Rural Education's ABE-GED program and MAP are both noncredit programs. While many of the disadvantages of separate programs relate to the administration of credit programs, there is some sentiment that noncredit programs work closely with credit programs. For example, the Rural Education Task Force report states that "close alignment of CES with rural post-secondary credit course delivery is highly desirable and

²Rural Education Task Force, Postsecondary Education in Rural Alaska, April 3, 1985.

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strongly recommended."³ On the other hand, Jerry Bomotti, Vice Chancellor of CCREE, noted that the MAP program has a very narrow focus, and it might be hard to fit MAP into other statewide marine programs if it was overseen by another branch of the university.

Dr. Charles Blood, Rural Education Coordinator in Dillingham, suggested that all of the rural outreach program could be consolidated under CCREE. This proposal would entail moving the responsibility for administering of the X-CED and Rural Development programs, at least at the community level, to CCREE. However, CCREE currently is not accredited to offer baccalaureate degrees.

Margery Walker, Dean of Rural Education, stated that consolidating rural outreach programs under one existing administrative unit would create problems, as none of the existing programs were created to serve this function. She favored the creation of a new unified rural outreach administrative unit. As envisioned by Dean Walker, this new unit would operate statewide. However, Dean Walker was careful to point out that some outreach units are tied to very specific programs. Creation of a single outreach unit would not reduce the need to coordinate with other administrative units that might have general responsibility for those programs.

Wendy Redmond, with the university's Statewide Administration, noted that any consolidation of programs into a single administrative unit would be very difficult. Consolidation of the programs under CCREE or a new rural outreach program would require obtaining accreditation to enable the unit to award baccalaureate degrees and teaching certificates. Ms. Redmond acknowledged that there were some existing models for noncampus based degree programs, such as Goddard and Antioch; however, she felt that obtaining such accreditation would be extremely expensive. On the other hand, Ms. Redmond doubted that it would be practical for UAF to administer such programs as very little of that institution's focus is on rural outreach programs.

It should be noted that administrative consolidation of rural outreach programs may not be the only method of alleviating the difficulties associated with having several administrative units involved in the administration of higher education programs within a community or region. Most of the individuals with whom I spoke stated that currently there is a high level of cooperation and coordination among the various programs in the Bristol Bay area. In fact, Bristol Bay was sometimes cited as an good example of how the programs can work together to make the most of their resources. Dr. Charles Blood does not believe that

³Rural Education Task Force Report, Postsecondary Education in Alaska, April 3, 1985.

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students using the Bristol Bay Rural Education Center consider the programs offered there to be separate entities; rather, the perception is that it is all the university.

Dean Mohatt stated that the principal reason for advocating an administrative change for rural outreach was to extend and formalize the level of cooperation that currently exists in Bristol Bay as a result of the efforts of the present staff. While he believes the level of cooperation and coordination between programs in Bristol Bay is excellent, he expressed some concerns about how changes in personnel might affect the situation. Dean Mohatt also noted that some effort have been made to formalize this cooperation. For example, the College of Human and Rural Development has taken steps to ensure that policy advisory boards for Rural Education and for the college are the same body.

Dean Walker noted that most of the problems that stem from having programs in different administrative units are technical problems, and solutions could probably be found that did not require the merging of these programs administratively. In fact, she stated that she would prefer maintaining the status quo to trying to combine the rural outreach programs into any existing administrative unit. If the administrations were to remain separate, the programs should continue to coordinate and cooperate as much as possible. Dean Walker stated that it is important to define the existing programs to the populace, work on the technical problems, and clarify the lines of responsibility between programs.

Ultimately, any decision to alter the current administrative structure of rural outreach programs in the Bristol Bay area would have to be submitted by the President of the University of Alaska to the Board of Regents for approval. According to Dean Jerry Mohatt, there has been some consideration of consolidating rural outreach programs at a local level. Some of the individuals contacted indicated that changes in rural outreach programs probably would be considered after vacancies in the chancellorship for CCREE and the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs and Institutional Planning were filled.

Most of the discussion of consolidating higher education programs in Dillingham has focused on changes which would reorganize the administration of rural outreach programs statewide. However, Dean Mohatt acknowledged that if a region developed their own plan and approached the President with the support of their legislators, they might be able to have their plan implemented.

* * *

I hope you have found this information useful. If you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

JS