

**HB**

**274**

## Overview of University of Alaska Activities Pertaining to Teacher Training, Recruitment and Retention in Alaska

The University of Alaska continues to focus its efforts on programs that benefit public education throughout Alaska, with efforts spanning over all MAUs. UA welcomes the opportunity to report to the Legislature on the quality, placement, and employment of teachers and administrators from these programs as well as other efforts.

### Academic Programs Offered:

The UAA College of Education (UAA COE) offers academic programs in several areas. The Department of Educational Leadership within UAA COE offers graduate degrees in Educational Administration and Adult Education. The Department of Counseling and Special Education offers a variety of programs for individuals interested in working as special educators, speech pathologists, and counselors. Lastly, the Department of Teaching and Learning offers a variety of programs for individuals interested in working as early childhood, elementary, or secondary educators.

The UAF School of Education (UAF SOE) offers a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education for undergraduate students, a one year post-baccalaureate program for people who already have a degree, and two Elementary Education minors. The Secondary Post-Baccalaureate Licensure Program serves individuals who currently hold degrees and are interested in pursuing a career in teaching at the middle school and high school level. The UAF SOE Graduate department also offers Master of Education degrees in Curriculum and Instruction, Cross-Cultural Education, Counseling, and Reading. UAF SOE also serves as the administrative home for the Bachelor of Arts and Sciences degree and offers non-degree professional development programs to teachers who wish to add endorsements. The UAF SOE is nationally accredited, and all programs are approved by their respective professional associations.

The UAS School of Education (UAS SOE) offers a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and an AAS in Early Childhood Education for undergraduate students. For students who already have a bachelor's degree and want to become a teacher, a Master of Arts in Teaching is offered with focus areas available in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education. The School of Education also provides support for experienced teachers through a Master of Education degree with emphasis areas available in Special Education, Educational Technology, Early Childhood Education, and Reading Specialist, as well as graduate certificates in a variety of areas, including Mathematics Education. The School of Education is also home to the PITAAS (Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools) program.

Support Activities: Programs range from teacher and administrator recruitment and preparation to professional development training, in-service support programs, and curriculum development. Many of these efforts are in collaboration with leading national research centers, the state Department of Education and Early Development (EED), scientists, and school districts throughout Alaska. A detailed list of UA activities by area can be found starting on page 2.

Reports and Information: The University has published a number of reports pertaining to teacher training, recruitment, and retention, including accreditation reports, grant performance reports,

teacher quality reports, the Alaska teacher supply and demand report, missions and measures reporting, Department of Labor employment follow-ups, and graduation reports. A selected list of these reports can be found in the appendix.

#### The Challenges:

The recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators is an important and complex policy issue for all of Alaska. Federal and State educational policies compel individual school districts, the state Department of Education and Early Development, and postsecondary institutions to develop programs that are in compliance with these regulations.

#### Suggestions:

Through expanding and strengthening existing partnerships with other state agencies, as well as with the fifty-three individual school districts in Alaska, even greater progress can be achieved. One possible approach is to request a shared reporting session including UA, EED, ACPE, school districts, and DOLWD to foster a dialogue between agencies to address the full range of issues that influence recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators throughout Alaska. This approach may serve to improve communication, collaboration, and help to focus state educational policy.

### **UA Activity Detail**

#### Future Teachers of Alaska

A key facet in UA's efforts to recruit future teachers to the profession is the Future Teachers of Alaska program. In collaboration with rural and urban school districts, this program targets Alaska's Indigenous students, engaging and encouraging them at an early age with college readiness activities to prepare them for careers in education. Other teacher preparation and support programs at UA include the Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools (PITAAS) program housed at the Juneau campus of UAS, and the Alaska Native Educators Student Association (ANESA) at UAF.

#### K-12 Outreach

The K-12 Outreach Program housed at UA Statewide works directly with school districts on recruitment and retention issues. The Alaska Teacher Placement program (ATP) works to fill the gap between teacher supply and demand by providing recruiting assistance to school districts, maintaining the ATP Job Bank online at [alaskateacher.org](http://alaskateacher.org), and hosting job fairs both in Alaska and the Lower 48. In collaboration with EED, ATP also works to recruit special education teachers.

The Alaska Statewide Mentor Project, in partnership with EED, supports beginning teachers throughout Alaska. Working with the New Teacher Center, ASMP is a grassroots effort that serves the needs of first and second year teachers onsite by providing formative assessment and feedback through teacher observation and support.

The UA Alaska Educational Innovations Network (AEIN), located at UAA, was established to build stronger teaching and learning communities in nine partner school districts. This program offers professional development and training to teacher leaders and support to school districts.

The K-12 outreach effort at UA also includes activities for students such as sports camps, the Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI), and Upward Bound, which offer the opportunity to complete college preparatory courses. The International Polar Year (IPY), for example, provided every school in Alaska with a set of posters and an educational resource guide with information about IPY. In addition, there is an art contest for students sponsored by IPY Education Outreach.

#### Research and Curriculum Development

Research grants often encourage a K-12 curriculum component. As a result, researchers and scientists alike are working to develop curriculum and resources for teachers right here in Alaska. Some examples include: Aurora Alive, an interactive DVD for students and teachers; Geographic Information for Alaska (GINA), a network and resource for teachers to use in the classroom; Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE), a worldwide, hands-on, primary and secondary school-based science and education program; Science Teacher Education Program (STEP), a professional development program designed to increase Alaska teachers' science content knowledge in order to meet Alaska State Science Standards; the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN), which provides resources for compiling and exchanging information related to Alaska Native knowledge systems and traditional ways of knowing; and Math in a Cultural Context (MCC), a long-term, collaborative project aimed at developing supplemental math curricula based on the traditional wisdom and practices of the Yup'ik Eskimo people.

## APPENDIX

### Inventory of Reports Related to Teacher Training, Recruitment and Retention in Alaska

- Alaska Teacher Supply and Demand Report, 2005 Update
- Teacher Supply and Demand in Alaska—A 2005 Snapshot
- Finding and Keeping Teachers in Alaska - 2006 Supply and Demand Fact Sheet from Alaska Teacher Placement
- Turnover Among Alaska's Teachers: How many leave their jobs?
- Graduates of Alaska's Teacher Preparation Programs – Where Are They Now?
- Alaska Statewide Teacher Mentor Project Research Highlights, 2006-2007
- Alaska Statewide Teacher Mentor Project Executive Summary
  
- UAA College of Education - Program Overview
- UAA College of Education - Detailed Program Profile
- UAA College of Education - NCATE Institutional Report
  
- UAF School of Education - Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
- UAF School of Education - NCATE Institutional Report
- UAF School of Education - NCATE Board of Examiners Report
  
- UAS School of Education - Fact Sheet
- UAS School of Education - Center for Teacher Education Overview
- UAS School of Education - NCATE Board of Examiners Report
  
- Residency and Employment Followup on UA Teacher Education Graduates, 1989 - 2006
  
- University of Alaska End Results Performance Reporting on High Demand Job Area Program Graduates (Teacher Education)

Note: Each of the above reports is updated on a cyclical basis, ranging from semi-annual updates to an update cycle of several years.

# Representative Mike Hawker

## Alaska State Legislature



### House Bill 274 Sponsor Statement

#### Short Title: University Report: Teacher Training/Retention

HB 274 is part of the recommendations adopted by the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force. The bill requires the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska system to prepare an annual report to the legislature describing its efforts to attract, train and retain qualified public school teachers.

The number of teacher vacancies far outpaces the number of Alaskans trained to be public school teachers. According to a recent fact sheet produced by the University, "the State of Alaska experiences about 1,100 teaching vacancies each year and in-state teacher training programs produce only about 220 graduates per year." Our statewide university and other training institutions must continue to whittle away at this unfortunate gap.

The Alaska State Legislature and the University of Alaska need to work together to ensure our 53 school districts have the best teachers possible, preferably Alaska trained teachers. An annual report offered by the University will be the beginning of a meaningful dialogue between these two institutions.

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Bud  
Creswood  
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Seward  
Hope

## **HB 274**

### **Sectional Analysis**

Prepared by Representative Mike Hawker's Office

**Section 1:** Requires the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska to prepare an annual report that describes the university's efforts to attract, train and retain qualified public school teachers. Details information that must be included in the report.

**Sections 2 and 3:** Correct statutory references required by section 1 of this bill.