

2/08/12

**PRESENTATIONS:
UNIVERSITY OF
ALASKA BOARD OF
REGENTS, ALASKA
GATEWAY SCHOOL
DISTRICT AND
STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>2-08-12 PRESENTATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA BOARD OF REGENTS, ALASKA GATEWAY SCHOOL
DISTRICT AND STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDC27</COMM></TARGET>

Alaska State Legislature

Rep. Lance Pruitt, Vice-Chairman
Rep. Sharon Cissna
Rep. Eric Feige



Rep. Peggy Wilson
Rep. Paul Seaton
Rep. Scott Kawasaki

Rep. Alan Dick, Chairman
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Agenda

February 8, 2012

8 a.m.

Ramona Barnes Committee Room - 124

- I. JT. HOUSE/SENATE EDUCATION MEETING - Call to Order
- II. Presentation by Regent Michael Powers – UA Board of Regents Report on teacher preparation, retention and recruitment

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

- III. Superintendent Presentation
 - a. Todd Poage – Alaska Gateway School District
- IV. State Board of Education – Annual Report to the Legislature (Cont'd)
 - a. Esther Cox, Chairman Board of Education & Early Development
- V. Adjourn

SB 241 Testimony
Alaska's University 2012 Report
Mike Powers – UA Regent
February 8, 2012

I am here today to share with you Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools 2012 Report

- Prepared in accordance with Senate Bill 241 of the 25th legislative Session
- A Report to the legislature on teacher preparation/retention/ and recruitment by the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska

I am joined by:

Diane Hirshberg, Assoc Prof of Education Policy, with UAA's Institute of Social and Economic Research & Provost Rick Caufield of the University of Alaska South East

Report was prepared by:

Patricia Chesbro, Interim Dean, College of Education UAA
Paula Donson, Associate VP of Academic Affairs, UA
Gwen Gruenig, Associate VP of Institutional Research and Analysis, UA
Lexi Hill, Data Analyst, ISER, UAA
Diane Hirshberg, Associate Professor of Education Policy, ISER, UAA
Deborah Lo, Dean of School of Education, UAS
Allan Morotti, Interim Dean, School of Education, UAF

Intent is to:

1. Provide a brief overview of the numbers of teaching education graduates
2. Identify the shortage areas in the Alaskan teaching workforce
3. Highlight each of U of A's MAU's efforts to attract, train, and retain qualified teachers

Here are some of the relevant numbers you will 1st see in the report:

1. In the past 5 years, between 2006 and 2011, U of A has graduated about 200 new teachers annually
2. On average, half of U of A graduates begin teaching in AK the fall after graduation, rising to 60% within 3 years
3. U of A graduates made up 12% of new hire teachers across the state in 2011
4. Number of principals prepared by U of A has increased substantially w/ new UAS educational program
5. Special Education remains a hard-to-fill challenge area
 - a. Nevertheless, between 2006 and 2011, the U of A more than doubled the annual number of special education graduates, from 29 in 2006 to 68 in 2011

6. Math and certain positions are also hard to fill. The numbers fluctuate, but – in general- The number of newly hired math teachers has remained steady over past 7 years: 12-15 math teachers are hired annually.
7. Relative to Efforts to Attract – Train – and Retain qualified teachers:
 - a. The U of A provides an umbrella of programs and strategies through:
 - i. UAA College of Education
 - ii. UAF School of Education
 - iii. UAS School of Education
 - iv. Alaska Teacher Placement System
 - v. Future Educators of Alaska program
 - vi. And the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project
 - b. In addition, U of A offers:
 - i. A variety of college-bridging programs-help with transition to post secondary education
 - ii. Programs are found on both main and branch campuses
 - c. As a fairly new regent, I have been struck by the level of cooperation across all three campuses, and specifically point to:
 - i. Teacher Education Plan which the Deans and Provosts at the three MAUs developed, laying out 4 common goals:
 1. Recruit and retain more AK students in Education
 2. Increase program access through multiple delivery methods
 3. Enhance Educator Preparation programs in Special Ed and Math and Science
 4. Conduct research to identify causes/solutions for Ed challenges...I have been very impressed with shared strategy planning sessions
8. Brief description of some challenging areas
 - a. Significant efforts have focused on attracting and prepare AK Native and other diverse populations
Teacher turnover is often cited as a concern, especially in rural areas
 - b. Consequently, many districts are forced to recruit from out-of-state
 - c. These out-of-state recruits often struggle with adjusting to their new environment...and to address this challenge:
 - i. Each MAU has specific outreach efforts
 - ii. Distance education technologies have been instrumental
 - iii. The number of AK Native students has been fairly steady
8.7% of new teacher graduates are Alaskan Native, vs. 4.5% of all teachers currently in AK schools
 - d. **At UAA**, the Department of Teaching and Learning is supporting a cohort of paraprofessionals who want to become elementary teachers
 - i. An advisory group made up of College of Education, College of Arts & Science, Kenai Peninsula College and educators in the village of Chee-vak are working to provide coursework for 15 individuals pursuing AA and BA degrees
 - ii. Department has established a “conciierge” service to help students navigate the system ... same in healthcare
 - iii. This program has been funded by a private donor who wants to see rural expansion in teacher education efforts

- e. **UAS** has two US Department of Education teacher programs for AK Natives
 - i. Pee-tas: Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for AK Schools...and a
 - ii. Village Teacher program focused on providing AK Native teachers in obtaining advanced degrees. Roughly 20 AK Native Teachers are beginning a Reading Specialist Masters program this spring.
- f. **UAF** has a variety of outreach efforts to attract, prepare and retain teachers:
 - i. All certification and degree programs are offered through distance education and....Faculty continues to develop additional online course offerings...as well champion efforts to modernize its IT systems for enhanced connectivity
 - ii. School of Education maintains staff advisor dedicated to rural student needs
 - iii. On rural visits, faculty meet with school and community officials to understand and construct solutions to local needs
 - iv. School of Education collaborates with Rural Student Services to assist w/ special requests
 - v. School of Education also offers a one-week rural practicum for Fairbanks-based elementary & secondary candidates
 - vi. School of Education recently internally funded a \$12k grant to study teacher retention factors in Northern AK
 - vii. School of Education continues to house the AK Native Teacher Preparation Program grant that provided financial support to AK Natives in final 3 years of their programs...Grant is a partnership between UAS school of Education, AK Native Education Association, Association of Interior Native Educators, and UAF College of Rural and Community Development....again, another clear signal of inter-campus and community collaboration

The 2012 report also speaks to 5 other Key Efforts to Attract/Train and Retain Educations

1. **AK Teacher Placement Service**
 - a. University established a the service in 1978
 - b. It is a partnership between school districts across the state and U of A
 - c. Serves as a statewide clearinghouse to match interested teachers/principals with positions throughout Alaska
 - d. Responds to thousands of inquiries annually
2. **Future Educators of AK Program**
 - a. Statewide collaborations of AK Native K-12 students interested in teaching
 - b. Partnership among U of A, K-12 school districts and community orgs such as Alaska Native Education Association
 - c. Funded by the US Dpt of Education since 2005
 - d. Works with 23 school districts across the state
 - e. 600 Students are currently enrolled
 - f. Recently all MAUs approved a 100-level course transferable across all MAUs
3. **Alaska Statewide Mentor Program**
 - a. An individualized support program for 1st and 2nd year teachers

- b. Focus on the diverse academic and cultural backgrounds of AK students
 - c. This Academic year, the program has 24 mentors, working in 34 school districts
 - d. Project was recently award a \$15 million grant by US Dpt of Ed, matched by \$1.5M in private Donations
4. **University of Alaska Outreach and College & Career Bridging Program**
- a. Last year U of A conducted a career bridging survey-- 266 programs analysed related to 1) program description 2) program organization and location and 3) funding source
 - b. Findings:
 - i. 168 Outreach/Bridge programs use U of A general funds
 - ii. 82 programs receive federal funding
 - iii. 68 programs receive state funding
 - iv. 34 programs receive private funding
 - v. 72 Programs designed to lead students to a degree program
 - vi. 77 programs were considered partnerships, including dual credit collaborations with school districts
 - vii. There are 117 youth outreach programs – not resulting in credit –but strong public information: job fairs, college nights, on-campus education sessions
 - viii. 24 percent of the programs focus on STEM issues: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
 - ix. Roughly 43 programs specifically note the integration of cultural and indigenous knowledge and are funded by Us Dpt of Education
 - x. “Efforts are underway to better track and measure the effectiveness of these programs” ...Core to the mission of the university
5. **A fifth area of general focus related to attracting, training and retaining teachers relates to Alternative Certification in Alaska**
- a. This is an area which allows teacher candidates who already hold a BA, to be employed as a teacher while earning their certificates.
 - b. As of this past summer, 6 educators had completed this program, and 23 others were pursuing their certificates
 - c. UAF has graduated 51 educators using this alternative certification process.
 - d. UAA operated a program from 2005 to 2010 and graduated 21 secondary teachers.

Finally, I will touch on **Recommendations for Educational Policy Research**

- In summer of 2010, U of A Foundation awarded ISER—the Institute of Social and Economic Research at U of A -- funding to start the “Center for AK Education Policy Research – CAEPR
- CAEPR’s mission is to conduct collaborative, interdisciplinary research and analysis around issues of:
 - Educational access
 - Equity and Excellence in the “Alaska Context,” across early childhood, primary, secondary, higher and adult education.

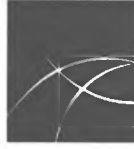
In October this past year, CAEPER set the following priorities for research in the coming year:

1. Identification of learning readiness models
2. Exploration of system change in education, especially related to students at-risk.
3. Identification of models for preparing AK Native teachers and administrators
4. Identification of educator retention models
5. Identification of indigenous language models that lead to successful learning

With that, I'd like to simply recap the objectives of the University of Alaska for Alaska's Schools 2012 report, conclude my remarks and ask if we can answer questions you may have:

1. Relative to a brief overview of teaching education graduates, specifically related to key number
 - a. U of A tends to graduate 200 Alaskan teachers per year
 - b. Alaskan graduates make up 12% of new hires
2. Relative to shortage areas in the Alaskan teaching workforce
 - a. Special Education is particularly hard to fill, but Special Education hiring's have doubled in last 5 years
 - b. Math and Science difficult to fill...and like most of Lower 48, will likely continue to be challenging area.
3. Finally, some of the key programs that highlight U of A's efforts to attract, train, and retain qualified teachers...include:
 - Alaska Teacher Placement Service: 33 yr clearing house effort which ... responds to thousands of inquiries annually about teaching opportunities across Alaska
 - Future Educators of Alaska Program: 66 Alaska native students participating in the program
 - The Alaska Statewide Mentor Program: Project recently awarded a \$15mill grant of US Dpt of Ed...and an additional \$1.5M private donations to enhance and support teaching profession in Alaska
 - University Outreach and College & Career Bridging Programs: A 266-program-analysis with special focus on: 1) college readiness, 2) school district partnerships and 3) youth outreach and information
 - The Alternative Certification Programs for those already holding a degree, and who would like to become teachers, especially in rural Alaska
 - And finally, from a research perspective – a core feature of the UA mission – U of A's efforts to attract, train and retain qualified teachers will be enhanced by acting on the 2010 U of A Foundation award to establish the Center of Alaska Education Policy Research

That concludes my remarks. And speaking for other university representatives here in attendance, would be happy to answer questions you may have.



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA

Many Traditions One Alaska

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

In Accordance with:

AS 14.40.190(b)

Source: Senate Bill 241, 25th Alaska State Legislature

AN ACT

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

Prepared by:

Patricia Chesbro, Interim Dean, College of Education, UAA

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Under the direction of:

Patrick K. Gamble, President, University of Alaska

Daniel J. Julius, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, University of Alaska

Presented by:

The University of Alaska Board of Regents

Regent Michael Powers, Chair of the Academic & Student Affairs Committee

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:

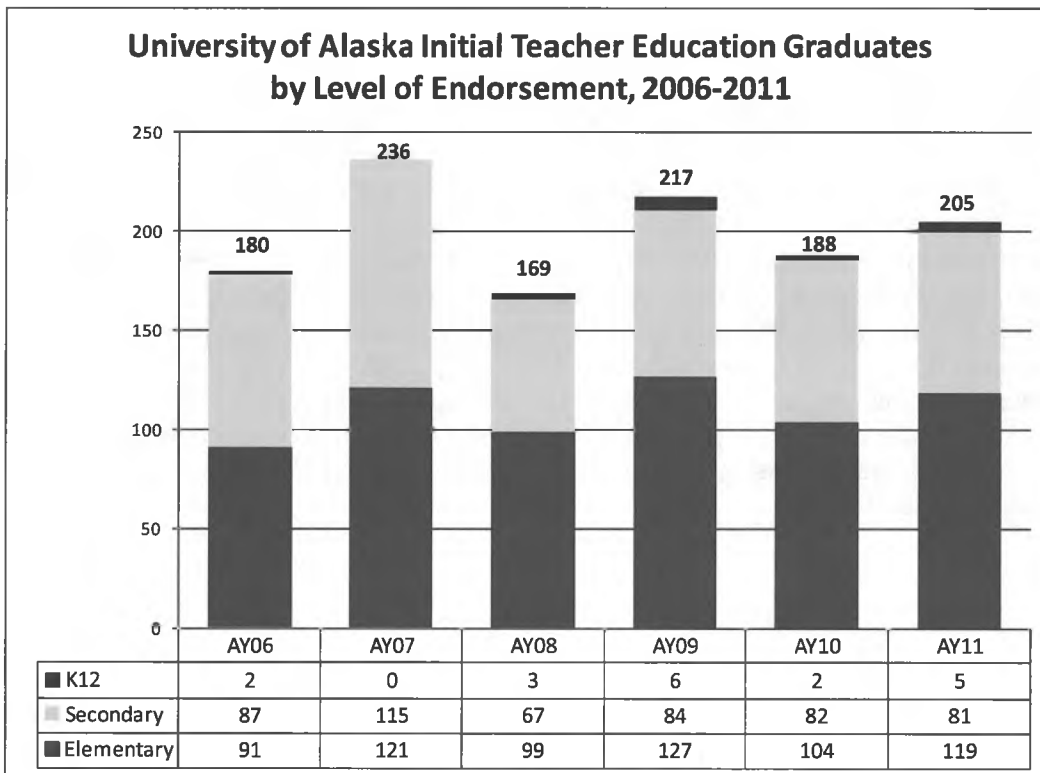
http://www.alaska.edu/files/research/TeachPrepPlan_101112.pdf

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.

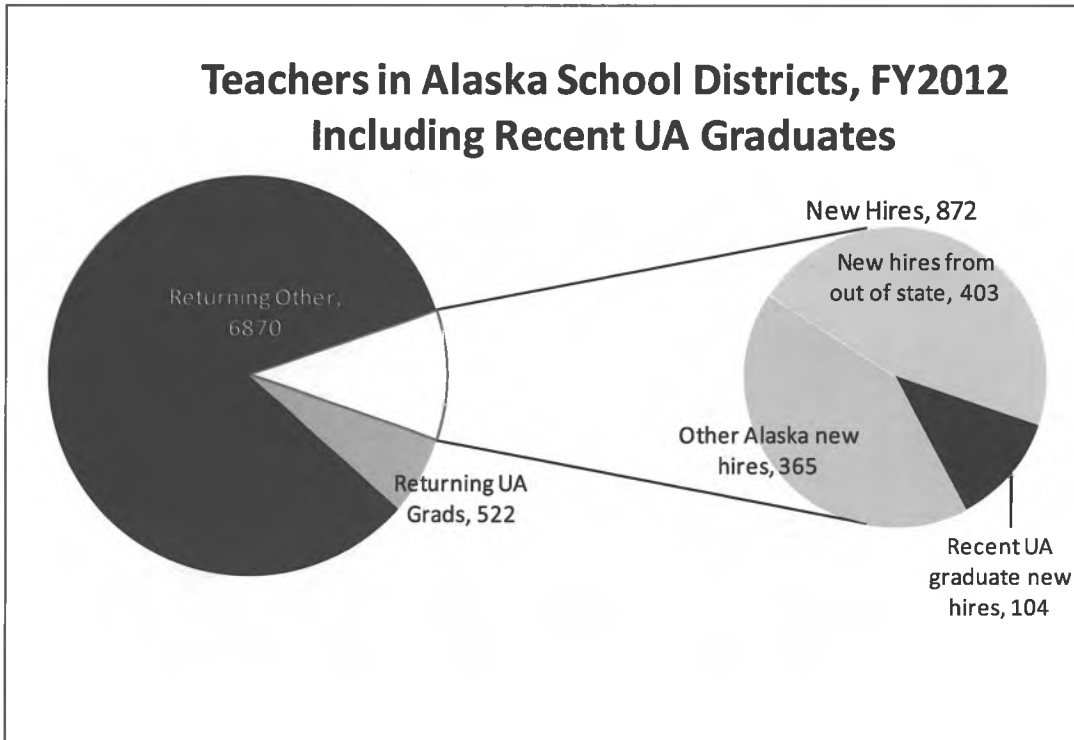
Graduates of UA initial teacher preparation programs, 2006-2011 certification and employment in FY2012					
Academic Year	# program graduates*	With Alaska Certification**		In AK Schools Oct 2011	
		number	percent	number	percent
2006	174	161	92.5%	94	54.0%
2007	232	215	92.7%	137	59.1%
2008	166	158	95.2%	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

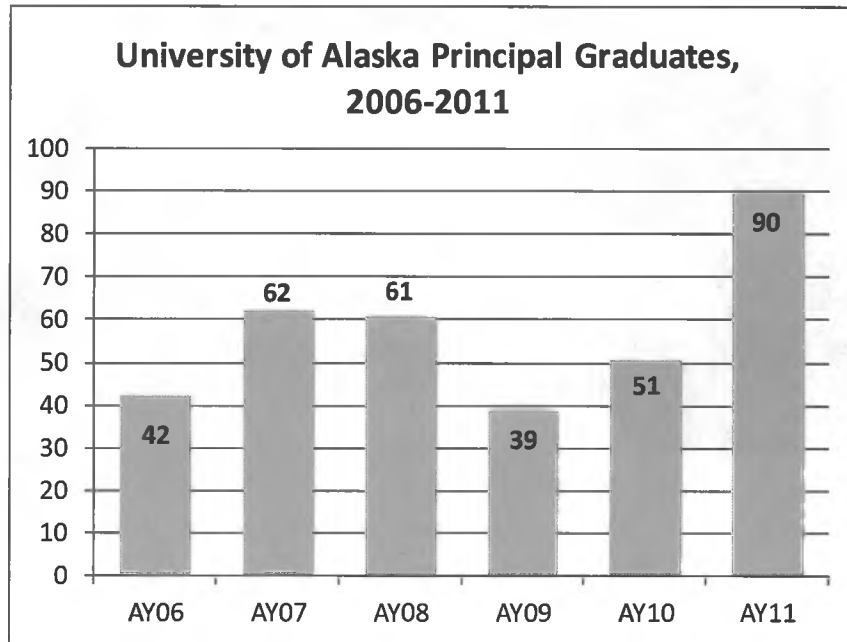
There are many reasons that graduates don’t immediately move into teaching jobs; they may be waiting for an opening in their preferred subject, grade, or location (or all three). Some teacher program graduates don’t enter the teacher profession at all – personal or family reasons may keep them out of 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.

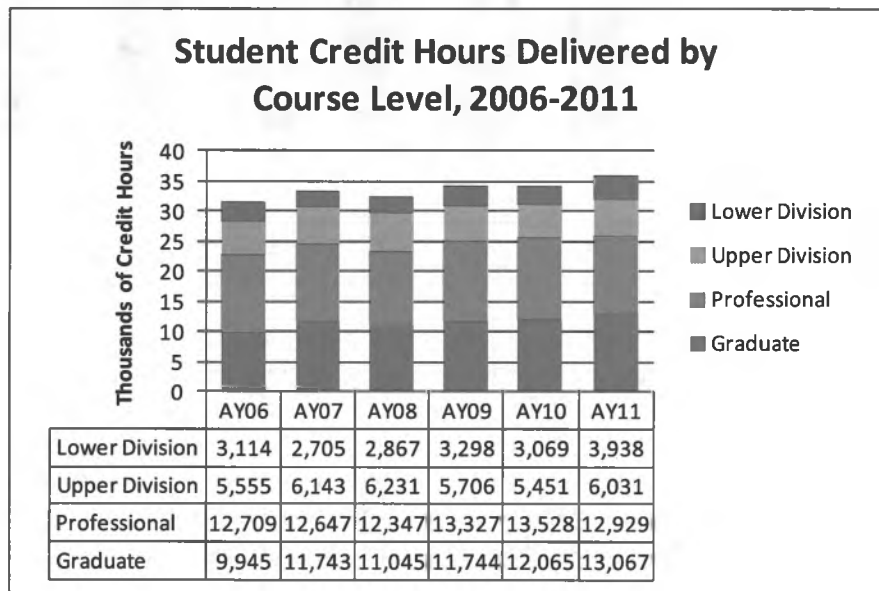
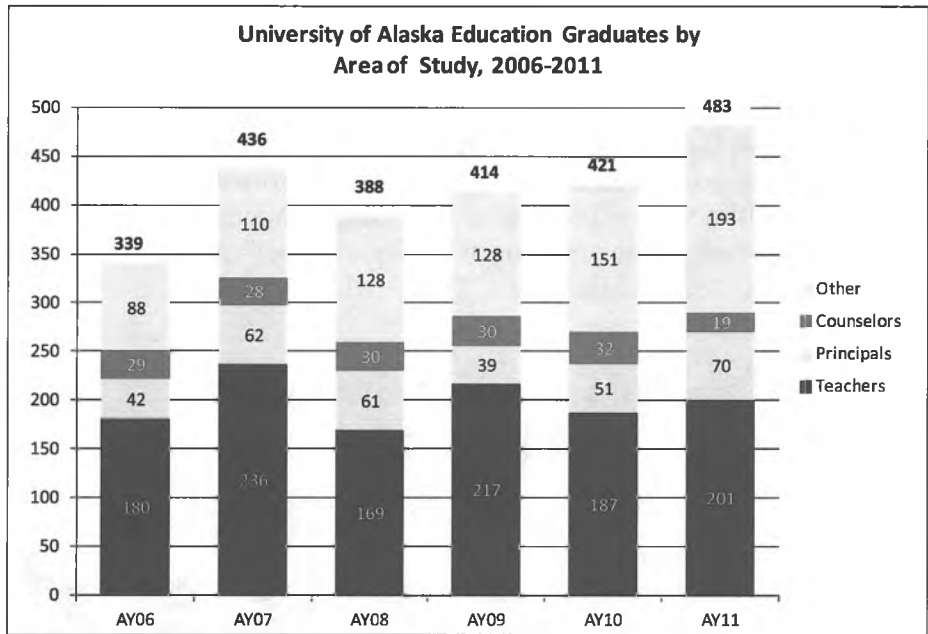


While almost all graduates of the University's principal preparation program are employed in Alaska schools when they finish the program, the percent drops off sharply in subsequent years. Fewer than half actually have positions as principals, assistant principals, or lead teachers; anecdotal evidence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

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.

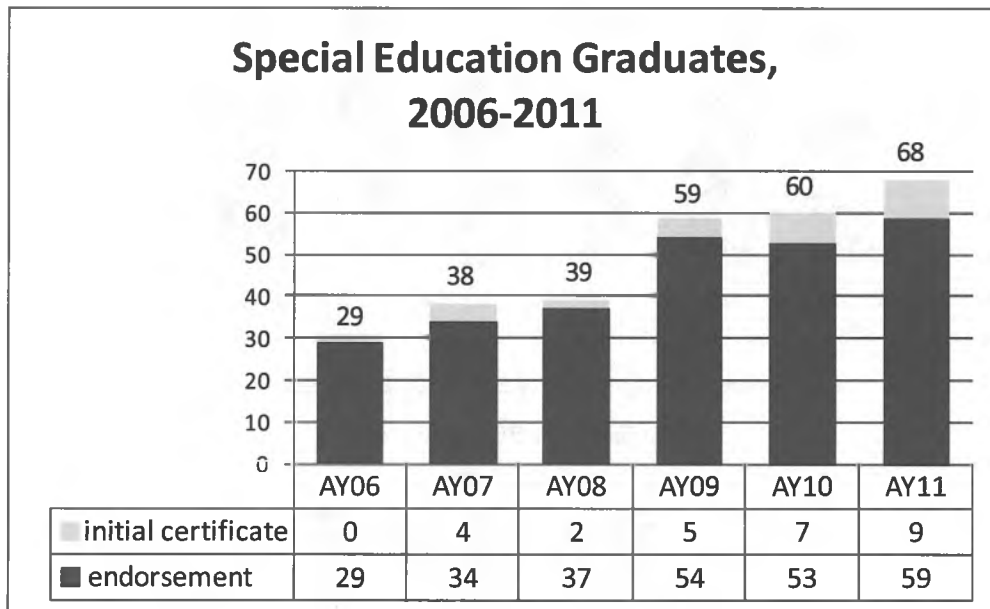


HARD TO FILL POSITIONS

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.

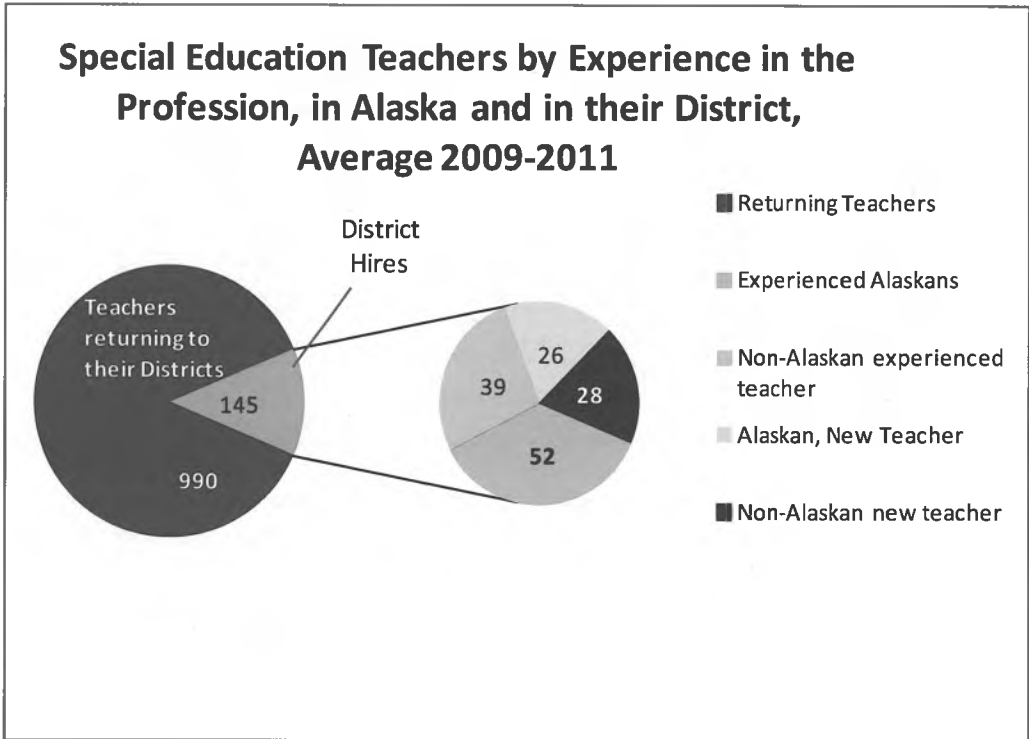


Recent changes in how the University records Special Education endorsements will improve our ability to track these graduates into the workforce. However, only about 70 percent of the graduates between 2006 and 2011 are easily tracked. We used those graduates to estimate the percent of all our graduates 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.

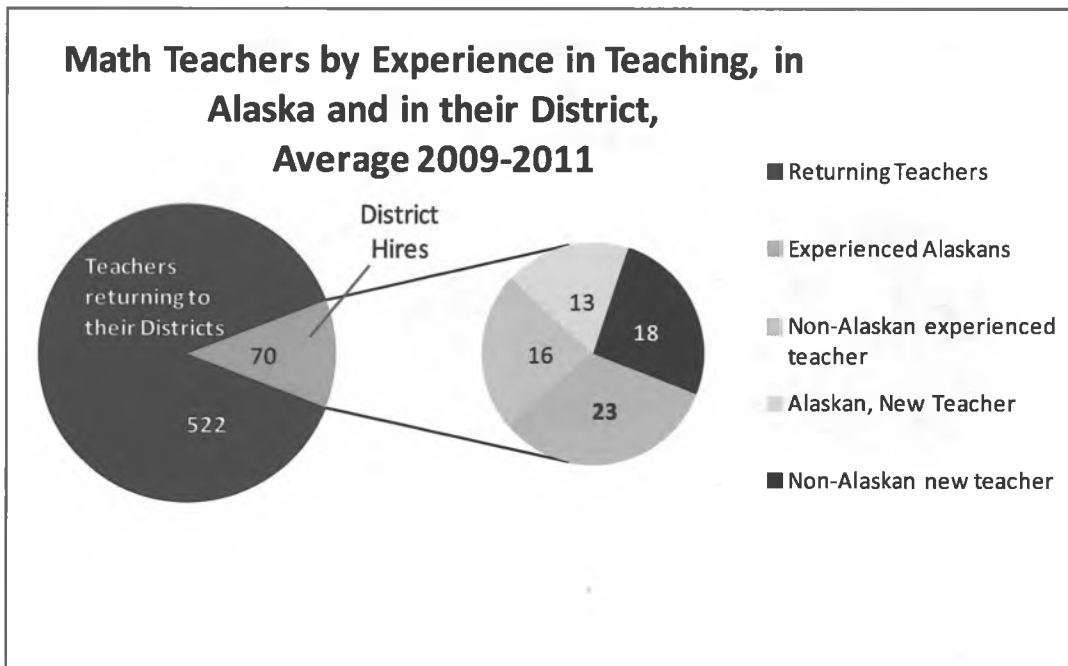
Special Education teachers in Alaska Schools by experience in special education, in Alaska and in their district, FY 2005-2011						
		Returning from previous year		New Hires		
				Alaskan		From out of state
Year	Total	Number	Percent	New teacher	Experienced teacher (movers)	Other new hires
2005	924	799	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.

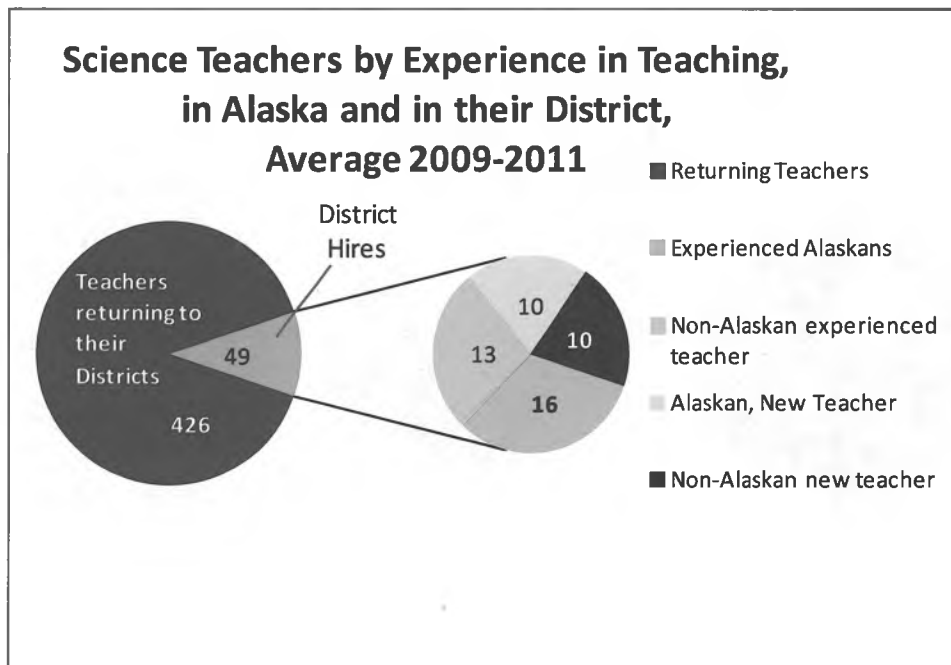
Math Teachers

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)

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.

PRESENTATION TO JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEES 2012

- **GOOD MORNING MR CHAIRMAN AND SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEES.**
- **MY NAME IS ESTHER COX, AND I AM CHAIR OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMET.**
- **I AM HERE TODAY TO BEGIN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATOR DAVIS' BILL---SB 1---WHICH WAS PASSED LAST LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND IN ESSENCE STATES THAT "THE ALASKA BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIR WILL GIVE AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE WITHIN THE FIRST 30 DAYS OF THE SESSION."**
- **I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE, BECAUSE AS I HAVE TESTIFIED IN THE PAST, I LOOK FORWARD TO ANY OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR BOARD TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE LEGISLATURE.**
- **AND OF COURSE, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO KNOW ME, THIS WILL COME AS NO SURPRISE, BUT I ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE COUNSEL TO MY SENATOR. I ALWAYS FEEL THAT GIVES HIM A HEADS UP FOR HIS BUSINESS IN THE COMING MONTHS!**
- **A WRITTEN REPORT HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE COMMITTEES, AND MY COMMENTS WILL SUMMARIZE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THAT REPORT.**
- **AFTER THE REPORT, I WILL BE HAPPY TO ENTERTAIN QUESTIONS.**
- **IN THE EVENT THAT I CAN'T ANSWER A QUESTION SATISFACTORALLY, I HAVE TERRIFIC BACK UP. COMMISSIONER HANLEY, DEPUTRY COMMISSIONER MORSE, AND MANY PEOPLE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SENIOR STAFF ARE HERE TO HELP ME GIVE YOU CLEAR AND CONCISE RESPONSES.**

ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP

- **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS NEW SCHOLARSHIP HAS HAD THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, BUT ALL THE ATTENTION CONTINUES TO BE WORTH IT FOR THE OPPORTUNITY THAT IT PROVIDES FOR ALASKA STUDENTS.**

- THROUGH REGULATION THE BOARD ESTABLISHED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA INCLUDING GPA, CUT SCORES ON THE SAT/ACT/WORK KEYS, QUALIFYING COURSES, WITH A PHASE IN SCHEDULE SO ALL DISTRICTS WOULD HAVE TIME TO BEEF UP CURRICULUM AS WELL AS GIVE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED THIS PAST YEAR AND FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS AND WHO WILL NOT HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS THE FINAL CREDIT REQUIREMENTS.

- ACCESS TO RIGOROUS COURSES CONTINUES TO BE A CONCERN OF THE BOARD, AND MANY STUDENTS ARE SUPPLEMENTING THEIR SCHOOL CURRICULUM WITH ON-LINE COURSES. THIS OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY PROVIDES THE RIGOROUS CURRICULM DICTATED BY THE SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILTiy, BUT IT PROVIDES A STRONG AND POSITIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR OUR STUDENTS.

- IT IS ENCOURAGING TO KNOW THAT DISTRICTS AS SMALL AS HYDABURG WITH ONLY 4 GRADUATES HAVE STILL BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY COURSES TO QUALIFY , AND IN FACT, DOES HAVE A STUDENT WHO QUALIFIED.

- THE BOARD APPROVED A NUMBER OF COURSE TITLES THAT WOULD FIT THE APS CRITERIA IN DECEMBER, AND AS SOON AS THEY GO THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND LIEUTANENT GOVERNOR REVIEW, THEY WILL BECOME REGULATION.

- THE BOARD WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR AND TWECK THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APS AS ISSUES OR CONCERNS ARISE.

THIS YEAR:

- AS OF JANUARY 1, 2012, THE APS HAS AWARDED OVER \$3 MILLION TO OVER 900 ALASKA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES FROM THE CLASS OF 2011.

- NEARLY 29% OF ALL PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN 2011 WERE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE APS. OF THOSE ELIGIBLE, 36% TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE APS FOR THEIR FIRST SEMESTER AFTER GRADUATING.

- CONSISTENT WITH THE STATE'S POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA HAD THE MOST STUDENTS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE AN APS. IN THE FAR NORTH AND INTERIOR—BERING STRAIT, NOME, NORTH SLOPE, AND NORTHWEST ARCTIC--- NEARLY ONE HALF OF ALL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS ARE USING THEIR SCHOLARSHIPS

- **THE VAST MAJORITY OF AWARDS WENT TO STUDENTS WHO ENTERED UAA AND UAF TO STUDY FULL TIME TOWARD A BACHELOR'S DEGREE.**
- **IMPRESSIVELY, THE PERCENTAGE OF ALASKA GRADS WHO TOOK THE SAT OR THE ACT GREW FROM 77% IN 2010 TO AN UNHEARD OF 85% IN 2011.**
- **BASED UPON PRELIMINARY DATA FROM THE UNIVERSITY, APS STUDENTS WHO ENTERED THE UA SYSTEM WERE LESS LIKELY TO NEED REMEDIAL COURSES WHICH CERTAINLY MAKES A STATEMENT IN REGARD TO REQUIRED RIGOROUS CURRICULUM.**
- **AND MORE GOOD NEWS IS THAT DISTRICTS ARE REPORTING MORE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN MATH AND SCIENCE.**
- **SO IF THERE IS A QUESTION IN YOUR MIND IF YOU HAVE CREATED A GOOD THING, PLEASE BELIEVE ME THAT YOU TRULY HAVE.**

ASSESSMENTS

- **THE BOARD ADOPTED SEVERAL AMENDMENTS REGARDING WORK KEY ASSESSMENTS WHICH ARE CAREER READY TESTS GIVEN TO ALL 11TH GRADERS EACH YEAR. ACT WHICH OWNS WORK KEYS, HAS CREATED THOUSANDS OF JOB PROFILES WHICH ANALYZE SKILL LEVELS NEEDED FOR SPECIFIC JOBS, SO ASSESSED STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO COMPARE THEIR SKILL LEVEL WITH THE SKILL LEVEL OF THOSE JOBS. STUDENTS WITH QUALIFYING SCORES RECEIVE NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATES, AND THE TESTS MAY BE USED TO QUALIFY FOR THE ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP IF THE STUDENT IS GOING TO ATTEND A POST SECONDARY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN ALASKA.**
- **THE BOARD ALSO DECIDED THAT IT WAS THE IEP TEAM OF STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES DECISION IF THE STUDENT SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE WORK KEYS ASSESSMENT. IN SEPTEMBER THE BOARD PUT OUT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT THE ALASKA SUPPLEMENT FOR WORK KEYS ASSESSMENT WHICH CLARIFIES THE APPROPRIATE USE OF ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY. FINAL ACTION WAS TAKEN JANUARY 2012.**
- **OF THE 9007 ALASKA STUDENTS WHO TOOK WORK KEYS IN THE 2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR, 7665 (85%) EARNED A NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE.**

- **BECAUSE WIDA ----WORLD CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND ASSESSMENT----PROFICIENCY STANDARDS ARE RESEARCH BASED AND OF HIGH QUALITY, THE BOARD ADOPTED THE WIDA STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12.**

- **AND THE BOARD AND DEPARTMENT DO RESPOND TO OUR CONSTITUENCIES WHEN A REGULATION CAN BE IMPROVED UPON TO LIGHTEN THE BURDEN ON DISTRICTS AND TEACHERS. THE BOARD EXTENDED THE TIME FOR DISTRICTS TO DISTRIBUTE RESULTS OF THE STATE'S STANDARDS BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA's) AND THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION QUALIFYING EXAM TO TEACHERS AS THE PREVIOUS 20 DAY DEADLINE WAS BURDENSOME.**

- **THE BOARD AMENDED TWO REGULATIONS REGARDING STATE ASSESSMENTS AND ADOPTED REVISED PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. THIS ALLOWED FOR RESPONSE TO SUGGESTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS, CONTINUED TO IDENTIFY NEW RESOURCES, AND PROVIDED FOR KEEPING UP TO DATE ON PRACTICES IN ACCOMMODATIONS.**

- **THE BOARD ADDRESSES SEVERAL HOUSE KEEPING ITEMS THROUGH OUT THE COURSE OF A YEAR INCLUDING THE CLARIFICATION THAT THE SBA IS THE ASSESSMENT USED FOR CALCULATING STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION RATE IN REPORTING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS.**

- **THE ONE ASSESSMENT THAT MANY OF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN IS THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION QUALIFYING EXAM. IT TRULY IS A MINIMUM COMPETENCY TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, AND ONCE STUDENTS HAVE PASSED IT, THEY KNOW THAT THEY CAN MOVE ALONG WITH THEIR CURRICULUM. IF A STUDENT DOES NOT PASS, THEN HE/SHE KNOWS WHAT AREAS MUST BE ADDRESSED FOR ADDITIONAL WORK. AFTER MUCH DELIBERATION, THE BOARD VOTED TO RECOMMEND KEEPING THE HSGQE FOR SEVERAL REASONS: IT DOES GIVE STUDENTS A BASE LINE IN BASIC SKILLS, AND IN THIS DAY OF ACCOUNTABILITY, IT IS ANOTHER INFORMATION TOOL THAT CAN BE USED TO ADJUST PROGRAM AND/OR A STUDENT'S CURRICULUM ROAD MAP. THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT IT DOES SHOW THAT STUDENTS HAVE DEMONSTRATED MINIMUM COMPETENCIES IN ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED TO FUNCTION IN OUR SOCIETY.**

- **IN THE 2010-2011 HSGQE, 83% OF GRADE 10 STUDENTS PASSED READING, 71% PASSED WRITING, AND 76.9% PASSED MATH. STUDENTS HAVE FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO PASS THE EXAM IN GRADES 11 AND 12 AND AFTER LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL.**

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

- **FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPORTING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS, THE BOARD AMENDED A REGULATION TO ALLOW DISTRICTS TO INCLUDE IN THE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SUBGROUP THOSE STUDENTS WHO EXITED THE PROGRAM IN THE PRIOR TWO YEARS SO DISTRICTS COULD HAVE CREDIT FOR SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONING STUDENTS OUT OF THE PROGRAM.**

- **THE BOARD WAS BRIEFED ON SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS RESULTS AT THE SEPTEMBER MEETING. THREE CHANGES TO THE CALCULATION OF 2011 DATA SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED THE RESULTS:**

- **PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO SHOULD BE PROFICIENT INCREASED FROM 77.18% TO 82.88% IN LANGUAGE ARTS; FROM 66% TO 74.57% IN MATH. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ACCORDING TO THE FEDS, WE WILL BE 100% PROFICIENT BY 2014! I HAVE BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS A VERY LONG TIME, AND TRUST ME, I HAVE NEVER SEEN 100% OF ANYTHING!**

TEACHER CERTIFICATION/TEACHER QUALITY

- **THE BOARD ADOPTED SEVERAL AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION.**

- **BRIEFLY, THE BOARD REQUIRED TEACHERS MOVING FROM AN INITIAL (3 YEAR) CERTIFICATE TO A PROFESSIONAL (FIVE YEAR RENEWABLE) CERTIFICATE TO HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED AS A TEACHER FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS. THOSE WHO HAVE NOT TAUGHT FOR TWO YEARS MAY APPLY FOR ANOTHER INITIAL CERTIFICATE. THE BOARD FELT STRONGLY THAT NO ONE SHOULD HOLD THE STATE'S PROFESSIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATE WITHOUT HAVING WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS.**

- **BECAUSE THE STATE GIVES TEACHERS AN INITIAL PERIOD TO COMPLETE CREDITS BEFORE RECEIVING A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE, THE BOARD ADOPTED AN AMENDMENT THAT WILL NO LONGER REQUIRE EDUCATORS SEEKING PROVISIONAL (2 YEAR) ADMINISTRATIVE, SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE AND SPECIAL SERVICES CERTIFICATES TO COMPLETE SIX SEMESTER HOURS OF CREDIT BEFORE RECEIVING THE CERTIFICATE. THOSE CREDITS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE NEXT STAGE OF CERTIFICATION HOWEVER.**

- **THE BOARD ALSO ACTED UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE TEACHER QUALITY WORKING GROUP TO :**
- **CHANGE THE NAME OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION; REQUIRE DISTRICTS TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THE BLANK FORMS USED IN TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION; REQUIRE DISTRICT EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS TO REQUIRE TEACHERS TO DISCLOSE ANY PRIOR TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN ALASKA.**
- **THE BOARD ALSO APPROVED TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR ELEMENTARY K-5 MATH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, FOR AN ELEMENTARY ENDORSEMENT AT ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY, AND ADDED AN ENDORSEMENT IN THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE.**
- **ALASKA'S TYPE M CERTIFICATE MUST BE INITIATED BY A DISTRICT WHO WANTS TO HIRE AN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS NOT MATRICULATED THROUGH A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM. THE ASD MIGHT WANT TO HIRE A WELDER TO TEACH WELDING FOR EXAMPLE. THERE IS A REGULATION THAT IS NOW UNDER REVIEW BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW THAT REQUIRES CTE ENDORSED TYPE M TEACHERS TO DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCY IN READING, WRITING, AND MATH BY PASSING THE PRAXIS 1 WITHIN ONE YEAR OF OBTAINING THE CERTIFICATE AND TO DEMONSTRATE INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS.**
- **IN ORDER TO RENEW A TYPE M LIMITED CTE CERTIFICATE FOR FIVE YEARS, THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD MUST SUBMIT ON THE APPLICANT'S BEHALF A RENEWAL APPLICATION WHICH CONTAINS THE EVIDENCE OF THE FOLLOWING:**
 - **THREE SEMESTER HOURS OF CREDIT RELATED TO THE APPLICANT'S EMPLOYMENT**
 - **135 HOURS OF WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE SPECIALITY FIELD OUTSIDE OF WORK WITH STUDENTS.**
 - **A STATEMENT OF SATISFACTORY TEACHING PERFORMANCE UNDER THE LIMITED CERTIFICATE.**
- **THESE NEW REGULATIONS ONLY APPLY TO THE TYPE M LIMITED CTE CERTIFICATE. TEACHERS IN THE SPECIALITY AREAS OF ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE OR CULTURE AND ROTC ARE EXEMPT.**

• AND THE BIGGIE! FOR RECERTIFICATION, TYPE A CERTIFICATED TEACHERS MUST TAKE CREDITS IN SUBJECTS RELATED TO THEIR EMPLOYMENT, ENDORSEMENT AREA, OR PROGRAM LEADING TO AN ENDORSEMENT. BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THIS HAS NOT BEEN A REQUIREMENT FOR RECERTIFICATION IN THE PAST.

STATE STANDARDS

• ONE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE IS TO SET PROPER STANDARDS FOR ITS STUDENTS.

• THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS SET THE DIRECTION FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING STUDENT STANDARDS FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS. STUDENT STANDARDS CURRENTLY INCLUDE BROAD CONTENT STANDARDS AND DETAILED GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS; ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS; ALTERNATE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES, AND CULTURAL STANDARDS.

• SINCE FEBRUARY 2010, THE DEPARTMENT, ALASKA EDUCATORS, AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ENGAGED IN A PROCESS TO REPLACE THE CURRENT CONTENT STANDARDS IN READING, WRITING, AND MATH WITH MORE RIGOROUS GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS. THE FOCUS HAS BEEN TO ENSURE THAT THE STANDARDS OUTLINE A PATH FOR STUDENTS TO GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE-READY AND CAREER-READY, AND THE NEW ALASKA STANDARDS WILL BE INCLUSIVE OF ALL GRADES K-12 UNLIKE THE CURRENT K-10 STANDARDS. THE REVISION OF GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATION WILL FOLLOW AFTER THE STANDARDS ADOPTION BY THE BOARD.

• UNDOUBTEDLY, YOU ARE AWARE OF THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS THAT HAVE COME DOWN AS A NATIONAL MOVEMENT. MANY STATES HAVE ADOPTED THESE STANDARDS, BUT ALASKA DID NOT. WE DECIDED EARLY ON THAT WE WOULD USE OUR ALASKA STANDARDS AS A BASE LINE TO IMPROVE AS WELL AS COMPARE TO THE COMMON CORE. WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED IS MORE RIGOROUS THAN THE COMMON CORE, AND THE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN DONE BY ALASKANS FOR ALASKAN STUDENTS.

• I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF STANDARD DEVELOPMENT SO THAT YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT THESE STANDARDS WERE NOT SIMPLY CREATED BY THE BOARD OR THE DEPARTMENT BUT INDEED, ARE A PRODUCT OF ALASKANS FROM EDUCATION, INDUSTRY, AND THE COMMUNITY.

- BETWEEN FEB. 2010 AND NOV. 2010, A STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE WAS FORMED. THIS COMMITTEE WAS MADE UP OF K-12 EDUCATORS, AND THEY MET TO COMPARE ALASKA STANDARDS WITH THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS.

- FROM JAN. 2011 THROUGH NOV. 2011, INPUT WAS GATHERED FROM ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS GRADES 3-12; MATH TEACHERS GRADES 3-12; SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS, OTHER EXPERIENCED EDUCATORS, COACHES FROM THE STATE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT, UNIVERSITY FOLK, CTE PROGRAM TEACHERS AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES.

- REPRESENTATIVES WHO WORK WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS, AND STUDENTS FROM ETHNIC SUBGROUPS MET TO ENSURE THAT ALL HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO THE NEW ALASKA STANDARDS.

- THE NEW ALASKA STANDARDS:

- ARE ALIGNED WITH COLLEGE-READY AND WORK-READY TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

- INCLUDE RIGOROUS CONTENT AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE THROUGH HIGHER-ORDER SKILLS

- BUILD UPON STRENGTH AND LESSONS OF CURRENT STATE STANDARDS

- EQUAL OR MORE RIGOROUS THAN THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- RELATE TO REAL WORLD APPLICATION

- AT NO TIME IN THE DESIGN OF THE ALASKA STANDARDS WERE THEY ALLOWED TO DIP BELOW THE RIGOR OF THE COMMON CORE.

- AT THE DECEMBER, 2011, MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, A MOTION WAS PASSED TO OPEN UP AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF PUBLIC COMMENT FOR THE DRAFT ALASKA CAREER-READY AND COLLEGE READY STANDARDS. AFTER REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING ALL PUBLIC COMMENT, THE BOARD ANTICIPATES TAKING FINAL ACTION ON THE STANDARDS IN JUNE, 2012.

- NEW STANDARDS WILL MEAN NEW ASSESSMENTS, SO WORK BEGINS ON THAT ASPECT IMMEDIATELY. STUDENTS WILL MOST LIKELY NOT BE ASSESSED ON THE NEW STANDARDS UNTIL SPRING 2016.

GRADUATION RATE

- **ALASKA'S GRADUATION RATE METHODOLOGY HAS RECENTLY CHANGED TO REFLECT A FEDERAL MANDATE REQUIRING ALL 50 STATES TO USE A UNIFORM GRADUATION RATE THAT IS TO BE REPORTED FOR ALL PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS.**
- **I WILL NOT PRESUME TO TAKE YOU THROUGH THAT PROCESS BECAUSE I WOULD ONLY GET YOU AS CONFUSED AS I AM; HOWEVER, MR. MCCORMICK, DIRECTOR OF ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IS HERE, AND HE COULD ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS AT THE CONCLUSION OF MY REMARKS.**
- **GRADUATION RATES ARE CALCULATED ACROSS 4 YEARS. DROPOUT RATES ARE CALCULATED OVER 1 YEAR AND BECAUSE THE TWO RATES ARE CALCULATED INDEPENDENTLY, THEY ARE NOT THE INVERSE OF EACH OTHER. MOST PEOPLE WILL TELL YOU THAT IF A STUDENT DID NOT GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL, HE/SHE IS A DROP OUT, AND THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY TRUE.**
- **I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT OUR GRADUATION RATE HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE PAST 7 YEARS. 2011 GRADUATION RATE WAS 68% IN COMPARISON TO 2005 AT 61%.**

MENTOR PROGRAM

- **TEACHER RETENTION IN RURAL ALASKA IS A VERY REAL ISSUE. WHEN JIM HICKERSON WAS SUPERINTENDENT AT BERING STRAIT, HE TOLD ME THAT 85% OF THEIR TEACHERS COME FROM OUTSIDE. THERE ARE SO MANY ISSUES FOR THEM TO DEAL WITH: A WHOLE NEW CULTURE, ISOLATION, COLD, TRANSPORTATION, ETC., THAT MANY SPEND THE YEAR AND LEAVE.**
- **IN 2004, THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM WAS INITIATED TO INCREASE TEACHER RETENTION BY HELPING NEW RURAL TEACHERS BECOME MORE EFFECTIVE IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES WITHIN THEIR FIRST 2 YEARS IN THE CLASSROOM.**
- **YOU AND I TALKED BRIEFLY LAST YEAR ABOUT THE BUDGET CUTS TO THIS PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM DOES HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON TEACHER RETENTION AND A PROMISING IMPACT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.**
- **THIS SCHOOL YEAR, 24 MENTORS (DOWN FROM 28 LAST YEAR) ARE WORKING WITH 330 TEACHERS (DOWN FROM 401 LAST YEAR) IN 142**

SCHOOLS (DOWN FROM 187 SCHOOLS LAST YEAR) IN 34 SCHOOL DISTRICTS (DOWN FROM 43 LAST YEAR).

- **THIS PROGRAM DOES WORK! FROM AN AVERAGE RURAL TEACHER RETENTION RATE OF 68%, THE MENTORED TEACHERS HAVE RETAINED AT 84% IN 2010-2011.**
- **AT THE AMERICAN EDUCATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE ON MAY 4, RESULTS WERE PRESENTED THAT SHOW THAT ALTHOUGH MENTORING NEW TEACHERS DID NOT BRING THE STUDENTS' STANDARDIZED SCORES OF NEW TEACHERS UP TO THE SAME LEVEL AS STUDENTS IN VETERAN TEACHERS' CLASSES, THEY ARE MUCH CLOSER THAN EXPECTED FOR READING, WRITING, AND SCIENCE.**
- **IN THE CASE OF MATH, STUDENTS IN CLASSROOMS OF MENTORED TEACHERS PERFORM THE SAME AS THOSE IN CLASSROOMS OF VETERAN TEACHERS.**
- **THERE ARE PROMISING RESULTS TO START CLOSING THE ANCHIEVEMENT GAP TYPICALLY SEEN BETWEEN THE STUDENTS OF NEW AND VETERAN TEACHERS.**
- **THROUGH A GRANT FROM THE US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, EDUCATION NORTHWEST AND UA STATEWIDE WILL EVALUATE THE EFFECTS OF MENTORING ON TEACHER RETENTION AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THE DETAILS FOR THIS EVALUATION ARE NOW BEING WORKED OUT.**

EARLY LEARNING

- **THERE IS A WHOLE LOT GOING ON IN THIS ARENA. IN 2009, THE LEGISLATURE PROVIDED \$2 MILLION FOR A PILOT PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM THAT WOULD INCLUDE SIX SITES. PROPOSALS FROM DISTRICTS WERE SUBMITTED AND SIX SITES WERE SELECTED. THE LEGISLATURE THEN ADDED TWO ADDITIONAL SITES. THE PURPOSE WAS TO ALLOW VARIED SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO CREATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS THAT INCORPORATE ALASKA'S EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES IN WAYS TAILORED TO THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**
- **THE TWO YEAR REPORT WAS A PART OF THE BOARD PACKET FOR OUR JANUARY TELECONFERENCE. I AM NOT GOING TO GO THROUGH ALL THE FINDINGS EXCEPT TO STATE THAT MANY CHILDREN SHOWED**

EXCEPTIONAL GROWTH, BUT THERE ARE STILL CHILDREN PERFORMING BELOW EXPECTATIONS.

- **FOR ALL ALASKA'S CHILDREN TO CLOSE THE GAP BY THEIR THIRD GRADE ASSESSMENTS , CONTINUOUS GROWTH MUST BEGIN IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BE SUSTAINED THROUGH THE PRIMARY GRADES.**
- **COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN HEAD START AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS POSITIVELY AFFECTS THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN.**
- **THE BOARD ENDORSED THE DEPARTMENT'S FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES ACTION STEPS FOR PARENTS, TEACHER AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS THAT WILL ULTIMATELY IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THIS IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EARLY LITERACY PLAN THAT PROVIDES ACTIONS THAT PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, PRESCHOOL TEACHERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO THAT WILL HELP STUDENTS COME TO SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.**
- **I HAVE TO TELL YOU LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THAT I AM CONVINCED THAT SCHOOL READINESS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT COUPLED WITH QUALITY TEACHERS ARE THE ONLY THINGS THAT WILL POSITIVELY IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.**

STATE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

- **THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, THE BOARD HEARD REPORTS ON STATE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT ACTIVITIES: THE THIRD LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE AND THE ALASKA LITERACY INSTITUTE, WHICH WAS SPONSORED FOR INTERVENTION DISTRICTS AND INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES FROM PRE-K PROGRAMS AND HEAD START PROGRAMS; THE CURRICULUM EXPOSURE ANALYSIS DONE BY THE STATE; AND ACTIVITIES OF THE YUPIIT SCHOOL DISTRICT.**

THE BOARD RECEIVED UPDATES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RUBRIC ON CULTURAL STANDARDS FOR EDUCATORS AS A FOLLOW UP TO OUR ADOPTION OF THIS SECTION FROM THE PUBLICATION "ALASKA STANDARDS FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS."

THE DEPARTMENT IS RESPONDING TO ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES : FUNDING, STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS, AND OVERSIGHT AND SUPPORT. WE ARE CURRENTLY INTERVENING IN THREE DISTRICTS IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE OVER SIGHT

RESPONSIBILITY WHERE STUDENTS HAVE CHRONICALLY LOW PERFORMANCE. TWO DISTRICTS HAVE COME OUT OF THE INTERVENTION STATUS AFTER RAISING STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BUILDING CAPACITY.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

- **ALASKA'S LEARNING NETWORK IMPROVES STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY PROVIDING DISTANCE COURSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED ALASKA TEACHERS; A NETWORK OF SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS TO COLLABORATE AND SHARE RESOURCES IN A DIGITAL REPOSITORY; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS. ALASKA'S LEARNING NETWORK PROVIDES RIGOROUS COURSES THAT MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP.**

MT EDGE CUMBE HIGH SCHOOL

- **MT. EDGE CUMBE HIGH SCHOOL IS A STATE OPERATED BOARDING SCHOOL IN SITKA FOR APPROXIMATELY 400 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE STATE. SEVENTY EIGHT PERCENT OF THE STUDENTS BODY SELF- IDENTIFY AS ALASKA NATIVE.**

- **THE STATE BOARD WHICH SERVES AS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR MT. EDGE CUMBE RECENTLY WORKED ON SOME CREDIT REQUIREMENT CHANGES WITH SUPERINTENDENT RANDY HAWK.**

- **IN ORDER FOR MT. EDGE CUMBE STUDENTS TO MEET THE CREDIT REQUIREMENT OF THE ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP, THE BOARD REDUCED THE REQUIRED CREDITS IN SOCIAL STUDIES FROM 5 TO 4 AND ADDED A REQUIRED CREDIT OF EITHER SOCIAL STUDIES OR MATH OR SCIENCE BEYOND COURSES ALREADY REQUIRED. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REQUIRED CREDITS REMAINS AT 24.**

END

- **IN NOVEMBER, COMMISSIONER HANLEY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MORSE, BOARD FIRST VICE CHAIR JIM MERRINER, AND I ATTENDED ANCHORAGE MAYOR DAN SULLIVAN'S TWO DAY EDUCATION SUMMIT.**

- **THE UPSHOT OF THE SUMMIT WAS EXACTLY WHAT OUR BOARD AND DEPARTMENT ARE DEDICATED TO :**

- **WORLD CLASS LEADERSHIP: TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT**
- **GREATER EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**
- **EXPAND CHOICE, OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS.**
- **WHERE HAVE YOU HEARD THAT BEFORE? SEEMS THAT WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME WAVE LENGTH WHICH BASICALLY IS PROVIDING THE BEST EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH AND EVERY STUDENT IN OUR STATE.**

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON?

- **TEACHER EVALUATION TIED TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.**
 - **IF WE ARE GOING TO WANT TO CONTINUE RECEIVING FEDERAL DOLLARS, THIS IS A REALITY. AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT IS A MUCH MORE CONVOLUTED IDEA THAN AT FIRST BLUSH, BUT THE TEACHER QUALITY COMMITTEE IS WRESTLING WITH THIS WHOLE CONCEPT AS WE SPEAK.**
- **CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE DEPARTMENT WORK WITH INTERVENTION DISTRICTS.**
- **DIALOGS WITH THE BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENTS OF INTERVENTION DISTRICTS.**
- **REPORT FROM DISTRICTS WHO HAVE EXITED INTERVENTION STATUS.**
 - **HOW DID IT GO? WHAT WAS GOOD? WHAT COULD BE DONE BETTER?**
- **A BOARD SESSION ON STRATEGIC PLANNING**
- **CONTINUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE CAREER/TECHNICAL EDUCATION PLAN.**
- **CERTAINLY MORE WORK ON THE NEW ALASKA STANDARDS AND THE ASSESSMENTS TO GO WITH THOSE STANDARDS.**
- **MONITOR AND/OR AMEND REGULATIONS AS NEEDED FOR THE APS.**
- **AND SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES.....**

- WHILE I STILL HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT A BURR THAT HAS BEEN UNDER MY SADDLE BLANKET EVER SINCE I HAVE BEEN ON THIS BOARD, AND BELIEVE ME, I HAVE LEANED ON EVERY COMMISSIONER ABOUT THIS, BUT THERE IS AN OLD ADAGE: YOU CAN'T GET BLOOD OUT OF A TURNIP!

- I KNOW THAT REPRESENTATIVE DICK HAS QUESTIONED THE MAKE UP OF THE BOARD, BUT OUR BOARD HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT. RIGHT HERE I WOULD LIKE TO CLEAR UP SOME MISINFORMATION. YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE BOARD NEVER HAS HAD A MEMBER FROM A DISTRICT IN INTERVENTION. NORTHWEST ARCTIC WAS IN INTERVENTION STATUS, AND BUNNY SHAEFFER WAS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD THE WHOLE TIME. THE DISTRICT HAS COME OFF INTERVENTION, AND BOARDMEMBER SHAEFFER IS STILL ON THE BOARD.

- WE DO HAVE EVERYTHING TO DO WITH WHERE WE MEET, HOWEVER,

- THIS IS A STATEWIDE BOARD THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT, AND BECAUSE OF BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, WE ONLY MEET IN ANCHORAGE, FAIRBANKS (NOT OFTEN) AND JUNEAU. WE DID WANDER UP TO THE MAT-SU THIS YEAR, BUT IN ANYBODY'S DEFINITION, THAT IS NOT RURAL ALASKA.

- I THINK IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THIS BOARD MEET IN RURAL ALASKA ONCE A YEAR

- IN MY TENURE ON THE BOARD, WE HAVE MET IN GALENA, KOTZEBUE, AND AT MT. EDGE CUMBE. I TRULY THINK THAT THE ARGUMENT COULD BE MADE THAT THIS BOARD SHOULD ALSO MEET AT MT. EDGE CUMB ONCE A YEAR. MEETING IN THESE PLACES WAS A GREAT EDUCATION FOR ALL THE BOARD MEMBERS. EVEN THOUGH WE ARE BROAD AND OPEN MINDED INDIVIDUALS, IT IS DIFFICLT TO REPRESENT THE DIVERSITY OF OUR STATE WHEN WE DON'T HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE IT.

- THE OPERATION OF THE BOARD FALLS WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE PORTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET, AND SPECIFICALLY, THE TRAVEL PORTION HAS BEEN CUT. EVEN THOUGH OUR COMMISSIONER'S TRAVEL EXPENSES ARE DOWN FROM PREVIOUS YEARS, WE ARE UNABLE TO FIND IN THE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET FUNDING FOR THIS BOARD TO GAIN A FIRST HAND UNDERSTANDING OF AREAS OF ALASKA IN WHICH WE DON'T LIVE OR MEET.

• THE OBVIOUS QUESTIONS WILL BE AROUND COSTS AND WHY THE DEPARTMENT CANNOT TRAVEL THE BOARD IN THE CURRENT BUDGET. PERSONALLY, I CANNOT ANSWER ALL THOSE QUESTIONS, BUT I DO KNOW THAT FOR THE BOARD TO TRAVEL TO RURAL ALASKA WE ARE LOOKING AT \$15-20,000. THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE DEPARTMENT STAFF.

• SO I WOULD ASK----NO, I WOULD IMPLORE YOU TO CONSIDER MY REQUEST DURING THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION. IT CERTAINLY WOULD HELP US BECOME AN EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE BOARD.

• AND BEFORE I WRAP UP, I NEED TO TELL YOU THAT AS I PUT TOGETHER THIS REPORT, I WAS AMAZED AND PROUD OF WHAT THIS BOARD HAS ACCOMPLISHED. WE ARE A VOLUNTEER BOARD AND WE MEET FACE TO FACE FOUR TIMES A YEAR ONLY. I CONTINUE TO BE VERY PROUD TO SERVE.

• THANK YOU.

• QUESTIONS?

**Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Annual Report to the Legislature for 2011**

January 2012



Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development

Esther J. Cox, Chair

Jim Merriner, First Vice Chair

Janel Keplinger, Second Vice Chair

Phillip Schneider

Geraldine Benshoof

Bunny Schaeffer

Patrick Shier

Lt. Col. Grant Sullivan, Military Advisor

Tiarna Fischler, Student Advisor

Note: Donald Handeland was the student advisor during 2011 from January through June.

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Alaska State Constitution Education Clause

Section 7.1 - Public Education.

The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.

Mission of the State Board of Education & Early Development

To ensure quality standards-based instruction to improve academic achievement for all students.

Regulations adopted/revised/repealed in 2011

Alaska Performance Scholarship

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 43 regarding the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The Board allowed eligible students to receive an Alaska Performance Scholarship during a one-year grace period in which they complete the scholarship's curricular requirements. The Board also allowed school districts to receive state funding for courses taken by students who have a grace period. This provision will be in effect only in the scholarship program's first two years of existence. The rationale is that students in these first graduating classes could not know – and therefore fully prepare for -- the scholarship's credit requirements until the law had passed and regulations were adopted.

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 43.030 regarding course requirements for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The Board set the allowable courses for scholarship eligibility, and created a process for school districts to submit other courses for eligibility. The regulation would first take effect for the high school graduating class of 2015. The rationale is to maintain the intended rigor of the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

Standards and Assessment

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 06.707 regarding the WorkKeys assessments, which are career-ready tests given to all 11th-graders each year. Students with qualifying scores receive national career-readiness certificates. The tests may be used to qualify for an Alaska Performance Scholarship if the student is going to attend a postsecondary certificate program. In the amendments, the Board required WorkKeys to be administered between August 1 and December 30 of each year, so that the scores will be available in time for scholarship determinations and the state's data-collection deadlines. Additionally, the Board will allow 12th-graders to take or retake the test once at no cost to the student or district. The rationale is that

12th-graders should be encouraged to improve their scores and possibly qualify for a career-readiness certificate or Alaska Performance Scholarship. The Board also allowed districts to determine whether students with significant cognitive disabilities should be required to take WorkKeys assessments. The rationale is that such students' individualized education program teams know best whether WorkKeys meets the students' needs.

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 04.155 regarding standards for English language proficiency for students who are English language learners. The Board adopted the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards, 2007 Edition, Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12. The rationale is that Alaska has joined WIDA -- World Class Instructional Design and Assessment -- a consortium of 27 states. WIDA standards are research-based and known for their high quality.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.710 regarding the statewide student assessment system. The Board added the new English language proficiency assessment and WorkKeys to the list of assessments. House-keeping.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.738 and 06.758 regarding state assessments. The Board extended the amount of time districts may take to distribute to classroom teachers results from the state's Standards Based Assessment and the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination. The rationale is that the previous deadline of 20 days was too burdensome to districts.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.750 regarding state assessments. The Board changed the required grade levels to reflect the current grade levels assessed on the TerraNova assessment. House-keeping.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.755 regarding state assessments. The Board designated the hours in which the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination would begin, and added clarifying language about test security. School districts asked the state to set the starting time.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.761 regarding state assessments. The Board added a new section to consolidate multiple references to test security. House-keeping.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.765 regarding state assessments. The Board added WorkKeys to the list of assessments whose contents are confidential. It also required districts to train relevant staff in test procedures. The rationale is to maintain high standards in test security.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.771 regarding state assessments. The Board required re-tests of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination to be administered under the same conditions as the original test. The rationale is to maintain high standards for test security and reliability.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.775 and AAC 06.776 regarding state assessments. The Board adopted revised participation guidelines for students with disabilities. The rationale is to respond to suggestions from stakeholders, identify new resources, and keep up-to-date on practices in accommodations. Additionally, when districts determine testing accommodations for students

with limited English proficiency, they are required to include a teacher with experience in teaching students with limited English proficiency, when practicable. The rationale is to use the most qualified sources when serving students.

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.805 regarding state assessments. The Board clarified that the state Standards Based Assessment is the assessment used for calculating students' participation rate in reporting Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. House-keeping.

Adequate Yearly Progress

The Board amended 4 AAC 06.830 regarding state assessments. The Board allowed districts, for the purposes of reporting Adequate Yearly Progress, to include in the limited-English-proficiency subgroup those students who exited the program in the prior two years. The rationale is to give credit to districts for successfully transitioning students out of the program.

School Finance

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 09.160 regarding school districts' fund balances. The Board redefined the exceptions to the type of funds that may be in a district's year-end fund balance. The rationale was to align the state's regulation with the nationwide Governmental Accounting Standards Board's new criteria for classifying fund balances into specifically defined categories.

Teacher Certification

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 12.305 regarding renewal of teacher certificates. The Board required teachers moving from an initial (three-year) certificate to a professional (five-year renewable) certificate to have been employed as a teacher for at least two years. Those who have not taught for two years may apply for another initial certificate. The rationale is that no one should hold the state's professional teacher certificate without having worked as a teacher for at least two years.

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 12.345 regarding provisional certificates. The Board will no longer require educators seeking provisional (two-year) administrative, special education administrative and special services certificates to complete six semester hours of credit before receiving the certificate. Such educators still must complete the credits to receive the next stage of certification, which is a five-year certificate. The rationale is that the state similarly gives teachers an initial period to complete credits before receiving a professional certificate.

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 12.405 regarding teacher certification. The Board mandated that teachers fulfill the college credits required for renewal of their certificates in subjects related to their employment, endorsement area, or program leading to an endorsement.

The rationale is that the credits should relate to subjects that the teacher teaches or intends to teach.

The Board adopted amendments to 4 AAC 12.370 regarding limited teacher certificates in specialty subjects, known as Type M. Such certificates may be granted when no teacher with a bachelor's degree in the specialty is available. The Board created new requirements for Career and Technical Education Type M certificates. The Board required CTE-endorsed Type M teachers to demonstrate competency in reading, writing and math within one year of obtaining the certificate and to demonstrate instructional skills. The rationale is that many students use career and technical courses for credit in core academic subjects.

Alaska State Museums

The Board amended 4 AAC 58.010 regarding fees at the Alaska State Museums. The Board increased the summer fee from \$5 to \$7 at the Alaska State Museum in Juneau, and from \$4 to \$5 at the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka. However, the Board added a \$1 discount to visitors age 65 and older. The rationale was to raise revenues to offset labor and operating costs.

Other

The Board repealed 4 AAC 05.070, which required districts to submit an Education Plan under an obsolete state accountability system. House-keeping.

Resolutions in 2011

There were none.

State Standards

The State Board of Education & Early Development has set the direction for developing and implementing student standards for nearly 20 years. Student standards currently include content standards, which are broad, and Grade Level Expectations, which are more detailed; English language proficiency standards; alternate performance standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities; and cultural standards.

The standards for English language arts and mathematics were last revised in 2005. The department's contract for assessments aligned to those standards expires in 2015. Since February 2010, the department, Alaska educators and industry representatives have engaged in a process to replace the current content standards and Grade Level Expectations in reading, writing and math with rigorous grade-level standards. The focus has been to ensure that the standards outline a path for students to graduate high school college-ready and career-ready. The new Alaska standards will be inclusive of all grades, K-12, unlike the current K-10 standards.

In developing the proposed new standards, the department has held the following meetings:

February 2010 – Met with the newly established Standards Review Committee to compare and contrast the current Grade Level Expectations with the national Common Core Standards (recently adopted by many states) for reading/literature, math and writing. The Standards Review Committee consisted of K-12 educators from across Alaska who have an in-depth knowledge of, and experience with, reading, writing and math standards.

October 2010 – Met with the Standards Review Committee and participants of the August 2010 Content Item Review Committee. Together, they reviewed in greater detail the Common Core Standards and identified considerations when transitioning to new standards, such as the need for professional development for teachers.

November 2010 – Met with personnel working in state universities and vocational programs, industry representatives, and high school staff to assist the department in defining what it would take for high school graduates to be prepared to go to college or enter the workforce.

January 2011 – Met with English/language arts teachers in grades 3-12, special education teachers, and English language learner teachers to determine how to refine Alaska's standards so that students are on track to be college-ready and career-ready as they move on to high school.

February 2011 - Met with math teachers in grades 3-12, special education teachers, and English language learner teachers to determine how to refine Alaska's standards so that students are on track to be college-ready and career-ready as they move on to high school.

June 2011 – Met with experienced educators and coaches from the State System of Support, which works with struggling districts, to review recommended revisions to the Alaska standards with a focus on coherence, alignment and clarity.

October 2011 – Met with K-12 English/language arts and math teachers, librarians, and high school career/technology instructors to further refine the new Alaska standards to be college-ready and career-ready.

November 2011 – Met with representatives working with students with disabilities, English language learner students, economically disadvantaged students, and students from ethnic subgroups to ensure that all learners will have equal access to the new Alaska standards.

The Board was briefed on the status of the standards-revision process at each of the quarterly meetings in 2011, culminating with a review of the draft career-ready and college-ready standards in English language arts and mathematics at the December 2011 meeting. The Board opened a period of public comment for the draft standards. The Board anticipates taking final action on the standards in June 2012. If the standards are adopted, students likely will not be assessed on them until spring 2016 at the earliest.

Graduation Rate

The state's graduation rate methodology has recently changed to reflect a federal mandate requiring all 50 states to use a uniform graduation rate that is to be reported for all public high schools. This rate, known as the Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate, was first implemented in Alaska with the 2010-2011 school year. All states are required to use the new adjusted cohort graduation rate for accountability purposes in the 2011-2012 school year. Specifically, the accountability measures would include Adequate Yearly Progress calculations at the school, district and state level as well as public reporting of school district report card data.

Under this new methodology, a cohort graduation year is assigned to each ninth-grade student in the fall of his or her initial entry. The expectation of the adjusted cohort graduation rate is that the student will graduate within four years. For example, a student who entered ninth grade in the 2009-2010 school year would be considered part of the 2013 graduation cohort group. Students are included in the cohort if they transfer into the public school system, and are removed from the cohort if they transfer to an education program with a secondary school diploma track.

A graduate is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma from a state-approved or district- approved education program as evidenced by receipt of a secondary school diploma from school authorities. Any student that receives a diploma under a waiver from the competency examination required under AS 14.03075(a), as specified by the state Board, is considered to be a graduate. This does not include a student who receives a Certificate of Achievement or a General Educational Development certificate.

The Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is reported as a fraction. The numerator is the sum of the number of graduates within the cohort who receive a regular diploma on or before June 30. The denominator is the sum of all students assigned to the cohort. The statewide count of high school graduates has increased significantly over the last seven years.

School Year	Graduation Rate*	Graduate Count
2005	61.4%	6,905
2006	61.6%	7,361
2007	63.0%	7,666
2008	62.6%	7,855
2009	67.5%	8,008
2010	67.4%	8,245
=====		
2011	68.0%	8,060**

*Note: Prior to the 2011 school year, the graduation calculation used the methodology below: *The Graduation Rate is reported as a fraction. The numerator is the sum of the number of graduates receiving a regular diploma before June 30. The denominator is the sum of the number of graduates, plus the number of dropouts in grade nine three school years prior, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade ten two school years prior, plus the number of*

unduplicated dropouts in grade eleven in the prior school year, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade 12 during the current year, plus the number of grade 12 continuing students.
**Graduate count represents any student who graduated with a regular diploma during the school year (July 1-June 30).

There is often confusion between graduation rates and dropout rates. Dropout rates are event rates, meaning they are calculated across a single year. The graduation rates are measures of cohort groups across four years. Dropout rates are calculated by dividing the total number of students dropping out of public school in grades 7-12 by the October 1 enrollment count for all students in grades 7-12. Graduation rates and dropout rates are calculated independently from each other and are not the inverse of each other. Also, a student counted as a dropout in one reporting year may be counted as a dropout in another year.

Assessments

Public school students in Alaska are required to pass the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination -- in addition to meeting minimal state and local curriculum credit requirements -- in order to obtain a high school diploma. The Board discussed the relevancy of the HSGQE to Alaska's students, options for high-stakes testing, and the impact of the HSGQE on graduation rates across the state. In September 2011, the Board agreed to continue support of the HSGQE. The exam was supported both as a measure of student accountability and as an indicator that a student receiving a diploma has demonstrated minimum competencies in essential skills needed to function in our society.

The Board has engaged in multiple work sessions and conversations related to the relevancy and use of each assessment required by law in Alaska's Comprehensive State System of Assessment. In addition to the HSGQE, specific discussions were conducted regarding the Standards Based Assessments, the Development Profile, the TerraNova, WorkKeys, the alternate assessment for students with severe cognitive disabilities, the English language proficiency exam, and the federally required National Assessment of Educational Progress test.

The Board was briefed on preliminary 2011 HSGQE and Standards Based Assessment results at the June meeting. Passage of all three sections of the HSGQE is required in order for a student to receive a high school diploma. The Standards Based Assessment is required by federal law and is the primary assessment used to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress in the No Child Left Behind accountability system.

In the HSGQE, 83.4% of the grade 10 students passed reading, 71.1% passed writing, and 76.9% passed math. Students have two further opportunities each year to pass the exam in grades 11 and 12 and after leaving high school.

In the Standards Based Assessment in reading, grade-level scores ranged from 74.3% proficient in grade 4 to 83.3% proficient in grade 8.

In the Standards Based Assessment in writing, grade-level scores ranged from 70.4% proficient in grade 6 to 77.0% proficient in grade 8.

In the Standards Based Assessment in math, grade-level scores ranged from 60.1% proficient in grade 9 to 75.2% proficient in grade 4.

The Board was briefed on school and district Adequate Yearly Progress results at the September meeting. Three changes to the calculation of 2011 data significantly affected the results: The targets for the percentage of students who should be proficient increased from 77.18% to 82.88% in language arts and from 66.09% to 74.57% in math. Also, the newly adopted Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate went into effect in 2011.

In 2011, 12 of 54 districts met Adequate Yearly Progress (22%), a reduction of eight districts from 2010. In 2011, 231 schools met Adequate Yearly Progress (45.7%) and 274 schools did not meet. This marked a decrease of 74 schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress from 2010.

WorkKeys

WorkKeys is a career-ready assessment that measures fundamental skills employers have identified as critical to success in the workforce. WorkKeys is owned by the not-for-profit American College Testing (ACT) organization. For WorkKeys, ACT created thousands of job profiles, which analyze the level of skills needed for entry to specific jobs. Assessed students are able to compare their skill level with the skill level of those jobs.

The Board had previously approved the implementation of WorkKeys as a tool to measure the career-readiness of students preparing to transition from high school to higher education and employment. The Board held multiple work sessions to discuss the need for the assessment in our public school system. Students in Alaska are required to take this assessment in the 11th grade, and they have the option to re-take the assessment in the 12th grade. The assessment requirement first went into effect during the 2010-2011 school year. Additionally, in 2010 the Board approved the use of WorkKeys as a qualifying assessment for the Alaska Performance Scholarship for those students who are seeking a career or technical certificate in their postsecondary education.

In Alaska, students participate in three WorkKeys assessments: Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information (in visual formats). Students who attain qualifying scores on the three assessments receive ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate. The certificate is a nationally recognized credential that indicates ACT's assurance that an individual has certain skills that are important across a range of jobs. The higher the level of skills attained, the more jobs for which the individual can expect to be considered. Dozens of employers in Alaska currently either require, request or recognize the certificate or WorkKeys assessments in their hiring or placement processes.

Of the 9,007 Alaska students who took WorkKeys in the 2010-2011 school year, 7,665 (85%) earned a National Career Readiness Certificate. Twenty-one percent of all test-takers received a bronze certificate; 42.6% received a silver certificate; 21% received a gold certificate; and 0.5% received a platinum certificate.

In September 2011, the Board approved the Alaska Supplement for WorkKeys Assessment, 2011 edition. The supplement clarifies the appropriate use of accommodations for students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. It is a supplement to the Participation Guidelines for Alaska Students in State Assessments.

Mentor Programs

In response to high teacher turnover in parts of the state, the department in 2004 created the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project in partnership with the University of Alaska and school districts. The Board continues to support the project's efforts to increase teacher retention and help ensure that teachers new to the profession are supported in becoming more effective in their instructional practices within their first two years in the classroom.

Similarly, the department's Administrative Coaching Program helps new school administrators in their first two years understand the context in which they work and become effective instructional leaders who support teachers and students as they work toward increasing achievement levels.

This school year, 12 administrator coaches are serving 76 principals and four superintendents. In the previous school year, 12 administrator coaches served 78 principals and 11 superintendents. Additionally, in each of these school years, 15 University of Alaska Anchorage interns receive services through the Rural Administrator Principal Preparation and Support grant in conjunction with the Alaska Staff Development Network.

In June, the Board discussed the Legislature's cuts to the mentor program. Discussion revolved around the program's impact on teacher and principal retention and the promising impact on student achievement. For example, in mathematics, Alaska students in classrooms of mentored teachers perform the same as those in classrooms of veteran teachers, according to a study published in 2010. Board members suggested the department present more program data to the Legislature. This school year, 24 mentors are working with 330 early-career teachers in 142 schools in 34 school districts. In the previous school year, 28 mentors served 401 teachers in 187 schools in 43 districts.

Teacher Quality

The Board has discussed teacher quality at length this year and considered recommendations from the Teacher Quality Working Group (convened by the department) regarding teacher

quality, certification, and preparation. Recognizing the impact that high-quality teachers have on student achievement, the Board acted on the recommendations of the working group to:

- Amend teacher certification regulations to clarify the requirements to renew teacher, administrator and special services certificates; change the name of the Vocational Education Endorsement to Career and Technical Education; require districts to make available to the public the blank forms used in teacher and administrator evaluation; and require district employment applications to require teachers to disclose any prior teaching experience in Alaska.
- Approve teacher preparation programs for Elementary K-5 Math at the University of Alaska Southeast and for an Elementary endorsement at Alaska Pacific University; and add an endorsement in the Career and Technical Education certificate program at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Career and Technical Education

In December 2010, the Board adopted the Career and Technical Education Plan, created by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the University of Alaska Statewide, the Department of Education & Early Development, and other stakeholders. The plan outlines actions that can be taken to improve Career and Technical Education opportunities for students from kindergarten through postsecondary.

In June, the Board heard a report on agencies' progress implementing the Career and Technical Education Plan. The Board also discussed the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Career and Technical Education grants to districts. Board members expressed concern that there would be accountability for the expenditures made and wanted to make sure that these grants benefitted students in Career and Technical Education.

The board continued its support of the plan through the following actions:

- Approving the Graduate Certificate program at the University of Alaska Anchorage for teachers wishing to add an endorsement in Career and Technical Education to their certificates;
- Adopting regulations regarding the qualifications for Type M teachers who obtain endorsements in Career and Technical Education.

Early Learning

In 2009, the Legislature provided \$2 million for a pilot pre-kindergarten program that would include six sites. The purpose was to allow varied school districts to create preschool programs that incorporate Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines in ways tailored to their local communities.

In 2011, the Board heard reports on the Alaska Pre-K Pilot Program, the progress being made with Head Start grantees using a common assessment across the state, and the increasing number of Head Start teachers who are certified. The Board also was informed about the work of the recently formed Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

Recognizing the importance of children coming to school ready to learn, the Board endorsed the department's Family Engagement Plan and its Early Literacy Plan. The Family Engagement Plan includes action steps for parents, teachers and community members that will ultimately impact student achievement. The Early Literacy Plan encourages early literacy activities in all settings where young children interact with adults. It provides actions that parents, caregivers, preschool teachers and community members can do that will help students come to school ready to learn. The Board also approved the Birth-Graduation Literacy Blueprint, the culmination of work done by literacy experts in Alaska to provide a roadmap for improving literacy outcomes for all Alaska students. The Blueprint included work previously done on the Early Literacy Plan.

State System of Support

The State System of Support assists districts as they build their capacity to implement sustainable school improvement strategies with fidelity. The State System of Support provides aligned resources, information, professional development, content coaches, and technical assistance within six domain areas that represent aspects of best practices that substantially influence school and student performance.

Throughout the year, the Board heard reports on State System of Support activities: the Third Leadership Institute and the Alaska Literacy Institute, which was sponsored for intervention districts and included representatives from pre-k programs and Head Start programs; the curriculum exposure analysis done by the state; and activities of the Yupiit School District trustee.

The Board received updates to the development of a rubric on Cultural Standards for Educators as a follow-up to their adoption of this section from the publication *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools*.

Distance Education

The Board received updates on the progress of Alaska's Learning Network throughout the year. Alaska's Learning Network is an outgrowth of the department's Virtual School Working Group. Alaska's Learning Network enhances educational opportunities by providing: 1) distance courses taught by highly qualified Alaska teachers, 2) a network of support for educators and students to collaborate and share resources in a digital repository, and 3) professional development for teachers. Alaska's Learning Network provides rigorous courses that meet eligibility requirements of the Alaska performance Scholarship.

The Alaska Literacy Blueprint

In March, the Board endorsed the Alaska State Literacy Blueprint Birth to Graduation, created by Alaska educators. The blueprint provides guidance to policymakers, educators, community leaders, and families about ways to support all children in becoming literate and therefore prepared to fully participate in their chosen work and activities. The blueprint is organized into the key areas of instruction, assessment, leadership, professional development, and family and community engagement.

Mt. Edgecumbe High School

Mt. Edgecumbe High School is a state-operated boarding school in Sitka for approximately 400 students from around the state, 78 percent of whom self-identify as Alaska Native or American Indians and another 11 percent who self-identify as mixed race. The State Board, which serves as the Board of Education for Mt. Edgecumbe, approved a change to the credits required for Mt. Edgecumbe graduates. The Board reduced the required credits in social studies from four to three and added a required credit of either social studies or math or science beyond courses already required. The total number of required credits remains at 24. The rationale was to provide scheduling flexibility for students who want to meet the credit requirements of the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

The Board appointed an ad hoc committee to review the Mt. Edgecumbe Policy Manual. The rationale is to update the manual and remove outdated policies and procedures.