University of Alaska Teacher Education Consortium  
September 25, 2012 Meeting Notes

In service of an overarching goal of improving UA teacher education programs, two meetings were held on September 25, 2012 to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders. The first meeting was a Listening Session that took place from 8:30 am until 10:00 am in the Lee Gorsuch Commons. Following the Listening Session, the Alaska Education Consortium met from 10:30 am – 2:00 pm in the same location.

This paper is a summary of both meetings and provides an interpretation of alignment between the clusters of input and the 2011 Alaska Teacher Education Plan.

Listening Session
The purpose of this session was to take comments from a variety of stakeholders in the teacher education system. Thirty-two participants attended the session in Anchorage, and 19 statewide participants called in. The comments were captured in two ways: the session was recorded, and Diane Hirshberg, Associate Professor, Institute of Social and Economic Research and invitee to the Alaska Teacher Education Consortium, took notes. Several leaders within the UA system were present to hear the comments: Deans of Education Allan Morotti, UAF, Deborah Lo, UAS, and Ed McLain, interim, UAA; UA President Patrick Gamble, UA Vice President for Academic Affairs Dana Thomas, UAF Provost Susan Henrichs, and UAA Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Elisha “Bear” Baker. Richard Caulfield, UAS Provost & Executive Dean, School of Career Education, convened the session.

The participants were asked to focus their comments on these four questions:

1. What are we doing well and should continue to do?
2. What can we do to improve our teacher preparation programs? How and where can we be better?
3. What are some challenges you face in teacher preparation?
4. Where should the priorities be for improvement?

Participant comments can be organized into these clusters:

- Mentoring for new teachers
- Dialogue, partnerships, and collaboration
- Recruitment of Alaska teachers and Native Alaska teachers
- Quality of new Alaska-educated teachers
- Timing of student teachers into schools
- Support strategies for Paraprofessionals
- Alaska Teacher Education Consortium

Membership
President Gamble invited individuals representing key constituencies to serve as members of the Alaska Teacher Education Consortium. The following participated in the meeting: EED Commissioner Michael Hanley, Alaska School Board Executive Director Carl Rose who was represented by Joseph Reeves, Alaska Commission on Post-Secondary Education Executive Director Diane Barrans, Alaska Council of School Administrators Executive Director Bruce Johnson, President of NEA Alaska Ron Furher, and President of Sealaska Heritage Institute Rosita Worl. Al
Tamagni, representing Alaska PTA, was unable to attend. Also participating as members of the Consortium were Deans of Education Allan Morotti, UAF, Deborah Lo, UAS, and Ed McLain, interim, UAA; UA Vice President for Academic Affairs Dana Thomas, UAF Provost Susan Henrichs, UAA Vice Chancellor and Provost Elisha “Bear” Baker, and Diane Hirshberg, Director, UAA Center for Alaska Education Policy Research. UAS Provost Richard Caulfield, UAS, convened the session.

History
In 2010, under the direction of the President and Regents of the University of Alaska, the deans of the Schools and College of Education developed a teacher education plan. The University of Alaska Teacher Education Plan, published in January 2011, sets out the following goals:

1. Recruit, retain, and graduate more students in education, particularly Alaska residents
2. Increase program access through multiple delivery methods
3. Enhance educator preparation programs in special education and in math and science teaching
4. Conduct research to identify causes and propose solutions for education challenges in Alaska

As a step toward greater strategic alignment among key education leaders and organizations, this plan established the Alaska Teacher Education Consortium. According to the plan, the Consortium will provide a “forum to co-opt institutional expertise, leverage academic resources, and ensure that any strategies that come out of the UA Plan a fully coordinated with those of partner organizations.”

Meeting Summary
The meeting began with a discussion with UA President Gamble who spoke about the context and direction of the Consortium’s work and the importance of teacher education to the mission of the University. His remarks are paraphrased in CAEPR's meeting summary as follows:

- Growth goal has changed to internal quality
- Flat-funding status has helped focus on priorities, collaboration, and cooperation
- Good data makes a difference in choosing a good direction
- Take a risk on good ideas supported by research
- Show results in a cost-effective environment
- Teachers are one of the biggest factors in student success

During the working lunch, Dr. Kathryn Bertram, UA Statewide K-12 Outreach Director, presented a continuum of support available for prospective teachers, that includes Future Educators of Alaska, Alaska Teacher Placement, the Statewide Mentoring Project, and the Prepares program.

Following lunch, Consortium invitees were asked to focus on prioritizing UA’s work in the area of teacher preparation. Invitees were asked to identify the most important one or two things they would like to see UA do to improve teacher education programs. Their comments are grouped into three clusters and their specific suggestions are bulleted.

Rural and Native Education
- Stronger collaboration with indigenous organizations to change rural teacher preparation
- Increase variety, quality and quantity of rural internships (student teaching placements)
- Promote cross-cultural studies of Alaska Native culture, history, and legal status
Use, expand, improve UA capacity to reach out to rural population through both face to face and enhanced distance media

**UA Teacher Preparation Programs and Curriculum**
- Integrate skills and training for using student performance data to enhance and improve content or pedagogy
- Integrate traditional knowledge systems into curricula; pair traditional values with western values
- Prepare more highly qualified teachers capable of teaching at multiple grade levels; develop skills in differentiation for multi-level classrooms
- Provide field experiences earlier in the program
- Provide comprehensive advisement throughout teacher education training; consider non-retention of slow-developing students
- Improve literacy teaching standards across all subject areas
- Ensure that each teacher education graduate is an expert in the K-12 standards and cultural standards she or he will be teaching
- Share instructional resources across MAUs

**GER Engagement**
- Work with colleagues in Arts & Sciences to strengthen content knowledge of students
- Engagement with K-12 schools
- Recruit and education more Alaska Native and other minority teachers
- Increase UA visibility in K-12 schools as part of a recruitment strategy
- Work with P-12 schools and Arts & Sciences to ensure preparedness
- Explore ways to encourage P-12 schools to hire Alaska teacher graduates

As a follow-up question, each invitee was asked to identify an action that they or their organization could offer. Their responses follow:

- Research: provide best practices to support change efforts and provide research and evaluation of efforts on outcomes
- Help make a connection between the schools and the communities
- Provide structure through policies in recruitment, training, evaluation, and retention
- Find members who can provide the expertise
- Work with Alaska State Board of Education to share expectations and concerns; draft a teacher preparation plan
- Assist in developing state capacity for longitudinal data collection and analysis
- Incorporate educator development strategies through outreach and early awareness tools and resources
- Build knowledge of Native community, culture, and history through partnership with schools and UA
- Provide honesty to students and advisors regarding progress or lack of progress
- Review and refine the partnerships in process; build state entities into that process
- Communicate with other campuses and colleges regarding services offered or in development
- Ensure that each K-12 graduate knows the recently adopted K-12 Standards
- Advocate for changes (as suggested in these bullets) within UA for teacher education; communicate UA efforts to legislators
- Advocate for resources within UA for teacher education
• Help ensure the input from this group is being pursued and that UA members report back on progress.

The Alaska Teacher Education Consortium concluded its meeting at 2:00 pm and agreed to these follow-up actions:

1. Teleconference call Monday, October 1, 4 pm – Rick Caulfield
2. Identify the status of Native paraprofessionals in SE schools – Rosita Worl
3. On behalf of ACPE, consider ways to strengthen secondary to postsecondary AKCIS content and advocate for content enhancements – Diane Barrans
4. Report out on teacher retention research – Diane Hirshberg