The second meeting of the University of Alaska Teacher Education Consortium (UATEC) was held on March 26, 2013 from Noon to 4:00 pm on the University of Alaska Southeast Juneau Auke Bay campus in the Glacier View room.

Participating in the meeting were:

**Consortium Members:** Dana Thomas, Vice President of Academic Affairs, UA; Rick Caulfield, Provost, UAS; Deborah Lo, Dean, School of Education, UAS; Allan Morotti, Dean, School of Education, UAF; Ed McLain, Interim Dean, School of Education, UAA; Kathy Berry Bertram, UA Statewide K-12 Outreach Director; Mike Hanley, Commissioner, AK DEED; Bruce Johnson, Alaska Council of School Administrators; Rosita Worl, Executive Director, Sealaska Heritage Institute; Joseph Reeves for Carl Rose, Alaska Association of School Boards; Stephanie Butler for Diane Barrans, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education; Diane Hirshberg, Associate Professor and Director, Center for Alaska Education Policy Research, ISER, UAA;

**Guest Superintendents:** Jack Walsh, Superintendent, Bristol Bay School District; Glenn Gelbrich, Superintendent, Juneau School District; Steve Bradshaw, Superintendent, Greater Sitka Borough School District; via teleconference: Gary Baldwin, Superintendent, Lower Kuskokwim School District; Robb Donohue-Boyer, Human Resources Director, Anchorage School District; Deena Paramo, Superintendent, Mat-Su School District;

**Guest participants:** John Pugh, Chancellor, UAS; Joseph Nelson, Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management and Student Services, UAS; Patricia Jacobson, Chair, UA Board of Regents; Esther Cox for Jim Mariner, State Board of Education; Chris Simon, UA/AK DEED Rural Education Coordinator; Susan McCauley, Director, Teaching and Learning Support, DOE; via teleconference: Sue Hull, Member, School Board, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District; Mary Lou Madden, Education Consultant.

UAS Provost Caulfield convened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He explained that the purpose of this meeting was to hear from those outside the university system, specifically Alaska Superintendents, on how the University can do a better job of education, placing, and retaining teachers who come from the University of Alaska system. Provost Caulfield reminded participants that the UATEC grew from the Alaska Teacher Education Plan, which was endorsed by President Gamble and the University Board of Regents (BOR). The success of the UATEC was based on establishing meaningful partnerships of key state education stakeholders who share mutual interest in producing high quality teachers to work in Alaska schools.

Alice Galvin, meeting facilitator, reviewed the agenda. There were three sections to the agenda: Setting Context, Superintendent’s Roundtable, and Action Groups. This summary will provide highlights from each section.

**Context Setting**
Opportunities for meaningful action become possible when Consortium members are aware of all each member organization’s respective priorities. To that end, each member and a few guests were asked to provide an update. The highlights are included in this summary, and more details are available in the transcript.

- Senate Bill 241 Board of Regent’s Report: Alaska’s University for Alaska’s Schools 2013 and Response the Questions of the Joint Education Committee, February 27, 2013
  
  During Vice President Thomas and Provost Caulfield’s presentation to the Joint Education Committee, several questions arose for which the legislators requested a written response. Two issues that Vice president Thomas wished to emphasize because they were important to the Joint Education Committee as well as to himself were: 1) retention of teachers in rural Alaska is positively impacted when mentoring is provided; and 2) closing the gap for needed teachers versus UA teacher graduates. UA is looking into this issue through research conducted by the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR).

- Response to the National Council on Teacher Quality Findings (NCTQ)
  
  Dean Lo review the current situation, noting that the NCTQ, an independent education reform group based in Washington, D.C., has recently rated Alaska deficient in teacher education policies and practices in ten specific areas. Dean Lo took the lead in preparing the UA response and shared the key points and the UA responses. Although she and the other Deans do not agree with many of their findings, she does agree with their recommendations to shrink the pipeline of elementary teachers into the profession and to make the role of the cooperating teacher a more attractive proposition for practicing classroom teachers. There was agreement among the UATEC participants about the value of inviting representatives from the NCTQ to Alaska so they could better understand our environment.
• **Board of Cultural Knowledge Bearers**
  Kathy Berry Bertram and Chris Simon talked about the role of this board in the teacher education process. Each of the seven board members has been involved in writing the Guide to Implementing Cultural Standards for Educators, has twenty plus years of classroom teaching, is Alaska native born and raised, is a college graduate, and has been appointed by the Governor or the President to be, at some point in their lives, a spokesperson education. This Board will play a role in the Cycles of Success programs that address teacher recruitment, training, and retention.

**UATEC Member and Guest Updates**

- **Commissioner Hanley, DEED:** One to One Initiative, one of the four components in the Governor’s budget relating to digital learning in education for students and for teachers; partnering with UA on how to train teachers with technology, and Alaska may be the first in the country to offer this type of program.
- **Bruce Johnson, ACSA:** His organization receive many ideas about how to improve education; brought the superintendent’s together in March to review the new teacher/principal evaluation regulations passed by the Board of Education.
- **Joseph Reeves, AASB:** His organization has been active in lobbying and is supportive of the One to One initiative; Held a weekend event to inform members about the new standards and the new evaluation system.
- **Rosita Worl, Sealaska Heritage Institute:** Two projects for teacher professional development-teaching math through native basketry, and understanding the cultural landscape of the Southeast Native people.
- **Stephanie Butler, ACPE:** P-20 longitudinal database project is in progress and partners with DEED, Department of Labor, and UA; purpose of the system is to link current data, not collect new data; Dana Thomas noted that one of the first outcomes of this project is information to school districts on the proportion of their students coming to UA requiring developmental math.
- **Esther Cox, State School Board:** Working on the new teacher evaluation regulations which she believes address student growth; also working on common core standards, understanding the extent of classroom assessments, and curriculum alignment and pre-K programs.
- **Patricia Jacobson, UA Board of Regents:** A BOR met with the State School Board in June to open communication between the two entities, and two outcomes are being worked on: giving the Accuplacer test earlier in the high school year, and MOOCS and developmental course work.
- **Diane Hirshberg, CAEPR:** Updating their teacher supply and demand report; looking into indigenous leadership and Alaska Native principals in schools, will publish The State of the State in June which looks at all K-12 data, and a report, requested by the legislators that examines how districts allocate their existing funds.

**Superintendent’s Roundtable**

**Topic 1: Ideas for increasing the quality of University of Alaska teacher graduates**

Summary of ideas:

- Slow down turnover by hiring carefully for quality and retention
- Training and preparation for:
  - Multilingual instruction
  - Literacy and reading
  - Core reading
  - Cultural standards
  - Technology
  - Classroom management and building engaging learning environments
  - Response to instruction
  - Instruction methods for multi-grade classrooms
  - Strong content and methods for teaching math
- Teachers must know their content
- Versatility of teachers’ degrees and qualifications
- Mentoring for new teachers
- Skills for building community relationships
- Breadth of pedagogy that allows teachers to instruct students in skills and knowledge they need
- Be outcome oriented and see lower performing students as capable rather than needy
• Consider a 4 year program with a minor in the content areas that is rigorous
• Time in the classroom earlier in the program
• Let the superintendent choose the master teacher
• Need to stabilize funding so the talent pool doesn’t disappear
• Ensure that professors have significant classroom experience and are identified as master teachers

**Topic 2: Effective approaches for increasing the numbers of quality Alaska-trained teachers hired by local districts**

**Summary of Ideas:**

• Must consider the current context of reduced funding, reduced budgets, hiring less, layoffs uncertainty, complex learning needs
• Rural perspective is that UA teacher graduates do not apply to rural schools, and when they do, they are prioritized
• Leverage the value of rural internships and two week rotations so teacher students can learn about rural schools
• Have more cohorts and replicate models such as ANSEP or Bridge or X-CED but for teachers
• Applying students must learn about the districts to which they are applying so they can do well in the screening process
• Continue to reach out to districts regarding job fairs and names of top graduates
• More teachers with certifications in math and science
• Help with people looking to teaching as a second career; help them with licensing or certification
• Help village students get an on-line degree beginning in high school
• Districts could provide incentives to offset the high cost of rural living
• Help teacher graduates be aware of current events in the state and country so they can make content relevant to students

**Action Groups**

The participants formed three work groups and were asked to reflect on what they heard and learned today and on what they already know, and then identify up to three meaningful action steps to take over the next one-two years. The working group topics and recommendations were:

**Teacher training – Dean Lo**

• UA Schools and Colleges of Education and P-12 schools need to communicate regularly regarding teacher training
• All teacher candidates should participate in teacher education programs with rigorous literacy experiences and requirements
• Professional development around literacy, RTI, differentiation and technology is needed for practicing teachers across the State.
• Some districts report teacher shortages in the related services (School Psychology, etc.) areas as well as Vocational Education, School Librarians and ELL. Chancellor Pugh from UAS suggests looking to the data to determine actual need before designing new programs.
• Deans will report back on addressing new standards – how far they’ve gotten, what’s left
• DEED: Have UA involved in new standards – as standards get changed, keep UA engaged

**Teacher Retention – Dean Morotti**

• Funding for mentoring all new teachers, principals, and superintendents, including those new to Alaska, for a minimum of three years
• To raise the professional image of teachers communicate with public that the three-year mentoring process is similar to a physician’s residency
• Evaluation of teachers should be strength-based and focus on one-to-two areas at a time. Principals are the academic leaders of the school; therefore, evaluation should be an ongoing process with the goal to improve teacher performance. Improved teacher performance leads to improved student performance
• To improve teacher retention in rural Alaska, encourage greater collaboration between the teachers and the communities
• One strategy for improving retention rates in rural Alaska is by hiring teachers for and from their home communities. Innovative distance education programs (e.g., X-CED) would make teacher education a more desirable field to pursue.
Teacher Recruitment – Dean McLain

- Universities and colleges or schools (in concert with districts) - Continue to seek out, develop, build, on and grow local advancement opportunities; collaborate with districts and sites – Chevak model (advancement for para-professionals) as an example. Seek out ways to expand and refine the Chevak model to serve other schools, communities, and regions.
- Districts - Improve quality of life issues as a compounding factor of high cost of rural (Bristol Bay settlement components); use available resources to incentivize rural teachers;
- DEED – continue to maintain schools across the State (bonds, CIP lists) while investigating possible revisions to the statutes or regulations that guide school construction, I.E. to allow greater flexibility or ability to build housing on school grounds when new construction is being built or major facilities updating is being done. This could allow for some cost and time efficiencies as work crews would be on hand and materials for housing could be shipped in at the same time as the other school construction materials.
- DEED and Districts – explore collaborations with Native corporations who have housing authorities
- Leverage UAF Cold Climate Housing Research Center housing projects (teacher’s home is experiment for community).

Next Steps and Wrap Up

Representation on the UATEC: Both Vice President Thomas and Provost Caulfield inquired about this subject. Responses included more rural and Native representation; connect to native organizations for resources, Gloria O’Neill from BOR, and some principals.

Outreach to Education Organizations: Dean Lo suggested that the three Deans and the Commissioner of Education travel to several statewide organizations

Fall 2013 meeting dates: a meeting in the fall was endorsed, especially in conjunction with the principal’s conference with the understanding that principals are the next group of stakeholders we need to involve in the work of UATEC.

The meeting concluded at 4:00 pm.