EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS PLAN FOR ALASKA

June 1, 2015

Section 1: Introduction

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED) is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education the Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Plan (Equity Plan) that aims to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to excellent teachers in Alaska.

This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014, letter to State Education Agencies (SEA), as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Alaska's plan complies with (1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that "poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers." As part of the efforts of this plan, we are transitioning from using the terms poor to low-income (economically disadvantaged) and minority to students of color.

In addition, the plan provides the measures that EED will use to evaluate and publicly report on the progress of EED with respect to such steps. EED plans to continually improve the Equity Plan in collaboration with educational stakeholders.

Current Education Agency Context

As EED submits this plan, many major education initiatives and reform efforts are in progress:

- **2014 Governor's Education Opportunity Act and Current Funding Shortfall**: The Alaska State Legislature has passed former Governor Parnell's House Bill 278 which would increase funding, provide families with more choice in education, and promote student readiness for careers and postsecondary education. The Education Opportunity Act would increase the base student funding in fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017, recognizing that districts' operating costs increase over time. Alaska currently faces a $3.5 billion deficit.
- **Salary & Benefits Schedule and Teacher Tenure Study completion:** As part of House Bill 278, the Alaska State Legislature instructs the Department of Administration to "present to the legislature a written proposal for a salary and benefits schedule for school districts, including an evaluation of, and recommendations for, teacher tenure" (Sec. 52). The Department of Administration is contracting with the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR) to develop a proposal for a salary and benefits schedule for districts that includes base compensation schedules for teachers and principals, geographic cost differentials, and information on different benefits that districts offer to employees. CAEPR is also tasked with exploring the purpose and value of tenure, alternatives to the current structure in Alaska, and the value of tenure to teachers including how it affects the teacher labor market. *See Appendix A for an overview.*
- **Enhancing Student Learning and Performance**: The Partnership for Public Education provides information on issues facing teachers, students, schools, and communities. A 2013 Statewide Survey indicated the biggest areas of workplace dissatisfaction were parent and community support, student conduct, and district leadership.

- **The Educator Quality and Quantity Project**: Initiated by CEAAC, the Citizens for Educational Advancement of Alaska's Children focuses on a systemic approach to strengthen the K-12 Certificated Workforce. The two strategies proposed are as follows: 1) Expand the workforce, with the goal of 60% of Alaska's new hires being Alaska grown by 2025. Recommendations to meet this goal address educator recruitment and preparation. 2) Develop and keep the workforce, with the goal of having 90% of Alaska's educators rated as proficient under the state's evaluation system by 2025. Recommendations to meet this goal address professional development and teacher retention.
- **A Plan for Revitalizing Teacher Education in Alaska:** The University of Alaska (UA) is addressing the on-going challenge of increasing the number of teachers prepared for Alaska's K-12 schools. The Plan was introduced to the Board of Regents in December 2014. It includes four goals: 1) To improve the rigor and selectivity of UA teacher certification programs to meet new CAEP standards and place UA programs in the top one-third nationally by 2020; 2) To graduate 50% more teachers who have the certifications needed by Alaska's schools by 2025; 3) To partner with the State of Alaska and Alaska's school districts to reduce the average annual teacher turnover in rural districts to no more than 10% by 2025; and 4) To collaborate across our three UA universities to eliminate administrative barriers to timely student completion and unnecessary duplication of efforts by 2016. *Appendix B includes the Plan for Revitalizing Teacher Education.*
- **Teacher and Principal Induction into the Profession to Create Excellence in the Classroom:** A joint effort of EED and UA to provide all new-to-the-profession public school teachers and principals mentoring/coaching during their first two years. The Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) has been providing mentoring to early career teachers during their first and second years of public school teaching. The Alaska Administrative Coaching Project (AACP) has provided coaching to new principals during their first and second years of public school administration. These programs have been mostly funded through general funds provided by the Legislature to the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED). During the past two legislative sessions, the budgeting process has resulted in significant reductions of $800,000 per year.
- **The Educator Certification Advisory Committee**: Established by the State Board of Education & Early Development (State Board) to consider increasing requirements and/or rigor for teacher certification, endorsement and high qualified status. For example: The State Board is being asked to adopt amended regulation 4 AAC 30.020. The proposed regulation make changes to student teaching including the following: the length of student teaching; criteria for serving as a student teacher; and who may supervise a student teacher. This proposed regulation are expected to increase the quality of entering student teachers through a longer student teaching period under an experienced teacher who is meeting or exceeding the district's teaching standards. *See Appendix C for committee membership.*
- **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver:** EED received a waiver from many elements of the ESEA as amended by No Child Left Behind. For the past two years, EED has been implementing all aspects of the waiver, many of which directly relate to the effort to increase access to excellent educators. EED awaits approval of its renewal application that may require revisions to proposed actions related to Alaska's school and educator accountability process. The implementation of the ESEA waiver has already stretched both the state and district capacity in terms of personnel and resources.

- **District Educator Evaluation & Support Systems**: All districts as part of the ESEA flexibility waiver must submit the redesign of their systems by July 1, 2015. In these redesigns, many districts are adopting nationally recognized frameworks such as Danielson or Marzano. The districts' systems require the inclusion of student learning data as one component of the evaluation. The professional development needed for both teachers and administrators has increased. Many districts were not able to address the student learning component. The State Board has proposed a delay in the inclusion of the student learning data for the upcoming school year. Full implementation of the Educator Evaluation & Support system will begin in school year 2016-17. *See Appendix D for committee membership.*

Alaska Equity Plan Focus

Alaska's earlier Title II plan (2006) focused primarily on increasing access to highly qualified teachers (HQTs). Districts wrote their own plans and identified strategies to ensure poor and minority students were not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at a higher rate than other students. With the ESEA flexibility waiver, district plans are no longer required and EED checks the meeting of this requirement through the ESEA five year monitoring cycle.

In contrast, the current Alaska Equity Plan focuses on ensuring that all classrooms are taught by excellent teachers, recognizing that there are multiple important dimensions of educator excellence (e.g., qualifications, expertise, performance, and effectiveness in improving student academic achievement). As more data becomes available, our plan could develop over time from being input focused (qualifications and expertise) to outcome focused (performance and improving student academic achievement). No information from the districts' Educator Evaluation & Support systems will be available until September 2016. EED would like to recognize that it will likely take two-three years before the data can be relied on to make high stakes decisions.

The Alaska Equity Plan focuses on increasing the number of experienced teachers and reducing educator turnover in low-income, high-minority, and high-need schools and districts.

Alaska has defined *excellent teachers* as follows:

- An *excellent teacher* is licensed and fully prepared to teach in his/her assigned content area.

EED convened a team to design this plan consisting of Teaching and Learning Support (TLS) staff. The lead development team included a:

- Teacher Certification and Education Administrator
- Improving Teacher and Principal Quality Education Specialist
- Assessment and Accountability Data Management Supervisor
- Certified Staff Accounting Data Research Analyst

This group completed these initial actions steps:

- Review the state plan requirements and educator equity profile provided by USDOE and scanned Alaska Initiatives and Education Reform Efforts research and survey reports.
- Update Alaska educator data to reflect current information and 10 year averages.
- Develop and embark on a long-term strategy for engaging stakeholders in ensuring equitable access to excellent educators.

Scan of State-Level Policies, Initiatives, and Currently Available Data

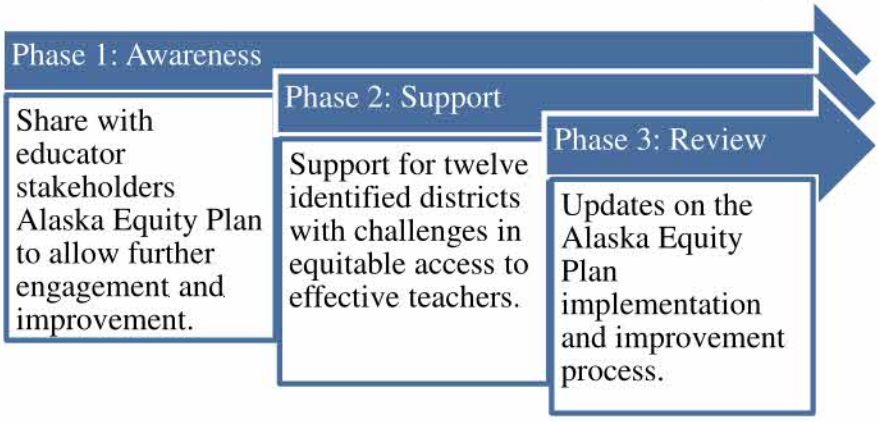
To begin this process in an informed way, EED has performed a scan of current policies and initiatives that Alaska has been implementing in recent years as well as a review of past efforts and relevant and available data specifically:

- Current licensure standards and requirements and existing state policy and practice for improving educator recruitment, retention, development, and support.
- Policies and initiatives focused on Alaska's institutions of higher education (IHEs) and other providers that prepare teachers.
- Policies and practices highlighted in the past plan prepared for the U.S. Department of Education.

Additional TLS team members engaged in updating Alaska Equity data and the further actions steps:

- Reviewing updated Alaska educator data to identify equity gaps.
- Conduct analyses, based on data and with stakeholders, to identify the root causes that underlie our equity gaps to identify and target our strategies accordingly.
- Set measurable targets and created a plan for measuring and reporting progress and continuously improving this plan.

This Alaska Equity Plan proposes a multi-phase approach in implementing this plan.



Section 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Alaska has continually focused on improving Educator Quality especially for students in our high-needs schools. EED itself often serves as a stakeholder in many other Alaska organizations efforts around Educator Quality. This plan considers the extensive input gathered from Alaskans by these other organizations. We leverage these reports and surveys to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts in the state. *See Appendix E for reports and surveys.*

EED has engaged in some preliminary stakeholder engagement in the design of this plan. The stakeholders include internal state agency members of TLS, existing stakeholder groups with scheduled spring 2015 meetings, and specialized stakeholder groups (as described below). Alaska recognizes the need for more comprehensive stakeholder engagement in the further development of this plan. More comprehensive external stakeholder engagement using scheduled fall 2015 meetings will be a focus during Phase one – Awareness.

A team consisting of the Teacher Certification & Education Administrator, Improving Teacher and Principal Quality Education Specialist, Assessment and Accountability Data Management Supervisor, and Certified Staff Accounting Data Research Analyst led the Educator Equity Plan work. The initial work included becoming familiar with the state plan requirements, verifying the educator equity profile provided and attending technical assistance sessions both virtually and on-site. During this time, the profile was shared with the Title I program managers as a first step in creating awareness. Once more current data was available, the internal team from EED was expanded to include representation from each component of the TLS division. A representative group met to review and refine the updated equity data. Additionally, the group identified key equity gaps, possible root causes and strategies in existing state or school district initiatives. *See Appendix F for the expanded TLS team.*

The external stakeholder groups includes the Title I Committee of Practitioners; Title II, Part A District Program coordinators; Educator Evaluation & Support System district revision committee members; and representatives from districts identified on the Educator Equity Profile for Alaska.

- Our last equity plan efforts with districts were coordinated through the Improving Teacher and Principal Quality (II-A) program. One of the first stakeholder groups that were engaged was the Title II, Part A District Program coordinators. Representatives from each of our 54 districts span a large range of district positions from professional development, curriculum and instruction, federal programs, assistant superintendents and superintendents. They participated in a winter update webinar held as soon as possible after the initial technical assistance and the districts returned from the winter break. The main purpose was to provide an awareness of the State Equity Plan requirements. The next gathering of this group was part of the ESEA Application workshop held in April each year. As part of the Title II-A roundtable, State Equity Plan awareness was highlighted and specific attention was focused on Title II-A program activities for recruitment and retention. *See Appendix G for district coordinators.*

- The Title I Committee of Practitioners is a stakeholder group that was engaged during their annual meeting held in conjunction with the ESEA Application Workshop in April. This group includes parents, teachers, principals, district directors, superintendents and school board members. All regions of the state were represented at the annual meeting. During this meeting, an essential agenda item included State Equity Plan awareness, review of the Educator Equity Profile for Alaska and opportunity for input and involvement. *See Appendix H for committee members.*
- We consulted via 30-minute phone conversations with a specialized stakeholder group consisting of representatives from the high poverty and minority districts included in the Educator Equity Profile for Alaska. The representatives hold various district roles or serve as coaches from the State System of Support (SSOS) working with districts identified as the highest need (Tier III). Representatives of this group were contacted through individual phone contacts of approximately thirty minutes in duration. The consultation provided a district perspective of the Educator Equity Profile for Alaska, equity gaps, possible reasons and existing and suggested strategies. *See Appendix I for district stakeholders.*
- Another group of targeted stakeholders is the district staff working on the revision of their district's educator evaluation and support systems. This group consists of many of the same roles as the Title II-A coordinators but also includes teachers, principals, human resource personnel, and union representatives. As part of our monthly webinars, we provided awareness of the State Equity Plan and shared information learned from the onsite technical assistance session.

EED plans on reaching out to additional stakeholder groups during their regular scheduled fall meetings including the district superintendents and both the Education Certification and Educator Evaluation Advisory Committees.

- The Educator Certification Advisory Committee is an existing stakeholder group that focuses on improving Educator Quality in Alaska. This group consists of the Deans and Professors from all four of the state's IHEs, director of K-12 Outreach for the UA, National Education Association Alaska (NEA-AK) representatives, Alaska State School Board of Education representation, Education Matters – an education advisory group, and representations from districts including human resources and instruction. During the annual scheduled fall meeting, this group will be engaged in the review of the submitted equity plan and assist with further development.
- The Educator Evaluation Advisory Committee has been a key stakeholder group formed to assist EED in providing guidance and resources for districts in the redesign of their Educator Evaluation and Support systems. This group consists primarily of larger districts chosen for their leadership and capacity in the redesign efforts. The representatives include human resources, curriculum and instruction, and association leaders. This group will provide key input during scheduled meetings as we consider additional future equity data available from district's redesigned evaluation systems.
- As Alaska is a local control state, District Superintendents are critical stakeholder group. There is a scheduled annual summer meeting held in collaboration with EED. During this meeting, EED plans to build an acute awareness of the State Equity plan and discuss collaborative state and district efforts needed to improve equity in our state.

As a first step, EED leveraged an existing stakeholder group containing representations of parents, teachers, principals, human resource personnel and district administrators (e.g. The Title I Committee of Practitioners). Next, we reached out to existing stakeholder groups with district representation that would be directly instrumental in the implementation of efforts to increase the equitable distribution of educators. The district Title II-A program coordinators were primary contacts in the 2006 plan. The district's educator evaluation and support teams which include human resource personnel and district administration will be key contacts in this current plan.

EED will consider expanding the existing Educator Advisory Committees in an effort to include broader and authentic representation as needed in our continued and improved efforts to promote the equitable distribution of educators.

As described above during the fall, the previously identified stakeholder groups will be engaged in the plan's implementation and refinement of the plan during scheduled meetings. We will share our progress in plan implementation with stakeholder groups and the public to specifically encourage continued engagement and improvement of the plan as appropriate in state or district level efforts.

EED will establish and promote an Educator Equity webpage where stakeholders can provide input on the submitted plan and any revisions. We will shared this input with stakeholder groups for consideration before any incorporation in the equity plan. EED maintains final approval.

EED will continue to engage stakeholders in our activities going forward. We will provide all identified stakeholders will regular updates on our progress and opportunities to comment, which will inform our long-term commitment to implementing the strategies in this plan. We expect that the stakeholder groups will add substantive knowledge from their particular perspective to engage in ongoing data reviews and monitoring and improvements of strategies in the plan. A few specific examples of our ongoing engagement plans include the following:

- Fall meetings with identified additional stakeholders including District Superintendents, and both Education Certification and Educator Evaluation Advisory Committees.
- Meetings with the twelve school districts who are the focus of the plan to discuss data disaggregation and progress in meeting goals.
- Updates for stakeholders contacted in preparing this plan and further development efforts to review data and progress toward achieving equitable access.

Section 3: Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis

The Alaska Equity Plan focuses on increasing the number of experienced teachers and reducing educator turnover in low-income, high-minority, and high-need schools and districts.[1] To ensure that our equitable access work is data-driven, we rely on multiple data sources and the intent is to continue to improve them over time. In review of existing Alaska Equity Research and initial work with our stakeholder groups, multiple perspectives have shed greater light on the data and helped us gain a better understanding of the root causes for our equity gaps appropriate strategies, unintended consequences and likely implementation challenges for certain strategies.

Alaska has been concerned with providing equitable access to excellent educators for several years, and our efforts to date appear to be showing results. At this time, more than 90 percent of the teachers of core academic subjects in Alaska fully meet the federal definition of HQT. The unique remote conditions and limitations of our small schools tend to account for the remaining 10%. In our earlier equity work however, districts found that HQT status and achievement were not always related and better measures must be examined.

Data from the Alaska fall certified staff information data collection (our state system for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on public school teachers, administrators, and other staff) show that twelve school districts with high concentrations of minority students and students from low-income families have significantly higher levels of inexperienced teachers and new-to-the district teachers than schools with low concentrations of those students. Additionally, achievement results show that these are high-needs school and districts. Our state plan to ensure equitable access to excellent educators provides a comprehensive strategy for Alaska to reduce these gaps starting with these twelve school districts.

Definitions

ESEA requires that States define three groups of teachers ("inexperienced," "unqualified," and "out-of-field") and analyze whether certain students are more exposed than others to these teachers. In addition, Alaska elected to identify "teacher new to the district" as a possible source of inequity. EED defines these key terms in the following way:

- **Low-income student (Economically Disadvantaged Student) –** A student who is eligible for free or reduced-price school meals under the Department's Alaska Income Eligibility Guidelines for Free and Reduced Meals Program, as defined in 4 AAC 06.899.(5).
- **Minority Student (Students of Color)** – A student identified as a member of a minority race or ethnicity (e.g., African American, Alaskan Native, American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or two or more races, as defined in 4 AAC 06.899).
- **Inexperience Teacher –** A teacher in their first year of teaching in any school, subject or grade. The number of year(s) of teaching experience includes the current year but does not include any student teaching or similar preparation experiences.

[1] Educator effectiveness data from Alaska's revised educator evaluation and support system will not be available until September 2017, so Alaska is focusing on input data that research has showed makes a difference to student success, namely experience and stability.

- **Teacher New-to-the-District –** A teacher in their first year of teaching in the district in which they are currently employed. Inexperienced teachers are a subset of this category.
- **Unqualified Teacher –** An educator with a bachelor's degree and no educator preparation. They are currently teachers of record as a subject-matter expert, through an alternative route or a Special Education waiver and enrolled in an educator preparation program.
- **Out-of-Field Teacher -** A teacher who is teaching an academic subject or a grade level for which the teacher is not highly qualified.

Data Sources

To identify disproportionality in teacher assignments to students, EED used multiple years of historical data on experience levels in teaching and teacher new to the district and the most current information available on certification status and subject assignment of teachers in the state. For student information, EED used school level information about the proportion of students in the school eligible for free and reduced lunch (low-income or economically disadvantaged student) and the proportion of students identifying as a minority (student of color).

For this analysis, EED leveraged data from three data systems. The October Certified Staff Accounting Report is an annual report on the certified staff in schools, their assignments and their highly-qualified status. These data can be linked from year to year, allowing for individual teachers to be followed as their assignment, school, or district changes. Data from the past ten years of the certified staff accounting to determine the percentage of first-year teachers and teachers new to the district. Ten years of data provide additional stability to this analysis as approximately 35% percent of Alaska schools employ ten or fewer teachers yearly. The data from the October Certified Staff Accounting data for school year 2014-2015 were combined with data from the Alaska teacher certification database to determine the number of teachers who were in the process of completing their educator preparation program. Finally, to calculate school level student attributes, data from the Fall 2014 On-Line Alaska School Information System (OASIS) data collection, part of the state's yearly data collections, were aggregated to the school level.

Limitations

One limitation of the Alaska data is that it does not necessarily allow for the accurate assignment of teachers to students to determine within-school disparities and the distribution of teacher quality. Another limitation is that, for now, measures of teacher quality are limited to measures using teacher certification, experience levels, and highly qualified status.

Because of the complexity of the analyses, timelines, and internal capacity, EED was not able to explore trend data in any of the required areas or the other areas of interest by the June 1, 2015 deadline. Alaska commits to dive deeper into these data in a feasible, timely manner to expand our understanding of equity issues within our state and examine additional metrics to monitor the progress of our equity efforts.

Equity Gap Analysis

EED compared student access to teachers in their first year of teaching and teachers new to the district for the past 10 years and found that schools with a higher percentage of minority and low-income students employed a higher percentage of first-year teachers and teachers new to the district than schools with a lower percentage of minority and low-income students (graphs follow the description). EED found the following gaps in student placement with first year teachers and teachers new to the district, by minority and low-income status for the past 10 years, students in the quartile of schools with the highest percentage of:

- Low-income students were
    - 1.8 times more likely to be placed with first-year teachers than students in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of low-income students.
    - 2.3 times more likely to be placed with teachers new to the district than student in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of low-income students.
- Minority students were
    - Two times more likely to be placed with first-year teachers than students in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of minority students.
    - 3.3 times more likely to be placed with teachers who was new to the district than student in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of minority students.

In schools in the top quartile of low-income students, 9.2 percent of teachers are first-year teachers, whereas only 5.0 percent of teachers in the schools in the bottom quartile of low-income students are first year teachers. A larger gap exists between the schools in the top quartile of minority students (12.4 percent) and schools in the bottom quartile of minority students (6.1 percent).

In the top quartile of low-income schools, 15.4 percent of teachers were new to the district, whereas only 6.7 percent of teachers in schools in the bottom quartile of low-income students. The top quartile of minority students, 25.7 percent of teachers were new to the district. In the bottom quartile of minority students, only 7.8 percent of teachers were new to the district.

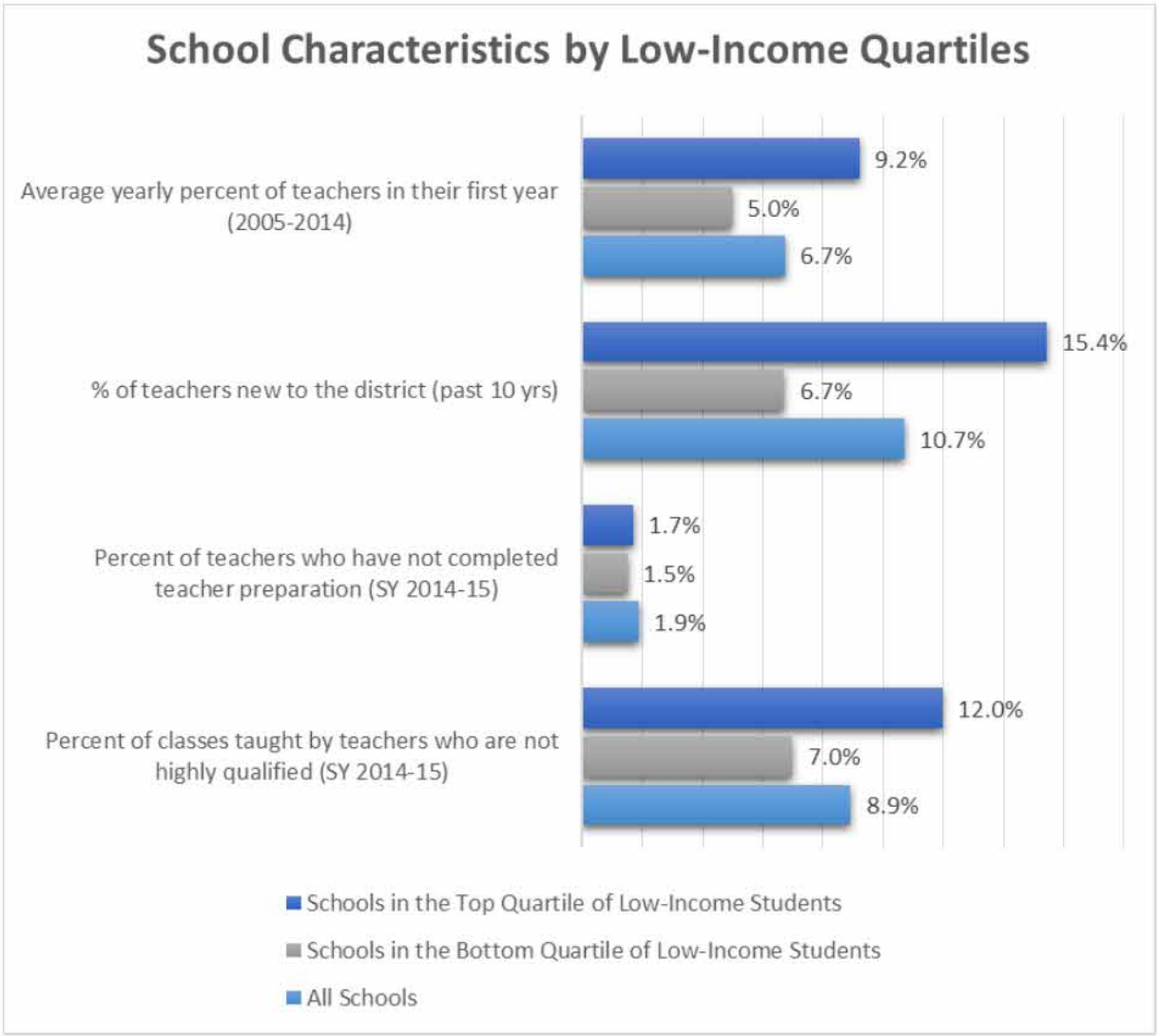
EED also examined student access to teachers who have completed all requirements of a teacher preparation program during the 2014-2015 school year and found that overall 98 percent of Alaska teachers have completed all the required preparation for the positions they hold. The proportion of teachers who have not met all requirements of their teacher preparation program is too small to provide a meaningful, more refined analysis.

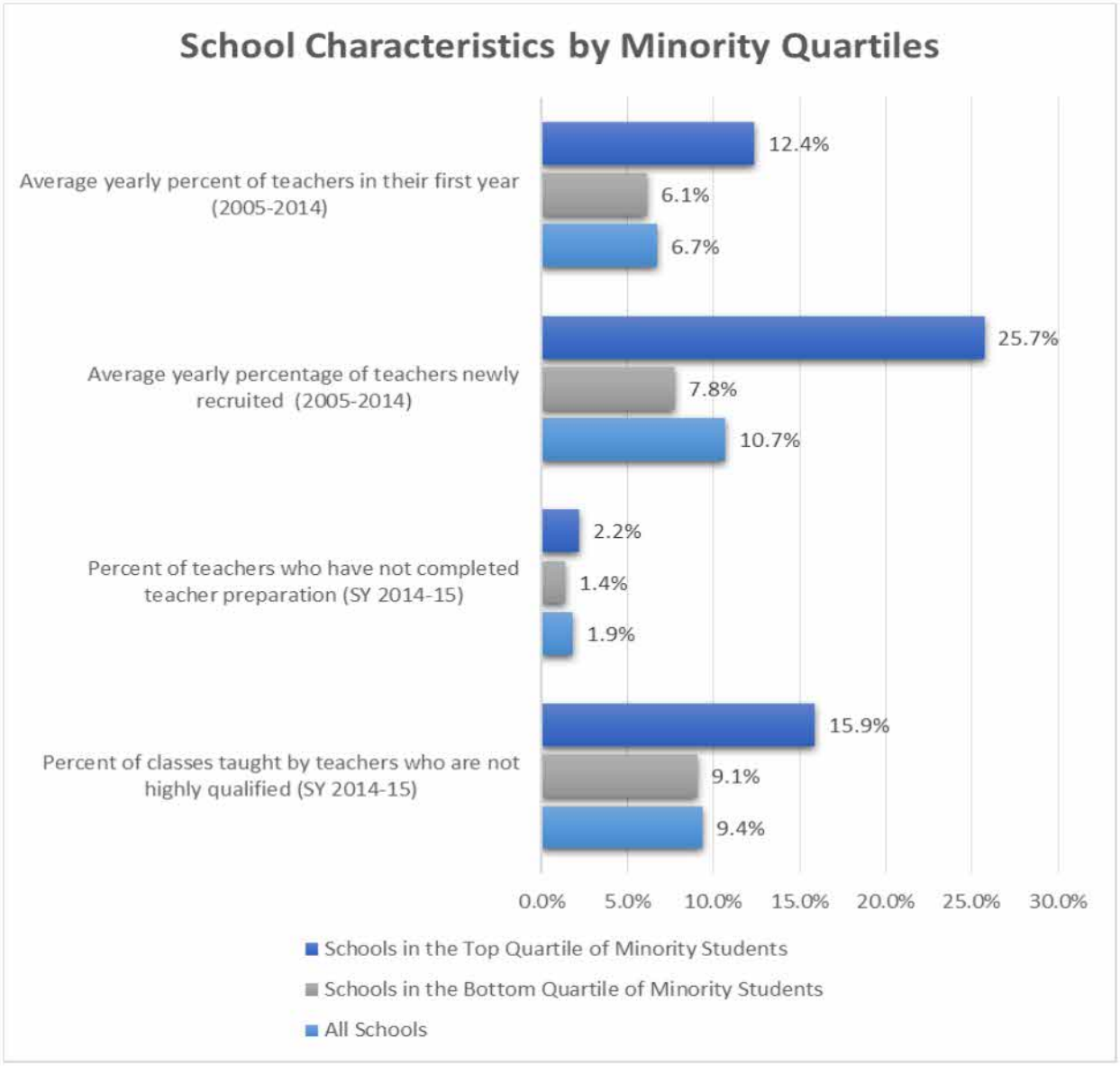
EED compared student access to core content area courses taught by HQTs. We found that schools with a higher percentage of minority and low-income students offered a higher percentage of courses taught by not HQTs than schools with a lower percentage of minority and low-income students. EED found the following gaps in student access to core courses taught by HQTs, by low-income and minority status – during the 2014-15 school year, students in the quartile of schools with the highest percentage of:

- Low-income students were 1.7 times more likely to be taught a core content course by a teacher who was not highly qualified than students in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of minority students.
- Minority students were 1.7 times more likely to be taught a core content course by a teacher who was not highly qualified than students in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of minority students.

In schools in the top quartile of low-income students, not HQTs taught 12.0 percent of courses, vs. 7.0 percent in the bottom quartile of low-income. A similar gap exists between the schools in the top quartile of minority students (15.9 percent) and schools in the bottom quartile of minority students (9.1 percent).

The following graphs summarize the percent of teachers who are in their first-year of teaching, teachers who are new to their district, teachers who are have not completed a teacher preparation program, and core courses taught by not HQTs in schools in the top and bottom quartiles of low-income students and top and bottom quartiles of minority students.





To further understand the characteristics of schools with inequities, EED investigated additional aspects of schools in the top and bottom quartiles of minority and low-income students.

Priority schools represent the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools, and target schools are the next 10 percent of Alaska's lowest performing Title I schools. Priority schools are required to implement a significant program of improvement. Focus schools are required to implement interventions to address their specific deficiencies. Both priority and focus schools receive additional support and oversight from EED through our State System of Support team.

Alaska schools in the top quartile of low-income students include all 11 of the 16 schools identified as priority schools and 20 of the 28 schools designated as focus schools. Schools in the top quartile of minority students include all 16 schools identified as priority schools and 24 of the 28 schools designated as focus schools. For both low income and minority students, the schools in the bottom quartile do not include any of the priority or focus schools.

The Alaska School Performance Index (ASPI) Rating ranks schools on a 100-point scale, based on student growth and proficiency on state assessments, attendance, high school graduation, and student performance on work-ready and college entrance exams. Based on a 100 point scale, schools receive a rating of one to five stars. Alaska's highest performing schools earn four and five stars. The schools in the top quartile of low-income students received lower ASPI ratings than the schools in the bottom quartile of low-income students, 2.8 stars on average verses 4.1 stars on average respectively. Comparing schools in the top and bottom quartiles of minority students, the schools in the top quartile have a significantly lower average ASPI rating than those in the bottom quartile (2.4 stars vs. 4.2 stars). The schools in the top quartile of minority are also on average ranked lower on the ASPI rating than the average of all Alaska schools (2.4 stars vs. 3.4 stars).

In addition to the high percent of first-year teachers (12.4%) and teachers new to the district (25.7%), the schools in the top quartile of minority students experience a high turnover rate in school leadership. The schools in the top quartile of low-income students have had on averaged 3.3 principals in the past 10 years while the schools in the bottom quartile have had on average 2.7 principals in the past 10 years. The schools in the bottom quartile of minority students have experienced 2.7 different principals on average from 2005 through 2014. During the same time period, schools in the top quartile of minority students have experienced 4.0 different principals on average.

While the schools in the top quartile for minority represent a quarter of the schools in Alaska, the schools in this quartile actually employ only 14% of the teachers in the state and provide 12% of the core classes offered across the state. Clearly, we have progress to make; however, we need to keep in mind that there are other characteristics of these schools that need to me considered as we move forward.

Tables one and two below provide a summary of other important attributes of schools in the top and bottom quartiles of minority and low-income students as well as a comparison to all schools in Alaska.

Table 1: Attributes of Schools in the Top and Bottom Quartile of Low-Income Students

	# of schools	# of Priority Schools	# of Focus Schools	Average ASPI Rating (One star=1, Five stars=5)	Average number of principals (2005-2014)	Total # of full-time teachers	Total # of core classes
Schools in the Top Quartile of Low-Income Students	123	11	20	2.8	3.3	1544	4172
Schools in the Bottom Quartile of Low-Income Students	125	0	0	4.1	2.7	2180	7330
All Schools[2]	495	16	28	3.5	3.2[3]	6988	20724

[2] Schools considered for the analysis of schools with low-income students only includes schools that have reported number of students and student income status. For the 2014-15 school years, twelve of the 507 Alaska schools did not report either number of students or student income status. This resulted in only 495 schools to be included in this analysis.

[3] 45 Alaska schools do not have full time principals. These schools were excluded from the calculation that determined the average number of principals in each quartile and overall.

Table 2: Attributes of Schools in the Top and Bottom Quartile of Minority Students

	# of schools	# of Priority Schools	# of Focus Schools	Average ASPI Rating (One star=1, Five stars=5)	Average number of principals (2005-2014)	Total # of full-time teachers	Total # of core classes
Schools in the Top Quartile of Minority Students	125	16	24	2.4	4.0	1010	2483
Schools in the Bottom Quartile of Minority Students	125	0	0	4.2	2.7	1579	5275
All Schools[4]	503	16	28	3.4	3.2[5]	7005	20885

One hundred seventy-five of Alaska's 507 schools are identified as either in the top quartile of low-income or minority students or both. These schools are housed in 29 of Alaska's 54 school districts. In order to further understand the information concerning these school, EED organized the schools in the top quartiles of both the low-income and minority students into one chart by school district. EED considered various data for the identified schools in each district including the ASPI rating, the number of priority and focus schools, the turn-over rate of principals and teachers, and the total number of teachers. Based on the analysis of all this information, EED will begin by targeting its efforts on the following 12 school districts:

Table 3: Targeted School Districts

Districts	Total # of Schools in District	School in Top Quartile of Low Income Students	Schools in the Top Quartile of Minority Students	Combined # of schools in either or both of the Top Quartiles
Bering Strait	15	15	13	15
Iditarod	8	5	5	5
Kashunamiut	1	1	1	1
Kuspuk	9	9	6	9
Lower Kuskokwim	28	15	25	25
Lower Yukon	10	9	10	10
North Slope	11	1	9	9
Northwest Arctic	13	0	11	11
Southwest Region	7	0	6	6
Yukon Flats	7	5	5	6
Yukon-Koyukuk	10	5	7	8
Yupiit	3	3	3	3

[4] Schools considered for the analysis of school with minority students only include schools that have reported number of students and student demographics. For the 2014-15 school year, four of the 507 Alaska schools did not report either number of students or student demographic information. This resulted in only 503 Alaska schools to be included in this analysis.

[5] 45 Alaska schools do not have full time principals. These schools were excluded from the calculation that determined the average number of principals in each quartile and overall.

EED considered the data in Table 4 to identify on which school districts to target during our initial work around equitable access to excellent teachers in Alaska.

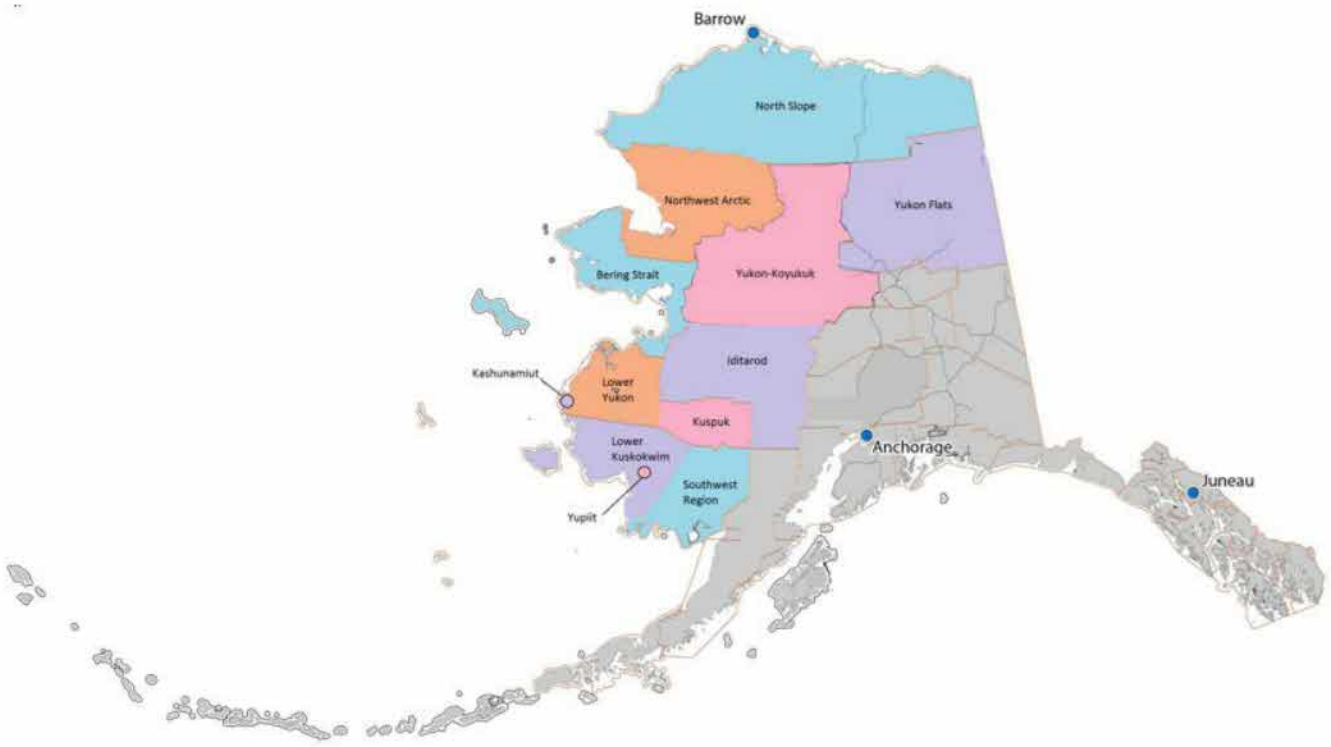
Table 4: Location of Schools in the Top Quartiles of Low-income and Minority Students

District					Schools in Top Quartiles of Low-Income and/or Minority Students*							
	Total Schools	Combined Number of Top Quartile Schools	Top Quartile of Minority Students	Top Quartile of Low Income Students	Number of Focus Schools	Number of Priority Schools	Average ASPI Rating	Average Number of Principals (Past 10 years)	Sum of Teachers FTE (Past 10yr)	Average Percentage of First-year teachers	Average Percentage of Teachers new to the district	Percentage of courses taught by NHQ teachers
Alaska Gateway	8	8	4	8	**2**	0	3.3	**3.0**	**342.9**	5.5%	21.1%	**50.7%**
Aleutian Region	2	1	1	1	0	0	3.0	0.0	23.2	4.3%	**31.4%**	**14.3%**
Anchorage	97	30	0	30	0	0	3.4	2.4	**10228.3**	7.0%	8.6%	5.4%
Annette Island	4	3	3	0	0	0	4.0	**3.7**	**304.8**	9.5%	21.8%	0.0%
Bering Strait	15	15	13	15	**4**	**1**	**2.7**	**4.1**	**1860.1**	**13.9%**	**26.0%**	**23.4%**
Chatham	5	2	1	2	0	0	**1.5**	2.5	102.9	5.8%	15.9%	0.0%
Hydaburg	2	1	0	1	0	0	3.0	**4.0**	96.6	6.2%	22.7%	2.6%
Iditarod	8	5	5	5	0	0	**2.8**	0.8	**169.8**	**10.7%**	**29.6%**	**50.0%**
Juneau	14	1	0	1	0	0	3.0	1.0	33.1	6.0%	14.5%	**22.2%**
Kashunamiut	1	1	1	1	0	**1**	**2.0**	**5.0**	**308.5**	**11.4%**	**25.3%**	0.0%
Kenai Peninsula	43	4	2	3	0	0	3.5	1.0	**267.1**	8.7%	20.1%	**17.6%**
Kodiak Island	14	3	3	0	0	0	3.3	1.0	107.9	3.7%	**25.7%**	**23.3%**
Kuspuk	9	9	6	9	**3**	0	**2.3**	**2.8**	**359.3**	8.6%	**24.8%**	**20.6%**
Lake and Peninsula	14	4	4	1	0	0	3.5	**4.0**	**170.5**	**14.0%**	**24.6%**	**36.4%**
Lower Kuskokwim	28	25	25	15	**4**	**9**	**2.1**	**3.8**	**2328.6**	**13.6%**	18.5%	**22.3%**
Lower Yukon	10	10	10	9	**5**	0	**2.2**	**5.6**	**1566.5**	**12.0%**	**24.8%**	6.9%
Nome	5	1	1	0	0	0	**1.0**	0.0	11.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
North Slope	11	9	9	1	0	0	**2.1**	**6.0**	**1478.9**	8.8%	**28.0%**	3.4%
Northwest Arctic	13	11	11	0	**1**	**3**	**2.2**	**4.5**	**1062.8**	**11.6%**	**25.6%**	**15.8%**
Pelican	1	1	0	1	0	0	3.0	1.0	17.8	0.0%	**53.9%**	**33.3%**
Pribilof	2	2	2	1	0	0	3.5	1.5	110.7	**16.1%**	**30.9%**	0.0%
Saint Mary's	1	1	1	1	0	0	3.0	1.0	150.7	**17.2%**	**29.8%**	0.0%

Southeast Island	10	2	1	2	0	0	**2.5**	0.5	15.7	**20.3%**	20.3%	**27.3%**
Southwest Region	7	6	6	0	**1**	0	**2.7**	**3.0**	**536.0**	**15.7%**	**29.4%**	6.3%
Tanana	1	1	1	1	0	0	3.0	**5.0**	51.5	**13.5%**	**38.2%**	0.0%
Yakutat	2	2	0	2	0	0	4.5	**3.0**	129.6	5.1%	9.2%	0.0%
Yukon Flats	7	6	5	5	**2**	0	**2.7**	1.0	**308.8**	7.2%	**30.1%**	6.3%
Yukon-Koyukuk	10	8	7	5	**2**	0	**2.4**	**3.4**	**411.5**	**12.5%**	**27.9%**	**33.7%**
Yupiit	3	3	3	3	**1**	**2**	**1.0**	**5.7**	**458.4**	**16.7%**	**35.9%**	**28.4%**
Grand Total	347	175	125	123	25	16	2.7	3.3	23013.0	9.7%	17.6%	12.0%

Numbers and percentages that are **bold** are of most urgent concern to EED.

The 12 targeted school districts where EED will focus its efforts are shown on the map below.



Initial Root Cause Analysis

Through the analysis of data, information gathered from our meetings and conversations with stakeholders, and various research studies, EED identified an initial picture of the challenges in Alaska. While part of our strategies will include working with districts to develop district specific root cause analysis, we anticipate our 12 targeted school districts will identify with the following roots causes. This list is not exhaustive and will serve as starting point of discussion:

- **Rural Challenges** — Our data shows that most of Alaska's schools in the top quartile of low-income students and all of our schools in the top quartile of minority students are located in Alaska's most remote rural communities. Turn-over here is one of the highest in the nation and is reflected in the percentage of first-year teachers and teachers-new-to-the-district in our data. The conditions in remote rural Alaska include shortage of adequate housing, high living costs, isolation, difficulties and cost of travel and limited access to medical care. In discussion with our stakeholder groups, these realities were frequently mentioned; however, they will not be changing anytime in the foreseeable future.
- **Supply of Excellent Educators** - While finding relief from those conditions described above are largely outside of the control of both EED and our districts, stakeholders frequently mentioned the need for more qualified applicants that are prepared for the unique teaching situations inherent in our remote rural schools. Teaching positions in these locations require teachers who are able to teach multi-grade classrooms in elementary settings and subjects beyond what they have been trained to teach in secondary settings. Finding teachers with the skill set, experience, and disposition to meet the need of our rural remote schools is a challenge for our human resource managers.
- **Retention of Excellent Educators** – Schools in the top quartile of low-income and minority students are replacing 15.4 and 25.7 percent on average of their teaching staff annually. While many of the reasons for this attrition are rooted in the challenges faced in our remote rural communities, stakeholders, recent research studies and our data suggest there are improvement of working conditions within the control of schools and districts to be made.

  Stakeholders cited lack of incentives for teachers in remote rural schools to stay. Teaching in Alaska no longer represents a significant economic advantages for teachers, in that Alaska's salaries and benefits no longer lead the nation.

  In spring 2013, CAEPR, in "While they stay, or will they go?" systematically analyzed a survey that asked teachers from rural Alaska their perception of their working conditions and the factors contributing to their decision to leave their school or stay. When comparing teachers who decided to leave their schools with those who stayed, the analysis showed higher levels of dissatisfaction around district and school leadership, student conduct, and parent/community relationships.

  In addition to high teacher turn-over, our data also shows high turn-over of school leadership in the schools in the top quartiles of low-income and minority students. While the data is not conclusive, the high leadership turn-over may be a contributing factor to the high rate of attrition of teachers within schools identified in the top quartiles.

Section 4: Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps

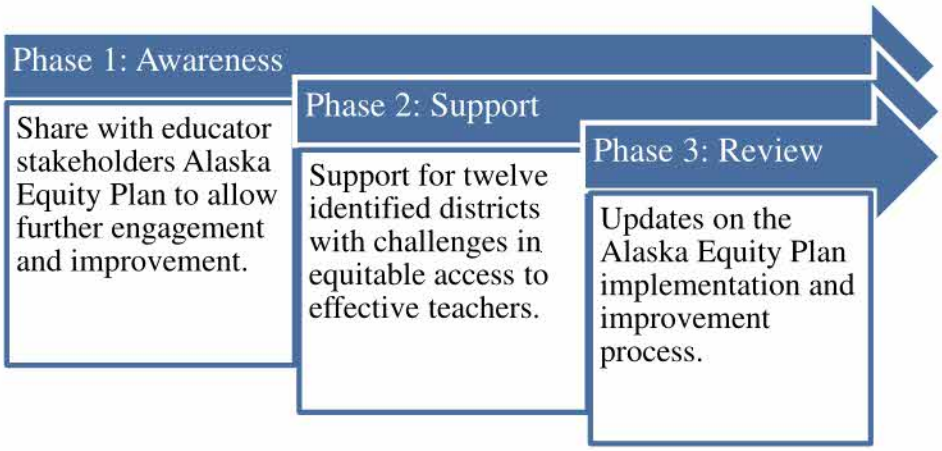
Alaska recognizes that ensuring students' equitable access to excellent teachers is a long-term issue, and achieving our teacher equity goals will require implementation of strategies in collaboration with our school districts. Alaska's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, therefore, is built on the following theory of action.

- ***If*** *a comprehensive approach to continuous improvement—in particular for low-income, high-minority, and high-need schools and districts targeted —is implemented systematically and its implementation is monitored and revised as data warrants,*

- ***Then*** *Alaska school districts will be better able to recruit, retain, and develop excellent teachers such that all students have equitable access to excellent teaching resulting in higher levels of college- and career-readiness for all students.*

Our theory of action is based on the following principles and key beliefs:

- Research shows that teachers have a greater impact on student achievement than any other in-school factor. Students in many of our high-needs schools and districts, do not have the same access to effective teaching as other students.
- There are a number of factors that impact a district's supply of effective teachers and students access to those teachers. To address these issues, EED needs to continue working with districts to improve talent management—recruitment, hiring, staffing, evaluation, development, and retention.
- Districts vary considerably in the set of talent management issues they face, and improving access to meaningful data will likely lead to improved district-level decision-making in this area.
- Our stakeholder engagement includes several phases: providing awareness to all districts and stakeholders, supporting twelve targeted districts to facilitate analyses and initiatives, and, finally, reviewing of our plan's progress with transparency and accountability.



Key Strategies

EED has identified four strategic areas: awareness of access to excellent teachers, preparation of teachers, recruitment of teachers, and support of teachers and leaders (retention). In Phase One, EED will begin by building awareness and providing opportunities for districts to collaborate with other districts across the state. The support phase will also provide opportunities for our target districts to further review their data and develop district specific root cause analysis.

EED will support all districts' ongoing efforts to recruit excellent teachers by providing opportunities for districts to learn best hiring and retention practices from each other. EED will encourage IHEs to introduce teachers and potential teachers to our remote rural schools, and supporting efforts to increase the number of locally-grown teachers, especially from the remote rural schools across our state. Finally, EED will continue to collaborate with other organizations interested in improving educator quality.

Increasing the number of qualified applicants is only half of the challenge; the other half is to identify those teachers that are most effective and then find strategies to extend those teachers' service in our remote rural schools. All 54 Alaska districts will begin the implementation of revised educator evaluation and support systems this fall. These newly revised systems will improve districts abilities to recognize their most effective teachers and provide more precise assistance to those teachers in need of additional support. EED will continue to monitor the implementation of districts' new systems and provide technical assistance as needed.

EED will continue to seek out and share strategies that have been demonstrated to improve teacher retention rates working collaboratively with our districts and other stakeholder groups. The following are key strategies that will be used by EED to increase equity across Alaska:

Awareness of Access to Excellent Teachers

- Presentations to Key Stakeholder Groups
- Ongoing Data Collection and Analysis including School District Equity Reports
- Review of Strategies and Sharing of Best Practices
- Support for our 12 Targeted School Districts

Preparation of Teachers

- Support of Alaska's Future Teacher of Alaska, Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaskan Schools and Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program
- Collaboration with Alaska Universities and Colleges on:
    - A Plan for Revitalizing Teacher Education in Alaska - UA
    - Expansion of student internships in remote rural schools
    - Alignment of Teacher Preparation Program with Educator Evaluation
    - Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

Recruitment of Teachers

- Identify and mitigate certification barriers that discourage teachers from out-of-state from relocating to Alaska to teach.
    - Adopt additional out-of-state and national exams that teachers can utilize to satisfy the basic competency exam requirement.
    - Develop timeline and plan to move from a paper-based application process to an online portal.
- Examine existing recruitment and hiring efforts for effectiveness
    - Alaska Teacher Placement
    - Teachers-Teachers portal
    - Facilitate sharing of district's best practices and strategies
- Collaboration with other organizations' efforts including
    - The Educator Quality and Quantity Project - CEAAC
    - The Partnership for Public Education

Support of Teachers and Leaders (Retention)

- Crosswalk of equity data with the Salary & Benefits Schedule and Teacher Tenure Study (CAEPR) to assist with the identification of current promising practices being utilized by Alaska districts. Organize and share this information with all districts in Alaska.
- Continued coordination with the Alaska State Mentor Project (ASMP), Alaska Administrative Coaching Project (AACP), and State System of Support (SSOS).
- Oversight of the districts' Educator Evaluation and Support systems implementation which incorporates the Cultural Standards for Educators.
- Collaboration with the Alaska Learning Network (AKLN) to provide students with expanded access to excellent teachers in remote rural areas through the Distance Delivery of Instruction.
- Expansion of ways to meet Alaska Studies and Multicultural Certification requirements to include work during the district cultural camps coordinated through the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative.

In Alaska, we rarely find success with a one-size-fits all approach with the diversity in our state. In establishing this plan to ensure equitable access to excellent educators for all students, we recognize the collaboration needed with our school districts. Specific challenges facing our districts vary throughout the state as do the root causes. Because of this variety, a critical role that the state can have is sharing of best practices and strategies for equitable distribution. Ongoing technical assistance will be provided to our twelve targeted districts to help them design their own strategies that fit their unique circumstances.

EED will utilize Title IIA funding to support statewide stakeholder engagement and to implement key strategies. EED will also use funds generated by certification fees to streamline certification processes. Districts will be encourage to leverage Title I and Title IIA funds to implement district specific strategies to increase equitable access for their students to excellent educators. Other funding sources will be sought to support both state and districts' efforts.

The core EED Equity Team, consisting of Teacher Certification and Education Administrator, Improving Teacher and Principal Quality Education Specialist, Assessment and Accountability Data Management Supervisor and Certified Staff Accounting Data Research Analyst, will meet annually to review updated state and district level equity data. The updated state and district level data will be shared annually with TLS division members and district stakeholders. State and School District Equity Reports, based on the annual Certified Staff Accounting Report, will be posted on EED website and shared in the EED and TLS newsletters, yearly.

The timelines and milestones for implementing the strategies and closing the equity gaps will be developed in collaboration with our stakeholders during phase one of our plan.

Section 5: Ongoing Monitoring and Support

Recognizing that doing this work well will take time, while also recognizing its urgency for the benefit of the students in our state, we believe this will involve a cyclical approach.

- Ongoing Data Collection and Analysis. If state and local data collection and analysis improves, then better informed data-driven decisions will be made. These data will constantly inform our collaborative efforts, so our approach can be adjusted as needed.
- Review of Strategies and Sharing of Best Practices. If strategies are reviewed and resources and lessons learned are shared with school districts throughout the state, then all school districts will have opportunities to improve talent management practices and, subsequently, address inequitable access to excellent teachers and improve student learning throughout the state.
- Targeted Support for Highest Poverty and Highest Minority Schools. Given our limited resources as a state, if focused, strategic support is provided to highest poverty and highest minority schools through the school districts in which they are located, then the greatest impact will be had on the distribution and effectiveness of educators and on student outcomes. The lessons learned from targeted supports will also influence our implementation of state-level strategies and our ongoing data collection and analysis

Districts are monitored on a five year cycle for ESEA Monitoring. Prior to the on-site, the consolidated application is reviewed which includes information on the needs identified for recruiting and retaining highly qualified and effective teachers and principals. The information from the desk audit will be available and both will be used to enable the state to determine what technical assistance to offer individual LEAs.

It is important to provide transparency at both the state and district levels. At the district level, our primary mechanism for continued awareness and monitoring will be through annual district equity data reports. As a short-term performance metrics these reports include data on the inexperienced and new to the district teachers updated on a yearly basis. At the state level, we anticipate continuing to provide stakeholder groups updated equity data, which will be used to evaluate the goals established through our fall stakeholder engagement activities. The Equity Plan Website will allow for even greater public awareness about our state progress in addressing issues of inequitable access as a long-term performance measure.

Phase I: Awareness

The Teacher Education and Certification team will providing outreach on, and dissemination of, the Alaska Equity Plan to educational stakeholders, including the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project, the Statewide System of Support coaches, the Education Certification Advisory Committee, Educator Evaluation and Support Advisory Committee, and EED's Teaching and Learning Support Education teams who liaison with school districts in a variety of Federal and State programs.

The awareness phase will continue to involve, presentations at meetings and a series of awareness webinars for key stakeholders including families and community members. A webpage with the State Equity Plan will be available to all community members, parents, school district personnel, teachers, and all other stakeholder groups. Awareness campaign steps include:

- Notification and updates in the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development's weekly newsletter, the Teaching and Learning Support monthly newsletter to school districts; and distribution of a State Equity Plan flyer which will include a webpage link;
- Presentations at the Annual Association of School Administrators/EED Summer Meeting in July 2015 and the Alaska Association of School Business Officials in December 2015;
- Technical assistance meeting or webinars for the Title II-A District Program Coordinators and the District Highly-Qualified Coordinators during September 2015;
- Fall meetings of the Alaska State Mentor Project; the State System of Support Coaches, Education Certification Advisory Committee and Educator Evaluation & Support Advisory Committees in August, October and November 2015 in Anchorage;
- Presentations as budget allows during the 2015-2016 school year at the Association of Alaska School Boards, Alaska Elementary and Secondary Principals Conference, Alaska PTA Conference, and the NEA-AK Delegate Assembly; and
- A webinar series will be provided as needed for school district leaders, principals, teachers, educational organizations, professional development providers, community members and parents that will be archived and retrievable on demand.

Phase II: Support

The Teacher Education and Certification team will coordinate with the other Teaching and Learning Support Education teams who liaison with school districts in a variety of Federal and State programs. During the summer of 2015, a plan to support the targeted school will be developed to minimize duplication of district planning efforts.

Phase III: Review

During summer of 2016, a TLS internal team will create an annual report on the equity plan progress. The report will review ESEA monitoring results, update implementation timeline for Year Two, and changes needed for the annual Certified Staff Accounting Data Collection.

Our detailed timeline uses our three identified phases (awareness, support, and review).

Alaska's Equity Plan Implementation Timeline

Timeframe	Key Activity	Stakeholders Involved	Organizer
Phase I: Awareness			
July 2015	Annual Association of School Administrators/ EED Summer Meeting	School District Superintendents	AASA and EED Commissioner's Office
August 2015	Provider's Conference	Alaska State Mentor Project and State System of Support Coaches	EED Instructional Support team
September 2015	EED Equity Webpage (if plan is approved)	EED Internal Team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
September 2015	Equity Meeting and/or Follow-up Webinar(s)	Title II-A District Coordinators *(see Appendix G)* and Highly-Qualified Contacts	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
October 2015	Education Certification Advisory Committee	Alaska's IHEs, School District and Education Organizations (*See Appendix C).*	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
October 2015	Fall Certified Staff Accounting Data Collection	All School Districts and EED TLS internal team	EED Assessment & Accountability
November 2015	Educator Evaluation & Support Advisory Committee	School Districts and expert advisors *(See Appendix D)*	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
November 2015	EED Desk Audit of Equity data	EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
December 2015	Alaska Association of School Business Officials	School Districts Human Resource and Business Managers	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
December–April 2016	ESEA Monitoring	13 Scheduled School Districts for 2015-16	EED ESEA team
Ongoing Fall 2015	Awareness Stakeholder Feedback Review	EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team

Ongoing	EED Equity Plan Updates Monthly	EED and TLS newsletter and website readers	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
Phase II: Focus			
January - March 2016	Support Conference for School Districts	12 Targeted School Districts	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
April 2016	ESEA Application Annual Workshop	All School Districts	EED Title IIA Program Manager
May 2016	Certified Staff Accounting Data Collection Updates	All School Districts	EED Assessment & Accountability
Ongoing Spring 2016	Focus Stakeholder Feedback Review	EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
Phase III: Monitor			
May - August 2016	ESEA Consolidated Application Review	All School Districts and EED ESEA team	ESEA team
June 2016	Review ESEA monitoring results	EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
June 2016	EED Review of Certified Staff Accounting Data	EED TLS internal team	EED Assessment & Accountability
June 2016	Update Implementation Timeline for Year Two	EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
July 2016	Annual report on Equity Plan progress	EED internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team
August 2016	Annual Certified Staff Accounting Data Collection updates	EED TLS internal team	EED Assessment & Accountability
September 2016	1st Educator Evaluation & Support Reporting	All School Districts and EED TLS internal team	EED Teacher Certification and Education team

Section 6: Conclusion

EED strongly supports the U.S. Department of Education's goal of ensuring that every student has equitable access to excellent educators and welcomes this opportunity to provide our plan for moving toward equitable access for all Alaska students. Our plan provides initial and ongoing outreach to stakeholders and includes specific state level actions that will increase awareness, provide support, and ensure regular review of low-income and minority students' equitable access to excellent teachers. As we continue to work with our twelve targeted districts and other stakeholders, our plan is designed to have the flexibility to evolve over time.

Appendices

A. SALARY & BENEFITS SCHEDULE AND TEACHER TENURE STUDY
B. A PLAN FOR REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION IN ALASKA
C. EDUCATION CERTIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
D. EDUCATOR EVALUATION & SUPPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
E. ALASKA EQUITY REPORTS & SURVEYS
F. EED TEACHING & LEARNING SUPPORT STAKEHOLDERS
G. TITLE II, PART A DISTRICT COORDINATORS
H. ALASKA TITLE I COMMITTEE OF PRACTITIONERS
I. ALASKA DISTRICT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

SALARY & BENEFITS SCHEDULE AND TEACHER TENURE STUDY

Project overview

House Bill 278, passed by the legislature in spring 2014, instructs the Department of Administration to "present to the legislature a written proposal for a salary and benefits schedule for school districts, including an evaluation of, and recommendations for, teacher tenure" (Sec. 52). The Department of Administration has contracted with CAEPR to develop:

1. **Salary & benefits schedule** for teachers and principals, including a review of current salary schedules, a profile of current benefits, geographic & job differentials, and identification of issues for consideration
2. **District profiles for other positions**, which will describe the complexity & diversity of district personnel, including the range of superintendent duties
3. **Recommendations for teacher tenure**, including a review of the current structure, a presentation of alternate models, and a review of the value of tenure to teachers as it affects the teacher labor market

CAEPR has operationalized these three responsibilities and action steps for each include:

Salary & benefits schedule for teachers & principals	District profiles for classified staff, related personnel & superintendents	Teacher tenure
• Describe different salary structure models • Inventory and describe benefits in different AK districts • Discuss how compensation structures attract teachers, retain teachers, and incentivize improvement • Explore types of pay differentials • Solicit stakeholder input • Develop schedule	• Inventory types of positions employed • Describe different approaches to filling positions, including recruitment, hire, and employment v. contract appointments • Tabulate FTEs in different job types • Describe superintendent roles, duties, hiring protocol, and compensation • Develop comprehensive profiles	• Describe tenure's historical context, structure in other states, and contemporary intent and impacts • Describe Alaska's tenure policy in print and in practice • Identify alternative tenure structures and their impacts, pros, and cons • Model the impact of tenure on the teacher labor market, including its impact on compensation and teacher turnover • Solicit stakeholder feedback • Make recommendations

Data collection & analysis

Data collection for this project will occur in four phases:

- The **literature review** will include comprehensive reviews of empirical studies, case law, other states' policies, and position papers from professional organizations.
- The **document review** phase will examine Alaska's policies and context, including collective bargaining agreements and job descriptions.
- A **review of existing data** will include the certified & classified staffing databases, as well as the statewide survey of teacher working conditions.
- **Collection of new data** will include data requests to district offices, surveys and interviews, and periods for stakeholder input.

Data analysis will use these data to define the labor market for Alaska teachers and principals, estimate job and community differentials, and triangulate these findings with stakeholder perspectives identified in the qualitative analysis.

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FAQs

Why is the state conducting this study?
The legislature is interested in exploring different models for setting salary and benefits. Preliminary stages of the project will include conversations with legislators who developed the bill to ensure that the research is responsive to their objectives.

Other state employees in Alaska use a common schedule; why are teachers different?
Teachers in Alaska are employed by their respective districts, rather than the state. Teachers negotiate contracts with over 50 different employers. In other states with common salary schedules, districts still negotiate with teacher organizations, but use the schedule as a common base.

What kinds of benefits are considered in compensation?
The project will review negotiated agreements for all aspects of monetary and non-monetary compensation. Health and retirement are the most common benefits; however the project will also look at travel allowances, housing (provided, cost-subsidized, or both), life insurance, tuition assistance and retention bonuses, as well as personal and sick leave (both the number of days and when they can be used) and contract days required.

How will CAEPR accomplish all of this in the given timeframe?
Though CAEPR will collect some new data, much of the information needed for analysis already exists in negotiated agreements, databases, and information collected as part of other studies. The CAEPR project engages a talented research team of 8 people who will use a well-organized timeline to meet the project deadlines.

Project stakeholders

- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
- Alaska Native education organizations
- Community members
- Education advocacy organizations
- Education-related professional organizations
- Legislators
- Not-for-profit education organizations
- Parent organizations
- Postsecondary Education Programs
- School board members
- School business officers
- School district employees
- State Board of Education
- Students
- Teacher unions
- Teachers

We seek stakeholder input; if you would like to participate, please contact Diane Hirshberg at dbhirshberg@alaska.edu

Is this study going to take away teacher tenure or limit districts' control?
This study will only make recommendations based on research findings. Decisions regarding policy are the responsibility of the state legislature. Other states that use a common salary schedule have addressed this issue in various ways depending on the legislative intent and constituent needs.

Will teacher salaries be published as part of the analysis?
The analysis will not publish individual teacher salaries. However, teachers' salaries are public record.

Why is the Department of Administration tasked with recommendations for teacher tenure?
The Department of Administration is responsible for negotiating state employee compensation, and tenure can be regarded as a benefit. Stakeholders including the Department of Education and Early Development will have input into teacher tenure recommendations.

What happens next?

CAEPR will begin data collection in January, present a draft report for public comment in May, and present a final report to the legislature on June 15. Actions and follow-up are the purview of the Alaska State Legislature and Governor.

For more information

Visit the Department of Administration has a website: http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/HB278SchoolStudy/

Visit the CAEPR website: http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/CAEPR/

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A PLAN FOR REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION IN ALASKA

UNIVERSITY of ALASKA

Many Traditions One Alaska

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Summary

The plan presented on the following pages is designed to achieve four broad goals, which address both program quality and the number of teachers produced for Alaska schools. We also plan changes to streamline the student experience and to deliver teacher education programs in a more cost-effective manner.

The goals of the **REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION IN ALASKA (RTEA)** plan are to:

1. **Improve the rigor and selectivity of UA teacher certification programs in order to meet new CAEP standards and place UA programs in the top one-third nationally by 2020.**
2. **Graduate 50% more teachers who have the certifications needed by Alaska's schools by 2025.**
3. **Partner with the State of Alaska and Alaska's school districts to reduce the average annual teacher turnover in rural districts to no more than 10% by 2025.**
4. **Collaborate across our three UA universities to eliminate administrative barriers to timely student completion and unnecessary duplication of effort by 2016.**

Our aim is to prepare culturally responsive teachers, who will share an enthusiasm for learning and deliver a rigorous curriculum that prepares students for their adult roles, for post-secondary education or apprenticeships, and for future workforce demands. This plan is a dynamic document; assessment and revision will continue with collaboration and feedback from our educational partners including superintendents and principals from across the 54 districts, our students, and our faculties, as well as the UA Board of Regents. Of key importance is the ongoing evaluation of the impact on enrollment and retention as a result of our implementation of this plan.

Introduction

The faculty and staff at UA's three universities have productive working relationships with schools, school districts, education leaders, and professional organizations across Alaska. Districts hire local teacher graduates, support student teachers, call on university personnel for professional development, and work together with the universities on assessments and on grant-funded projects that bring innovation to the classroom. Each of the three teacher preparation programs at the University of Alaska provides distinctive learning opportunities, and together they expand the range of course offerings and the modes of program delivery for both urban and rural students. All UA teacher preparation programs are CAEP/NCATE accredited; only 670 (28%) of the 2400 education programs in the nation have this quality endorsement. The programs graduate over 200 newly certified teachers each year, many of whom are employed in schools across Alaska.

However, it is clear that UA teacher education programs are not fully meeting the state need for teachers. Alaska continues to hire about 60 percent of its teachers from outside of the state.[1] Parents, students, political leaders, stakeholder groups, and the public have increasing expectations for teacher qualifications and performance. UA has responded to these concerns in *Shaping Alaska's Future,* Theme 2: Productive Partnerships with Alaska's Schools. UA has committed to achieving the following:

[1] Alexandra Hill and Dianne Hirshberg, Alaska Teacher Turnover, Supply, and Demand: 2013 Highlights, UAA Center for Alaska Education Policy Research. (Retrieved from http://www.alaskateacher.org/downloads/2013TeacherTurnover.pdf)

- High school graduation requirements and UA freshmen placement requirements are aligned across Alaska and postsecondary preparation pathways are clearly identified and communicated.
- The teacher retention rate in rural Alaska equals that in urban Alaska and is significantly improved by educating more Alaskan teachers.
- The college-going rate in Alaska, the proportion attending college in-state and the proportion entering postsecondary education immediately after graduating from high school are similar to other western states.

RTEA is designed to directly address teacher retention in rural Alaska, and by improving the quality of Alaska-prepared teachers, the actions described will also help to ensure that high school graduates are college and career ready, and that more students will choose college following high school.

High-quality teachers in our classrooms are essential to Alaska's continuing prosperity, but both national trends and Alaska's special challenges make attaining that objective difficult. Nationwide, enrolment in teacher education programs at public and private non-profit universities is plummeting, down 12% from 2010 to 2012. The reasons for this are not known for certain, but are thought to include relatively low pay for teachers and the increasing criticism of teachers and public education. In addition, recession-related teacher layoffs probably contributed.[2] Teacher education programs have received much of the blame for weak performance of U.S. students compared with those of other nations,[3] and many groups have proposed solutions for the very complex issues surrounding teacher education. In response, national accreditation standards are changing; new CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) standards will substantially increase admission standards for initial certification programs. The new accreditation will also require tracking and reporting the learning outcomes of P-12 students taught by program graduates. However, reforms that could be appropriate for other states are not necessarily right for Alaska. Alaska is vast and diverse, including nearly 250 communities, large and small. Our communities are enriched by Alaska Native and other cultures, but some struggle with poverty and limited infrastructure. Particular challenges for Alaska's teacher preparation programs are that the college-going rate of Alaska's high school graduates, 46% in 2010, is 49th in the nation, and that only 62% of Alaska's college-going high school graduates attend UA. Broad UA efforts to increase these percentages will assist the teacher preparation programs in meeting their enrollment goals.

Currently about 980 public school teachers (550 urban, 430 rural) are hired each year, but about 24% of those positions are filled by returning Alaska teachers (individuals who were not teaching the previous year, but had formerly taught in Alaska).[1] This means that there are about 750 slots filled by people who are new to teaching in Alaska, 120 by individuals newly certified in Alaska and 630 from outside Alaska. (Those individuals may either be new or experienced teachers). When the *Shaping Alaska's Future* effect of teacher turnover in rural districts being the same as that in urban districts is attained, the total new-to-Alaska-teaching hires per year would decrease to about 620, still far more than can be filled by the graduates of UA teacher preparation programs at their current enrollment levels. UA produces about 220 newly licensed graduates per year,[4] but some of these take teaching jobs outside Alaska or in private schools. A survey of recent UA graduates showed that, of the individuals not employed as

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[2] Rebecca Koenig. Education-Degree Programs, Once Popular, Take a Nosedive. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 19, 2014.

[3] Julie Greenberg, Arthur McKee and Kate Walsh. Teacher Prep Review: A Review of the Nation's Teacher Preparation Programs, National Council on Teacher Quality, December 2013. (Retrieved from http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Prep_Review_2013_Report)

[4] Alexandra Hill, Diane Hirshberg, Deborah E. Lo, Edward A. McLain, Allan Morotti. Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools 2013. (Retrieved from https://www.alaska.edu/files/shapingalaskasfuture/SB2412012-2013-.pdf)

teachers, the majority were either working as substitute teachers or in other education related jobs. Only 11% were working in a job outside of education, and 4% were not employed.[5] Of those without full-time teaching jobs, many still desired a teaching position, but were unable or unwilling to relocate from a particular urban area.

In line with *Shaping Alaska's Future* themes and in order to help meet Alaska's unique needs, the deans of the Schools and College of Education at the University of Alaska have worked with their faculty members to develop a plan that will meet some of Alaska's most pressing needs while continuing to improve the quality of teacher education in Alaska. The RTEA was crafted after listening carefully to the insights of superintendents, principals, teachers, graduates, current students, and state officials. It reflects discussions held at the Alaska Teacher Education Consortium, with Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) officials, longtime Alaska educators, and professional accreditors. The deans shared this plan with Alaska's superintendents on October 3, 2014, to generally positive response. The Universities will better serve school district needs by offering learning supports for students, expanding dual credit and enrichment options for learners, sharing jointly developed courses, curriculum and faculty resources to increase efficiency, and increasing rural placements for pre-service teachers. The Education deans also presented the draft plan at the October 20, 2014, State Principals' Conference. The presentation was well-received. Key points raised dealt with classroom management skills, the yearlong student teaching experience, and criteria for cooperating teachers[6]. Those in attendance liked the idea of an education continuum spanning P-16. The paraprofessional initiative and partnering with outside universities to attract more student teaching candidates to Alaska were endorsed.

If the RTEA is approved by the Board of Regents, there will be on-going assessment of implementation and attainment of objectives and goals. First, there will be an annual progress report to the Regents, delivered with the SB 241 "Alaska's Teachers for Alaska's Schools" report if that report is required in a given year. The report to the Regents will include the assessment information specified in the tables below. A summarized, public version of this report will be produced and distributed. The SB 241 report is prepared by the UAA Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR), and includes data on new teacher production and placement. Second, the education programs will be assessed by CAEP every seven years. In addition, UA deans and the UA Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research (VPAAR) and UA Associate Vice President for K-12 Outreach will obtain feedback from Alaska DEED and the State Board of Education during meetings of the Alaska Education Consortium; the VPAAR will facilitate to ensure that this group meets regularly (at least annually) to review progress, garner feedback, and consider innovative collaborations to improve P-12 learning outcomes.

In the expanded plan below, each goal is followed by more specific initiatives, a proposed timeline, the means of assessment, and identification of the resources that will be needed. The plan is ambitious and will tax already thin resources. Nonetheless, if we truly want to make a positive impact on Alaska's future, our resources can be no better spent than on helping to ensure high quality teachers for our children.

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[5]Donna Gale Shaw, Diane Hirshberg, and Alexandra Hill. Why Aren't They Teaching? A Study of Why Some University of Alaska Teacher Education Graduates Aren't In Classrooms (Policy Brief 1). UAA Center for Alaska Education Policy Research, Institute of Social and Economic Research. January 2013. (Retrieved from http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/CAEPR/home/docs/2013_01-WhyNotTeaching.pdf)

[6] A cooperating teacher is the classroom teacher who supervises and mentors the student teacher.

Goal 1: Improve the rigor and selectivity of UA teacher certification programs in order to meet new CAEP standards and place UA programs in the top one-third nationally by 2020.

The UA schools and college of education must address Alaska's critical need for teachers with guidelines and policies that will help to ensure that the teachers we are preparing are the teachers that our children deserve. The new CAEP accreditation standards are intended to improve the performance of program graduates, in part by increasing admission standards:

> New CAEP Standard 3.2. The provider sets admissions requirements, including CAEP minimum criteria or the state's minimum criteria, whichever are higher, and gathers data to monitor applicants and the selected pool of candidates. The provider ensures that the average grade point average of its accepted cohort of candidates meets or exceeds the CAEP minimum of 3.0, and the group average performance on nationally normed ability/achievement assessments such as ACT, SAT, or GRE:
> - is in the top 50 percent from 2016-2017;
> - is in the top 40 percent of the distribution from 2018-2019; and
> - is in the top 33 percent of the distribution by 2020.

Intermediate objectives in reaching **Goal 1** are described below.

- UA teacher certification programs continue to meet the stringent standards of CAEP, as well as those of the professional organization governing the content area for which they are preparing, e.g., the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) in the case of pre-service teachers preparing to teach math.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
CAEP and Special Program Accreditations renewed for each eligible program	2016 (UAF) 2017 (UAA, UAS)	Accreditation letters from CAEP

- The UA education deans will work with Alaska DEED staff to recommend more rigorous standards for teacher certification, aligned with new CAEP standards, to the State Board of Education and Early Development. Increased certification standards for teachers educated outside Alaska will also be recommended to DEED and the State Board. The education deans and UA Statewide Associate Vice President for K-12 Outreach will work with Alaska DEED and CAEP to establish a partnership agreement that maintains high standards for preparing educators and accommodates Alaska's unique needs.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
State Partnership Agreement between DEED and CAEP	2016	The partnership agreement

- UA universities adopt rigorous entry criteria for teacher certification programs, as required by CAEP and the partnership agreement.

Objective	Target Dates	Assessment for Regents
Establish minimum admission standards for teacher candidacy, including a requirement to submit a nationally normed test score[7]. Admitted students' group average scores will meet the CAEP standard.	2016 (top 50%) 2017 (top 40%) 2018 (top 33%)	Admission standard and mean scores of admitted students included in RTEA Annual Report.

- UA will ensure that teacher preparation program graduates are highly competitive candidates for teaching positions in Alaska. We will collaboratively develop coursework, experiences and assessments in areas that our colleagues in P-12, DEED, and district superintendents have identified as crucial to success e.g., reading, math and classroom management. The student teaching (clinical) experience is widely regarded as critical, and so standards will be raised and made uniform for all UA initial certification students. UA will work with

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents[8]
Reading and literacy courses, math methods courses, and instruction in classroom management are strengthened and aligned, so that all UA graduates have very strong preparation in these areas.	Fall 2015 for completion of curriculum revision. 2018 (approx.) for reporting P-12 student learning outcomes.	CAEPR survey of all teacher preparation program graduates (1st, 3rd, and 5th year after graduation) and their employers. Assessments of P-12 student learning outcomes for UA teacher graduates (new CAEP requirement) summarized in RTEA Annual Report when implemented.[9]
Collaboratively establish and implement new procedures and assessments for the student teaching experience, working with P-12 teachers and administrators and based upon Alaska Beginning Teacher Expectations. Includes policies for selection and compensation of cooperating teachers.[6]	Fall 2016	A statewide MOA approved by the 54 districts. CAEPR survey of principals and cooperating teachers.
UA graduates attain employment related to their degree or credential.	Reports begin in Fall 2015	UA teacher preparation program graduate employment by content area summarized in the RTEA Annual Report.

[7] Students seeking an undergraduate degree in education will continue to be admitted to the universities under existing baccalaureate admission standards, but will pursue a BA curriculum with introductory education courses until admitted to teacher candidacy.

[8] Assessments that are not conducted by the Schools and College of Education will be provided to the Board of Regents. In addition, the Education programs conduct thorough assessments of each student's learning and of each program's students learning, collectively, as required by CAEP. Regents are welcome to examine the internal program learning assessments.

[9] Alaska is a local control state and so the implementation of this assessment will be challenging, and will require the collaboration of DEED, the 54 school districts, and the Universities. The exact form this assessment will take is unknown at this time.

- UA teacher preparation programs attain national rankings in the upper one-third of all comparable programs. Note that national rankings are typically given only to the top few hundred programs, when the total number of initial certification programs nationally is 2400 according to NCTQ (National Council on Teacher Quality). Hence a national ranking of "100" is actually quite a favorable ranking. It is also important to understand that some national rankings are partly based upon state policies that UA does not control. The Education deans are actively working with Alaska DEED and the State Board of Education and Early Development to change these policies.[10]

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
National ranking of initial certification programs in the top one-third of all programs.	2020	Published rankings

Goal 2: Graduate 50% more teachers who have the certifications needed by Alaska's schools by 2025.

Alaska imports over 60% of the teachers hired each year. The RTEA will increase the number of teachers who begin a teaching career in Alaska, and who are likely to stay in Alaska long enough to have a positive impact on our students.

- Recruiting and better-preparing middle and high school students for the teaching profession, focusing on students in rural schools. In addition to increasing the number of Alaska-educated teachers overall, these academic development, mentoring and recruiting efforts will help to address the issue that half of Alaska students are ethnic minorities[11], while 90% of teachers are white[1].

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Future Educators of Alaska is active in every rural middle and high school. (*FY16 budget request*)	Fall 2016	FEA participation information by school in RTEA Annual Report
ANSEP collaborates with the education deans to incorporate STEM teaching as an additional career objective for middle and high school students and UA students. Advisors/mentors are hired at each UA campus to assist ANSEP students interested in STEM teaching. (*FY16 budget request*)	Fall 2016	ANSEP STEM teacher participation information in RTEA Annual Report
Five rural clinical educators (UA faculty), with teaching, mentoring, advising, and FEA leadership responsibilities. These will be based at rural campuses or Regional Training Centers and may be partly funded by external sources. *(FY17 budget request)*	2017	RTEA Annual Report

[10] The two main policies at issue are admissions assessment and content assessment. The Alaska state requirements for teacher certification currently specify Praxis I and Praxis II, respectively, for these candidate assessments. Praxis will not be accepted under the new CAEP standards, because it is not nationally normed and the passing scores are set by the state.

[11] Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. 2013. Assessment, Accountability, and Student Information: Statewide Enrollment by Ethnicity as of October 1 2013. (Retrieved from http://education.alaska.gov/stats/StatewidebyEthnicity/2014Statewide_Gr_X_Ethnicity.pdf)

Alaska's Learning Network (AKLN) provides high-quality college preparatory courses. Teacher education pathway for FEA-affiliated and other secondary students including high school, honors[12], AP, and dual credit college courses, available for advising. English 111 and Math 107 designed for dual credit available by distance.	Fall 2015 and ongoing	Course offerings and course enrollment statistics in RTEA Annual Report
Dual credit, distance delivered classes including ED 122, Introduction to Education; ED 193, Paraprofessional Training; SAT/ACT/PRAXIS test preparation. Enrollment of at least 100 students in ED courses by 2016.	Fall 2014 – Fall 2015 for the initial offerings	Course offerings and course enrollment statistics in RTEA Annual Report
The three Education units work collaboratively with recruiting and marketing staff to develop unified Education recruiting materials and approaches. Materials will focus on areas of highest need for teachers.	2015 and ongoing	Description in RTEA Annual Report, materials available on request.
UA provides information on the availability of teaching positions by level, content area, and location to both prospective and enrolled students, and encourages them to choose programs in areas of highest need.	2015 and ongoing	SB 241 report on by program enrollments
10% average annual increase in enrollment, until the overall target of a 50% enrollment increase system wide is reached. Students are retained and graduate at the current rates or better.	2017 to 2022	SB 241 report on enrollments and degree and certificate production.

- A rural teacher initiative that focuses on Alaska's many capable paraprofessional teachers, numbering about 1800 across the state. The need is for a culturally responsive and relevant program that is accessible to rural residents who work full-time or part-time. In addition UA needs to find ways to deliver the program in a cost-effective manner, since the paraprofessional certification initiatives already underway through UAA and UAF are costly. The initial focus is on paraprofessionals with at least 30 college-level credits completed. Paraprofessionals must be nominated by their superintendent to participate with school district support, which will include assignment of a mentor teacher. Other qualified rural residents (must have at least an associate degree and otherwise meet admission standards) will be welcome to enroll as well.

Objective	**Target Date**	**Assessment for Regents**
Collaborative programs in Elementary Education and Special Education, combining resources and capabilities of all three universities, distance delivered statewide.	Fall 2015	Approved program curriculum available on request, after May 2015
Financial support program available, combining state (*FY16 budget request*) and school district resources.	May 2015	Program financial awards reported in RTEA Annual Report
Enrollment of at least 30 additional rural paraprofessionals, beyond the number currently enrolled in teacher certification programs.	Fall 2016	Enrollment reported in RTEA Annual Report

[12] Honors courses are offered through AKLN and are intended to prepare students to take AP courses, i.e., they are more challenging that ordinary high school courses, but less advanced than AP courses.

10 paraprofessionals attain certification 10 (additional) paraprofessionals attain certification 10 (additional) paraprofessionals attain certification	2018 2019 2020	Graduates reported in RTEA Annual Report

Goal 3. Partner with the State of Alaska and Alaska's school districts to reduce the average annual teacher turnover in rural districts to no more than 10% by 2025.

Research has shown that Alaska-educated teachers are more likely to be retained[1]. Hence, all of the actions taken to reach **Goal 2** will also contribute to reaching **Goal 3**. In addition, the following will be implemented:

- Continue and expand the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) to serve all new and new-to-Alaska teachers in rural school districts whose students perform below the state median on standards-based assessments. The ASMP is managed by UA Statewide.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Expand ASMP to new and new-to-Alaska teachers in the 26 Alaska districts whose students perform below the state median on testing, plus all districts with teacher turnover in excess of 25% per year (three year average). *(FY 16 budget request)*	2015	Number of districts, schools, and teachers served and their characteristics as specified in the RTEA Annual Report

- Partnerships with high-quality, CAEP accredited schools and colleges of education in the Lower 48 so that preparation for a career in Alaska can begin early in a pre-service teacher preparation. These will be identified by collaborating with Alaska Teacher Placement and rural superintendents, to find programs that supply a substantial number of rural teachers.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Sign an MOU with 7 to 10 partner institutions.	2015 to 2016	RTEA Annual Report
Develop or adapt courses on Alaska studies, multicultural education, and English as a Second Language teaching for distance delivery to students at cooperating institutions, which will agree to accept the credits.	2016	RTEA Annual Report
An average of 30 students/year enroll in the courses.	2016 and beyond	Enrollment statistics in the RTEA Annual Report
An average of 15 graduates per year are hired by rural Alaska school districts.	2017 and beyond	Employment statistics in the RTEA Annual Report

- Enhanced curriculum and professional development courses to better prepare UA graduates and others to work in remote rural schools. The Alaska School Districts whose students perform at the lowest level on Standards-Based Assessment tests nearly all share the following characteristics: high teacher turnover, high proportion of low-income students, and high proportion of ESL learners[13]. ESL students are also numerous in some urban schools. UA education students will benefit from

[13] Alaska Department of Education and Early Development "Report Card to the Public" database (http://education.alaska.gov/reportcardtothepublic/)

courses on teaching ESL students. Rural teachers hired from outside Alaska will benefit from professional development or graduate-level courses on Alaska Native cultures and ESL teaching.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Collaboratively develop distance-delivered undergraduate, graduate, and professional development courses in ESL teaching for elementary teachers.	2016	RTEA Annual Report
At least 20% of UA elementary education students elect ESL teaching course.	Fall 2016 and beyond	Employment statistics in the RTEA Annual Report

- Providing resources that will lead to lifelong learning among our graduates and provide valuable assistance to all teachers.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
An online "teaching toolbox", indexed and cross-referenced, containing contributions from practicing teachers and university faculty.	Summer 2015 launch	Viewable by Regents at any time after launch.

Goal 4: Collaborate across our three UA universities to eliminate administrative barriers to timely student completion and unnecessary duplication of effort by 2016.

All UA education students should be able to take a course from any of the three universities and have it count toward the education credential that they are seeking. Although that is already the case for the most part, it is not as clear to students as it should be, and students don't always know about all of their options. Through collaboration, we can offer students choices in course format, the time of year the course is taken, and course content in the case of electives. By making all options clear we can facilitate degree completion in the best time frame for the student. This will better accommodate the needs of non-traditional learners, whose numbers have grown strongly in recent years, as well as traditional learners. Collaboration will improve access to courses and timely completion for a wide variety of programs, from initial certification to specialized endorsements in speech and language and pathology, counseling, and graduate studies in education, by using a variety of collaborative, distance, blended, and face-to-face learning options.

Faculty and deans will work together to:

- Align curriculum so that students in any program in the same level can move between campuses or take classes from another campus.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Any education course that meets a degree requirement for a program at one UA institution will meet a degree requirement for that program, at the same level of degree, at another UA institution.	Fall 2016	Course alignment tables available on request after May 2016, summarized in in RTEA Annual Report

- Collaboratively develop and publish a course sequence so that crucial courses are offered all year round and can be taken at any of the three campuses.

Objective	Target Date	Assessment for Regents
Published course sequences for all programs.	Fall 2016	Summarized in RTEA Annual Report

Conclusion

The Education deans and faculty believe that implementing RTEA will promote quality in line with state and national standards, increase the number of Alaska-educated teachers, improve retention of teachers in Alaska's school districts, increase efficiency within UA, and demonstrate responsiveness to budget realities. They also believe that the RTEA builds on what is already working: the highly productive relationships and partnerships with school districts and with communities that our three teacher education programs have created over time.

FY16 Budget Request Summary

Implementing the "Plan for Revitalizing Teacher Education in Alaska" requires a sustained investment in order to achieve identified outcomes. The FY16 operating budget request (summarized below) represents part of the needed resources; we anticipate an additional request, for rural clinical faculty, in FY17. Implementing RTEA also requires sustaining the current base of support. During FY14, expenditures for the UA education schools and college totaled about $14.6 million. Revenues included State general fund (45%), tuition and fees (36%), federal receipts (8%), and other miscellaneous sources (11%) such as restricted funds from state agencies, private gifts, and indirect cost recovery.

FY16 Operating Request: UA Teacher Recruitment, Preparation and Mentoring (**GF: $2,781.8, NGF: $278.1, Total: $3,059.9)**

- Increase the high school to educator pipeline by creating a cohort based Alaska Native Teacher Education Program (ANSEP STEM Teacher) that results in more Alaska Native certified teachers ($699.1 UAA) and expanding Future Educators of Alaska (FEA) to include more rural schools ($699.1 SW). FEA is an existing successful program that works to inspire and support Alaska Native K-12 students to pursue careers in the field of education and includes students interested in careers in elementary education and special education.
- Implement a program for well-prepared Alaskan education paraprofessionals to become certified teachers. ($483.6 Total; $104.1 UAA, $124.4 UAF, $104.1 UAS, and $151.0 SW)
- Improve the quality and collaboration of teacher preparation programs across the state, especially in preparation for new Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) requirements and in helping students improve mathematics and reading success. ($300.0 Total; $100.0 each UAA, UAF & UAS)
- Strengthen the Alaska Teacher Placement Program using data and analytical feedback to improve teacher placement. ($100.0 SW)
- Extend rural teacher mentoring to include vo-tech teachers, counselors and teachers with out-of-state teaching experience who are new to teaching in rural Alaska to reduce the turnover of new teachers and help them be effective faster. International (Finland) and national data credit these as being a major factor in teacher retention. ($500.0 SW)

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Aleutian Region	Chelsea Sternicki	Federal Programs Coordinator
Aleutian Region	Dennis Niedermeyer	Finance Analyst
Aleutians East	Doug Johnson	Technical Director
Aleutians East	Doug Conboy	Superintendent
Aleutians East	Mike Robbins	SERRC Education Specialist
Anchorage	Vernon Campbell	Exec. Director, ESEA Programs
Anchorage	Jennifer Knutson	Exec. Director, Professional Development
Anchorage	Michael Graham	Chief Academic Officer
Annette Island	Mike Robbins	SERRC Education Specialist
Annette Island	Eugene Avey	Superintendent
Bering Strait	Tammy Dodd	Federal Programs Coordinator
Bristol Bay	Stephanie Lott	Federal Programs Coordinator
Bristol Bay	Bill Hill	Superintendent
Chatham	Scott Butterfield	Superintendent
Chatham	Teri Derrick	Business Manager
Chugach	Debbie Treece	Federal Programs Coordinator
Copper River	Tammy Van Wyhe	Director of Teaching & Learning Support
Cordova City	Theresa Keel	Superintendent
Craig City	Jack Walsh	Superintendent
Craig City	Karen Cleary	Grants Administrator
Delta-Greely	Laural Jackson	Assistant Superintendent
Denali	Alesha Ferguson	District Title I
Denali	Lorrie Terry	Business Manager
Dillingham	William McLeod	Superintendent
Dillingham	Danny Frazier	Federal Programs Director
Dillingham	Robyn Chaney	Federal Programs & Grants Assistant
Fairbanks	Peggy Carlson	Executive Director/Curriculum & Instruction
Fairbanks	Heather Rauenhorst	Director of Grants/Special Projects
Galena	Tracy Culbert	Federal Programs Director
Haines	Ashley Sage	District Administrative Assistant
Haines	Cheryl Stickler	School Principal
Hoonah	Angie Lunda	Superintendent
Hydaburg	Priscilla Goulding	Grants/Federal Programs Manager
Juneau	Michael Grubbs	Human Resources Director/HQ Coordinator
Juneau	Cherish Hansen	Highly Qualified Certification Specialist
Juneau	Patty Newman	Director/Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
Juneau	Jemmalyn Gaceta	Staff Accountant
Juneau	Kimberly Homme	Federal Programs Coordinator
Kake	Kevin Shipley	Superintendent
Kenai Peninsula	Tim Vlasak	Director of Federal Programs
Kenai Peninsula	Christine Ermold	Director of EL Ed & PD
Ketchikan	Linda Hardin	Federal Programs Coordinator
Klawock	Rich Carlson	Superintendent
Kodiak Island	Sue Norton	Migrant Records Manager
Kodiak Island	Steve Doerksen	Director of Federal Programs/Assessment
Kuspuk	Brad Allen	Title I/Federal Programs

TITLE II, PART A DISTRICT COORDINATORS

District	Contact	Title
Lake and Peninsula	Rick Luthi	Federal Programs/Migrant Coordinator
Lower Kuskokwim	Gayle Miller	Director of Academic Programs
Lower Kuskokwim	Daniel Walker	Assistant Superintendent/Instructional Programs
Lower Kuskokwim	Angela Walker	NCLB Grant Specialist
Lower Kuskokwim	Carlton Kuhns	Assistant Superintendent/Personnel & Student Svcs
Lower Yukon	Brian Krosschell	Federal Programs Director
Mat-Su	Fran Jacobson	Professional Development Coordinator
Mat-Su	Marci Orth	Assistant Federal Programs Director
Mat-Su	Laurine Domke	Federal Programs Director
Mat-Su	Tracy Collum	Title I Coordinator
Mt Edgecumbe	Randy Hawk	Superintendent
Mt Edgecumbe	Bernie Gurule	Federal Programs Coordinator
Nenana	Sherilyn Carratini	K-12 Principal
Nenana	Eric Gebhart	Superintendent
Nenana	Carl Horn	Director of Finance
Nenana	Susan Kauffman	Administrative Assistant
Nome	Jon Berkeley	Federal Programs Director
North Slope	Janet Valentour	Director of Assessment and Accountability
North Slope	Elizabeth Parady	Assistant Superintendent
North Slope	Mike Robbins	SERRC Education Specialist
North Slope	Brian Freeman	Grants Coordinator
Northwest Arctic	LeeAnn Tyree	Director of State & Federal Programs
Pelican	David Spence	Superintendent
Petersburg	Robert Thomason	Superintendent
Pribilof	Connie Newman	Superintendent
Saint Mary's	Davey Shields	Business Manager
Saint Mary's	David Herbert	Superintendent
Saint Mary's	Julie Staley	SERRC Federal Programs Manager
Sitka	Sarah Ferrency	Federal Programs Coordinator
Skagway	Joshua Coughran	Superintendent
Skagway	Mike Robbins	SERRC Education Specialist
Skagway	Cindy O'Daniel	Business Manager
Southeast Island	Lucienne Smith	Business Manager
Southeast Island	Priscilla Goulding	Grants/Federal Programs Manager
Southwest Region	Steve Noonkesser	Director of Instruction/Information Systems
Southwest Region	Jon Clouse	Federal Program Director
Tanana	Therese Ashton	Superintendent
Unalaska	John Conwell	Superintendent
Valdez	Tristy Morrison	Federal Programs Coordinator
Wrangell	Richard Rhodes	Superintendent
Yakutat	Rod Schug	Superintendent
Yukon Flats	Tim Stathis	Federal Programs/Director of Curriculum & Instruct
Yukon-Koyukuk	Gina Hrinko	Assistant Superintendent
Yupiit	Diane George	Assistant Superintendent

EED TEACHING & LEARNING SUPPORT STAKEHOLDERS

Additional TLS team members

Margaret MacKinnon	Director	Assessment & Accountability	Margaret.mackinnon@alaska.gov	465-2970
Elizabeth Davis	Administrator	Assessment & Accountability	Elizabeth.davis@alaska.gov	465-8431
Bjorn Wolter	Education Specialist	Career and Technical Education	Bjorn.wolter@alaska.gov	465-6542
Sheila Box	Education Specialist	Career and Technical Education	Sheila.box@alaska.gov	465-8743
Felicia Swanson	Education Associate	Career and Technical Education	Felicia.swanson@alaska.gov	465-2980
Donald Enoch	Administrator	Special Education	Donald.enoch@alaska.gov	465-2972
Samuel Jordan	Administrator	Special Education	Samuel.jordan@alaska.gov	465-2824
Karen Melin	Administrator	Instructional Support	Karen.Melin@alaska.gov	465-6536
Deb Riddle	Education Specialist	Instructional Support – Math/Science Content	deborah.riddle@alaska.gov	465-3758
Anji Gallanos	Education Specialist	Instructional Support – Language Arts	anji.gallanos@alaska.gov	465-6416
Paul Prussing	Deputy Director	Teaching & Learning Support	Paul.prussing@alaska.gov	465-8721
Dr. Susan McCauley	Director	Teaching & Learning Support	susan.mccauley@alaska.gov	465-2830

Alaska Title I Committee of Practitioners
Regional Representation 2015

Region	Districts		Representative(s)/Role(s)
ANCHORAGE Number of Reps: 2	• Anchorage		• Vernon Campbell, ASD Director of Accountability (2016) • Lindsey Fees, ASD Title I Teacher (2015)
CTE REP Number of Reps: 1	• Saint Mary's		• Matt Hanson, Title I Voc Ed Teacher (2016)
INTERIOR Number of Reps: (2)	• Alaska Gateway • Denali • Delta Greely • Fairbanks • Galena	• Iditarod • Nenana • Tanana • Yukon Flats • Yukon/Koyukuk	• Helen Clark, FNSBSD Federal Programs (2017) • Craig Roach, AGSD Title I Principal (2015)
NORTHWEST Number of Reps: 1	• Bering Strait • North Slope	• Nome • NW Arctic	• Janet Valentour, NSBSD Federal Programs (2015)
PARENT REP Number of Reps: 1	• Anchorage		• Danny Andrews, Parent (2017)
PRIVATE SCHOOLS Number of Reps: 1	• Immaculate Conception School, Fairbanks		• Amanda Angaiak, Administrator (2017)
SOUTH CENTRAL Number of Reps: 2	• Chugach • Cordova • Kenai • Kodiak Island	• Copper River • Valdez • Mat-Su	• Christine Ermold, Kenai Director of Elem Ed (2017) • Carl Chamblee, Mat Su Federal Programs (2015)
SOUTHEAST Number of Reps: 2	• Annette Island • Chatham • Craig • Haines • Hoonah • Hydaburg • Juneau • Kake • Yakutat	• Ketchikan • Klawock • Mt. Edgecumbe • Pelican • Petersburg • SE Island • Sitka • Skagway • Wrangell	• Sarah Ferrency, Sitka Federal Programs (2017) • Lisa Worl, Juneau School Board Member (2016)
SOUTHWEST Number of Reps: 2	• Aleutians East • Aleutian Region • Bristol Bay • Dillingham • Kashunamiut • Kuspuk • Lake & Peninsula	• Lower Kuskokwim • Lower Yukon • St. Mary's • SW Region • Unalaska • Pribilof • Yupiit	• John Conwell, Unalaska Superintendent (2017) • Jon Clouse, SWRSD Federal Programs (2016)

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EDUCATOR EQUITY PROFILE – ALASKA DISTRICT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

District	Contact	Role	E-mail	Phone
Alaska Gateway	Scott McManus	Assistant Superintendent	smacmanus@agsd.us	883.5151 x 115
ASD	Vernon Campbell	Executive Director, ESEA Federal Programs	Campbell_Vernon@asdk12.org	742-4206
BSSD	Carl White	Special Assistant to the Superintendent	cwhite@bssd.org	
Iditarod	Woody Woodgate	Curriculum Director/CTE and Federal Programs Coordinators	wwoodgate@iditarodsd.org	524-1230
Kenai	Douglas Hayman	Principal, Tustumena Elementary School	DHayman@KPBSD.k12.ak.us	260-1371
Kodiak	Marilyn Davidson	Assistant Superintendent	mdavidson01@kibsd.org	481.6209
LKSD	Carlton Kuhns	Assistant Superintendent/Personnel and Student Services	carlton_kuhns@lksd.org	543-4886
Lower Yukon	Dan Walker	SSOS Coach	(b)(6)	362-7858
LPSD	Rick Luthi	Chief Operating Officer	(b)(6)	246-4280 Ext. 327
NWABSD	Cheryl Schweigert	Director, Special Programs	cschweigert@nwarctic.org	442-1815
SWRSD	Jon Clouse	Director of Federal & State Programs	jclouse@swrsd.org	842 8216
Yupiit	Bob Thompson	Managing Director, State System of Support Coaching Program	(b)(6)	745 - 2019