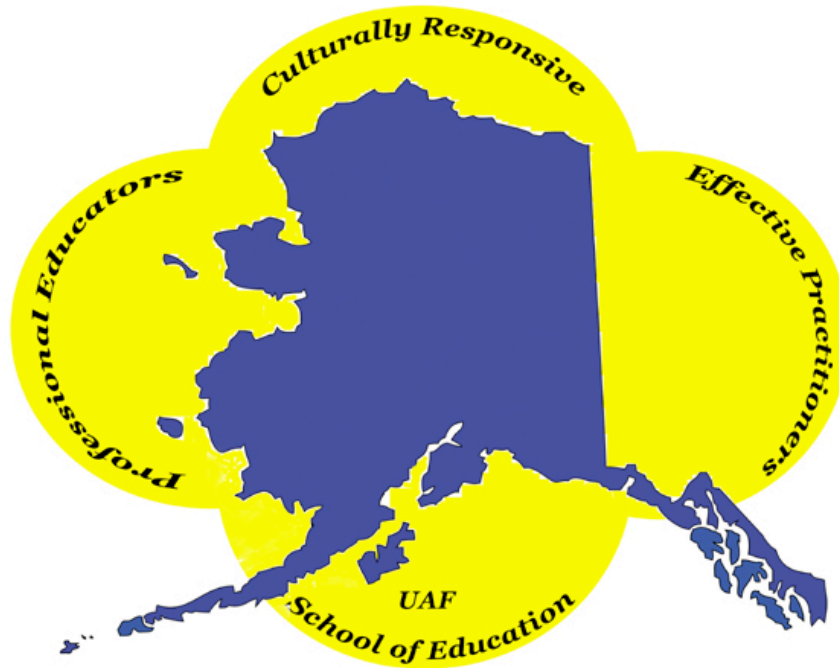


UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



REVISED 2009
EARLIER VERSIONS 2002 AND 2004



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Table of Contents

Conceptual Framework

University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education

1.0	Mission and Goals of the University of Alaska Fairbanks	3
2.0	The Alaska Education Context	4
3.0	Vision, Mission, and Goals of the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education	
3.1	Vision	8
3.2	Mission	8
3.3	Goals and Objectives	9
4.0	UAF School of Education Programs	10
4.1	Stages of an Educator's Professional Career	11
4.2	Overview of Programs and Graduates	12
4.3	Partnerships	13
5.0	Candidate Proficiencies	16
5.1	Candidate Proficiencies Correlated to State Standards	17
6.0	Overview of UAF School of Education Assessment System	22
7.0	Philosophy of the Faculty	23
7.1	Theoretical and Research Base	23
7.2	Contexts of Education in Alaska	30
7.3	Historical and Political Contexts	30
7.4	Cultural and Linguistic Contexts	33
7.5	Geographical and Technological Contexts	35
7.6	Conclusion	36
8.0	References	38

Mission and Goals of the University of Alaska Fairbanks

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is a multicampus institution with responsibility for providing a range of programs including public service, research and doctoral programs, liberal arts and professional undergraduate and graduate education, certificate and associate degree vocational education, and developmental and life-long learning to traditional as well as nontraditional students. UAF is a separately accredited major academic and administrative unit of the University of Alaska, the state's only publicly supported system of higher education. UAF is the only unit within the institution with a large number of rural campuses throughout the state and the only unit with responsibility to deliver programs and courses to off-campus place-bound rural students through distance delivery methods. The University of Alaska Fairbanks is committed to having a diverse student body, and it actively recruits and encourages the enrollment of underrepresented students from local, state, national, and international communities.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks recognizes as part of its mission the importance of providing an education to and for the Alaska Native population. This means that it must provide a curriculum that is meaningful to Alaska Native people and it requires that UAF deliver education to small populations of students in remote rural areas of the state.

Bearing in mind its history, current strengths, and responsibilities within the university system, UAF approved the following mission statement in June 2006:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks, the nation's northernmost Land, Sea, and Space Grant university and international research center, advances and disseminates knowledge through teaching, research, and public service with an emphasis on Alaska, the circumpolar North and their diverse peoples. UAF—America's Arctic University—promotes academic excellence, student success and lifelong learning.

UAF adopted its first strategic plan, *UAF 2000*, more than a decade ago and a second version, *Strategic Plan: UAF 2005*, was adopted in July 2001. The most current version, *Strategic Plan: UAF 2010*, was approved by the Board of Regents in 2008 and is posted on the UAF website (<http://www.uaf.edu/strategic/>). The report identifies six strategic pathways to guide the university toward its vision. These are paraphrased below. The specific goals attached to each pathway can be seen in the complete report.

1. Teaching and Learning for Student Success: Student success in higher education depends on both high quality faculty and students who are committed to the teaching and learning process, both in and out of the classroom.
2. Research and Scholarship: UAF will maintain international prominence in research and scholarship with emphasis on the circumpolar North, through its undergraduate and graduate programs, and through basic and applied research and research outreach

conducted by its faculty.

3. Enrollment and Retention: UAF focuses on recruiting and supporting students as they complete their undergraduate and graduate programs in a timely manner.
4. Community Engagement and Economic Development: UAF will strengthen its community engagement practices through outreach that engages public participation and community partnerships and responds to the needs of a contemporary society.
5. Advancement and Philanthropy: UAF will engage the public's support of the university through outreach efforts that increase additional philanthropy from private and corporate giving.
6. Faculty and Staff Development: UAF is dedicated to recruiting and retaining diverse faculty and staff who will fulfill its mission of excellence in teaching, research and service.

The Alaska Education Context

Because the mission of the School of Education is informed by the multiple contexts for which we prepare educators, this section briefly describes those contexts before presenting the mission and vision that derive from them.

Schooling in Alaska has a number of unique characteristics that make the preparation of educators challenging. Although Alaska is the state with the largest landmass, it is also the state with the lowest population density. The population is 670,053 people, including nearly 103,189 of aboriginal ancestry (U.S. Census Population Estimates, 2006) who collectively refer to themselves as Alaska Natives. The large majority of non-Native people are migrants from the Lower 48 states, and there are increasing numbers of Asian-Pacific Islander, South East Asian and Hispanic American immigrants moving to the state. With 20 distinct Alaska Native languages, several Asian and European languages, and American dialects from all regions of the United States, there is an unusual linguistic diversity for such a small population. Our urban schools are diverse, with as many as 44 languages spoken by students in Fairbanks and 92 languages spoken by students in Anchorage.

It is important to note that Alaska has the highest percentage and the sixth largest overall population of indigenous people in the United States. Alaska Natives/American Indians constitute 15.4% of the state's population, and 25.7% of its school population. Nearly 60% of Alaska Native students continue to attend school in rural and remote communities where K-12 school enrollments range from eight students with one teacher to 500 students with many teachers. The remaining 40% of Alaska Native students are in urban schools where the majority of the student enrollment is white.

There are 53 school districts in Alaska today. These are often described in three categories: (1) urban districts; (2) road system/marine highway districts; and (3) rural regional center and village districts. The urban districts include Anchorage, Fairbanks,

Juneau, and Matanuska-Susitna. The road system/marine highway districts include schools in communities accessible by car or ferry and are primarily non-Native, such as Kenai, Ketchikan, Sitka, and Tok. The regional center and village districts include larger rural communities such as Barrow, Bethel, Kotzebue, and Nome, where the population is 30 to 50% non-Native, and small villages typically ranging from 65 to 700 people, primarily Alaska Native residents.

Because of the small populations in villages, there are many small rural schools staffed by small numbers of teachers. Most of these schools have a K-12, multigraded organization and the number of teachers typically ranges from one to 10. In a few rural schools, instruction in the early years may be in one of the Alaska Native languages, such as Gwit'chin, Inupiaq, Siberian Yup'ik, or Central Yup'ik (Barnhardt, 2001). Table 1 below describes the ethnicity of students in Alaska's schools.

Table 1. Ethnicity of students in all Alaska school districts combined (State Report Card 2006-2007).

Ethnicity	Alaska Native or other Native American	Asian- Pacific Islander	African American	Hispan- ic	White	Ethnicity Mixed ¹	Total Number of Students
Percentage of Students	25.7%	6.4%	4.2%	4.1%	55.6%	4%	133,164

Table 2 below provides information on the ethnicity of students in the four urban areas of Alaska—the Anchorage Municipality (population 279,671), the Matanuska-Susitna Borough just north of Anchorage (population 86,754), the Fairbanks North Star Borough (population 82,840), and the Juneau Borough (population 30,737) (U. S. Census Population Estimates, 2006). Table 3 below provides data on the ethnicity of students in the non-urban school districts.

Table 2. Ethnicity of students in the Anchorage Municipality, Mat-Su Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and Juneau Borough, 2008-2009.

Ethnicity and Percentage of Students	Alaska Native or other Native American	Asian- Pacific Islander	African American	Hispanic	White	Ethnicity Mixed	Total Number of Students
Anchorage	9%	12%	6%	10%	50%	13%	49,674
Fairbanks	10.9%	3.4%	6.5%	6.9%	64.8%	7.5	14,305
Juneau	22%	7%	0%	9%	62%	Not reported	4,878
Mat-Su	12%	1.7%	1.2%	2.3%	83%	Not reported	15,747

Table 3. Ethnicity of students in the 48 non-urban school districts (Hill & Hirshberg (2006)).

Ethnicity	Alaska Native or other Native American	Asian- Pacific Islander	African American	Hispanic	White	Ethnicity Mixed ¹	Total Number of Students
Percentage of Students	54%	4%	1%	2%	38%	1%	38,455

The high-school dropout rate for Alaska Natives and other Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics continues to be much higher than for white students (Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2006-2007), and there is a significant achievement gap between Alaska Native and white students (EED, 2006-2007). Taken together, these data demonstrate the need for programs that prepare school personnel to respond to the concerns of Alaska's geographic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diverse communities.

In part because of the challenges of responding appropriately to this diversity, Alaska has long had a shortage of professional school staff, and the demand continues to be greater than Alaska universities can fill. According to Hill and Hirshberg (2005), over 1,000 educators are hired each year, (about 14% of the state's 8, 1000 teachers) and there are many positions that remain vacant at the beginning of each academic year. The majority of these vacancies are in the rural schools in the high need area of special education. In addition, rural schools typically experience a high rate of turnover of both teachers and administrators (Hill & Hirshberg, 2008). This has not changed much in recent years. Turnover among all Alaska teachers was about the same in 2007 as it had been in 1999, with about 14% leaving their school districts. In rural districts, that percentage was at least twice as high—about 22%, compared with 10% (p.1).

Table 4 below provides data on the numbers of new teachers hired in Alaska for the last three years 2006-2008.

Table 4. New teachers hired in Alaska for years 2006-2008.

New Hires	FY 08	FY 07	FY 06
New to state, already teachers	160	188	257
New teachers, already in AK	291	286	225
New to state and teaching	176	156	229
Totals	627	630	711

Hill and Hirshberg (2006) identify the following as major factors influencing the turnover rate primarily in Alaska's rural schools:

- Many schools in Alaska are in remote locations accessible only by plane or boat, so access can be both expensive and difficult.
- Housing availability and housing costs are often problematic and in some rural Alaskan communities, teacher housing lacks water and sewer hookups.
- Health care, shopping options, entertainment, and other "city" amenities can be quite limited.
- Teachers in rural schools are often required to teach multiple subjects across several grade levels. (p. 2).

In addition to the factors identified above, cultural differences can create difficulties, especially for those who come to Alaska from the "lower 48" states. Alaska is home to many Alaska Native cultures—each having distinct languages, belief systems, traditions, and cultural practices—and it can be difficult for non-Native educators to learn how to work effectively within Native communities.

The context of schooling in Alaska, described above, informs the core of the UAF School of Education mission, which is set within our overall responsibility to the state and to the districts in the UAF service area as well as throughout the state. These districts play critical partnership roles in the School of Education's (SOE) major mission. They provide professional educators who serve as adjunct faculty and program advisors. They host SOE interns in their schools, classrooms and counseling programs, and collaborate in professional development activities. The SOE, in turn, provides pre-service preparation and ongoing professional development for many of the districts' personnel.

Vision, Mission, and Goals of the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education

In the following section, we present the overall mission of the UAF School of Education, which derives from the contextual needs outlined above, after which we demonstrate how the specific elements of our programs flow from our mission.

Vision

The vision of schooling in Alaska shared by the faculty of the UAF School of Education is of schools that function as an integral part of the community; schools in which children, teachers, school administrators, school counselors, parents, elders, and other community members become interdependent. We share the vision that a highly qualified educator is one who not only has a deep understanding of academic and pedagogical knowledge, but also has a deep understanding of the cultural, environmental, and emotional context of the children for whom they share responsibility with the family and the community. We envision schools in which the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the professional school staff reflect the diversity of the students in the community.

Mission

We focus our vision of schooling in Alaska through our mission statement, which undergoes regular review and revision based on faculty consensus. In a series of meetings in 2000, 2001 and 2004, the faculty reviewed its mission in light of the revised mission of UAF and adopted the statement below. The faculty reviewed the mission statement again in 2007-2008, and agreed that this statement still represents the SOE's mission and did not revise it for this review period. It is stated as follows: *The Mission of the School of Education is to prepare professional educators who are culturally responsive, effective practitioners for Alaska's Schools*. Such educators have the following professional characteristics. They

- respond to the individual needs of the child,
- seek to develop the classroom as an inclusive community of learners,
- work collaboratively within the community of which the school is a part, and
- affirm the varied cultures and languages of Alaska's children.

We define the key terms in our mission statement as follows:

- **Professional:** Educators who are fully functioning members of the education profession, and who feel connected to that profession even before they exit our programs.
- **Culturally Responsive:** Educators who have an understanding of, and respect for, the children, families, and communities they serve as professionals. They respond to their communities in ways that demonstrate that the schools honor the communities' cultural and linguistic heritages and they participate in the schools and the communities in ways that are most likely to result in the personal and academic success of the communities' children.
- **Effective:** Educators who develop goals for themselves and their students, and who are able to demonstrate that they and their students have attained the

intended goals. We strive to help our candidates become professional educators who will have a lasting, positive impression upon the students, families, schools, and communities in which they serve.

Goals and Objectives

We situate our vision and mission in practice through goals and objectives, summarized in the following list.

1. Increase the number of qualified educators for Alaska's schools by:
 - providing licensure programs at undergraduate and graduate levels
 - providing education programs to place-bound students in rural Alaska
 - recruiting Alaska Native candidates
 - aligning programs with state and national standards and the candidate proficiencies identified in our Conceptual Framework
2. Enhance the professional skills of Alaska's K-12 educators and university faculty by:
 - providing professional development opportunities throughout their careers
 - providing graduate degree programs statewide
 - developing partnerships with public schools
3. Develop and support educational collaborations with Alaska schools and communities to:
 - respond to the needs and interests of youth, families, and communities
 - better serve Alaska's diverse populations
 - enhance learning opportunities for individuals with exceptionalities
4. Conduct collaborative research on cross-cultural and multicultural education to provide on-going support for
 - the quality of Alaska's K-12 schools
 - the preparation of educators who incorporate into the learning environment the varied cultures and languages of Alaska

In Table 5 we compare the objectives noted under each goal, above, to the strategic plan of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The purpose of the table is to demonstrate a clear synchrony between the goals of the university and commitments of the School of Education as expressed in our goals and objectives.

Table 5. Objectives of UAF School of Education correlated with the goals of *Strategic Plan: UAF 2010*

<i>Strategic Plan: UAF 2010</i> Goals	Objectives of the UAF School of Education
Teaching and Learning for Student Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Aligning programs with state and national standards and the candidate proficiencies identified in our Conceptual Framework * Providing professional development opportunities throughout their careers
Research and Scholarship	Conducting collaborative research on cross-cultural and multicultural education to provide on-going support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The quality of Alaska's K-12 schools * The curriculum of the UAF School of Education * The preparation of educators who incorporate into the learning environment the varied cultures and languages of Alaska.
Enrollment and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Providing licensure programs at undergraduate and graduate levels * Providing education programs to place-bound students in rural Alaska * Recruiting Alaska Native candidates * Providing graduate degree programs statewide
Community Engagement and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Developing partnerships with public schools * Responding to the needs and interests of youth, families, and communities * Better serving Alaska's diverse populations * Enhancing learning opportunities for individuals with exceptionalities
Advancement and Philanthropy	
Faculty and Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Providing professional development opportunities throughout their careers

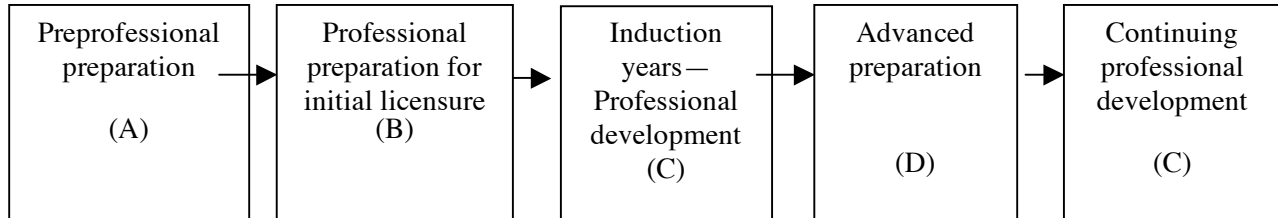
UAF School of Education Programs

Stages of an Educator's Professional Career

As discussed, the context of schooling as it exists in Alaska today and our vision of what it might become directly influence the design of our programs. In addition, we recognize that to become culturally responsive, effective practitioners, pre-professionals move

through a series of stages on their way to becoming effective practitioners. These stages appear in graphic form below.

Stages of an educator's professional career:



These stages can be identified and described in terms of SOE responsibilities at each stage.

- A. *Pre-professional preparation.* Pre-professional preparation of our candidates involves faculty from disciplines across the University of Alaska Fairbanks as a whole, especially faculty in the College of Liberal Arts; the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; and the College of Rural Alaska. It is the particular responsibility of the faculty of the School of Education to help candidates develop the pedagogical foundations needed to prepare them for their school internship experiences.
- B. *Professional preparation for initial licensure.* Candidates have a two-semester internship in a public school, during which time they develop close working relationships with their students, mentor teachers, and university supervisors, and become integrated into their school-wide communities.
- C. *Induction years—professional development.* Because Alaska is a small state where professional relationships tend to be close and enduring, SOE faculty have a long tradition of informally supporting graduates into their professional years.
- D. *Graduate Preparation.* Candidates attain advanced degrees through the Master of Education degree programs, including Counseling, Cross-cultural Education, Curriculum and Instruction and Language and Literacy.
- E. *Continuing professional development.* The School of Education engages teachers and other school personnel in continuing professional development through courses and workshops at the 500 level, which can be used for recency credits only (i.e., they cannot be used to meet degree requirements). In addition, graduate courses at the 600 level can be applied to a graduate degree and/or an advanced professional licensure program.

To summarize, the goals and objectives of the UAF School of Education derive from the context of schooling as it exists in Alaska today, our vision of what schooling *could* look like as the profession continues to mature within our multiple settings, and our understanding of the typical stages educators pass through on their way toward becoming culturally responsive, effective practitioners. Together, these inform our programs today and chart their development into the future.

The School of Education's Programs and Graduates

Prior multicultural experience, respect for diversity and experience in incorporating and using place-based, culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy in their teacher education courses are two of the “strongly preferred” characteristics built into many SOE staff and all SOE faculty position descriptions. The faculty and staff also know the impact that high teacher turnover has on students, families and communities and understand that both students and educators move frequently between rural and urban schools (Hill & Hirshberg, 2008). Thus, SOE personnel are committed to preparing K-12 educators for the range of schooling contexts in Alaska, as the license they receive is an Alaska license, not an urban or rural license.

Our programs are based on strong collaborative relationships with school districts in the UAF service area and throughout the state, and on a long history of delivering programs to off-campus students and interns. Our off-campus delivery models originated in 1970 in an attempt to recruit Alaska Native candidates, and aspects of those models (e.g., technologically mediated instruction, heavy use of practicum experiences, and place-based learning) have informed the learning experiences we provide to on-campus students, just as our more traditional delivery structures have informed our commitment to a common set of learning outcomes for all SOE graduates.

We currently offer a bachelor's degree for the preparation of elementary teachers, graduate level licensure programs for the preparation of both elementary and secondary teachers, and several Master of Education degree programs. These are available in Fairbanks and by distance delivery to students throughout the state. Our programs use a variety of instructional technologies and models of delivery that include weekly audio conferences, E-live, video conferencing, SKYPE, web-based instruction (including Blackboard and on-line portfolio systems), e-mail and phone communication, and on-site visits for supervision of interns and student teachers. In addition to facilitating communication among all program participants, these technologies model for our candidates some of the strategies they will use to become effective practitioners.

All of our programs include courses that focus directly on issues related to teaching responsively and effectively in a wide variety of cultural and linguistic contexts, with a focus on Alaska Native rural environments. Candidates learn to work in Alaska's diverse settings through a variety of specific requirements: undergraduate students complete multiple fieldwork requirements in different contexts; post-baccalaureate students are placed in schools that serve diverse student populations, and each spring they participate

in one-week practicum experiences in rural communities arranged in conjunction with the school districts.

Through a partnership with Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, we have been able to obtain district and school names and position descriptions for SOE graduates employed in Alaska, allowing us to create a School of Education FileMaker Pro database of 3,539 individuals who have completed our programs since 1976. These data reveal a steady history of preparing educators who have stayed and been successful in Alaska's schools.

Of the 3,539 individuals, 1,199 (39%) held professional positions in Alaska's schools in the 2008-09 academic year; specifically, these included 1,016 teachers, 55 school administrators, 17 curriculum specialists, 46 school counselors and 82 in other professional school positions. A high percentage of UAF education graduates obtain public school positions in Alaska and are far more likely to continue as Alaska educators over time.

Alaska employed 8,100 educators in the 2008-09 school year with the largest numbers of teachers in the three largest urban districts (Anchorage, Fairbanks and Matanuska/Susitna). During the 2008-09 school year, 500 out of 955 (52.35%) professional personnel employed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District had earned licensure, endorsements, or degrees through the UAF School of Education. They included 429 teachers, 30 counselors, and 16 building administrators, with the rest in other professional positions. It is interesting to note that although the UAF School of Education is located in Anchorage, Anchorage area students choose to come to UAF for their teacher preparation programs. In the Anchorage bowl area (i.e., Anchorage and Mat/Su districts), there were 230 UAF graduates employed in 2008-09. In addition, the rural Lower Kuskokwim School District employed 64 UAF graduates in 2008-09.

As a result of our long commitment to preparing culturally responsive, effective practitioners, and because of our focused recruitment and retention efforts, UAF continues to be a leader in the state in the preparation of rural and Alaska Native educators. The percent of SOE Alaska Native undergraduates nearly always equals or exceeds the 18% of Alaska Native residents among the state's population as a whole. Of the 392 Alaska Native candidates who have completed our programs since 1970, there were 204 Alaska Native UAF graduates employed in Alaska's public schools in 2008-09. Our 10 years of data provide strong evidence of the longevity of Alaska Native educators relative to educators from outside the state. In addition, we know through ongoing professional relationships that many Alaska Native educators who no longer work in public schools serve in other educational capacities, including several in higher education.

Partnerships

The University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education is involved in many partnerships. Those partnerships occur with individuals, within the unit, across campus

and across the state and with federal agencies such as the Office of Indian Education. Some of those partnerships are described below. It should be noted that these examples have been categorized to demonstrate various types of collaborations, but they are not mutually exclusive. For instance, workshops serve individual candidates but often are improved through intra-campus collaborations.

School and District Partnerships

School of Education faculty regularly participates in and supports Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) programs. For instance, faculty members serve as Site Leaders for Battle of the Books competitions and judge at science fairs and speech contests. Other faculty members coordinate Social Studies related events such as Project Citizen, History Day and We the People. In addition, the School of Education provides professional development for district teachers through presentations at seminars, district in-services, continuing education classes and at local education conferences; for example, the *FNSBSD-SOE Technology in Education Conference* in May 2008.

This spring 2009, two faculty members are presenting workshops in the *Writers Workout*, a series of Saturday workshops for teachers, which is sponsored by the National Writing Project and Alaska State Writing Consortium, and coordinated by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Yukon Koyukuk School District and the University of Alaska. Next October 2009, the Alaska State Literacy Conference is being hosted by the Alaska State Literacy Council and the Golden Heart Reading Council (Fairbanks), and the Fairbanks School District. One faculty is on the executive planning committee and other SOE faculty will present sessions at this conference.

The School of Education is also piloting a project, *Support Staff to Teachers Program*, to help district paraprofessionals become licensed teachers, and a faculty member is working with the FNSBSD to research high school dropout prevention.

Ongoing partnerships between the School of Education and school districts across the state are evidenced by placement of candidates in the schools to complete their fieldwork and internships. For instance, in 2007-08 and 2008-09, candidates were placed at schools across the FNSBSD, as well as in the Matanuska-Susitna, Lower Kuskokwim, Yupiit, Iditarod, Kuspuk, Bristol Bay, Bering Straits, Dillingham City, Kashunamiut, Lower Kuskokwim, Anchorage, Kuspuk, Bering Straits, and Tanana City school districts.

Intra-unit and Intra-campus Partnerships

The School of Education also works with academic programs across campus in efforts to provide exceptional learning opportunities for candidates. For instance, students who take courses at other UAF branch campuses are welcome to complete their internship year through the UAF campus. Additionally, a variety of services to support, advise and provide “Intensive Courses” for Alaska Native and rural students are provided by joint efforts of the SOE, the Interior Aleutian Campus, and the NW Campus and Bering Strait. Similarly, SOE collaborates with the Rural and Community Development program to promote the M.Ed. in Counseling degree for students in the program who want to continue their education. Further evidence of intra-campus partnerships are 1) faculty

joint appointments between SOE-College of Natural Science & Mathematics and SOE-Linguistics and 2) the specialty courses in other disciplines (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Geosciences, and Math) developed specifically for education majors. A new distance-delivered geography course, for off-campus students, is the latest example of a course that is the result of a partnership between SOE and the Geography Department.

School of Education faculty members also collaborate and support one another on research and publication projects. The UAF School of Education maintains a Faculty Research Fund and a faculty advisor board oversees it. Other research projects (e.g., “Teaching Alaskans, Sharing Knowledge,” “Math in a Cultural Context,” as well as other National Science Foundation grants) are the result of collaborations among faculty from the SOE and other departments.

Intercampus, State and National Partnerships

The UAF School of Education works cooperatively with candidates to help them be successful in their academic pursuits. To accomplish this goal, the Unit has full-time student advisors for the Elementary and Secondary Programs and a half-time advisor to assist the graduate students. Advisors help candidates navigate the initial, intermediate and final steps of their programs and assist them in finding courses that best meet their individual needs. These advisors also help students identify other opportunities, such as grant programs, available to them.

Some research efforts coming out of the unit are a result of inter-campus collaborations. For instance, there is a partnership in place with PIRE research from Berkley, CA, to conduct research with Alaska Native populations.

The Onward to Teaching Excellence (OTE) grant began in October 2003 and ended in April 2008. This grant offered financial aid to Alaska Native students pursuing teacher certification. The SOE collaborated with the Interior Aleutians Campus (IAC) in identifying students and assessing their educational and financial needs.

Similarly, the Native Teachers for Alaska (NTA) grant began in July 2004 and ended in July 2008. This grant focused on supporting Alaska Native education students. The grant also provided induction services to grantees that finished their degrees and began teaching. The induction services were intended to assist new teachers in achieving success in their new classrooms. One of the primary induction activities was a professional development workshop coordinated in May 2008, the *Native Teachers for Alaska Workshop*. Seven participants received full financial support to attend the workshop and received one professional development credit for their participation. Several intra-campus and community collaborations (including planners and presenters from the Association of Interior Native Educators, Effie Kokrine Charter School, Interior Aleutians Campus, Howard Luke’s Galee’ya Spirit Camp, Upward Bound Program, Future Teachers of Alaska, Athabascan Elders, School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, and the Institute of Arctic Biology) helped to make this event a success.

A federal grant from the Office of Indian Education entitled *The Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Project* (ANTPP) was awarded to the SOE in July 2008 and will run to July 2012. The purpose of the grant is to recruit Alaska /Native (AN) and American Indian (AI) individuals into the professional cadre of AN/AI educators and educational leaders who value each other as interdependent learners, teachers and mentors. The project goals include the following: (a) provide support and pre-service training to 27 qualified individuals so they will earn bachelor's degrees in education or bachelor's degrees in endorsable areas and full State teacher certification; (b) provide services to project completers that will successfully induct them into the teaching profession; and (c) increase by 27 the number of AN/AI teachers in schools with significant AN/AI student populations.

Furthermore, faculty members contribute to state and national projects/programs. For instance a faculty member serves as the liaison and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Alaska Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ACTM). Two faculty members serve on the Alaska State Writing Consortium steering committee. Other faculty members participate in Alaska Department of Education and Early Development working groups (i.e. for teacher preparation programs).

These and other partnerships demonstrate the importance the School of Education places on the lifelong learning of the candidates and the faculty. The Unit has a commitment to ongoing partnerships and scholarship that benefit teachers and students across the state.

Candidate Proficiencies

To define what our mission and goals should look like in practice, in 2003 the SOE developed a single set of candidate proficiencies for all our programs, including programs for initial and advanced teacher preparation and other school professionals. Our intent was to base the proficiencies on our School of Education mission statement (i.e., professional educators who are culturally responsive, effective practitioners), on the document *Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers for Alaska's Schools*, and national and state teaching standards.

Once our “in-house” proficiencies had been determined, the SOE faculty undertook a process of comparing, revising, aligning, and consolidating successive iterations of our candidate proficiencies to the Alaska Teacher Standards. Where there was direct alignment, we adopted the language of the Alaska Teacher Standards for our program assessment documents. In those instances where the wording of the Alaska Teacher Standards did *not* adequately incorporate the candidate proficiencies from our Conceptual Framework, we added specific items that we refer to as “UAF additional performances.” This process yielded our primary working document, which we refer to as the “Alaska and UAF School of Education Standards and Performances for Culturally Responsive, Effective Practitioners,” presented below as Table 6.

Table 6. Alaska and UAF School of Education Standards and Performances for Culturally Responsive, Effective Practitioners (merging the *Standards for Alaska's Teachers* with the proficiencies UAF expects its candidates to demonstrate).

1	<p>A teacher can describe the teacher's philosophy of education and demonstrate its relationship to the teacher's practice. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Engaging in thoughtful and critical examination of the teacher's practice with others, including describing the relationship of beliefs about learning, teaching, and assessment practice to current trends, strategies, and resources in the teaching profession. B. Demonstrating consistency between a teacher's beliefs and the teacher's practice. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demonstrating a willingness to take professional risks.</i> • <i>Demonstrating resiliency and flexibility.</i>
2	<p>A teacher understands how students learn and develop and applies that knowledge in the teacher's practice. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Accurately identifying and teaching to the developmental abilities of students. B. Applying learning theory in practice to accommodate differences in how students learn, including accommodating differences in student intelligence, perception, and cognitive style. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing opportunities for all individuals to learn, no matter their age, race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ability, or exceptionalities.</i> • <i>Assessing and teaching to individual learning preferences, interests, and ways of knowing.</i>
3	<p>A teacher teaches students with respect for their individual and cultural characteristics. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Incorporating characteristics of the student's and local community culture into instructional strategies that support student learning. B. Identifying and using instructional strategies and resources that are appropriate to the individual and special needs of students. C. Applying knowledge of Alaska history, geography, economics, governance, languages, traditional life cycles, and current issues to the selection of instructional strategies, materials, and resources. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demonstrating and promoting respect for cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity.</i> • <i>Supporting the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of rural and urban Alaskan communities in their professional lives.</i>
4	<p>A teacher knows the teacher's content area and how to teach it. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Demonstrating knowledge of academic structure of the teacher's content area, its tools of inquiry, central concepts, and connections to other domains of knowledge. B. Identifying the developmental stages by which learners gain mastery of the content area, applying appropriate strategies to assess the stage of learning of students in the subject, and applying appropriate strategies, including collaborating with others, to facilitate students' development. C. Drawing from a wide repertoire of strategies, including, where appropriate, instructional applications of technology, and adapting and applying these strategies within the instructional context. D. Connecting the content area to other content areas and to practical situations encountered outside the school. E. Staying current in the teacher's content area and demonstrating its relationship with and application to classroom activities, life, work, and community. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applying content within and across disciplines in culturally responsive ways.</i> • <i>Critically examining forms, uses, and accessibility of technology.</i> • <i>Demonstrating effective communication skills.</i> • <i>Providing opportunities for students to engage in higher order and critical thinking (i.e., reflection, inquiry, and problem solving).</i>

5	<p>A teacher facilitates, monitors, and assesses student learning. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Organizing and delivering instruction based on the characteristics of the students and the goals of the curriculum. B. Creating, selecting, adapting, and using a variety of instructional resources to facilitate curricular goals and student attainment of performance standards. C. Creating, selecting, adapting, and using a variety of assessment strategies that provide information about and reinforce student learning and that assist students in reflecting on their own progress. D. Organizing and maintaining records on students' learning and using a variety of methods to communicate student progress to students, parents, administrators, and other appropriate audiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflecting on information gained from assessment and adjusting teaching practice as appropriate to facilitate student progress toward learning and curricular goals. </p>
6	<p>A teacher creates and maintains a learning environment in which all students are actively engaged and contributing members. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Creating and maintaining a stimulating, inclusive, and safe learning community in which students take intellectual risks and work independently and collaboratively. B. Communicating high standards for student performance and clear expectations of what students will learn. C. Planning and using a variety of classroom management techniques to establish and maintain an environment in which all students are able to learn. D. Helping students understand their role in sharing responsibility for their learning. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Demonstrating personal responsibility for the individual's learning.</i> <i>Striving for equitable outcomes and success for every individual.</i> </p>
7	<p>A teacher works as a partner with parents, families, and the community. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Promoting and maintaining regular and meaningful communication between the classroom and students' families. B. Working with parents and families to support and promote student learning. C. Participating in school-wide efforts to communicate with the broader community and involving parents and families in student learning. D. Connecting, through instructional strategies, the school and classroom activities with students' homes and cultures, work places, and the community. E. Involving parents in setting and monitoring student learning goals. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Demonstrating respect for students, colleagues, and community members.</i> </p>
8	<p>A teacher participates in and contributes to the teaching profession. <i>Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include ...</i> A. Maintaining a high standard of professional ethics. B. Maintaining and updating knowledge of both the teacher's content area(s) and best teaching practices. C. Engaging in instructional development activities to improve the quality of or update classroom, school, or district programs. D. Communicating, working cooperatively, and developing professional relationships with colleagues. <i>UAF School of Education additional performances:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Recognizing the legal and ethical responsibilities of a culturally responsive practitioner.</i> <i>Incorporating technology effectively in professional settings.</i> <i>Demonstrating high motivation and commitment to the profession.</i> <i>Demonstrating intellectual curiosity and a commitment to ongoing professional development.</i> </p>

The mission, goals, standards, and assessment criteria summarized in Table 6 form the basis of the performance-based assessment systems in our programs.

Candidate proficiencies associated with diversity and technology

As is evident in Table 6, candidate proficiencies related to diversity are embedded in our programs. Table 7 below includes the proficiencies from Table 6 that specifically address candidate knowledge and understanding of diverse populations.

Table 7. Candidate proficiencies related to diversity

From Standard 2:

- Providing opportunities for all individuals to learn, no matter their age, race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ability, or exceptionalities.
- Assessing and teaching to individual learning preferences, interests, and ways of knowing.

From Standard 3:

- Incorporating characteristics of the student's and local community culture into instructional strategies that support student learning.
- Identifying and using instructional strategies and resources that are appropriate to the individual and special needs of students.
- Applying knowledge of Alaska history, geography, economics, governance, languages, traditional life cycles, and current issues to the selection of instructional strategies, materials, and resources.
- Demonstrating and promoting respect for cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity.
- Supporting the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of rural and urban Alaskan communities in their professional lives.

From Standard 4:

- Applying content within and across disciplines in culturally responsive ways.

From Standard 6:

- Demonstrating personal responsibility for the individual's learning.
- Striving for equitable outcomes and success for every individual.

From Standard 7:

- Connecting, through instructional strategies, the school and classroom activities with students' homes and cultures, work places, and the community.

The above proficiencies relating to diversity are assessed in various ways in all of our programs; initial, advanced and other school professionals. Individual programs have also developed program-level assessments of professional dispositions (referred to as Professional Characteristics Feedback Forms or PCFFs) that assess professional dispositions, including assessment of professional characteristics aligned with the candidate proficiencies related to diversity in Table 7.

After several years of work with our initial set of candidate proficiencies (Table 6), the SOE faculty determined that although technology instruction and use was certainly prevalent in all of our programs, our Alaska and UAF School of Education Standards did not adequately reflect our expectations for candidates relative to the use of technology both as professionals and with students. To address this shortcoming, the School of Education has developed a set of student technology outcomes based on the International Society for Technology in Education, National Educational Technology Standards for

Students and the National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers. These outcomes address the specific technology skills that initial teacher candidates are expected to have upon completing their programs. A summary of these proficiencies can be found in Table 8 below.

Table 8. UAF School of Education Technology Standards. (*Note: a complete list of expected candidate proficiencies relative to technology can be found at <http://www.uaf.edu/educ/technology/techcompetencies.html>*)

I. Management
Goal: Candidates will be able to manage technology resources in their classroom.
II. Instruction
Goal: Candidates will be able to use technology tools to implement instruction, create instructional materials, and assess student products.
III. Integration
Goal: Candidates will be able to make informed decisions about the place of technology in their classrooms.
IV: Professional Practice
Goal: Candidates will be able to use technology to enhance professional productivity, collaboration, and communication

The instruction and assessment of these technology standards has been infused into our initial teacher preparation programs.

In addition to the UAF institutional and Alaska state standards presented above, the SOE also aligns its educator preparation programs with the national standards established by the leading professional organizations such as the National Council of Teachers and Mathematics. Table 9 below shows how all of the SOE's Educator Preparation Standards align with the three levels of standards and how these interrelated standards provide a strong base for the implementation of our programs.

Table 9. Alignment of Educator Preparation Programs with Institutional, State and National Standards.

Program	Level	Degree	Institutional Standards	State Standards	National Standards
Elementary Education-Post Baccalaureate	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	Association of Childhood Education International
Elementary Education Undergraduate	Initial	Bachelors	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	Association of Childhood Education International
English / Language Arts Education	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	National Council of Teachers of English
Foreign Language Education	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages
Mathematics Education	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
Science Education	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	National Science Teachers Association
Social Studies Education	Initial	Post-Baccalaureate	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	National Council for the Social Studies
Reading Education Endorsement / Masters of Education (Admission was suspended in Spring 2009.)	Advanced	Masters	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	International Reading Association
Counseling	Advanced	Masters	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	Program is aligned with Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) Standards, but has not sought CACREP accreditation
Cross-Cultural Education; Curriculum & Instruction; Language & Literacy	Advanced	Masters	UAF/AK Teacher Standards	Alaska Teacher Standards	N/A

Overview of UAF School of Education Assessment System

The UAF School of Education employs a diverse yet cohesive array of assessment strategies to monitor applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, and competence of graduates, unit operations and program quality. Candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions prior to admission to teacher preparation programs, or to post-baccalaureate and guidance and counseling programs, are based on a systematic evaluation of the following: candidate GPA (both overall and relative to degree-related coursework); Praxis I and/or II scores or other professional licensure exams; an interview; admissions essay; resume and/or autobiography; letters of reference; evaluation of technology competence; and evidence of adequate communication skills. This collection of evidence is evaluated relative to the candidate's future ability to successfully meet the Alaska and UAF School of Education Standards and Performances for Culturally Responsive, Effective Practitioners.

Candidate proficiencies in all School of Education programs are evaluated relative to the Alaska and UAF School of Education Standards and Performances for Culturally Responsive, Effective Practitioners. These standards provide the foundation for successful completion of all of our programs, and individual program assessment systems have been developed with these standards as the foundation. This cohesive foundation ensures that all programs fundamentally adhere to the shared vision of our conceptual framework. Over the last six years, all of the programs have worked through a "backwards mapping" system to develop a program assessment system that meets the needs of their program and adheres to the shared standards of the School of Education.

Some programs chose to develop their own program-specific "performance standards" to articulate the expectations within the program relative to the overarching School of Education standards (e.g. elementary program "competencies"), while others used the School of Education standards as stated. Individual programs looked at the School of Education standards, and then looked at the current assessment strategies being employed to determine candidate proficiency, and aligned their assessments with the School of Education standards. Where there were "gaps" additional assessments were developed.

As a result of this gradual development of standards-based assessments, all UAF School of Education program graduates now have to demonstrate proficiency relative to a shared set of outcomes. All programs evaluate candidate proficiency at a minimum of three transition points (admissions, mid way, and at program completion), and all program assessment systems employ a variety of assessment strategies including the development and implementation of instructional materials, teacher work samples, evaluations of student work and documentation of impact on student learning, research projects, case studies, on-site evaluations by cooperating practitioners and fieldwork supervisors, etc. All programs place a high value on performance-based assessments in their overall assessment of candidate proficiency. The majority of performance-based tasks used to assess candidate proficiency are evaluated using analytic, task-specific rubrics.

A number of strategies are used to assess the competence of our graduates in the workplace following their completion of our programs. We have developed and disseminated a variety of surveys for graduates of our initial licensure programs, graduates of our M.Ed. programs, and for employers of our graduates (primarily Alaskan principals). We also systematically request feedback on program quality from the cooperating practitioners our candidates collaborate with in their fieldwork experiences.

While we have gathered some useful data as a result of these formal survey strategies, we have continued to find that our most valuable sources of feedback on what and how we are doing come in the form of informal conversations members of our faculty engage in on a regular basis with principals and educators around our state. We maintain positive and productive relationships with a good number of the 53 school districts in our state, and our distance-delivery options provide us with interns in communities throughout the state every year. We use these opportunities, as well as yearly statewide conferences and teacher job fairs, to communicate regularly with employers and to solicit feedback regarding the efficacy of our programs.

On-going assessment of unit operations is accomplished primarily through the collective review of a variety of annual or semi-annual reports that must be submitted to various organizations by both program heads and the Dean of the School of Education. These include yearly “outcomes-assessment” reports submitted to the provost for each program in the School of Education, annual AACTE PEDS reports, annual NCATE reports, SPA reports for individual programs, and a variety of unit-level operations reports prepared by and submitted by the Dean annually. Many of these reports are shared at either program level or department level faculty meetings and used to guide program and unit level decision-making.

Data listed above are systematically gathered and compiled using a variety of software applications, primarily Excel and FileMaker Pro. The relative small size of our cohorts allows us to keep track of our candidate and unit data without the use of a large database.

Philosophy of the Faculty

Theoretical and Research Base

The overall philosophical and theoretical base of the faculty aligns with Social Constructivism, which emphasizes the social, cultural and historical contexts as determinants in growth and learning (Vygotsky, 1978; 1981). Constructivist theory is based on the assumption that learners connect new knowledge to their existing ideas, and further develop and build their knowledge base through new learning experiences. Learners are active seekers of meaning, learn from hands-on experiences, and apply what is known to what is being constructed to make sense of the world (Piaget, 1971). Opportunities for engaging all students in the teaching and learning enterprise must be generated and reflect a belief in the wholeness, integrity and well being of all children with regard to age, race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, abilities and special needs. In addition, these opportunities must be prefaced with the belief that all children

come to school with language, culture and background experiences that form the foundation of their communicative competence in their homes and communities. It is the school's responsibility to build on these competencies and support the students' continued learning and development in ways that are culturally and socially compatible with the children's communities.

Vygotsky (1978) stated that the capacity to learn through instruction is a foundational feature of human intelligence and that both children and adults have a natural ability to learn and teach. When adults help children accomplish a task that they cannot do on their own they foster the development of knowledge and ability. The development of ways of reasoning and learning is a product of social interaction or scaffolding between the developing child and the adult. Thus, children's knowledge is the product of a collaborative and mediated construction of understanding between the child and a more expert member of the community/culture. Once this constructed learning is internalized, the learner can engage in and progress through the next zone of proximal development with the adult or a "more capable peer" (p. 86). When culturally responsive practices and curricula are used to support the social nature of learning, both the adults and children's learning is positively impacted.

Another aspect of the philosophical approach the faculty employ in the SOE's programs includes thinking about classrooms as communities with their own social organization, including roles, rules, behaviors, and discourses (Au, 2003, 2006; Cazden, 1988). Student-centered, inquiry-based collaborative learning is encouraged within these communities (Nieto, 1996). Collaboration means that each member of a partnership or group has something unique and valuable to contribute in order to solve a problem. When feasible, these collaborative projects should go beyond the classroom to include families and communities. In this model, the learners are apprentices, experimenters, inquirers, and action takers. The practitioner's role is to facilitate or scaffold the individual's and the group's learning processes and to coordinate learning with others. Throughout the process, students, teachers, counselors, families and communities construct knowledge together. In addition, authentic, hands on experiences and problem solving strategies that draw upon the "local environment, history and culture" are at the heart of learning for understanding and place-based learning (Boyer, 2006, p. 115).

Place-based education embodies an educational philosophy that encourages educators to link students to their local places—both natural environments and human communities—in order to learn fundamental concepts as well as to facilitate student and community well-being (Sobel, 2004; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000).

Place-based learning is rooted in what is local—the unique history, culture, environment, and economy of a particular place. The community provides a context for learning, student work focuses on community needs and interests, and community members serve as resources and partners in every aspect of teaching and learning. We have found that this local focus engages students academically, pairing real-world relevance with intellectual rigor, while promoting genuine

citizenship and preparing people to live well wherever they choose (Williams, 2003, p. i).

Sobel (2004) echoes this definition and adds, “Community vitality and environmental quality are improved through the active engagement of local citizens, community organizations, and environmental resources in the life of the school” (p. 7). Finally, in a foundational review of place-based education, Woodhouse and Knapp (2000) outline five characteristics of the approach, summarized as follows:

1. It emerges from the particular attributes of a place.
2. It is inherently multidisciplinary.
3. It is inherently experiential.
4. It is reflective of an educational philosophy that is broader than “learn to earn.”
5. It connects place with self and community. (p. 1)

Place-based educators advocate using place as much as possible to teach required formal educational standards regarding content and skills. This philosophy corresponds well to Native American and Alaska Native educational models, in which youth learn through holistic and practical experiences (Barnhardt, 2006, 2008; Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2004, 2005; Cajete, 1994, 1999; and Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999).

The site of Henry-Stone’s (2008) study, the Effie Kokrine Charter School in Fairbanks, was designed within a place-based philosophical and pedagogical framework. It opened in the fall of 2005 with a mission to

...provide educational opportunities for students to succeed in the world by developing a strong sense of purpose, identity, place and community through cultural and academic empowerment. The school provides students with an educational setting in which their assignments and assessments are project oriented, culturally responsive, place-based, and hands-on. The curriculum, based on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network SPIRAL: Spiral Pathway for Integrating Rural Alaska Learning, is organized around twelve three-week long themes: Exploring Horizons, Family, Cultural Expression, Tribe/Community, Language/Communication, Energy/Ecology, Health/Wellness, Living in Place, Outdoor Survival, ANCSA, Applied Technology, and Subsistence. Each theme is organized and implemented in a manner consistent with the Alaska Content and Performance Standards and the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. In addition, each theme is specifically linked to one or more of the standards noted above with the objective being that essential subject matter is taught in a relevant cultural context. The curriculum will reflect the seasonal cycles of the natural world and the cultural activities that occur during each cycle. In the Native culture, elders are the teachers and family is the focus. There will be extensive use of elders and other knowledgeable community members as learning resources. EKCS is designed to be a “school without walls” and teachers are

encouraged to use field trips and other learning resources to reflect and support the academic program as much as possible. (Meierotto, 2008, p. 18)

Several SOE faculty have collaborated with the Effie Korkrine Charter School. Various supervised field experiences for elementary and secondary education students take place there. Other faculty have been involved in curriculum design, and another serves on the school advisory board and played a crucial role in developing the school's overarching philosophy and curriculum.

The emphasis in recent years on whole group and ability-level instruction makes this approach more challenging to sustain and for new educators to see it in practice. However, the benefits of this kind of learning and pedagogy have been documented throughout the years, beginning with works by Dewey (1916), accounts of educators who practiced culturally responsive pedagogy long before it was accepted as a construct of education (Ashton-Warner, 1986), the groundbreaking research of the Kamehameha Project in Hawaii conducted through the 1980's (Au, 1993), and the continued development and dissemination of the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (2009).

Tightly woven into the constructs of place-based, student-centered learning, and learning as a social process is the equally important construct of culturally responsive education. This construct is grounded in the writings, theories, research and pedagogy of renowned scholars such as Au (1993, 2006); Banks, (2007); Gay (2000); Kawagley (2006); and Nieto (1996), and provides the basis for much of the research and instruction conducted by the SOE faculty. This construct is also central to the SOE vision and mission statements, as well as to the overall Conceptual Framework, illustrated in Figure 1.

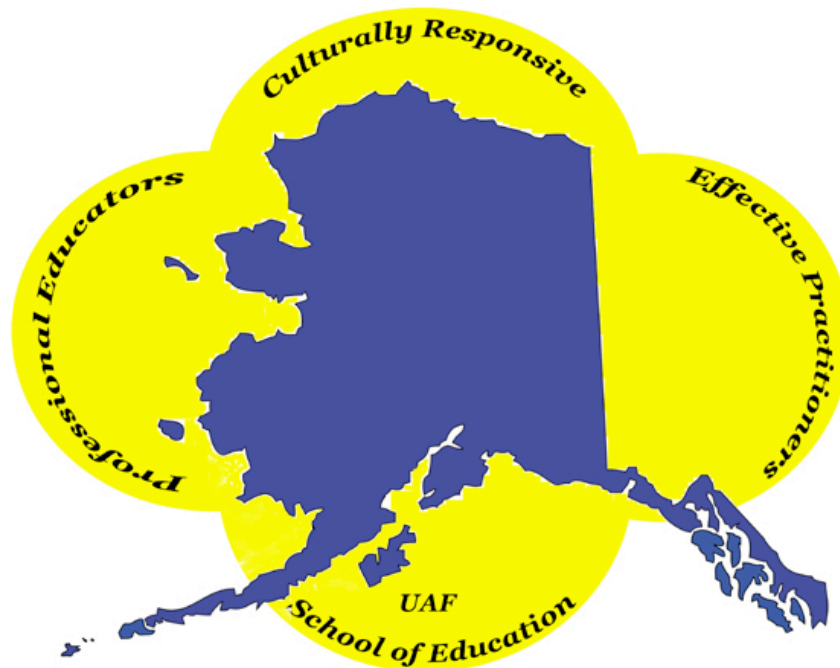


Figure 1. University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education Conceptual Framework

Application of Theory and Research

Courses required in all programs ensure that students in undergraduate/preservice education and graduate programs in education and counseling understand how the historical, political, economic, and social factors are interrelated and impact culturally responsive education and the issues of access and equity in Alaska's schools. In this spirit, the School of Education is committed to preparing and retaining the best possible K-12 educators for this far north, geographically culturally and linguistically diverse state. The key elements comprising the conceptual framework are defined and explicated in the following section.

Professional Educators are fully functioning members of the education profession who feel connected to that profession even before they exit our programs. To prepare teachers and counselors who are fully functioning members of the education profession, the School of Education emphasizes constructivist theories of learning, research in culturally responsive and effective education, and promotes the habit of lifelong learning. Pre-service teachers learn how to set up and manage a constructivist classroom. They learn how to plan experiential, inquiry-based lessons, ask open-ended questions fostering student-teacher interactions, organize cooperative learning projects, and utilize the state-of-the-art technologies provided by the university to enhance their lessons. The names and theories of Bruner (1966, 1987); Dewey (1916, 1983) Piaget (1971); and Vygotsky (1978, 1981) become familiar to them as the concepts are reinforced in courses

throughout the licensure and degree programs. How to apply these theories in practice is also demonstrated and emphasized in assignments such as research papers, lesson and unit planning, and teaching and counseling internships.

In the pre-service teacher education programs, the interns are required to do collaborative research on cross-cultural and culturally responsive education. Following the theory of John Dewey (1916), the faculty show the candidates how to use local community contexts, and issues as topics for their lessons. The focus on place-based education (Boyer, 2006; Henry Stone, 2008; Sobel, 2004), and Indigenous education (Adams, et al., 2005; Barnhardt, 2006, 2008; Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2004, 2005; Cajete, 1994, 1999; Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999; Lipka, et al., 2005; Parker-Webster, et al., 2005; and Rickard, 2005), provides the interns with resources and knowledge of Alaska through required research and speakers such as Reverend Dr. Michael J. Oleksa, a noted authority on cross-cultural education and a student of Native cultures, who has lived and worked in Alaska for over 30 years.

Similarly, students in the M. Ed graduate programs in education and counseling delve into the theory and research bases that support current practices and reflection in the specific areas of Cross-cultural Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Language and Literacy and Counseling. They complete projects designed for their classrooms, schools and community settings that emphasize strong theory and research-bases in culturally responsive curriculum, effective pedagogy and counseling practices. They complete research-based fieldwork (resulting in either a thesis or a project) and/or clinical internship requirements that provide opportunities, for example, to design and implement formative and summative assessments, new content-based curricula or counseling programs, and professional development workshops for colleagues, parents and the community.

Culturally Responsive Educators have an understanding of and respect for the children, families, and communities they serve as professionals. They adopt educational approaches that take into account students' cultural backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, contexts and languages. They know how to demonstrate the ways in which their schools honor the communities' cultural and linguistic heritages, and integrate these traditions into the schools in ways that result in the personal and academic success of the community's children. New and practicing teachers and counselors in rural and urban classrooms throughout the nation are charged with becoming culturally responsive and effective educators.

There are a number of definitions of culturally responsive education that describe a new and fresh vision of transformative curricula and practices that critically address detrimental past and current practices (discrimination, inequity, and limited access to resources) still found in many of today's schools. Au (1993) defines culturally responsive instruction as "consistent with the values of students' own cultures and aimed at improving academic learning" (p. 13). Au (2006) expands her definition of culturally responsive education with the explicit descriptors below:

1. Culturally responsive instruction resides firmly within a pluralistic vision of society;
2. Culturally responsive instruction aims at school success for student of diverse backgrounds, acknowledging that a disproportionate number of these students typically experience failure in school;
3. Culturally responsive instruction seeks to build bridges between students' experiences at home and at school;
4. Culturally responsive instruction supports students in building or at least maintaining their competence in the home culture and language—these are valued for their own sake (p. 114).

Materials based on multicultural education (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2000; Vavrus, 2002) and culturally responsive content and curricula (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2009; Harris, 1992, 1998; and Seale and Slapin, 1999, 2006), have been developed with regard to teaching specific cultural groups and expanding the awareness and practice of both insiders and outsiders of the groups. The Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools (1998) were developed by Alaska Native educators and elders in order “to provide guidelines or touchstones against which schools and communities can examine what they are doing to attend to the cultural well-being of the young people they are responsible for nurturing to adulthood” (p. 3). These standards were also developed to highlight the diversity of Alaska Native cultures and the diversity throughout the state,

because they focus curricular attention on in-depth study of the surrounding physical and cultural environments in which the school is situated, while recognizing the unique contribution that indigenous people can make to such study as long-term inhabitants who have accumulated extensive specialized knowledge related to that environment. (p. 3)

In addition, the Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers (1999) were developed along with several other sets of guidelines that highlight the preparation of administrators, school boards, and other school personnel that work for the health and well being of Alaska Native students and communities throughout the state. Specifically, the Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers,

address issues of concern in the preparation of teachers who will be expected to teach students from diverse backgrounds in a culturally responsive and educationally healthy way. Special attention is given to the preparation of Native and non-Native teachers for small rural schools in Alaska. The guidelines are presented as they relate to each of the Alaska Teacher Standards, taking into consideration the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and the Alaska Student Content Standards (p. 2).

Research has established that culturally responsive education provides a strong base for academic success for historically marginalized and underrepresented groups (Au, 1993, 2006; Delpit, 1995, 2002; Heath, 1983; and Purcell-Gates, 1997). Research regarding

how language, literacy and socio-economic status play out in terms of resources and access to quality schools, educators, curricula and materials (McCarty et al., 2005) also contribute to the theoretical and research framework that faculty draw upon for their classes. Such resources provide our students with a strong base from which to further develop their awareness and understandings of what it means to be culturally responsive educators in rural and urban Alaskan settings as well as those outside the state. While the mission of the School of Education is to prepare professionals for Alaska, the faculty members are also aware that some candidates may teach and practice in classrooms, schools and communities in other states or in other countries. Therefore, the SOE programs prepare students to serve as educators and counselors in a variety of contexts and locations.

Effective Practitioners develop goals for themselves and their students, and are able to demonstrate that they and their students have attained the intended goals. We strive to help our students become professional educators who will have a lasting and positive impression upon the children, youth, families, schools and communities in which they serve.

The teachers of today and the near future are at the forefront of a new kind of education, one supported by technology and open to the changing demographics of American society and a global community. The SOE faculty emphasizes that teachers and counselors promote the concept of life-long learning via assignments that require ongoing reflection and identification of areas for future professional development. The faculty encourages candidates' inquiry into current educational and content-area questions in their local communities. They also encourage candidates' genuine enthusiasm for working with and facilitating students' learning, and emphasize the importance of applying academically sound, research-based and culturally responsive practices.

Once candidates complete their respective programs and earn teaching or counseling licenses, endorsements and/or master's degrees, they are considered professional educators. They have studied and applied the theories of development and learning in their practice and they have had first-hand experience in cross-cultural and diverse educational and/or counseling contexts. They are prepared to be effective practitioners in the unique Alaskan environment, and to continue developing their knowledge, skills and experiences, in ways that make them life-long learners and professionals.

In addition to preparing the SOE's candidates for today's educational contexts, the unit provides on-going professional development opportunities for practitioners who also face rapid change in their classrooms, schools, districts and communities. Courses at the 500 level may be used for recency credit and those at the 600 level may be used toward a master's degree. Certified teachers and school and community counselors may become mentors/cooperating teachers or supervisors in our licensure programs, working directly with pre-service teachers and counseling interns.

The faculty also recognizes the importance of continued professional development within the unit. This is evidenced by the support provided by the SOE professional development

travel funds. The SOE research funds that provide seed money for faculty research and scholarship, and internally sponsored opportunities such as the Rich Media Project during spring semester 2008.

Contexts of Education in Alaska

Also central to the theory and research base of the conceptual framework are additional historical/political, cultural/linguistic and geographic/technological contexts that underlie education in Alaska and that impact the SOE's Conceptual Framework. It is important that all of the SOE's students have a clear and accurate understanding of these contexts, their historical roots and their impact on Alaska's classrooms, schools and districts today.

Historical and Political Contexts

Alaska has a unique history and geographic setting and a rich cultural context that has contributed to policies and practices of education in Alaska, particularly for Alaska Native groups (Barnhardt, 1994, 2001). The Russian period, 1741-1867, is the first documented period of history of Alaska Natives. In the early years of Russian invasion, Russian soldiers along the southwestern coast of Alaska slaughtered thousands of Aleuts. Many more were enslaved or died from disease.

Though no one questions the destructiveness of colonization through assimilation, domination and control in these early periods, not all groups were equally assimilationist. For example, Ioann Veniaminov, a Russian missionary who arrived in 1824, is said to have "brought a period of enlightenment and benign Russian influence in the colony" (Krauss, 1980). The Russian Orthodox Church was the first to develop a system of writing for the Aleut language. Several other Alaska Native language scripts soon followed. Russian church schools were the first schools and the first to teach literacy using Native languages.

In contrast, when American missionaries first arrived in Alaska in the late 1800s, the main goal of most missionary groups was to eliminate Alaska Native languages and cultures. The Presbyterian missionary Sheldon Jackson became the first commissioner of education and "adamantly opposed the use of Native languages in either education or religion" (Krauss, 1980). Some missionary groups, notably Moravian and Roman Catholic, incorporated Alaska Native languages into their religious services and conducted some further translations of the Bible into Native languages, while others prohibited (sometimes by use of force) the use of Native languages in churches and in the schools that the churches established.

It was not until 1884, 17 years after Alaska was purchased from Russia, that there was any provision made for schooling in the new Territory. Through the Organic Act of 1884, the United States Congress delegated the responsibility of providing education for children of all races to the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Education. At this time, the federal government was providing education services for indigenous students in other locations because of existing treaty obligations with many American Indian tribes.

In the early 1900s, the gold rushes and the increasing availability of timber and fishing resources resulted in a large increase in the non-Native population in Alaska, and the Bureau of Education was no longer able to provide enough schools for all children. Subsequently, the U.S. Congress granted legal authority to communities in Alaska to incorporate, establish schools, and maintain them through taxation. However, the number of non-Native communities, which were too small to incorporate, was increasing rapidly, and they too desired some degree of local autonomy in the management of their schools.

Consequently, in 1905, Congress passed the Nelson Act, which provided for the establishment of schools outside incorporated towns. The governor of the District of Alaska, Sheldon Jackson, was made the ex-officio superintendent of public instruction, and new schools were established in which only “[w]hite children and children of mixed blood leading a civilized life” were entitled to attend. Thus, a dual, and in some communities a segregated, system of education was initiated in Alaska. The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and/or the Territory (and “State” after 1959) shared the responsibility of providing elementary schooling for students in rural communities. In some small rural communities, there were actually two schools—one managed by the Territory and one managed by the federal government— and they served different populations based upon the race of the child.

By 1976, pressure by Alaska Native people for control of their own schools, prompted the Alaska Legislature to establish 21 “Regional Education Attendance Areas/REAs” and commonly referred to as rural school districts. This provided people in rural areas throughout the state with the authority and autonomy to manage their own schools for the first time in the history of the state. Nearly all communities chose this new option, and by the mid 1980s there were no longer any federal Bureau of Indian Affairs schools operating in Alaska.

As a result of this massive school decentralization effort in Alaska, the 21 new rural school districts (similar to school districts in urban areas, but without a local government or tax base) assumed responsibility for educating all children in their regional areas. Each REAA elects its own school board and selects its own superintendent, and although the actual responsibilities assumed by school boards and administrators vary from region to region, most of the boards are directly involved in establishing policies for budgets, hiring, curriculum development and assessment. State regulations provide each REAA with enough latitude to design its schooling policies and practices in ways that are appropriate for the particular region and for the cultural and linguistic group of people that it serves. Because most rural communities have little tax base to draw upon, REAs are funded directly by the legislature, rather than through a local government.

The establishment of regional “school districts” did not, however, address the need for high schools in rural areas. There was in fact no comprehensive effort to remedy this problem by the state or federal governments until a lawsuit was filed against the State of Alaska in 1974. The class-action suit, charging discriminatory practice on the part of the

state, was filed by Alaska Legal Services, on behalf of rural secondary-aged students, for not providing local high school facilities for predominantly Native communities when it did for same-size, predominantly non-Native, communities. The Hootch family, whose daughter Molly the suit was named after, lived in the Yup'ik Eskimo community of Emmonak, with a population of about 400 people. Like most other rural Alaska Native families, they faced the prospect of sending their high school-aged child away from home for the entire school year. Secondary students in nearly all rural and Native communities in Alaska had been attending the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools in southeast Alaska, Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, or, for a short time in the 1970s, to state boarding schools and boarding home programs in larger Alaskan communities.

The case was argued on grounds of racial discrimination, and in 1976, the Governor of Alaska signed a consent decree as an out-of-court settlement of what had become the *Tobeluk v. Lind* case because Molly Hootch was no longer in school. In the settlement, the State of Alaska agreed that it would establish a high school program in every community in Alaska where there was an elementary school (which required a minimum enrollment of eight students) and one or more secondary students, unless the community specifically declined such a program.

Subsequent legislation and funding brought about sweeping and dramatic changes in the educational system in rural Alaska. During the year after settlement of the case nearly 30 new high schools were established with staffs of one to six teachers and student enrollments in the new high schools ranged from 5 to 100. During the next seven years, the state invested \$133 million in the development of approximately 90 more village high schools. Today there are over 120 small high schools in Alaska villages, nearly all operated by the rural school district in which they are located.

Like most educational reforms, decentralization of the state educational system through the establishment of rural school districts with power vested in the primarily Alaska Native regional and local school boards and the construction of 120 new small high schools did not occur simply because educational authorities determined these were the appropriate steps to pursue, or because federal policies had paved the way for new organizational structures that made self-determination a viable option. These events were, in fact, made possible by a combination of inter-related social, political and economic events outside the educational arena, in particular the ascendancy of Alaska Native political and economic initiative following passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971.

A large majority of Alaska Native adults living today attended school during the period of time when schooling policies and practices reflected the ambiguity of state and national beliefs about the best way to educate Alaska Native/American Indian students. Many were not able to complete the eighth grade, and a very large percent did not have the opportunity to enroll in, or to complete, high school in their home community. The policies of the BIA and territory schools attended by many Alaska Native adults forbade students to speak their Native languages and did not allow for a curriculum that reflected

anything Alaskan, Alaska Native or American Indian. Only rarely did any Alaska Native adults have the opportunity to be taught by an Alaska Native or American Indian teacher.

Although there have not been dual federal/state school systems in Alaska since the mid 1980s, the complexity of the shifting relationships among federal, state, regional, tribal, and municipal laws, decisions, and policies continues to directly impact Alaska Native people in areas encompassing education, land and water rights, subsistence, economic development, adoption rights, health care, and justice (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2009; Barnhardt 1999b; Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001).

Educators in the twenty-first century in Alaska need to have the patience to allow for, and the passion to advocate for, deep-seated and fundamental long-term systemic changes in our schools. Since many of the factors that currently inhibit success for Alaska Native students in our public schools come from the lingering effects of past schooling policies and practices, Alaskans must be diligent in their efforts to learn wisely from the past history of schooling in the State.

Cultural and Linguistic Contexts

The population of Alaska is primarily European American, 70.7 % (U. S. Census, 2006 estimated populations). With 20 different Alaska Native groups and four major indigenous language families (Eskimo-Aleut, Athabaskan-Eyak-Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Haida) with 20 distinct languages and several regional dialects (Krauss, 1980), Alaska Natives and American Indians make up 18% of the population (U. S. Census, 2006 estimated populations)—by far the largest minority group in the state—and 25.7 % of the K-12 school population (2006-2007 Report Card to the Public). Besides the indigenous groups, Alaska also has residents who identify themselves from scores of other ethnic origins, including African American 3.7 %, Asian American (Filipino, Korean, Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Vietnamese) 4.6 %, Hispanic/Latino 5.6 %, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (Samoan, Guamanian) 0.6% and mixed (two or more ethnic origins) 4.6 %.

Each cultural group has its own way of being and knowing, which must be understood. For example, 58 per cent of Alaska Natives live in small, rural villages (with 41.5 in remote rural areas and 16 percent in other rural areas), where they practice a subsistence lifestyle, and recognize a spiritual connection to others and nature (Kawagley, 1995). At the same time, they may also identify with the mainstream European American culture. Remarkable among many minority groups is what Alan Peshkin (2000) calls a “dual identity,” which refers to the negotiation of both traditional and Western worlds (Fogel-Change, 1993), and in some cases more than two. This dual identity is a source of tension for many Alaska students. On the one hand, people may feel allegiance to their traditional culture and its ways of knowing and being. On the other, many understand (either consciously or unconsciously) that aligning their thinking, acting, and talking with that of the mainstream culture affords them power and acceptance.

Au (2006), Delpit (1995) and Stubbs (2002) suggest that professional, culturally responsive and effective practitioners need to be explicit with students about the power relationships embedded in language and their rights to make informed choices about oral

language/literacy practices. In Alaska, some communities are dedicated to Alaska Native language revitalization and have thus taken the initiative to develop immersion programs to preserve and reinvigorate their language and culture. In addition, all educators must critically reflect upon all instructional practices as part of a deeply contextualized historical, political, cultural and social matrix. PK -12 educators can be responsive to different community needs and local decision making vis-à-vis language policy and planning as well in other areas through place-based education.

The SOE faculty's educational philosophy about the role of culture, language, literacy and learning is based on the following aspects: Language, a primary aspect of culture is a symbol system that is the most important form of communication for humans; it is the primary way of making meaning and is critical to the formation of mind, culture, and identity; just as knowledge is socially constructed and differently valued, so is language. Some languages, discourses, dialects, registers, genres, and idiolects are more valued than others. Thus, like knowledge, language is power. The faculty understand that the variety of language that dominates public schooling is designated as "standard American English." However, they are also aware of the limiting federal and state "English-only" policies that were in effect in Alaska during the late 1800s and continued well into the 20th century (Barnhardt, 2001; Dauenhauer, 1982), and are still being promoted (Baldauf, 2006; Crawford, 2004; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; and Tollefson, 1991). These policies adversely affected the flourishing of Alaska Native language and by extension, Alaska Native culture.

Therefore, the faculty recognize that all students have a right to gain full fluency in their native language, as well as learn other languages. The faculty support efforts to revitalize Alaska Native languages and cultures in the state and advocate for immersion and bilingual programs that facilitate both first and second language acquisition.

In addition, the faculty affirms that literacy, like learning itself, cannot be defined or understood outside of a dynamic social system. Orally based societies and peoples employ complex cognitive skills through spoken narratives (Heath, 1983; Leonard, 2007; and Purcell-Gates, 1997) and may rely on spoken language more than written texts to survive and thrive in the culture of schooling—a place that generally values literacy over orality. Professional, culturally responsive and effective practitioners can use this strength in orality as a bridge to writing and other multimodal forms (technological, visual, etc.) of literacy prevalent in our society today.

Geographical/Technological Contexts:

Due to the sheer size and varied geographic contexts of Alaska, technology plays an integral role in the delivery of education at the PK-12 and post secondary levels. Technology facilitates opportunities for teaching and learning in urban, rural and remote areas. Teacher preparation, careful planning, and adequate technical support are often cited as critical components of success (Stone, 2005). Thus, technology is an important part of the SOE's preservice and graduate programs.

SOE candidates must know how to negotiate a changing (largely digital) knowledge and information base and how to reflect on its use in the classroom for teaching and learning whether with whole classrooms, small groups or individuals. While issues of equal access, capability, connection quality, and network speed continue to provide challenges, improvements in these areas have also been made, and educators and students in rural areas have access to national, state and international learning opportunities.

Educators who can help their students access such learning opportunities are critical to the development of culturally appropriate and responsive curricula and students' learning. Advances in the use of technology have grown substantially in the last five years and continue to impact the SOE's programs, faculty, candidates and the students in Alaska's PK-12 school system. The need to prepare candidates to practice in ubiquitous technology contexts influences our distance and campus programs in the SOE. In addition to the beliefs about learning, social organization and content that reflect the practices of the SOE faculty and the nature of the programs that are offered, the capabilities of distance education and technology play an increasingly important role in how programs and courses are developed, revised and refined.

The SOE's licensure program requires candidates to pass a technology class: ED 429 (Teaching With Technology) for elementary education candidates, and ED 237 (Technology Tools for Teachers) for secondary education candidates. Secondary licensure candidates also enroll in EDSC 442/642 (The Electronic Portfolio), as they submit their final portfolio of evidence for the eight Alaska Teacher Standards through LiveText, an online electronic portfolio. In the M.Ed. Curriculum & Instruction strand, candidates are required to take ED 659 (Multimedia Tools for Teachers).

In addition both preservice and Master's candidates take courses through distance education using Blackboard, Elluminate, Video-conferencing, Skype and other tools. They meet and confer with their advisors and committees through these venues and by audio conferencing, a long established mode of distance education at UAF. As the SOE faculty and the candidates' work with these tools, they lay the groundwork for using them with PK-12 students in the schools. Software such as Inspiration, ComicLife, iMovie and Garageband are incorporated into the candidates' repertoires and engage the PreK-12 students who can apply them for sound academic purposes and learning. In order to facilitate this recursive cycle of integrating and using technology effectively at all levels of education, the SOE provides students and faculty with on going access to and training in current technology. Several initiatives relating to technology implementation are in place and include the following:

- 1) The School of Education has developed a set of student technology outcomes based on the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) National Educational Technology Standards for Students and the National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers.² These outcomes address management of technology, classroom instruction, integration of technology in the classroom, and use of technology in professional practice.

² <http://www.iste.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=NETS>

- 2) All candidates for elementary and secondary licensure programs are required to have full- time access to a laptop computer that meets the School of Education requirements for hardware and software, including Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and Inspiration.
- 3) The School of Education maintains a staffed technology lab for student and faculty use throughout the day. In addition a variety of technology equipment may be checked out by licensure candidates for use in their fieldwork: laptop computers, Vernier probeware, digital microscopes, graphics tablets, scanners, a KeyStation MIDI keyboard, digital video cameras and digital still cameras.
- 4) The School of Education has committed significant resources to professional development, including funding attendance at off-site seminars and a semester-long program for selected faculty on developing rich media content (podcasts, digital video, other multimedia tools) for professional and instructional use. The technology staff is also available for full-time professional development for faculty.
- 5) The School of Education has made significant progress in acquiring and deploying technology for student and faculty use, including three interactive SMARTBoards and state-of-the-art videoconferencing facilities.
- 6) In cooperation with UAF Videoconferencing Services, SOE is deploying a number of pre-configured videoconferencing systems in remote sites around Alaska. These systems will be used to supervise teacher candidates in remote villages, to conduct distance classes, and to provide opportunities for on-campus and remote faculty to interact on a more frequent basis.

Conclusion

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Alaska's statehood, gained in 1959. It was not until 1976, only 33 years ago, that the Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAs) and high schools were established throughout the state, including the rural and remote areas of Alaska, due in part to the ruling of the *Tobeluk v. Lind* or the *Molly Hootch* case, and to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971. Prior to 1979 both the territory and then the state government sanctioned segregated school systems, which were the norm in Alaska. Fortunately, since that time, change and reform in the entire Alaska State school system has undergone many constructive, though challenging, changes.

The history of education and the current educational contexts of Alaska in the current 21st century global society, as detailed in the preceding pages, highlight more than ever the need for culturally responsive and effective educators in Alaska's schools. In fact, effective schooling *is being* culturally responsive and strong professional education programs, such as those in the SOE, attend to "the preconceptions, attitudes, values, skills and commitments of classroom teachers" (LeRoux, 2001, p. 45). Addressing philosophical, theoretical and pedagogical factors facilitates the development of educators who value diversity (social class, gender, age, ability, race/ethnicity, culture and interest) in classrooms and the learning opportunities that such diversity presents.

Such programs also facilitate the belief “that all students can learn successfully and indeed belong in the school’s mainstream and community life” (pp. 41-42).

Culturally responsive and effective educators must have knowledge and skills of their content areas and competence in a variety of instructional methods and strategies in order to address the learning styles of their students. They must also have knowledge and skills that include lesson and unit planning, organizing for instruction, motivating and engaging students in their own learning, assessing the impact of their teaching on their students’ learning, and facilitating collaboration and cooperation in the classroom, the school and within the community. To this end, the SOE faculty, staff and administration affirm that the University of Alaska Fairbanks preparation and professional programs reflect long-term and on-going efforts to prepare professional educators who are culturally responsive and effective practitioners for Alaska’s schools.

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