To: Deborah Lo, Dean, School of Education, UAS  
   Eric Madsen, Dean, School of Education, UAF  
   Mary Snyder, Dean, College of Education, UAA

From: Statewide Academic Council (SAC)

Re: Next steps for the UA Teacher Education Plan

Date: September 28, 2010

At its September 21, 2010 meeting, SAC reviewed recent drafts of the UA Teacher Education plan. We very much appreciate the good, collaborative work you have done in developing these drafts. Teacher preparation is one of the highest priorities of the University of Alaska system. The UA Teacher Education Plan is constituted in alignment with the reporting requirements of SB 241 and its approval and implementation are a key to improving K-12 education in Alaska.

At our meeting, SAC agreed to provide you with specific direction and suggestions that should move us to a SAC-approved version of the plan in time to present it to the Board of Regents no later than their December 9-10, 2010 meeting.

We ask that you prepare and forward a next draft of the plan based on our comments below. We would like to receive this revision no later than October 21, 2010. The draft you forward should be one on which you all agree. We would also like you to join us at our October 28, 2010 meeting. The meeting will be held in Anchorage and we expect that we will discuss the draft Teacher Education Plan shortly after 10AM on October 28th.

Specifically, your next draft should do the following if it is to be approved by SAC:

- Use the SAC-approved goals as stated in the current draft of the Academic Master Plan, (which can be found at http://www.alaska.edu/bor/agendas/2010/sep23-24/100923ref02.doc):
  - Recruit and retain more students in education.
  - Increase program access through multiple delivery methods.
  - Enhance educator preparation programs in special education and in math and science teaching.
  - Conduct research to identify causes and propose solutions for education challenges in Alaska and make periodic reports to the President and Board of Regents.
Not include mention of the Moore v. The State of Alaska decision in the draft. We recognize the importance of the decision, but note that the resolution of the case is still in active discussion and thus do not think it to be the best basis for drafting the plan. We also note that Dean Snyder's recent revision made significant progress in this direction.

Explicitly connect the plan and its goals and actions with the Alaska Education Plan developed under the leadership of DEED Commissioner LeDoux. The plan can be found at http://www.eed.state.ak.us/edsummit/pdf/AK_Education_Plan.pdf

State that you will make an annual progress report to SAC and, through SAC and the President, to the Board of Regents.

Discuss how UA investment in the plan's goals and actions will leverage and make use of the resources and efforts of DEED, DOL, ACPE and others.

Clearly prioritize the planned actions and clearly demonstrate that the planned actions have a high probability of success. In doing this, consider deleting actions that have lower probabilities of success or higher cost/benefit ratios.

Include explicit intermediate milestones, the achievement of which will lead to achieving plan goals.

Not include explicit budget amounts in the text. Please include them in a separate memo to SAC when submitting your report. We all recognize that additional resources are needed to achieve the plan goals, but feel that such requests need to proceed through regular MAU budget processes. We suggest you consider including a broad statement to the effect that additional resources will be required to achieve results and that these resources will be pursued via already defined UA and legislative budget processes. During the prioritization requested above, you may decide that some actions are of critical importance. These are actions that are so important that, absent additional resources, we will need to reallocate existing resources and redirect current efforts to achieve them. Please identify any such critical actions in your separate memo to SAC.

Include a date and page numbers to facilitate version management and discussion.

In addition, we suggest that you consider the following in producing the next draft:

- Including a high-level discussion of the broad range of issues facing K-12 education and a clear statement of which issues are (e.g., graduating more Alaskan teachers) and are not (e.g., teacher salaries) within the mission and control of your units.

- Discussing potential financial incentives to attract students to your programs and to help place them in specialties and locations with high need, e.g., STEM and rural Alaska.
Incentives might include loan repayment, scholarships, or special tuition with corresponding requirements for service. Consider recommending that funds for direct student assistance be allocated to the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) rather than the University.

Developing alternate pathway programs that could allow individuals without degrees in education to pursue teaching careers.

Not including the idea of developing common data system tools for use across UA, as mentioned in Dean Snyder's latest draft. We see the value of such a system, but are not convinced that this is an appropriate action for the level of plan being developed. It is also likely that such a system would benefit from additional interaction among the MAUs and with DEED and other partners outside of UA.

Finally, we strongly suggest that you reconsider recommending an extensive marketing campaign. The cost is significant and it is not clear to us that it would achieve results commensurate with that cost. We understand the need to reach more potential students, but suspect that other mechanisms, e.g., hiring additional recruiters, might be more cost efficient.

We very much appreciate the good, thoughtful work you have contributed to the plan. We look forward to its approval and to working with you to achieve its goals. If you have questions, please contact your provost.