

Shaping Alaska's Future



Theme 2: Productive Partnerships with Alaska's Schools

Issue A: High expectations for the continuing impact of the Alaska Performance Scholarship and the new K-12 Alaska Academic Standards notwithstanding, today half of UA first-time freshmen do not place into college-level courses and require one or more university developmental classes at student, university and state expense.

Effect: High school graduation requirements and UA freshmen placement requirements are aligned across Alaska and postsecondary preparation pathways are clearly identified and communicated.

Issue B: The professional preparation that leads to retention of Alaska-educated teachers, especially those in rural Alaska, begins with UA's education programs and continues into UA Statewide's Alaska teacher placement process and the Alaska Statewide Mentor Program. The legislature has made it clear that UA is neither recruiting enough education students nor graduating enough teachers who are willing to accept positions in rural Alaska and remain teaching there long enough to positively impact student learning. Teachers moving to rural Alaska from outside the state do so without an adequate understanding of Alaska Native cultures, languages and rural living conditions. Although UA cannot unilaterally improve teacher retention rates in rural Alaska, it can wield significant influence.

Effect: The teacher retention rate in rural Alaska equals that in urban Alaska and is significantly improved by educating more Alaskan teachers.

Issue C: The quality of life and the economic potential of Alaska depend on an educated population. Currently, Alaska has one of the lowest rates of high school graduates continuing directly into post-secondary education. At the same time, increasing numbers of jobs in the state require postsecondary education.

Effect: The college-going rate in Alaska, the proportion attending college in-state, and the proportion entering postsecondary education immediately after graduating from high school are similar to other western states.