

## **Teacher Education Implementation Team**

The following is the work of an implementation team that was created and appointed by President Johnsen for the purpose of framing the issues around changing from three schools of education to one. The change was approved by the Board of Regents at the September meeting. The team was comprised of Scott Christian, Roy Roehl, Tim Jester, Lisa Parady and Jerry Covey and was chaired by Dan White. The work occurred between October 4 and October 15 and this report represents the entirety of the work-product of this team. The team recognizes that there are many issues that are not addressed and many different perspectives and aspects to the ones that were. No single topic discussed below has been exhaustively researched, however, the team addressed each topic in the charge to the best of its ability with the resources at its disposal in the time that it had. Should the board vote to affirm the current direction towards one school of teacher education, faculty and administrators will need to be assembled to address the many issues of the transition and its implementation. The team acknowledges that there may be errors and omissions in the following and is prepared to address them at the President's request.

The specific charge to the group was as follows:

1. Direction approved by the BoR in September 2016:
  - Task a team to build an implementation plan for 1 dean over 1 school with administrative head at 1 university and specialties delivered through programs/faculty at 3 universities. Based on best practice, develop plan to phase out BED in favor of disciplinary degrees plus licensure and graduate programs. Seek BOR review and approval at November meeting.
2. Describe the steps needed to implement the approved direction from the September BoR meeting, including:
  - a. Options for location of the college administration
  - b. Scenario for program distribution across the campuses
  - c. Elements of a transition of locally administered programs to centrally administered program for the following:
    - i. Faculty
    - ii. Program
    - iii. Specialized Accreditation
    - iv. Students
    - v. Student degree disposition
    - vi. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) notification
3. Develop a timeline for restructuring
4. Complete draft by October 15

The team met for one hour by phone on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> with email dialogue in the interim. Brainstorming was broad and encompassed many out-of-the-box ideas. The purpose of this document is to capture the essence of the dialogue to frame the issues in each area of the charge.

## **General Comments**

An important element of the transition, which would be achieved by the single administration and faculty, is that the new model cannot be an extension of current practices. Under one administration it clearly will not be.

The primary focus of the new structure must result in an increase in the quality and quantity of teacher candidates that UA produces while focusing on customers. The future school of education needs to increase both the voice of the customer in program design and service delivery. Process must be in place that will lead to fundamental, systemic reform of teacher education in Alaska. We have the unique opportunity to be more focused and innovative in how we serve K-12 districts and students, and be more collaborative with our K-12 partners. It will be important to move quickly to define the structure, identify priorities, align programs, and address staffing issues. The group felt that a new organization would need to embrace a culture of innovation and organize in such a way as to allow for and institutionalize innovative thinking and pedagogy. Should the board vote in November to have one dean and one administration for teacher education in the UA system, a series of committees will need to be formed to work out structural, administrative, and programmatic issues. These committees will necessarily have representation from faculty and administrators as well as community members. It is important that as these groups work, out-of-the-box thinking is paramount moving forward.

The group also felt that it was important in the consideration of structure to clearly articulate the rural regions of the state and the role that the campuses statewide play in teacher education.

## **Options for location of a single dean/single administration college administration**

Location of a single college administration will be affected by the path taken to arrive at the single administration. That is, a new college may be formed from the three, or two of the colleges may be wrapped into the existing structure and accreditation of the third. The advantage of the latter is that it offers the greatest degree of stability and the least disruption to the students who are seeking degrees and to the districts needing teachers. Core competencies and innovations should be identified at each university and woven into future structure or programming. However, there is acknowledgement that the structure of the lead site will look different than it does today. A college administrative structure that serves the University system cannot be just an expansion of the existing structure at one of the universities.

A brand new college resulting from the merger of three colleges situated within one of the universities offers a fresh start. However, it would also be the most disruptive to faculty and students. In addition, it is not clear that a new college would be a candidate for accreditation by CAEP based on the performance of students under the three separate accreditations.

By combining the three schools under one administrative structure, the administrative structure at the lead campus would require consideration to appropriately address its larger role in the system. Such modifications should be informed by the key strengths of each of the current university structures to give the new school the best chance for success. The location for the school and the dean selected to lead it should be part of the decision-making.

Agreements between the lead university and the other two universities would need to be developed so that tuition sharing, revenue flow, faculty supervision and support, and administrative services such as finance and HR are clearly articulated.

### **Scenario for program distribution across the campuses**

Each of the universities offers a suite of teacher education programs. The universities have developed different types of expertise based on history, region, local interests, University mission and goals, and faculty expertise and interest. A few of the key points brought up about the existing universities are listed below.

1. UAF – history of rural and indigenous education, capacity for research, strong elementary programs
2. UAA – larger population base and ability to grow its capacity, access to rural and urban school districts, administrative services hub, economic center, professional development, early childhood strength
3. UAS – successful MAT, statewide online licensure programs, Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools (PITAAS), literacy

The administration and faculty of the single college would need to determine at which locations different programs are offered and how to take advantage of the strengths built at each university, but also to affect the change that is needed to grow the programs. This will take time and include many steps, including alignment of the curriculum across the system. Additionally, programs will be rethought and, as necessary, revised. We need to set targets for what we want to exist and then strive to create this. It will include alignment, but will also include new programs.

As the single school takes shape, hard decisions will have to be made. Some programs could be offered at all university locations while other more specialized programs, such as PhD programs and the on-line MAT, may be offered at only one of the delivering campuses.

In addition to the transition of the programs over time, other areas of program administration will need to be unified. Recruiting, for example, is an important element of any college, but the recruiting function of the new single college will need unification. Another example is advising, which will be key for success.

Advisory boards are a long-standing component of professional schools, such as engineering, business, and teacher education. An advisory board for the new college should be assembled to help guide its direction and to support the dean. This would logically include such members as superintendents, principals, DEED, Alaska Native organizations, business representatives and other constituents.

### **Elements of a transition of locally administered programs to centrally administered program for the following:**

1. Faculty

Communication and engagement with faculty during the transition is a high priority and should remain so until the new structure is in place and operational.

Faculty currently exist in three separate colleges with their locus of tenure vested in that school. The tenure process includes peer review and peer review criteria. Based solely on the current focus of the three universities the tenure criteria are different. The new single college faculty would need to unify tenure criteria and address tenure transferability.

It is expected that faculty currently employed in a program at one of the non-lead universities could continue their employment with UA with their tenure not disrupted. This is a discussion that would require consultation with the CBA and University policy and regulation.

## 2. Program

The organization of programs at the three campuses would require administrative and faculty review. There already exists a process for review of programs on the campuses that is very similar. An initial program review by the new administration and faculty of the college will likely involve all programs, their location, and delivery. Program review under the new model should assess needs system-wide starting with the demand both by students seeking degrees and by districts hiring teachers. It is important the university program review process support the goals of increasing the number and enhancing the quality of educators in Alaska.

## 3. Specialized Accreditation

The three existing schools are accredited by NCATE/CAEP. Once a decision has been made to consolidate the three university Schools of Education into one, a discussion should commence with the accrediting agency to determine how to transition the three separately accredited programs into one. UA will want to avoid unnecessary time and effort associated with separate accreditation to the extent possible. Some discussion was had in relation to transitioning from CAEP accreditation to a state-based accreditation system. Students are currently in NCATE/CAEP accredited programs and a transition to a new state-based accreditation has many unknowns that would not be answered in the near term should this route be pursued, e.g., in the state's budget climate, could the state DEED stand up a new accreditation system?

## 4. Students/Student Degree Disposition

The university exists because students choose to get their education at UA. Students enrolled in a University of Alaska program are our most valuable client. UA has an obligation to them. The transition of three administrations to one need not disrupt nor diminish the student experience, but hopefully enhance their experience through additional or specialized offerings as well as redesigned offerings. Over time the programs offered at the three campuses will change, however, this could follow our normal process for program suspension and elimination. It is possible that disruptions to students can be minimized. Programs under a consolidated School of Education can be more efficient, e.g. 8 students in

a section at one of the campuses and 9 students at another campus enable UA to make it a hybrid class of one section.

5. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) notification

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accredits UAA, UAF and UAS separately. Each university is required to notify the NWCCU of program suspensions and submit programmatic changes to NWCCU for consideration. Significant program changes need to be approved by the commission. The elimination of a school administrative structure at two locations and the expansion of one to include the programs at the other locations could logically be discussed with the Northwest Commission in a package. While the accreditations are separate, the changes are linked. How this transition is managed should be discussed once a decision has been made by the board.

**Timeline**

The Board of Regents may vote as early as November to change policy to eliminate two of the schools of education in favor of a lead campus model. The consolidation of the administration could happen fairly quickly. It is possible that within the year, the administrative transition could occur with the following time frames as an initial draft:

- Administrative: 6 months – appointment of dean or interim dean and appointment of associate deans at each campus
- Faculty appointment transitions: 6 months +
- Accreditation: 1 year +
- Common course numbers and descriptions: 1 year and on-going
- Programs: 2 years +, programs to be prioritized, organized, added or eliminated