

FAQs School of Education – April 9, 2019

The Board of Regents, pursuant to Regents’ Policy 10.06.010.C, directed President Johnsen on March 1, 2019 to conduct an expedited exceptional review of the educator preparation programs at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) focused on: the viability of maintaining programs at UAA and seeking CAEP accreditation beginning 2020; providing programs in Anchorage through the accredited programs at UAF and UAS; and evaluating the long-term viability of programs unaffected by the CAEP accreditation revocation.

On April 8, 2019 the Board of Regents approved a recommendation to discontinue the initial licensure programs at UAA; teach-out through transfer of students, and maintain initial teacher preparation programs in Anchorage through the University of Alaska Fairbanks/University of Alaska Southeast; ceasing UAA programs as of August 31, 2019 when State Board approval expires.

These FAQs address the impacts of this decision:

What does this decision mean for UAA Education Students?

It means UAA’s initial licensure educator preparation programs will be discontinued effective September 1, 2019. UAA School of Education students enrolled in initial licensure programs who wish to graduate with a degree in education will need to transfer to education programs at UAF (or to the MAT, which would be offered by UAS) while remaining located in Anchorage (or current UAA campus), or choose to change to a different program at UAA.

For Consideration at the April 2019 BOR Meeting, Effective September 1, 2019

UAA Initial Licensure Programs	Disposition	Responsible Unit	Existing Program
BA Elementary Education	Discontinue	UAF	BA Elementary Education
Elementary Education post-bac	Discontinue	UAF	Elementary Education post-bac
MAT Secondary Education	Discontinue	UAS	MAT Secondary Education
BA Early Childhood Education (preK-3)	Discontinue	UAF	BA Elementary Education w/preK-3 endorsement and Early Childhood minor (new but does not require BOR approval)
Early Childhood post bac (preK-3)	Discontinue	UAF	Elementary post-bac with preK-3 endorsement
Special Ed Graduate Certificate initial licensure	Discontinue	UAF	Special Ed initial licensure preK-12
MEd. Early Childhood Special Ed initial licensure	Discontinue	UAF	Special Education Minor w/endorsement (preK-12)

At the May 2019 Board of Regents’ meeting, UAA’s non-initial licensure educator preparation programs will be considered.

How does this decision affect UAA education programs in Kodiak and Kenai Peninsula College?

All students currently enrolled in UAA initial licensure programs wishing to pursue an education degree will need to transfer to programs at UAF or UAS. These schools will continue to offer programs to students not located on the main campus in Anchorage. The transition team is evaluating options for faculty currently providing face-to-face instruction through UAA in those communities.

How many UAA students are affected by this decision?

Of the total of 489 students currently enrolled in the UAA School of Education, 335 are in the initial licensure programs. Many of those students are on track to graduate prior to August 31, 2019, and others will need to enroll in UAF or UAS programs beginning in the fall. To date, more than 100 students already have transferred to UAF or UAS programs.

What will happen to faculty and staff affected by discontinuation of programs?

Faculty who teach in these programs may have placement or recall rights in programs offered by UAA. In addition, programs offered by UAF or UAS in Anchorage will have staff and faculty needs that affected personnel may be able to address. UA will work closely with UNAC on issues related to faculty placement.

Why did the BOR not allow UAA to apply for accreditation?

That process would have taken three years and required periodic approval from the State Board of Education. The option of seeking interim State Board approval(s) would have involved several years of significant uncertainty regarding whether each graduating class of students would be able to obtain licensure. Because licensure is the fundamental goal of these programs, the administration believed that option involved a risk of significant magnitude to students and to UA.

Does the Board of Education need to approve this change?

No. The Board of Education has been notified, but its approval is not a requirement. Programs at UAF and UAS are accredited. UAF education programs recently passed CAEP accreditation. UAS is in the process of attaining its CAEP accreditation.

Will current UAA education students have to move to Fairbanks or Juneau to continue their program?

No. UA is committed to providing UAA teacher education students a path to licensure while remaining in their community if that is their choice. Students could take courses offered by UAF or UAS either online or via faculty who teach at the UAA campuses.

Would UAA students have the same program offerings they would have had?

Not only will students still be able to complete their degree through comparable programs, adoption of the president's recommendation would result in additional program offerings for UAA students currently only available to students at UAF or UAS.

Can I still do student teaching in local schools?

Yes. The university will continue to work with school districts in the region to provide opportunities for UA students to student teach, no matter what university they attend, or where they live.

How much will it cost to transfer to UAF or UAS?

UA is already facilitating transfers into accredited UAF and UAS programs, holding students harmless on transfer costs. If upon individual coursework review it is determined that students need to re-take courses, UA will cover that tuition.

What institution will provide my financial aid?

Financial aid is disbursed to students by the campus they are admitted to, even if the student is physically located at another campus. For example, if the student is admitted to a program at UAF, they will receive financial aid through UAF, even if they are taking courses on a different campus.

Where will I receive my advising? Would it be by distance or face-to-face?

Both options will be available for students.

Will I be able to participate in the commencement ceremony in Anchorage even if I am in a UAF or UAS program?

Yes. There are often a small number of students who participate in the commencement ceremony of their local university - even if their program of study is located at a different university.

What will this decision mean for UAA programs not affected by the loss of accreditation?

Non-initial licensure programs were also part of UAA's Expedited Program Review, but were not part of UAF or UAS programmatic proposals. In addition, UA just learned this week that there would be potential CAEP accreditation and State Board of Education approval lapses associated with a teach-out by UAA, and associated disruption to students. The Executive Dean of the AK College of Education, working with the Teacher Education Council will provide recommendations to the President regarding these programs for continuation, discontinuation, transfer or integration into existing UAF or UAS programs. At the May or June Board of Regents meeting, additional information on the following programs will be provided.

UAA non-Initial Licensure Programs
Education Leadership CERT
Education Leadership MEd.
Special Education MEd.
Special Education non-initial licensure program CERT
Language Ed CERT
Speech-Language Pathology post-bac
Teaching and Learning MEd.
Early Childhood Special Education non-initial licensure MEd.
Early Childhood Education AAS

What happened during the Expedited Program Review?

At UAA, School of Education faculty conducted a comprehensive review of every program. Programs were assessed on the basis of quality, efficiency, and contribution to mission and goals. Additional consideration was given to assessing the viability of each program. Faculty recommendations went to the Interim Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences for additional analysis and recommendations.

Chancellor Sandeen then reviewed the recommendations and submitted UAA's final recommendations to President Johnsen.

In addition, UAF and UAS reviewed their education programs in relationship to the impacted programs at UAA, and offered options for providing courses through their Schools of Education to students based in Anchorage. The chancellors at UAF and UAS submitted their final recommendations to President Johnsen.

Based on the options presented in these internal reviews, President Johnsen proposed recommended action to the Board of Regents for its consideration on April 8.

Why was the review conducted?

Following the loss of UAA's accreditation for initial licensure programs, three options for moving forward were considered by the Board of Regents in February:

1. Continue current programs through ongoing UAA effort toward state approvals and reaccreditation
2. Teach-out through the existing UAA programs, ceasing programs when students are done (~3 years). Phase in availability of UAF & UAS programs in Anchorage
3. Teach-out in Anchorage through transfer to UAF/UAS, ceasing UAA programs as of August 31, 2019, when State Board approval expires

All three options required the program review as well as a deeper understanding of the cost differentials of the three options.

Why is CAEP accreditation required?

State regulations require Alaska's educator preparation programs to meet or substantially meet CAEP standards in order to receive approval from the Alaska State Board of Education before the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) can issue program graduates a teaching certificate.

What would it have required for UAA to seek reaccreditation?

Accreditation takes time and resources, and to keep the programs open during the interim, UAA would have to seek ongoing approvals from the State Board of Education.

Time: UAA could not begin the reaccreditation process until January 2020. It would take at least three years.

Resources: There is a cost, generally around \$150,000, plus substantial faculty and staff time.

Risk: There also is the risk of uncertainty because the State Board of Education would need to continue to approve the program and license program graduates in the interim. There are additional long-term ramifications and uncertainty with respect to interstate reciprocity for graduates from a program "considered" to be approved.

Why did the board not seek accreditation at UAA?

This is an opportunity for the university as a whole to focus on opportunity and alignment and do what is best for students. This is the only way to provide a certain path for our students to licensure as a

teacher from an accredited and approved program. UAF is already CAEP accredited and we know they could meet student needs. UAS is well poised for their CAEP accreditation review and already excels at distance delivery of their Master's program.

Did UA consider the Governor's budget cuts in this evaluation?

Both the cost of seeking reaccreditation and efficiencies from the consolidation of programs were taken into consideration, but budget was not the determining factor. The high quality of UAF and UAS programs was a factor as was the risk associated with keeping education programs at UAA without a sure path to initial licensure for program graduates.

What are the implications for my previously-obtained UAA Education degree?

Graduates who previously completed a UAA Education degree received recommendation for initial licensure from the State Department of Education and received their degree from a fully-accredited institution. The decision to not seek accreditation in the future does not retroactively affect previously-obtained education degrees. It's also important to remember that the quality of the teacher preparation programs has never been the issue, and UAA graduates regularly demonstrate proficient skills as educators.

What does this mean for my UAA Education scholarship?

Existing education scholarships will continue to benefit students studying in Anchorage either through UAF or UAS. If you are currently a recipient of an education scholarship you will be assisted by UA Foundation staff in the transfer of scholarship payments to the appropriate university. For more information on UA scholarships contact Dory Straight, Scholarship Officer, at 907-450-8033 or dory.straight@alaska.edu.