

## University of Alaska Board of Regents Program Approval Summary Form

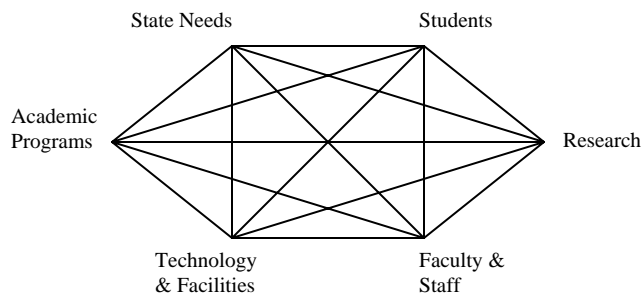
MAU: University of Alaska Fairbanks

### Title of Existing Program:

Elementary Post-Baccalaureate Licensure Program

**Proposed Program:** Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Elementary Education Program

**Target Admission Date:** Summer 2006



**The current program results in an Alaska teacher license but not a UAF certificate.**

**The proposed program will result in both Alaska teacher licensure and a UAF certificate.**

### Brief Overview

The current Elementary Post-Baccalaureate Licensure Program was approved by the UAF Faculty Senate and the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development in 1998, and by the national elementary professional organization, the “Association for Education of Childhood International” in 2003. In the spring of 2003 the program was thoroughly reviewed during the internal UAF Program Review (with a team comprised of two UAF faculty from other units and a local elementary teacher). In March of 2005, the UAF School of Education received national accreditation from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education/NCATE.

Currently, post-baccalaureate students who complete their teacher preparation programs at UAF are eligible to receive a State of Alaska Elementary Teaching License. However, they are currently *not* eligible to receive any formal recognition from UAF for having completed an “official” UAF program. We are requesting that the UA Board of Regents approve the UAF Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Elementary Education Program as a UAF “Certificate” Program. This proposed certificate will provide a valuable university award to students who complete this well-defined and fully approved program. The certificate will become a valuable addition to the portfolio of Alaska professionals who now have only a series of courses listed on their transcripts. The certificate will verify the completion of an integrated set of courses that is directly aligned with a year-long internship in an elementary classroom. The certificate will be useful for job seekers, those seeking professional advancement, and for employers who will have better documentation of the capabilities of their applicant or employees. In addition, the School of Education, UAF and UA Statewide will be able to gather and analyze data on post-baccalaureate licensure candidates in a far more accurate manner than is currently possible because program data will be included in the Banner system. Therefore, the UAF School of Education is seeking approval from the UA Board of Regents to offer our existing UAF Elementary Post-Baccalaureate Program as a program that will lead to a UAF certificate, in addition to an Alaska Teacher License.

### How Does the Program Relate to the Education Mission of the University of Alaska and UAF?

There is a well-documented and critical need for teachers in Alaska, and throughout the United States. The Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Elementary Education Program provides the option for students in rural areas, as well as those on the Fairbanks Campus, to seek licensure as an Alaska teacher. The development of the UAF post-baccalaureate program for elementary teacher preparation was a direct response to the stated mission of the University of Alaska, which is to: “inspire learning, and advance and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, emphasizing the North and its diverse peoples.” In addition to supporting the Mission of the University of Alaska, the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Elementary Education Program at UAF directly responds to, and supports, each of the six primary goals in the 2005 University of Alaska Fairbanks Strategic Plan. This is accomplished through the following: (1) collaboration across UAF departments to assure academic content requirements; (2) program requirements for year-long internships in schools based on on-going collaboration with nearly all of Alaska’s 52 school districts; (3) the built-in required professional development for cooperating mentor teachers; and (4) increasing the number of Alaska Native professionals (approximately 20% of students completing requirements for elementary licensure at UAF are Alaska Native).

There is no negative impact of this program, or of the request that a UAF certificate be awarded, on UAF programs or on similar post-baccalaureate programs at UAA and UAS. Faculty and administrators at each of the MAU’s communicate regularly, and we continue to work collaboratively on all of our teacher preparation programs.

### **State Needs Being Met by this Program**

Each of the MAU's provides elementary teacher preparation programs at both the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate and graduate level. The need for Alaska-prepared teachers is so great that it is necessary for all of the MAU's to continue to provide elementary programs at both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate graduate levels. One of the special attractions of the UAF post-baccalaureate program is that students are able to apply 13 of their post-baccalaureate credits to an M.Ed. in Elementary Education.

In a report to the Governor and State Board of Education and Early Development prepared by the State's "Education Funding Task Force," the statement is made that:

Alaska's college and universities supply about 30% of our state's annual demand for new teachers. More than two-thirds of new teachers come from out-of-state. A national shortage of teachers and administrators forces Alaska to compete with other states for an ever-shrinking pool of applicants. Other states are offering teachers signing bonuses, down payment on homes, mortgage subsidies, and student loan repayment plans. With attractive salaries and incentives in their home states, far fewer out-of-state teachers are applying for available Alaska teaching positions, some of which go vacant for a year or more (page 10).

Supporting data are available from each of the 52 Alaska School Districts, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the Alaska Teacher Placement Service, and from the UAF School of Education's own hiring database which includes data on approximately 3,600 students who have completed our teacher education programs since 1975.

### **Student Opportunities and Outcomes and Enrollment Projections**

Through our collaboration with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, our own extensive hiring database, and our own telephone surveys of our post-baccalaureate graduates, we have detailed and accurate information on each of the 59 students who have completed the existing elementary post-baccalaureate program since its beginning in 1998. Ninety percent of the program completers are working in the field of education—although not all are in positions as classroom teachers. Approximately 95% of our program completers are in Alaska. Students who are not place-bound are always able to find employment in an Alaska school.

Projections for enrollment are based on a review of enrollments in our licensure programs over the last ten years. The hiring data we have on approximately 3,600 graduates since 1975 allow us to know which districts and schools are hiring our graduates. For instance, we know that approximately 46% of the professional staff in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District have received degrees from the UAF School of Education, and we know that the UAF School of Education supplies a much higher percent of teachers for rural Alaska than do the other Alaska institutions. We can accurately predict enrollments for our undergraduate BA in Elementary Education students, but we are not able to predict the numbers of post-baccalaureate students, although it averages to about eight per year. Since the post-baccalaureate students enroll in all, except three, of the same internship year courses as BA in Elementary Education students, the expenses for maintaining the post-baccalaureate option are small. (And, in Alaska, as elsewhere the large majority of students seeking an elementary license do so through an undergraduate degree program rather than through a post-baccalaureate program). Since the State Board of Education and Early Development has recently changed its licensure requirements, it is possible that the new options provided by these changes will lead to an increase in the number of applicants to the elementary post-baccalaureate program.

With the full implementation of our Elementary Standards-based Assessment Plan/ESSAP in the 2004-2005 academic year, we now have in place a complete standards-based outcomes assessment system which allows us to carefully monitor and track individual student progress as well as being able to analyze strengths and weaknesses of our program.

### **Research Opportunities**

The Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Elementary Education Program assures the continued involvement of UAF faculty in rural and urban public education throughout the state. The full-year internship is dependent upon close working partnerships with schools, districts and communities. In addition, the UAF School of Education continues to focus nearly all of its research opportunities on issues related to assuring equity in opportunities and outcomes for all Alaska students—regardless of their geographic location or their cultural, racial or linguistic background.

**Fiscal Plan for Development and Implementation**

No additional funding is required for the posting of a UAF certificate. Currently, the School of Educational budget includes the necessary instructional funds to support the program at its current level. If the enrollment were to increase substantially and/or if the applicants were from rural areas where there are no School of Education faculty, it would be necessary to identify additional travel funds for supervisor travel.