

The following motion was passed at Faculty Senate meeting #230 on March 5, 2018:

**Motion:**

The UAF Faculty Senate endorses the 28-Feb-2018 letter from UAS Faculty Senate President, Dr. Megan Buzby, to the UA Board of Regents about the proposed plans for the Alaska College of Education. We concur with the concerns expressed in that letter. This endorsement will be delivered to the UA Faculty Alliance for consideration for transmission to UA President Johnsen.

**Effective:** Spring 2018

**Rationale:** The letter from Dr. Megan Buzby was submitted to the UA Board of Regents (BoR) on 28 February 2018 as public testimony for the 1-2 March 2018 full BoR meeting, was acknowledged received at 4:48 p.m. on 2 March 2018, and was sent as response to a letter from UA President Johnsen to "education students, faculty, and staff" delivered to the UAS Chancellor's Cabinet on 26 February 2018 and subsequently to the UAS Faculty Senate Executive Board. The 26-Feb-2018 letter from UA President Johnsen requests feedback on the Alaska College of Education for discussion during the 1-2 March 2018 full meeting of the BoR.

The proposed Alaska College of Education and associated organizational changes affects all three universities in the UA system, with the Schools of Education at UAF and UAA proposed to be eliminated and their programs moved to other colleges within their respective universities. Inadequate time was provided to faculty, staff, students, and administrators at all three universities to solicit feedback and gather data regarding this potentially disruptive process at all three universities. In addition, students have expressed confusion to faculty about the proposed Alaska College of Education, with some apparently under the impression that students must travel to Juneau to pursue degrees in education. The UAF Faculty Senate has elaborated its own concerns with the decision and the decision-making process, and concurs with the concerns expressed in the letter from Dr. Buzby. The UAF Faculty Senate therefore requests that UA President Johnsen and the UA Board of Regents address those concerns.

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DocuSigned by:

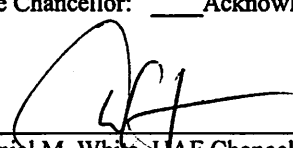
*Chris Fallen*

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Chris Fallen, UAF Faculty Senate President

The Chancellor: ☒ Acknowledges

☐ Vetoes

  
Daniel M. White, UAF Chancellor

Date: 3/21/18

The 28-Feb-2018 Buzby letter to the UA Board of Regents

The 26-Feb-2018 Johnsen letter to "education students, faculty, and staff"

February 28, 2018

Dear distinguished members of the Board of Regents,

This letter is in response to President Johnsen's letter, dated February 26, 2018, regarding the latest proposal for the Alaska College of Education structure. It represents my personal opinion informed by numerous discussions I have had with UA faculty, staff, students, community members, and consultants involved with the University of Alaska system.

The changes now before you do not reflect what was approved in concept after Strategic Pathways Phase I in 2016. The President proposed and the Board approved a single college of education for the state of Alaska. The gradual changes being made to that proposal no longer represent one college. While I believe these changes were made to make the best of a flawed decision, it appears as though only names and locations were changed with the addition of an ineffective administrator split between two high priorities. I agree that creating the teacher education council is a wise decision.

Two Schools of Education at UAA and UAF and one branch of the Alaska College of Education at UAS – are still three schools of education, regardless of the title you give them. Whether you call the administrative positions over those entities Directors, Deans, or Executive Deans, they are still responsible for the accreditation of programs, the faculty overseeing those programs, and the students enrolled in those programs. They are still full-time jobs that require experience and expertise in higher education.

Changing the title of "Dean of the College of Education" to "Director of the School of Education" at both UAA and UAF will not decrease the workload nor the responsibility of that position. If the goal is to pay a director less than a dean, you create a situation of high turnover which is inconsistent with the President's 2025 goal. If no money is saved, what is the point of changing names?

A major concern I have over the Executive Dean position is the lack of distinction between the Statewide home for the AKCOE and the UAS AKCOE. This change will most negatively affect UAS students and faculty who will be given a dean that does not have time to address local needs. This position will be split among the priorities for the system of three universities (and many more locations across the state) and trying to manage the daily concerns and accreditation at UAS. I believe UAS needs a Dean and the system needs a chair for the Teacher Education Council. UA does not need an Executive Dean to micromanage three schools of education nor is it reasonable to expect a single person to do such a thing. In addition, the Executive Dean position, as outlined in President Johnsen's letter, has no authority over UAA and UAF schools of education. At best, this position is set up to be ineffective. At worst, the position is set up to make uninformed decisions that create problems rather than fixing them.

It has been stated that one of the reasons for establishing a single college of education stemmed from a concern for a single point of contact for K-12 administrators. This seems like a useful improvement, but these elaborate structural changes and the addition of an Executive Dean are not necessary to create a single point of contact. That duty could easily be assigned to an existing position.

Perhaps the biggest positive outcome that came from Strategic Pathways was an acknowledgement that the three universities need to communicate more and work together. Education is like every other program across the state in that it needs to improve communication. Given its size and importance statewide, I think the education programs and the state could benefit from such a council. However, improving communication does

not require an Executive Dean. Form the UA Teacher Education Council and rotate the chair among the three universities.

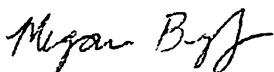
The other major concern I have over this proposal is the justification which stems from the currently low percentage of new teacher hires that are UA-educated in the state. Perhaps we should back up and consider why this hiring percentage is only 30%. There are many factors, but availability is an important one that will not be fixed by 2025. Enrollment in colleges and universities is down across the entire country. The number of people pursuing a degree in education is down across the entire country. The number of high school graduates is down in the state of Alaska. Now consider that the time it takes to complete an undergraduate degree is four years plus one more year to get a Masters of Arts in Teaching. That means we need to recruit record numbers of students from around the country to enroll in a teacher education program at UAA, UAF, or UAS by the year 2020 – that's 2 years from now. We would then need every single one of those students to earn their degree in five years and every single one of those students to apply for and receive jobs to teach in Alaskan schools. Do we really believe all this is possible in two years' time, simply because we changed the names of UAA and UAF Colleges of Education to Schools of Education and the name of UAS's School of Education to the Alaska College of Education? I do not. *Increase* the percentage of UA-educated new teacher hires, yes - but the state cannot hire people who do not exist.

The goal of 90 percent of new teacher hires to be UA-educated by 2025 is unattainable. What will we do when that goal is not met? All signs point to the new Executive Dean as the fall person. We will be hiring for this position again in 2025, if not before. The people that can make these changes are in the existing colleges and school of education. Mandate these units to increase their enrollment and graduates by an attainable amount. Take the money you save from hiring an executive dean to support their efforts.

In closing, I would like to remind us all that the simple solution is often the right one. Create a UA Teacher Education Council with membership from all three universities and outside stakeholders, but have the chair rotate among the three Education Schools/Colleges. Make that chair the contact person for the superintendents of the state. Support the existing colleges and school of education to achieve an attainable goal of more UA-educated teachers. We do not need an executive dean and we do not need an Alaska College of Education that looks and feels exactly like the system we have now – only less efficient.

I do realize these are challenging times and I very much appreciate your deliberations on this matter.

Sincerely,



Megan Buzby, PhD

Associate Professor of Mathematics at UAS  
UAS Faculty Senate President

February 26, 2018

Dear Education Students, Faculty and Staff,

After numerous discussions with the Chancellors, I wanted to make you aware that the University of Alaska Board of Regents will discuss the proposed framework for establishing the Alaska College of Education when it meets in Fairbanks, March 1-2. The information that I will present at the board meeting about the Alaska College of Education can be found here:

[https://www.boarddocs.com/ak/alaska/Board.nsf/files/AWCTQV6A5199/\\$file/AKCOE%20Update%201%20Mar%202018%20RVSD%20Final.pdf](https://www.boarddocs.com/ak/alaska/Board.nsf/files/AWCTQV6A5199/$file/AKCOE%20Update%201%20Mar%202018%20RVSD%20Final.pdf)

The university is making good progress toward establishing a single college of education, and the change is crucial to creating a culture in Alaska that encourages education and promotes the value of the teaching profession.

Below is a summary of the proposed changes.

**What will change:**

- **The name:** The new name will be the Alaska College of Education (AKCOE), with administrative leadership from the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). In addition to this statewide coordinating role, the AKCOE will be the academic home for UAS teacher education.
- **Leadership:** UAS is nearing completion of the search for an Executive Dean for the Alaska College of Education. The Executive Dean will work closely with the schools of education at UAA and UAF to coordinate and align programs and courses and to encourage innovation across the university system. The Executive Dean, working with the UA Teacher Education Council (see below) will have input on budgets, promotion/tenure, marketing, hiring of faculty positions, engagement with external partners, and alignment and coordination of programs statewide.
- **Reporting structure:** The action will eliminate two dean positions and place the UAA and UAF programs inside existing colleges. The College of Education at UAA will become the School of Education and be part of the College of Arts & Sciences; the School of Education at UAF will become part of the College of Natural Science & Mathematics. These Schools of Education will be led by directors.
- **UA Teacher Education Council:** The Executive Dean for the College will chair the council with administrative and faculty representatives from all three universities. The Council's charge will be to promote coordination, alignment, and innovation across the UA system.

**What will not change:**

- **Access and courses:** UAA, UAF and UAS will continue to offer education programs and have faculty and staff at their campuses to support students in their programs.
- **Degrees:** Students will continue to earn their degree from any of the three universities.
- **Accreditation:** To ensure that all UA students receive a quality education, each university will work to maintain its accreditation with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the national education accrediting body. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities will also be notified of the administrative changes at UAA, UAF and UAS.

- **Marketing:** The university system will continue to work to recruit more students and to promote the virtues of a career as an educator.
- **The university's goal:** Fill 90 percent of new teacher hires in Alaska by 2025 with a UA-educated teacher. Currently, 30 percent of new teachers hired in our schools each year are UA-educated.

**What can you do?**

- You can express your views to the Board of Regents. **Written testimony** is accepted at any time and is shared with the board and the president. Please submit to: [ua-bor@alaska.edu](mailto:ua-bor@alaska.edu).
- If you are in Fairbanks, you can attend the Board of Regents' public gathering and talk to the regents personally. The gathering is from 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 1 in the Globe Room, 215 Elvey Building on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus.

Sincerely,

Jim Johnsen  
President