

Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force

Recommendation Proposed by Gary Wilken

August 1-2, 2007

Other Issues – Teacher Preparation

Issue Summary: “The State of Alaska experiences about 1,100 teaching vacancies each year and in-state teacher training programs produce only about 220 graduates per year.” (Alaska Teacher Placement, University of Alaska, *Finding and Keeping Teachers in Alaska – 2006 Supply and Demand Fact Sheet*)

Recommendation: The Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force supports a formal legislative requirement that the University of Alaska prepare and submit an annual report, entitled *Alaska’s University for Alaska’s Schools*, to the Alaska State Legislature that highlights the efforts of the university to attract, train, and retain qualified public education teachers.

The annual report shall outline the University of Alaska’s past, current, and future plans to close the gap between known teacher vacancies and the number of in-state trained Alaskans. In addition, the report shall include the university’s short-term plan as well as a five year long-term strategy, with accompanied budgets. The report shall be approved by the University of Alaska Board of Regents and presented by the Board of Regents to the legislature at a joint meeting of the House and Senate Health, Education, and Social Services Committees and the House and Senate Finance Committees.

Discussion: At the present time the number of teacher vacancies far out pace the number of Alaskans trained to be public school teachers. But our state-wide university and other training institutions must continue to whittle away at this unfortunate gap.

The Alaska State Legislature and the University of Alaska need to work in partnership to ensure our 53 school districts have the best teachers possible, preferably Alaska trained teachers. An annual report offered by the University will be the beginning of a meaningful dialogue between these two institutions.