



**UAA Center for Alaska
Education Policy Research**
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

2012-2013 Work Plan for FY2013 Legislative Appropriation

UAA's Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR) based our work plan for the funding received from the Alaska Legislature for FY 2013 on the intent language attached to it. That language reads as follows:

It is the intent of the legislature that \$250,000 of this appropriation be used to evaluate Alaska's education system and make recommendations aimed at increasing student achievement. The evaluation should not focus on funding, except that it may recommend redirection of how a district is investing existing funding. The evaluation parameters should include instructional programs, including comprehensive curriculum, instructional materials, and effectiveness of professional development and instructional practices; evaluation of vocational and college preparedness tracks for education; district efficiency, including efficiency of district administration; instructional leadership, including instructional accountability; teacher retention and tenure; effectiveness and efficiency of remote-delivery of education; efficiency and effectiveness of state professional development; barriers to success that are within school district control, in particular with regard to fourth- and eighth grade reading and mathematics scores on national examinations. It should also examine the length of the school year, length of school day, and instructional time per day. The evaluation will also provide a comparison of Alaska's districts' practices to national practices on each of these parameters, including a comparison of Alaskan standards and expectations to those of other states.

We are engaged in five projects laid out below. At the end of this fiscal year we will assess what we have learned in order to move forward on other issues of interest to the legislature. This work plan does not include CAEPR projects funded through contracts and grants from other state, federal and private sources.

1) "State of the State in Education"

Timeline Research in progress, report to be produced in March 2013

This report will address the current state of K-12 education in Alaska and place Alaska within the national context. We will look at a number of issues including:

- a) The policy context, including content standards, the school calendar, the length of the school day, year, required professional development, graduation requirements, the Alaska Performance Scholarship, the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam, Alaska's school finance system, and demographic data on the student population
- b) Accountability and school reform, such as student achievement and education outcomes on standardized measures (e.g., standardized test scores, graduation and dropout rates) at the state level, for subgroups and for different regions, comparisons of state data with national averages, and efforts to improve student and school performance
- c) Recruiting and retaining high quality teachers
- d) Issues in education in rural Alaska and for Alaska Natives

2) Statewide Survey of Teachers

Timeline: Survey under development, to be launched in March 2013

This will be a comprehensive look at the factors influencing teachers' decisions to stay in their schools/districts or to leave. We are developing the instrument with input from key individuals and organizations including faculty in the schools and colleges of education in Alaska (UA and APU), NEA- Alaska, superintendents, and others.

Teachers will be asked about issues such as:

- a) Their perceptions of leadership in their school
- b) Their relationships with parents and community
- c) Salary, benefits and financial incentives to stay in their school
- d) Mentoring and professional development

In fall 2013, CAEPR will match data on teacher employment to see which teachers who participated in the survey continued to teach in Alaska and in their same school, and which do not, and analyze the relationship between teacher survey responses and work outcomes.

3) Educator Supply & Demand Report

Timeline: Research in progress. Report to be produced in April 2013

This will be a comprehensive update of data on teacher and administrator supply, demand and turnover, including:

- a) A literature review on factors influencing teacher retention and turnover
- b) Data on the number of teachers and administrators prepared by institutions in-state versus coming in from outside Alaska
- c) Teacher and administrator turnover rates by district
- d) A look specifically at the numbers and career pathways of Alaska Native teachers and administrators

4) Study of recent graduates of UA programs

Timeline: Completed.

Donna Gail Shaw has completed the study "Why Aren't They Teaching? A Study of Why Some University of Alaska Teacher Education Graduates Aren't in Classrooms". We are in the process of putting together a policy brief on this study, and it will be available shortly. A summary report is available now, by request.

5) Study of the cost of teacher turnover in Alaska

Timeline: Initial study design being drafted. Research will be conducted in March -April 2013, and a report will be completed in June 2013.

This project sets up a model for calculating the dollar-cost of teacher turnover in Alaska, and will be conducted in five districts, each representing a unique aspect of Alaska's educational landscape in regards to geographical and cultural place, varying levels of local, state, and federal funding, size and number of students served.