

# School of Education

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## *School of Education website*

The School of Education (SOE) comprises a community of educators dedicated to improving the quality of education. The mission of the School of Education is to prepare educators and support the lifelong learning of professionals to embrace diversity and to be intellectually and ethically strong, resilient and passionate in their work with Alaska's learners, families, educators and communities. School of Education programs emphasize the power of learning to transform people's lives.

The School of Education promotes the following core values in their collegial interactions to ensure that program graduates exhibit:

- **Intellectual vitality:** Professional educators examine diverse perspectives, engage in research and scholarship, contribute to knowledge and practice, and apply innovations in technology.
- **Collaborative spirit:** Professional educators generate, welcome and support the collaborative relationships and partnerships that enrich people's lives.
- **Inclusiveness and equity:** Professional educators create and advocate for learning communities that advance knowledge and ensure the development, support and inclusion of people's abilities, values, ideas, languages and expressions.
- **Leadership:** Professional educators are committed to the highest standards of ethical behavior in their roles, using professional expertise to improve the communities in which they live and work, and demonstrating the ability to translate theories and principles into transformative educational practice.

The school offers undergraduate and graduate curricula and programs designed to prepare personnel for various professional roles related to education in a variety of learning environments. The School of Education's advanced program is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The professional preparation programs are approved by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development issues certificates and endorsements under the "approved program" process for certification. UAA recommends individuals to the commissioner of Education and Early Development for certification or endorsement after successful completion of one or more of the approved programs. Only the director of the School of Education is authorized to recommend candidates for the appropriate certificate or endorsement.

In each of the school's curricula and programs, candidates are introduced to fundamental issues of education in the contemporary world through courses designed to develop perspective and understanding of the relationship of education to society. Courses provide theory and practice in the development of instructional materials and a thorough understanding of methods of instruction. Many courses and programs are offered through distance delivery methods. The school offers high-quality, distance-delivered coursework in order

to improve access for rural students and provide flexible scheduling for practicing educators.

Individuals who desire a UAA degree or certificate must apply for admissions to the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) and to the School of Education. Students are formally admitted to an appropriate program on the basis of multiple criteria, including their ability to make a positive contribution to educational professions. Candidates who seek Alaska state licensure must successfully complete a School of Education "approved program," as well as any additional requirements that may be initiated by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Only courses with a grade of C or higher will be applied to meet certification or endorsement requirements. In addition, candidates must demonstrate professional behaviors and dispositions consistent with the School of Education's Core Values and the Specialized Professional Associations as well as abide by the UAA Student Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics and Professional Teaching Standards adopted by the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission. These documents are available on the School of Education website. Candidates should be advised that total credits may exceed minimums because of prerequisite requirements, knowledge and skill enhancement, individually selected majors, and areas of specialization and/or emphasis.

Once admitted, students work with an academic advisor to develop a graduate studies plan with each candidate based upon transfer credits, program requirements, professional interests and elective courses. The program may or may not include certification or endorsement requirements.

## Master of Education

There are several options for students to obtain a Master of Education (MEd) degree. MEd options are:

- Educational Leadership
- Special Education
- Teaching and Learning

## Graduate Certificates

The School of Education offers three graduate certificate programs:

- Educational Leadership: Principal
- Language Education: English as a Second Language (ESL) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy Concentration
- Special Education

Coursework that is applied to graduate certificates may also apply to the MEd with faculty advisor approval.

See MEd & Graduate Certificate Requirements (p. 2) for more information on admission and graduation requirements.

All admitted students must have the technological knowledge and skills to engage in distance learning.

## Admission Requirements

In some cases, applicants may be contacted about scheduling personal interviews with the school after their completed files are received. When all documents are received and reviewed by the school, the applicant will be notified of the school's decision.

Applicant files are reviewed throughout the year. However, applications for admission need to be submitted by specific dates (July 1, November 1, and May 1) to qualify for financial aid.

Applicants must:

1. Complete the Admission Requirements for Graduate Degrees and Certificates (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/academicpoliciesprocesses/admissions/graduate/>).
2. Have an undergraduate GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 point scale).
3. Complete the admission requirements as specified by the appropriate program. In general, programs require submission of a resume documenting professional experience, goal statements, writing samples, and professional references. Some programs may require teacher certification. The college may request interviews as part of the admission process.

Applicants who meet the above criteria are considered for program admission on a competitive basis.

## Academic Requirements

Graduate students must demonstrate continuous progress toward program completion. School of Education candidates must complete at least one approved program course during any 24-month consecutive period to maintain active status in their programs. Candidates not making continuous progress and not on an approved leave of absence (see Leave of Absence in Graduate Degree Policies (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degreerequirements/policies/>)) may be removed from master's degree-seeking status.

## Graduate Studies Plan

An official graduate studies plan (GSP) must be approved before completion of more than 12 credits of coursework.

## Graduation Requirements

Candidates completing a graduate degree or certificate must complete the following requirements:

- Satisfy the General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degreerequirements/>) or the General University Requirements for Graduate Certificates (<https://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/gradcertrequirements/>) as appropriate to the program of admission.
- Specific programs may require more than 30 credits. See appropriate program for credit requirements.
- Satisfy the requirement of a comprehensive examination, comprehensive portfolio or other scholarly work as specified by the program.

Graduate courses completed prior to being admitted as a graduate student will not necessarily be applicable toward a specific graduate degree program.

## State-Approved Program Verification

Following are the requirements for a state-approved program verification for those programs approved for certification or endorsement:

1. For endorsements, all requirements for a current teacher certificate must be successfully met.
2. For Principal Type B Administrative Certificates, candidates must have three years of successful certificated contract experience as a teacher or special services provider (Type C). In addition, a minimum of a master's degree is required.
3. For the Principal Type B Certificate, the MED or graduate certificate must be conferred. For language education and special education, the graduate certificate must be conferred.
4. For the special education endorsement, candidates must pass the required Praxis II exam.
5. Demonstration of technology skills appropriate to the field.

Certification is awarded by the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (EED) in Juneau. Graduates must meet all requirements specified by EED at the time of application for the certificate.

## Professional Field Practice

Prior to permitting the candidate to enter the final stage of preparation, which is characterized in most options by participation in a practicum or internship, a faculty committee will evaluate the candidate's performance in the program. Admission into this final phase of professional preparation is a faculty decision and is separate from entry into the graduate program. Difficulties, including inadequate academic performance, unprofessional behavior, unsatisfactory field reports or other factors, may result in denial of entry to practicum or internship. Performance in practicum and internship is closely monitored, with stated minimum competencies and the development of individual objectives. Since this is the practice and application phase of professional development, it is assumed that candidates will demonstrate appropriate professional dispositions with respect to their professional actions, attitude and performance.

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development issues certificates/endorsements as a result of successful program completion as verified by the director.

## Field Placements

Most School of Education graduate programs require field experiences in school or agency settings. The School of Education works with Alaska school districts to offer diverse placements for students. Diversity of placements refers to grade levels and types of schools. It is our policy to, whenever possible, ensure students receive diverse placements in schools and grade levels. Students who live in rural

districts will be placed in the most diverse placements possible in their location.

### **Criminal History Background Clearance**

The School of Education requires compliance with specific background clearance policies and procedures for candidates participating in university-sponsored fieldwork. In some cases, criminal history background clearance is required for admission to a program. In addition to self-disclosure of criminal history to the School of Education and its partners, a check of the Alaska and national sex offender registries, a fingerprint-based check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and a name-based check through the Alaska Public Safety Information Network may be required. Various agencies and centers may have additional requirements.

Failure to comply with the School of Education background check requirements will result in denial of access to field placement settings. Failure to pass the criminal history background check will result in removal from the program. More information is available on the School of Education website (<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/coe/>).

### **Cooperating School/Agency**

Practica, internships and other field placements are made only in cooperation with participating school districts and agencies. The school districts and agencies that work with the School of Education reserve the right to request additional information and/or preparation from candidates in accordance with their established policies/practices. Cooperating districts and agencies also determine the number of available spaces and placements for candidates. Placements may become competitive if the number of applicants exceeds the number of spaces. Districts and agencies also reserve the right to refuse or terminate placements when candidates do not meet an acceptable standard of performance. Thus, while the university makes every effort to find appropriate field placements for candidates, admittance to a degree/certificate/endorsement program does not guarantee acceptance by cooperating school districts or agencies. Unacceptable academic performance, an unprofessional attitude, unsatisfactory field reports, violation of professional ethics or other factors may result in removal from the field placement.

### **Transfer**

Candidates who have taken all or part of an approved program at another university must take at least 9 credits of approved education courses at the University of Alaska prior to being admitted to an advanced practicum or internship.