

**Guidebook for New  
Teacher Applicants  
in Alaska School  
Districts**

**2000-2001**



Updated March 15, 2006

# **Guidebook for New Teacher Applicants in Alaska School Districts 2000-2001**

*Edited by*

*Lydia L. Hays, Ed.D. and Marilyn J. Forrester, M.S. Reading*

The CIRI Foundation

*3600 San Jeronimo Drive, Suite 256*

Anchorage, Alaska 99508-2870

Tel: (907) 793-3575 Fax: (907) 793-3585

Toll Free: 800-764-3382

E-mail: [tcf@thecirifoundation.org](mailto:tcf@thecirifoundation.org)

Web site: [www.thecirifoundation.org](http://www.thecirifoundation.org)

**Made possible by the  
Alaska Native Teachers for Excellence Project  
Funded by a Grant from the  
United States Department of Education  
Through a contract with  
Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.**

# Table of Contents

## **PART ONE BACKGROUND**

Introduction .....	2
--------------------	---

## **PART TWO RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS**

Section I: Coaching and Teaching Sessions .....	4
Section II: Application Process Overview .....	6
Section III: Application Process .....	7
Section IV: Preparation Strategies .....	8
Section V: Reference Materials .....	10
Section VI: Interview Tips from Interviewers and Those Who Should Know .....	10

## **PART THREE TEACHER MENTOR PROGRAM MODEL**

Section I: Recruiting Prospective Teacher Applicants .....	13
Section II: Mentoring Prospective Teacher Applicants .....	13
Section III: Mentoring First Year Teachers .....	14

## **APPENDICES**

A. Standards for Alaska's Teachers .....	16
B. Alaska's Vision and Goals for Education .....	19
C. Alaska School District Certificated Application Packet .....	20
D. Teacher Applicants Follow-Up Survey for Teacher Mentor Project .....	20
E. Resume Samples .....	21
F. Web Site Contacts .....	22

# **PART ONE**

# **BACKGROUND**

## INTRODUCTION

The Guidebook for New Teacher Applicants in Alaska School Districts was originally published as part of the "Alaska Native Teachers for Excellence Project." Because of this, we have learned many ideas helpful to teachers applying to Alaska School Districts. The Guidebook provides teachers with suggestions to consider when applying for a teaching position. It contains information about coaching sessions, application steps, telephone contacts, and other resources and strategies to assist teachers and students in their pursuit of teaching careers. These suggestions and ideas were designed to enhance the recruitment of Native teachers.

In 1997, the "Alaska Native Teachers for Excellence Project" proposal, submitted by Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC) of Anchorage, Alaska, was approved by the U.S. Department of Education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IX, for a three year period, 1997-2000 and endorsed by the Anchorage School District Board of Directors, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. and The CIRI Foundation in 1997.

The purpose of the Project was to:

- Increase the number of certified Native teachers and administrators in the Anchorage School District

The three-year Project was administered through CITC contracts with The CIRI Foundation and the Indian Education Program of the Anchorage School District:

1. **Mentoring for Teacher Applicants.** The CIRI Foundation sought to increase the pool of eligible and qualified Alaska Native and American Indian teachers in the District so they would comprise seven-percent (210) of the District's personnel by September 2000. Two teacher mentor staff provided seminars and one-on-one sessions to assist prospective School District applicants to sharpen their application and interview skills and improve their readiness to accept a teaching position in the School District upon being offered a position.

We were able to help 52 Native teachers obtain teaching positions with the Anchorage School District and 74 outside the District. However, because of the late hiring of the Anchorage District and low salaries, we were not able to reach our goal of seven-percent.

2. **Mentoring for New and Experienced Teachers.** The Anchorage School District Indian Education Program and Institutional Support provided (a) teacher mentoring which included up to 1,600 hours of in-class sessions on cross-cultural curriculum integration and (b) improved educational opportunity for Alaska Native students through cultural diversity training of school staff, parents and students.

**The Teacher/Mentor Program officially ended October 1, 2000**

## **PART TWO**

# **RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS**

<p><b>SECTION I</b> <b>COACHING AND TEACHING SESSIONS</b></p>
---

The Teacher Applicant Mentor Training Program suggested here is intended for any certified teacher applying for a teaching position in Alaska School Districts and interested student education majors in college. These School Districts are encouraged to offer structured training sessions and individualized one-on-one coaching with teacher applicants.

The coaching and training sessions to assist individuals applying for positions should be held weekly. One-on-one advising and coaching may be scheduled at the convenience of the client.

**Session Contents Here** are some recommended sessions to be offered to teacher applicants, and the time allowed for these is from one to six or eight hours:

- |     |  |                  |
|-----|--|------------------|
| 1.  | Orientation .....  | Core Session     |
| 2.  | Reception and Potluck for Teacher Mentor Participants .....            | Core Session     |
| 3.  | School District Application Process.....                               | Core Session     |
| 4.  | Educational Standards, Goals and Objectives .....                      | Core Session     |
| 5.  | Knowing Yourself .....   | Core Session     |
| 6.  | Dialogue with Principals (Mock Interviews) .....                       | Core Session     |
| 7.  | Case Studies on Selected Topics .....                                  | Optional Session |
| 8.  | Classroom Intervention Strategies.....                                 | Optional Session |
| 9.  | Confidence-Building Motivation .....                                   | Optional Session |
| 10. | Cultural Sensitivity.....  | Optional Session |
| 11. | Developmental Stages of Children and Youth .....                       | Optional Session |
| 12. | Evaluation.....  | Optional Session |
| 13. | Field Trips to School/s .....  | Optional Session |
| 14. | Instructional Techniques .....   | Optional Session |
| 15. | Assessment and Recommendations for Improving Teaching Performance..... | Optional Session |
| 16. | Personal Experiences and Tips for Teaching in the School District..... | Optional Session |
| 17. | Project Achieve (Behavior Management).....                             | Optional Session |
| 18. | Resolving Conflict Creatively Project (RCCP) .....                     | Optional Session |
| 19. | Role-Playing Practice Interviews.....                                  | Optional Session |
| 20. | Technology Tips.....   | Optional Session |
| 21. | Teacher Planning .....   | Optional Session |
| 22. | Videotaping Teacher Practices.....                                     | Optional Session |

**CORE SESSIONS**

The core sessions can provide useful information to assist certified teachers who are participating in the School District teacher application process. These sessions should focus on the application and interview process.

**Orientation** Introduction of participants to the hiring process of the School District, a report on the status of hiring, including target goals for the school year and the training and/or coaching opportunities available through the Teacher Mentor Project for individuals applying for a teaching position.

**Reception and Potluck for Teacher Mentor Participants** Meet major participants involved in the School District Teacher Mentor Project, interested educators, local universities, and Alaska Department of Education.

**School District Application Process** Review steps in the application process. Includes examining the application form, making an initial screening interview appointment, overview of expectations in the eligibility screening, what happens in the initial screening interview, how the selection of eligible applicants is achieved, and preparing a personal portfolio for submission to the School District—resume, references, cover letter and possibly a video tape of actual teaching and/or classroom environment.

**Educational Standards, Goals and Objectives** Presentation of the knowledge framework important for teachers in the School District; Alaska Education Standards; Alaska certification requirements; the background/history of the School District; its educational goals and objectives; and the State of Alaska Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.

**Knowing Yourself** Identifying and knowing your personal characteristics and attributes about who you are. This is important for the School District interview process. The applicant must be prepared to concisely tell why she/he is the best candidate for a certificated position in the School District--that is, why should the School District hire you? This awareness is important for both the initial screening interview and the building interview.

**Dialogue with Principals (Mock Interviews)** Participants are introduced to the interview process, including a selected few school principals who "practice" interviewing techniques with the teachers and provide important suggestions for improving an applicant's prospects for a successful initial screening interview.

### **OPTIONAL SESSIONS**

These optional refresher sessions are available to provide the teacher applicant with more information to prepare for the interview process of the School District and be concise and focused in anticipation of the interview questions that will be asked.

**Case Studies on Selected Topics—motivation, instruction techniques, etc.** School District teachers will participate in discussion on selected topics.

**Classroom Intervention Strategies** This session will help teachers begin to build protective factors in the classroom for all students. Subject areas include: respect, routines and rituals, observation and assessment, flexible room environment, transition time plans and adult-child ratio. Fourteen tips for effective intervention will be examined. The 40 developmental assets will be reviewed.

**Confidence-Building Motivation** Teachers of Excellence.

**Cultural Sensitivity** Discussion on Alaska Standards for culturally responsible schools. Meeting the needs of diversity in the class and implementing culturally relevant learning materials.

**Developmental Stages of Children and Youth** Discussion will center on the Key System, Cognitive Development, Social Development, and Implications.

**Evaluation** How to determine what students need to learn. What do you consider in evaluating a student's achievements? How do you assess your student's growth?

**Field Trips to School/s** Applicants will tour an elementary or secondary school. Tours will be led by principal or principal assistant.

**Instructional Techniques** Motivation skills to keep students on task; how to incorporate technology into teaching programs (multi-media); how to provide activities/programs for all students; how to set up and implement reading, math, science programs (elementary level, or secondary level); what teaching methods work best regarding bilingual language (applies to bilingual teachers); how to prepare and utilize parents/volunteers in the student's school experience.

**Assessment and Recommendations for Improving Teaching Performance** Review and recommendations for improved performance by beginning teachers. Designed to implement a professional development plan based on review and analysis.

**Personal Experiences and Tips for Teaching in the School District** Conversation with "veteran" teachers and administrators on teaching in the School District.

**Project Achieve** Stop-and-Think-Design to increase the student's on-task behavior (academically) by decreasing the negative behaviors that interfere with learning.

**Resolving Conflict Creatively Project (RCCP)** The use of mediation in the classroom by all. Much of the program uses student mediators resolving conflicts among peers.

**Role-Playing Practice Interviews** Focusing on conciseness of responses to practice interview questions, applicant's appearance and behavior in anticipation of the initial screening interview.

**Technology Tips** Discussion on the use of technology from a multi-media perspective.

**Teacher Planning** Curriculum selection, lesson plans, resource materials, team planning, evaluation and assessment tools.

**Videotaping Teacher Practices** How to videotape teaching techniques of the applicant for submission to the School District as part of the application portfolio.

In addition to workshops and individualized sessions, informational materials will be distributed to participants in the Teacher Mentor Training Program.

<b>SECTION II</b> <b>APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW</b>
--

**The Process** The application process outlined in this section is for reference purposes only, and the School District can complete the missing blanks. Questions or comments on the process should be directed to the particular District.

**The Application** The completed teacher application package must be submitted to the School District. It is difficult to predict the exact number of vacancies each year. All applicants typically must go through a screening process, and this begins when completed applications are received in the District.

The applicant is responsible for gathering all required documents before submitting the application package to the School District. Specific required information may vary from District to District. This is necessary for all School District positions which require an Alaska certificate (administrative, principal, classroom teacher, counselor, physical education, music, art, library, nurse, occupational and physical therapist, psychologist, speech/language specialist, audiologist, etc.).

Determine what specific documents are required by the School District in which you are interested.

All applicants must update their application file annually to include—(1) Resume; (2) Letter of recommendation from the most current immediate supervisor.

(Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ School District Application Form)

**Initial Screening Interview** Some School Districts may have scoring criteria they use based on the quality of answers.

**Hiring Dates** School District hiring varies from District to District and you should contact the District to which you are applying and if possible, Alaska Teacher Placement at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, P.O. Box 756880, Fairbanks, AK 99775, telephone: (907) 474-6644 for Job Fair dates.

### SECTION III APPLICATION PROCESS

The checklist below was developed as a suggested series of steps to follow by teachers who seek to apply for a teaching position in an Alaska School District. Each School District will personalize the missing blanks.

- 1. **Obtain "Vacancy Positions List" from the School District personnel office.**  
*Comment: This List is to identify openings in your specialty area and those schools that have openings. Contact School District by mail at \_\_\_\_\_, telephone \_\_\_\_\_, e-mail \_\_\_\_\_, or web site \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 2. **Obtain the \_\_\_\_\_ School District teacher application package.**  
*Comment: For the \_\_\_\_\_ School District, contact: Personnel Office, \_\_\_\_\_; telephone: (907) \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 3. **Compile current professional information, including but not limited to:**
  - a. completed teacher application form.
  - b. one letter of recommendation from current immediate supervisor and confidential references/recommendations.
  - c. official transcripts showing degree/s.
  - d. copy of your valid Alaska teaching certificate (or institutional recommendation).*Comment: Refer to the School District application form for further directions.*  
*Comment: There may be additional application requirements by the School District.*
- 4. **Submit completed application package to the School District personnel office.**  
*Comment: Mail or deliver materials to the School District in which you are interested.*
- 5. **Receive confirmation letter that the School District obtained your completed application materials.**
- 6. **Verify that you have been placed on the School District's "needing an interview list."**  
*Comment: Contact the School District to see what their interview process is.*
- 7. **Contact the School District personnel office to schedule an initial screening interview.**  
*Comment: Contact the \_\_\_\_\_ School District Administrative Assistant to make an appointment for the initial screening interview, telephone: (907) \_\_\_\_\_; e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_; or web site: \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 8. **Do "homework" to prepare for the Initial Screening Interview.**  
*Comment: Consider contacting The School District Teacher Mentor Project for "homework" recommendations, telephone (907) \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 9. **Attend the initial screening interview.**  
*Comment: Consider contacting Teacher Mentor Project for coaching assistance in preparing for the interview by telephoning (907) \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 10. **Await a call from the School District personnel office for initial interview results.**  
*Comment: Confirm with the School District their follow-up process for interview results.*  
*Comment: An applicant may contact the School District personnel office to determine the status on interview results.*
- 11. **Verify that you have been placed on the School District's "Eligible to Hire List," if the School District uses that type of process.**  
*Comment: Re-confirm that your certificate endorsements are accurate and on file with the School District personnel office.*
- 12. **Prepare a Professional Portfolio and Cover Letter indicating your interest to interview with a principal for a specific position with the School District.**  
*Comment: Include in the Professional Portfolio your resume, statement of philosophy of education, samples of classroom and student work, copies of teaching certificates, awards, reference letters and other materials that indicate your qualifications for a teaching position. This task is optional but advisable.*

*Comment: These materials are to be given to the principal/s prior to your building interview/s. Bring an extra copy with you for the building interview.*

- 13. **Contact the principal to schedule a building interview.**  
*Comment: Contact the principal in person if possible to arrange for the building Interview.*  
*Comment: Contact the Teacher Mentor Project to arrange for coaching sessions on building interviews.*  
*Comment: An applicant may arrange for more than one building interview, subject to availability of time.*
- 14. **Attend the building interview.**  
*Comment: Bring a copy of your Cover Letter, Resume, and Professional Portfolio (optional) with you to the interview.*
- 15. **Send a "thank you" letter or telephone the principal to express your thanks for the building Interview.**  
*Comment: Optional, but advisable.*
- 16. **Call the principal for results of the "Building Interview" after about seven days if you have not already heard from the principal.**  
*Comment: You may telephone the School District personnel office to determine if the principal has submitted paperwork regarding the interview results.*
- 17. **Receive a "Letter of Intent to Hire" from the School District personnel office.**  
*Comment: If you do not receive a "Letter of Intent to Hire," you may want to seek another position and arrange for a "Building Interview."*
- 18. **If you receive a "Letter of Intent to Hire" from the School District, contact the School District personnel office to arrange for signing a hiring contract and related documents.**  
*Comment: It is advisable to do this in person or use expedited mail.*
- 19. **Contact the School District to determine if they have a mentoring program for first year teachers.**  
*Comment: Contact the \_\_\_\_\_ School District, Teacher Mentor Program, \_\_\_\_\_, AK \_\_\_\_\_, telephone (907)\_\_\_\_\_.*

## SECTION IV PREPARATION STRATEGIES

**Praxis\* 1 Academic Skills Assessment** Anyone seeking an initial teacher's Type A certificate in Alaska is required, effective December 1, 1998, to present passing scores on the Academic Skills Assessment. Any teacher who was certificated on that date need not take the test. Includes the Academic Skills Assessments component of the Praxis Series which contains the Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST) and the Computer-Based Academic Skills Assessments (CBT). The test is available in a paper and pencil format and via computer. Applicants receive a score report of pass/fail according to Alaska score requirements. The Educational Testing Service issues the results to the applicant and directly to the Alaska Department of Education, if requested. For more information contact: The Praxis Series, Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6051, Princeton, NJ 08541-6051, telephone (609) 771-7395, Internet: <http://www.ets.org/praxis/> (Note: \*Praxis: Greek word meaning "from theory to practice.")

**Teacher Certificate Application and Renewal** An application for teacher certification renewal must be filed before the expiration date of the certificate. To be eligible for renewal of a certificate, you must have earned 6 semester hours or 9-quarter hours of credit since the issue date of the certificate due to expire. At least 3 of the 6 required semester hours must be upper division or graduate level.

Holders of teacher certificates issued after April 9, 1987 and before September 18, 1992, who have not completed 3 semester hours in Alaska studies and 3 semester hours in multicultural education or cross-cultural communication before issuance of the certificate, must complete 3 semester hours in each of those areas before renewal. Please write or call: **Teacher Education and Certification, Department of Education, 801 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 100, Juneau, Alaska 99801-1894. Phone: (907) 465-2831 Fax: (907) 465-2441**

**Philosophy of Education** A teacher's personal Philosophy of Education is very important because it provides focus and emphasis for teaching. Working to communicate your philosophy helps you to become aware of your own goals and values which prepares you to integrate them with the goals and values espoused by your district and community. Such a statement should be one or two pages in length.

**A teacher's statement of philosophy is a description of his or her own goals and beliefs as a teacher. Following are suggested guidelines:**

- What role will you play in nurturing school renewal?
- What role will you play in building bridges, linking schools, higher education, parents, students, and the community?
- What is the purpose of education?
- What is the teacher's role?
- What is the student's role?
- What does it mean to say "the teacher is a decision maker in diverse contexts?"

**Professional Portfolio Development** It is advisable to develop a Professional Portfolio.

*Comment: Such a portfolio gives evidence that a professional teacher can document the excellence of practice related to specific standards (See Section III, Application Process, #12). For information, contact Professor Sharon Early, University of Alaska Southeast, 1108 F STREET, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-8682. Telephone (907) 465-8745 or Fax (907) 465-2166*

*Comment: Contents of a Professional Portfolio would include: college courses list of recent professional readings, in-services and workshops, practical work experience outside of teaching, evaluations from knowledgeable supervisors, classroom research, and work samples from students. When you are putting together your portfolio, use this opportunity to reflect on your own professional growth and inventory your knowledge and skills.*

**Resume** Job experience may be arranged in three formats:

1. *Chronological:* (Employment positions are listed in reverse chronological order. This format is effective for someone with a history of quality employment or a steady rise through the organization, agency, or company.)
2. *Functional:* (Emphasizes skills and abilities, rather than employment history. People most often use this resume with a variety of job types, gaps in their employment history, or the need to stress capabilities instead of a stable job history.)
3. *Combination:* (This format is likely the most prevalent among today's professionals. It emphasizes skills and abilities with a summary stating major qualifications, yet includes the traditional chronological job listings and descriptions.)

*Comment: A good resume is concise, well organized, dynamic, neat, and designed with one thing in mind—to get you job interviews. Design an attractive layout; type your resume; proofread carefully; and make high quality copies. A good resume can open doors. (See Appendix E)*

**State of Alaska Code of Ethics of the Education Profession** All members of the teaching profession are obligated to abide by the code of ethics and the professional teaching standards adopted by the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission. (Source: AS 14.20.370, Reg. 53, effective 1/30/75)

**Substitute Teaching Experience** Certified teachers are encouraged to substitute teach or volunteer whenever they are able. School Districts prefer experienced teachers. This gives principals and teachers an opportunity to observe your teaching skills and may result in a regular teaching position. In the event these positions are unavailable, certified teachers are advised to substitute teach.

**Tips for Successful Interviewing**

- In order to learn all you can, you may want to request from your School District the Philosophies of Education for the different schools, and a list of all Alaska School Districts, etc. from the Juneau web site of [www.eed.state.ak.us/](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/)

- Be concise. When answering questions, listen carefully, and be brief in your answers.
- Emphasize your strengths. Focus on work experience, courses or personal qualities that would be beneficial for the job.
- Don't criticize. Don't put down previous employers, teachers or co-workers. It will give the interviewer a negative impression of you.
- Have something to offer. Discuss ways you can contribute to the organization. Let the interviewer know how you can meet a need or solve a problem.
- Be assertive. This doesn't mean you should be aggressive. It means being confident of your abilities.
- Avoid personal issues. Don't discuss family, personal or financial problems.
- Thank the Interviewer. You may want to do this in writing or by telephone.

## SECTION V REFERENCE MATERIALS

**Alaska Quality Schools Initiative**, Contact: *Alaska Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification, 801 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Juneau, AK 99801-1894 (1997)*

**Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools**, Contact: *Alaska Native Knowledge Network, University of Alaska Fairbanks, P.O. Box 756730, Fairbanks, AK 99775-6730 (1998)*

**Alaska Standards for Administrators, Alaska Standards for Schools, Alaska Standards for Teachers**, Contact: *Alaska Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification, 801 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Juneau, AK 99801-1894 (1997)*

**Code of Ethics**, Contact: *Professional Teaching Practices Commission, 344 W. Third Avenue, Suite 127, Anchorage, AK 99501 (1997)*

**Orientation Handbook for Rural Educators**, Contact: *NEA-Alaska, 1840 South Bragaw Street, Suite 103, Anchorage, AK 99508 (1995)*

**Pitfalls and Potholes**, Contact: *NEA-Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516 (1997)*

**Teacher Certification**, Contact: *Alaska Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification, 801 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 100, Juneau, AK 99801-1894 (1997)*

## SECTION VI INTERVIEW TIPS FROM INTERVIEWERS AND THOSE WHO SHOULD KNOW

- Substitute in the School District and do your student teaching in one of the District's schools.
- Your resume should be accompanied by a cover letter addressed to the principal by name.
- Remember to mention that you love children, want to help them learn, and how you can be an asset to the school.
- Get involved in professional organizations, such as NEA, AEA, IRA, etc.
- It is helpful to have videotape of one of your best lessons showing your teaching skills in the classroom.
- Be prepared to state your philosophy of education when asked.
- Pause and thoughtfully consider the question before giving an answer.
- List all volunteer work on your resume, such as summer camps, Sunday School, tutoring, etc.
- Show your hobbies and special interests (such as knitting or drama skills) on your resume.
- Volunteer in a classroom on days when you are not subbing so that teachers and principals get to know you and you can observe experienced teachers at work.
- Use creative words on your resume to grab the attention of the principal.
- Mention specific data about the school where you are interviewing (Slingerland is taught or they have cultural diversity at the school).
- If you have the opportunity to teach in rural schools, this will show you have developed good community and parent outreach skills.
- Tell how you have the ability to manage behavior control in your classroom.
- Be prepared when you come to the interview.

- Don't offer to do something that you do not have the experience (teach statistics or music) because this may set you up for failure and affect your teaching career.
- Mention any unusual or special talent.
- Double and triple check your resume for spelling, grammar, and vocabulary errors. Mistakes in this area may cause your resume to be discarded.
- Dress on the conservative side for your interview.
- If you are an Alaska Native or American Indian, communicate your background and heritage.
- Professional Portfolios are now being used instead of resumes because teaching is considered to be more of a craft. Eliminate items that are already in your personnel file, such as transcripts. Your portfolio should have visual examples of your abilities (like pictures), lesson plans, grading, and examples of projects.
- Do not speculate or think out loud during an interview. Get to the point and be very specific in your answers.
- As a new teacher, be prepared to devote your entire life to your job until you get your class and teaching style under control.
- You will be asked specific questions about curriculum, and may be expected to discuss whether you use cooperative or guided learning to teach reading. If you are not familiar with the approach used, interviewers would like to know that you are a perpetual learner, open to new ideas. Teachers should no longer see themselves as "keepers of knowledge, but facilitators of knowledge."

# **PART THREE**

# **TEACHER MENTOR PROGRAM MODEL**

## **SECTION I RECRUITING PROSPECTIVE TEACHER APPLICANTS**

1. Contact key personnel at universities, Alaska Teacher Placement, career fairs, and Alaska Department of Education to ask them for names of teachers and senior education students.
2. Identify any prospective teacher applicants and students in the Education Program who will be graduating soon from lists received.
3. Mail out Teacher Mentor Project information and brochures to these teacher applicants and students.
4. Follow up mailings with personal telephone calls to see if the applicant is interested in the program and answer any additional questions. If they are, add their names, endorsements, and telephone numbers to the Current Teachers Applicants List.
5. Advertise in the newspaper, and by radio/TV Public Service Announcements.
6. Distribute flyers to universities, Alaska Teacher Placement, schools, and other areas for posting on bulletin boards.
7. Visit schools on "field trips." Talk to high school and university classes, and counselors on encouraging students to become interested in teaching careers.
8. Attend functions at schools and universities where education students will be gathering.
9. Participate in conferences and workshops. Be a presenter and discuss the Teacher Mentor Program.
10. Have a table at job and career fairs and talk to students and unemployed teachers.
11. Organize a mini-job fair with the School District to discuss interviewing, resume writing, completing job applications, and applicants can meet with principals.

## **SECTION II MENTORING PROSPECTIVE TEACHER APPLICANTS**

1. Assist with teacher certification by referring education majors to a local education center for PPST readiness classes.
2. Advise teachers of the Alaska Department of Education certification process.
3. Facilitate teacher applicant readiness by initial coaching, workshops, and audio-conferences. Assertive training/cultural sensitivity classes will also be presented. For further information, please see Section I, Coaching and Training Sessions, page 5 in the Guidebook for New Teacher Applicants in Alaska School Districts.
4. Provide guidance in resumes, portfolios, and applications for submittal to the School District.
5. Assist with counseling and coaching for initial interview readiness.
6. Along with the Recruitment Liaison, complete an initial screening interview with the teacher applicant. Discuss interviewing techniques, questions and answers that could be asked on an interview.
7. Distribute informational materials such as Guidebook for New Teacher Applicants in Alaska School Districts, brochures and newsletters, orientation materials and educational standards, philosophies, goals and objectives, curriculum scope and sequence information.
8. Provide web site addresses where teacher applicants can locate job applications, teacher openings, state standards, district schools, resume, and cover letter writing, interviewing skills, and other pertinent information to assist them.
9. Organize a joint potluck for clients to become acquainted and meet university, school district, and other mentor personnel. Suggested agenda could include: welcome and introduction of new and mentor teachers, Teacher Mentor Project update, entertainment, food, shared activities and socializing.
10. Conduct a weekly teleconference with teacher applicants to discuss interview questions and any other problems teachers are encountering while getting jobs. Use the Guidebook for New Teacher Applicants in Alaska School Districts to review interviewing tips, checklist, philosophies of schools, and other materials of interest to teachers looking for jobs.
11. Confirm job openings with the School District in March and April. Advise applicants of job openings at schools, including telephone numbers, names of principals, etc.
12. Determine the interview outcome and if needed, provide more coaching to the applicant.

13. Offer supplementary coaching for clients to re-interview with the School District.
14. Work with the Teacher Recruitment Liaison to facilitate the building interview by scheduling arrangements.
15. Determine the interview outcome and notify any other mentors of the new hire so they can work with them later.
16. Maintain a client database for teachers, students, non-profit organizations, and other information from mailings.
17. Complete reports on the project and whether the goals have been met.
18. Mail and tabulate surveys on how to improve the Teacher Mentor Program and problems new teachers encountered in getting hired and during their first year.

<b>SECTION III MENTORING FIRST YEAR TEACHERS</b>
--

1. Provide first-year teacher mentorship and support to the new employee. Explore the suggestion of a two-year program.
2. Conduct a teacher orientation and networking workshop to help the new teacher become more comfortable in the School District. Invite veteran teachers to share ideas and provide support. Supply a packet of information, including several tips for the first few weeks, samples of letters to parents, classroom management strategies, etc. Try to include computer programs for classroom management and grade reporting.
3. Set up situations where new teachers can observe classroom-teaching situations.
4. Establish and conduct workshops with selected topics and speakers. Examples include: parent teacher conferencing and surviving the holiday season.
5. The mentoring process should have standards, accountability, and an agreement of accomplishment. A log is kept of visits, observations, and activities designed to promote the mentoring process.
6. Schedule visits to new teacher classrooms to gain insight on classroom organization, management, and strategies utilized by other teachers. During a class- room visit:
  - Be as unobtrusive as possible
  - Ask what has been working
  - Discuss how you can be of help
  - Plan for the next visit
7. Schedule cultural diversity workshops for administration, teachers, and other.

# **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**STANDARDS FOR ALASKA'S TEACHERS**

A teacher can describe the teacher's philosophy of education  
and demonstrate its relationship to the teacher's practice

*Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*

- a. engaging in thoughtful and critical examination of the teacher's practice with others, including describing the relationship of beliefs about learning, teaching, and assessment practice to current trends, strategies, and resources in the teaching profession; and
- b. demonstrating consistency between a teacher's beliefs and the teacher's practice.

**1. A teacher understands how students learn and develop, and applies that knowledge in the teacher's practice.**

*Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*

- a. accurately identifying and teaching to the developmental abilities of students; and
- b. applying learning theory in practice to accommodate differences in how students learn, including accommodating differences in student intelligence, perception, and cognitive style.

**2. A teacher teaches students with respect for their individual and cultural characteristics.**

*Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*

- a. incorporating characteristics of the student's and local community's culture into instructional strategies that support student learning; identifying and using instructional strategies and resources that are appropriate to the individual and special needs of students; and
- b. applying knowledge of Alaska history, geography, economics, governance, languages, traditional life cycles, and current issues to the selection of instructional strategies, materials, and resources.

**3. A teacher knows the teacher's content area and how to teach it.**

*Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*

- a. demonstrating knowledge of the academic structure of the teacher's content area, its tools of inquiry, central concepts, and connections to other domains of knowledge;
- b. identifying the developmental stages by which learners gain mastery of the content area, applying appropriate strategies to assess a student's stage of learning in the subject, and applying appropriate strategies, including collaborating with others, to facilitate students' development; drawing from a wide repertoire of strategies, including, where appropriate, instructional applications of technology, and adapting and applying these strategies within the instructional context;
- c. connecting the content area to other content areas and to practical situations encountered outside the school; and
- d. staying current in the teacher's content area and demonstrating its relationship with and application to classroom activities, life, work, and community.

**4. A teacher facilitates, monitors, and assesses student learning.**

*Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*

- a. organizing and delivering instruction based on the characteristics of the students and the goals of the curriculum;
- b. creating, selecting, adapting, and using a variety of instructional resources to facilitate curricular goals and student attainment of performance standards;
- c. creating, selecting, adapting, and using a variety of assessment strategies that provide information about and reinforce student learning and that assist students in reflecting on their own progress;
- d. organizing and maintaining records of students' learning and using a variety of methods to communicate student progress to students, parents, administrators and other appropriate audiences; and

- e. reflecting on information gained from assessments and adjusting teaching practice, as appropriate, to facilitate student progress toward learning and curricular goals.
- 5. A teacher creates and maintains a learning environment in which all students are actively engaged and contributing members.**
- Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*
- a. creating and maintaining a stimulating, inclusive, and safe learning community in which students take intellectual risks and work independently and collaboratively;
  - b. communicating high standards for student performance and clear expectations of what students will learn;
  - c. planning and using a variety of classroom management techniques to establish and maintain an environment in which all students are able to learn; and
  - d. assisting students in understanding their role in sharing responsibility for their learning.
- 6. A teacher works as a partner with parents, families, and with the community.**
- Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*
- a. promoting and maintaining regular and meaningful communication between the classroom and students' families;
  - b. working with parents and families to support and promote student learning;
  - c. participating in schoolwide efforts to communicate with the broader community and to involve parents and families in student learning;
  - d. connecting, through instructional strategies, the school and classroom activities with student homes and cultures, work places, and the community; and
  - e. involving parents and families in setting and monitoring student learning goals.
- 7. A teacher participates in and contributes to the teaching profession.**
- Performances that reflect attainment of this standard include*
- a. maintaining a high standard of professional ethics;
  - b. maintaining and updating both knowledge of the teacher's content area or areas and best teaching practice;
  - c. engaging in instructional development activities to improve or update classroom, school, or district programs; and
  - d. communicating, working cooperatively, and developing professional relationships with colleagues.

**Alaska Education Regulations  
4 AAC 04.200 (1997)**

# STATE OF ALASKA STANDARDS FOR ALASKA'S TEACHERS

January 1998

Alaska's leaders have taken significant steps to improve our public schools. Under the banner of the Alaska Quality Schools Initiative, Governor Knowles, the State Board of Education, parents, school board members, business leaders and hundreds of others are moving on many fronts to improve the academic achievement of our children and the quality of our schools.

A key part of this reform movement is to improve the skills and abilities of the professionals—the teachers and administrators—who teach our children and lead their instructional programs. A landmark step toward this end occurred in 1994 when the State Board of Education adopted teacher standards. These standards were amended in 1997. The Board also adopted standards for administrators in 1997. For the first time in Alaska's history, these standards clearly define the skills and abilities that our teachers and administrators need to possess to effectively prepare today's students for successful lives and productive careers.

Many people and organizations were involved in developing the standards, which provide the bedrock for further restructuring public K-12 schools and colleges of education. Upon this bedrock, Alaskans are working to find better ways to prepare new teachers, credential new and experienced teachers, and provide ongoing professional development to practicing educators. They are doing this with one goal in mind—to improve the academic achievement of students.

The teacher education standards adopted by the State Board of Education are highlighted in this (retyped) brochure.

I invite all Alaskans to get behind this and other projects of the Alaska Quality Schools Initiative.

Shirley J. Holloway, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Education

Serving Alaska's community of learners.

For further information about these standards or other efforts to improve the quality of Alaska's education workforce, please contact the ***Alaska Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification, 801 West 10th Street, Juneau, AK 99801-1894. E-mail: [certify@educ.state.ak.us](mailto:certify@educ.state.ak.us) Phone: (907) 465-8663***

## **APPENDIX B**

### **ALASKA'S VISION AND GOALS FOR EDUCATION**

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Department of Education is to lead and support the development of responsible, economically viable, lifelong learners and citizens.

**Vision Statement:** In keeping with the vision of the Governor's Office for the people of Alaska, the State Board of Education's vision for the education of the state's children, youth, and citizens is similarly based in the co-partnership of the state with the local community, its families and its schools. The vision is embodied in the following statements of belief:

#### **For Alaska's Society:**

- Education is the single most legitimate and compelling responsibility for the community and local government.
- A university-educated people is the greatest security for a democratic, free, and prosperous society.
- A quality education system involves all stakeholders.
- An investment in quality education reduces the need for social service programs.

#### **For Alaska's Families:**

- Parents and families are a child's first teachers.
- Learning is a family value.
- Families have a right and responsibility to be active partners in their children's schools.
- The education level and marketable skills of a parent are the most important factors in moving children out of poverty.
- Families and communities must nurture the healthy development of all children to ensure individual success.

#### **For Alaska's Schools:**

- Education is a planned process to provide each student equity and a right to a quality education that meets or exceeds high standards using resources inside and outside the school setting.
- Schools have a responsibility to involve parents, families, the community, and businesses in the education of children.
- Schools must provide the safe and healthy environment to enable each student the opportunity to meet or exceed high standards and have their learning assessed in a variety of ways.
- Comprehensive developmentally appropriate early childhood programs must be available for all children.
- Schools must be designed and organized to meet the developmental and cultural needs of individual students while promoting public credibility and the student's desire to learn.

#### **For Alaska's Individual Learners:**

- Everyone is a learner and a teacher during the lifelong process of education.
- Education contributes to the individual's journey toward self-reliance and independence.
- Education must provide entry and re-entry options for lifelong learners to expand career options.
- Schools and instruction must be designed and organized to meet the varying needs of individual learners.
- Communities and schools must accept the instructional and fiscal responsibility for the adequate and appropriate education of individual learners.
- Individual learners must assume the appropriate level of responsibility for their own learning.

#### **Goals:**

The Alaska Department of Education stands at the intersection of many parts of the state's social systems, necessitating that it direct its attention to a new set of goals and objectives.

- **GOAL A:** Focus the education system on improving the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of learners to prepare them for community and global citizenry, lifelong learning, and work.
- **GOAL B:** Provide leadership and support throughout the education system to effectively and efficiently serve the expanded user base—every learner from birth through adulthood.
- **GOAL C:** Develop and model programs and alternatives for learners of all ages and cultures in partnership with other entities.
- **GOAL D:** Develop interagency support and cooperation in areas such as: early learning, healthy families, schools and communities, libraries, museums, archives, arts council and schools, post secondary education programs and vocational rehabilitation training and support. Establish school/community/agency partnerships to assess and determine needs and most effective design and delivery of programs and services.
- **GOAL E:** Increase public support and awareness for education across diverse groups.

For objectives and further information, contact the **State of Alaska, Office of the Commissioner, 810 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Juneau, AK 99801-1894 telephone: (907) 465-2800** (Adopted by the State Board 1/21/99.)

**APPENDIX C  
ALASKA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CERTIFICATED APPLICATION PACKET**

*Obtain from the Alaskan School District of your choice.*

**APPENDIX D  
TEACHER MENTOR PROJECT  
TEACHER APPLICANTS FOLLOW-UP SURVEY (SAMPLE)**

*Directions.* In order to continue improving the quality of the Mentor Project for teacher applicants to the \_\_\_\_\_ School District, please complete this survey form and return it to: \_\_\_\_\_ . Thank you for your assistance.

1. How did you find out about the School District's teacher mentor program?
2. What were the three or four most useful tips that you learned from the School District's seminars and/or one-on-one coaching sessions?
3. Were the sessions applicable to your interview experience?      Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
*If you answered "no," please indicate what other information or tips would have been useful to you.*
4. Was the School District teacher mentor staff responsive to your needs? *Please explain, briefly.*
5. Were the tips on the "application process" useful?      Yes \_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
6. Were you placed on the School District's Eligible-to-Hire List?      Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
7. Were you offered a position by the School District?      Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
*If yes, on what date? \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_.*
8. Did you accept the offer?      Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ *If not, why?*
9. What advice would you offer for improving the teacher mentor coaching and/or advising in the hiring process?
10. *What would be useful in improving the quality of this Teacher Mentor Program for new teacher applicants?*
11. *What was most useful to you in the School District's Teacher Mentor Program? Please comment.*
12. *What was least useful to you in the School District's Teacher Mentor Program? Please comment.*
13. General Comments:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**This information is confidential.**

**APPENDIX E**  
**RESUME SAMPLES**

**1. CHRONOLOGICAL SAMPLE FORM** Job experience is arranged listing most recent job first.

**ANNE E. BATES**  
**16 East Street**  
**Kingston, Minnesota 06006**  
**(333) 555-5555**

**JOB OBJECTIVE** To work full time as a reporter for a major daily newspaper.

**EDUCATION** Alexandria College, Alexandria, Minnesota  
B.A. Communications, June 1992  
Journalism Award, 1992

**EXPERIENCE** (1992-present)  
The Kingston News, Kingston, Minnesota  
Working as a reporter. Responsible for covering local politics. Write regular column on political elections and events.

(1990-1992)  
Alexandria College News, Alexandria, Minnesota  
Served as features editor.

(Summer 1991)  
WXL, Channel 52, Ashland, Minnesota  
Completed a summer internship in broadcast journalism. Covered local news stories.

**SPECIAL SKILLS** Fluent in Spanish  
Skilled in use of word processing and office software.

**2. FUNCTIONAL SAMPLE FORM** Work experience is arranged according to areas of skill.

**ANNE E. BATES**  
**16 East Street**  
**Kingston, Minnesota 06006**  
**(333) 555-5555**

**JOB OBJECTIVE** To work full time as a reporter for a major daily newspaper.

**SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Conducted on-the-scene interviews as part of work for a television news team.  
Interviewed local officials and officeholders while covering political events.

Writing  
Wrote pieces for television news broadcasts.  
Wrote feature articles for college newspaper.  
Reported on local politics for city newspaper.  
Able to write in Spanish.  
Skilled in use of word processing and office software.

Editing  
Worked as features editor for college newspaper.

**WORK HISTORY** The Kingston News, Kingston, Minnesota  
Alexandria College News, Alexandria, Minnesota  
WXL, Channel 52, Ashland, Minnesota

**EDUCATION** Alexandria College, Alexandria, Minnesota  
B.A. Communications, June 1992  
Journalism Award, 1992

### 3. CHRONOLOGICAL AND FUNCTIONAL COMBINATION SAMPLE

**ANNE E. BATES**  
**16 East Street**  
**Kingston, Minnesota 06006**  
**(333) 555-5555**

**JOB OBJECTIVE** To work full time as a reporter for a major daily newspaper.

**EDUCATION** Alexandria College, Alexandria, Minnesota  
B.A. Communications, June 1992  
Journalism Award, 1992

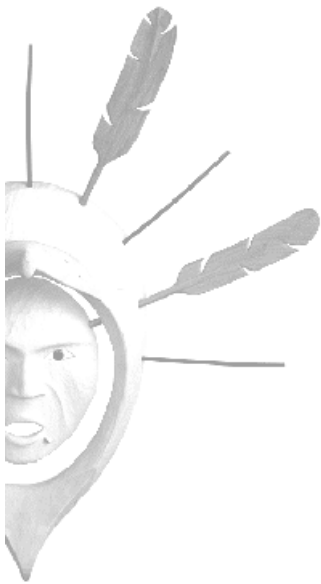
**SPECIAL SKILLS** Fluent in Spanish.  
Skilled in use of word processing and office software.

**WORK HISTORY** (1992-present)  
The Kingston News, Kingston, Minnesota  
Working as a reporter. Responsible for covering local politics. Write regular column on political elections and events.  
(1990-1992)  
Alexandria College News, Alexandria, Minnesota  
Served as features editor.  
  
(Summer 1991)  
WXL, Channel 52, Ashland, Minnesota  
Completed a summer internship in broadcast journalism.  
Covered local news stories.

**Source:** Channing L. Bete Co. Inc., 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 01373 Phone: (800) 628-7733 1995)

### APPENDIX F WEB SITE CONTACTS

- Alaska Pacific University .....<http://www.alaskapacific.edu>
- Alaska's People (Employment/Training Service) ..... <http://www.alaskaspeople.com/>
- Alaska Regional Assistance Center (AKRAC) ..... <http://www.akrac.k12.ak.us/>
- Alaskan School Districts on the Internet.....[http://www.educ.state.ak.us/DOE\\_Rolodex/QInternet\\_1.cfm](http://www.educ.state.ak.us/DOE_Rolodex/QInternet_1.cfm)
- Alaska Teacher Placement ..... <http://www.alaska.edu/atp/>
- Anchorage School District ..... <http://www.asdk12.org/>
- Department of Education Certification Information .<http://www.educ.state.ak.us/teachercertification/home.html>
- National Board Certification Information ..... <http://www.nbpts.org/>
- State of Alaska..... <http://www.state.ak.us/>
- State of Alaska Department of Education ..... <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/TeacherCertification/>  
..... <http://www.educ.state.ak.us/teachercertification/home.html>
- University of Alaska Anchorage..... <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu>
- University of Alaska Fairbanks, Teacher Placement ..... <http://www.uaf.edu/atp/text/>



**Guidebook for New  
Teacher Applicants  
in Alaska School Districts  
2000-2001**