

Partnerships for Learning

While partnerships in education are not new, there is a renewed recognition across Alaska and the nation of the importance of partnerships to further develop and support educational opportunities from preschool through postsecondary. According to the Council for Corporate and School Partnerships' *Guiding Principles for Business and School Partnerships*, nearly 70 percent of the nation's school districts have business/education partnerships. Education-focused nonprofits often help raise awareness about important education issues and can provide structure and support for a program.

Education does not exist in a vacuum. Through a variety of partnerships the pre-K through postsecondary system can bridge the student's present with the student's future, allowing students and their parents to see the realm of possibilities that exist for them in life. Partnerships infuse the new thinking and energy essential to strengthening educational opportunities for all students. Partnerships build student knowledge while making a lasting impact on student attitudes and beliefs about what they can achieve in their lives.

Opportunities for engagement of partners run range from providing resources for individual schools to fostering community support for policy initiatives to training teachers and students in new skills and technologies. Partnerships allow a wide variety of people to interact with and impact education on a variety of levels while leveraging resources, human and monetary, to create new learning opportunities for students, teachers, and communities.

The following are but a few examples of existing partnerships currently making an impact on education in Alaska:

- Tech Prep agreements between many school districts, university and apprenticeship programs provide students with credit toward postsecondary certificates, credentials or degrees.
- Preparing Indigenous Teachers for All Alaska Schools (PITAAS) a partnership between school districts, the University of Alaska Southeast, Sealaska and Tlingit-Haida provides mentors in the high schools in southeast Alaska.
- Future Teachers of Alaska, a statewide collaborative effort to inspire Alaska Native K-12 students to become teachers, involves a partnership among parents, teachers, University of Alaska campuses, communities and others.
- Business and Industry Internships that allow students to experience a variety of career pathways while strengthening their skills for the work force

The challenge for the future is to broaden existing partnerships and to find new partnerships that will continue to strengthen pre-K to postsecondary education and opportunities for students.

Topics this work group could examine include:

- Teacher training and staff development
- Research of effective teaching and learning
- Life-long learning
- Middle colleges
- Counselor boot camps
- Student recruitment for postsecondary opportunities
- Bridging programs
- Business and school partnerships
- Ownership of Alaska education institutions

Guiding Questions

What partnerships with businesses and nonprofit agencies should the Department of Education & Early Development, school districts, and the universities develop in order to insure quality preparation and professional development for all educators?

What opportunities exist to engage parents from pre-K through postsecondary as partners in the education process?

What kinds of quality pre-K, university, business, and nonprofit partnerships will enable students and parents to recognize the value of postsecondary education?

How do we promote ownership of a quality pre-K-20 education system by all Alaskans?

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