25	January	2016
	
TO:																										
	University	of	Alaska	Community
	
FROM:																				
	Jim	Johnsen,	President
	
SUBJECT:															
	Planning	Our	Future
	
The	University	of	Alaska	Board	of	Regents	held	its	annual	strategic	planning	meeting	last	
Thursday	and	Friday	in	Anchorage.	The	meeting	included	academic	and	administrative	leaders	
form	the	system	office	and	the	campuses.
	
The	purpose	of	the	meeting	was	to	set	the	long	term	course	for	Alaska’s	university	system	
during	this	most	difficult	financial	period	for	the	state.	The	Regents	were	unanimous	in	their	
commitment	that	the	university	provide	excellent	programs	at	each	of	its	campuses,	ensure	
access	to	the	opportunities	only	the	university	can	provide	Alaskans,	and	do	so	more	cost	
effectively.
	
The	meeting	began	with	a	report	on	the	university’s	progress	and	challenges	in	meeting	the	
state’s	high	priority	needs	for	higher	education.	The	presentation	was	followed	by	detailed	
information	on	the	university’s	organizational	structure,	the	roles	and	responsibilities	of	the	
Regents	and	university	administration,	the	missions	of	its	campuses,	the	wide	range	of	
academic	programs	offered	across	the	state,	cost	cutting	steps	already	underway,	options	for	
restructuring,	and	planning	for	an	additional	budget	cut	this	year.
	
The	Regents’	focus	then	moved	to	how	the	university	could,	through	a	more	unified	plan:
	
1.
 cut	expenses	in	both	academic	programs	and	administration	while	investing	in	areas	of	need	
and	opportunity
	
2.
 reduce	the	number	(and	cost)	of	redundant	programs	across	the	campuses	while	maintaining	
wide	access	to	those	programs	for	place	committed	students
	
3.
 diversify	revenues	so	the	university	does	not	depend	so	much	on	the	state
	
4.

the next hundred years. It's incumbent upon us to clearly define a university that can do just

that through its three major campuses. We have areas of excellence and expertise at each of

our campuses and we hope to highli ght and strengthen our campuses while elimi nating

redundancy, thus becoming more streamlined and efficient. I believe this is the best way to use

our resources and is also the best way to serve our stu dents and our state. The Regents gave

their u nanimous support to President Johnsen to proceed with the Strategic Pathways model

an d present to us again for review at our February meeting.”

The draft framework supported by the Regents is based on several core principles:

Focus:

Each of the three universities will focus their research, teaching, and outreach activities

on that university’s unique set of strengths, capabilities, advantages, and opportunities.

Each university will serve as a “lead campus” in its areas of focus for the UA system.

Acces s :

Instead of a wide range of academic degree programs delivered by each campus, diverse

program options will be avai lable from the “l ead campus” to students acros s the system

via e-learning (distance education). In addition, at each campus there will conti nue to be

a wide range of courses offered, though th ere may be fewer full degree programs

provided by each campus.

Diversity:

By assigning “ lead campus” responsibilities to each campus, we can maintai n or even

expand the diversity of program options available across the system while avoiding

unnecessary and costly duplication of programs at each campus.

Excellence:

Each program will b e resourced sufficiently to be excellent, thus allowing the universi ty

to retain and attract top quality faculty, recruit more Alaskan and “outside” students, and

attract more pri vate donations and specialized grants and contracts.

Consistency:

General Education Requirements (GERs), liberal arts and humanities courses,

develop mental education classes, and career and technical certificate and degree

programs will be avail able broadly at all campuses. The university will continue to enable

student transfers and flexibility through common calendars, GERS, and courses. In

ad dition, th ere will be greater consistency in admini strative systems and educational

technologies across the university.