

**To: Members of the State Board of
Education & Early Development**

January 22, 2025

From: Dr. Deena Bishop, Commissioner

Agenda Item: 13

♦ **ISSUE**

The board is being asked to provide provisional state approval of the Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) through December 31, 2032.

This document is an updated version of the previous briefings provided to the board. It reflects the most current information regarding UAA's program development, accreditation timeline, and state approval request.

♦ **BACKGROUND**

- The University of Alaska Anchorage's Master of Science in School Psychology-Specialist program has been designed to meet workforce needs for School Psychologists in Alaska by preparing graduates to provide assessment, intervention, consultation, and mental health services in Alaska schools.
- Alaska is currently experiencing a significant workforce shortage of school psychologists. The state's current ratio is approximately 1 school psychologist per 1,660 children and youth, which is more than three times higher than the recommended ratio of 1:500 as advised by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). 9 out of 54 Alaska school districts rely on contractual workers to provide services.
- In Alaska, the certification requirements for special service providers, including school psychologists, are governed by 4 AAC 12.355 of the Alaska Administrative Code. For the "school psychology" endorsement, the applicant must be recommended for endorsement by an institution whose psychology program has been approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Association of School Psychologists, or the American Psychological Association.
 - [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\) standards](#)
- Master of Science in School Psychology-Specialist program accreditation timeline:
 - July 2025 - Submit for Candidacy Status
 - September 2028 - Submit for Full Accreditation
 - April 2029 - NASP complete site visit
 - June 2029 - NASP informs program of decision
- The following items can be found behind Agenda Item 06.
 - UAA's Request for Provisional Approval (updated)

- Jenny McNulty, PhD, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Hattie Harvey, PhD, Professor of Psychology & School Psychology Program Director will be present to brief the board.

♦ **OPTIONS**

- Approve University of Alaska Anchorage's request for provisional state approval of its Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program request for provisional state approval.
- Approve UAA's Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program request for provisional state approval with conditions.
- Deny UAA's Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program request for provisional state approval.
- Seek more information.

♦ **ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION**

- Approve UAA's Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program request for provisional state approval.

♦ **SUGGESTED MOTION**

I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the University of Alaska Anchorage's request for provisional state approval of its Master of Science in School Psychology – Specialist program through June 30, 2029. During provisional approval status, the University of Alaska Anchorage is required to provide annual updates on their progress toward NASP accreditation at the state board's winter regular meeting.