

## MSBSD – University of Alaska Teacher Education Program Partnership Summary

The Matanuska Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD) and the University of Alaska have partnered to host a “Grow Your Own” teacher education program. This program is designed to provide MSBSD students or recent graduates with the opportunity to pursue a bachelor’s degree in education through the University of Alaska while working part-time with MSBSD. This 2+2 program allows students to complete their first two years of their program through Mat-Su College and then complete the remaining 2 through either the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) or the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), depending on which education degree program they wish to pursue.

**Eligibility:** Individuals who have graduated from a MSBSD school within three years of their date of application to the program interested in pursuing an education degree and return to MSBSD to teach full-time are welcome to apply. MSBSD reserves the right to limit the number of selected teacher loan forgiveness participants each year. MSBSD students must graduate with a 2.50 grade point average (GPA) or above to qualify. Students will also be required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

**Program Structure:** Mat-Su College will provide required course work offered both in person and asynchronously which will lead to a Bachelor of Education and an Alaska teaching certification. Students will follow the 2-year plan established by the university in which they will ultimately earn their bachelor’s degree from (UAS, UAF, or UAA). Students must designate which university they will complete their bachelor's degree from by the end of their first year.

### **Considerations:**

1. Program students will be placed in a cohort group where they will move together through their four-year teacher education program. Cohort students will take their education courses together, thus providing motivation, engagement, and support to each other.
2. District staff and administrators may serve as program instructors to better enhance course content and make it more relevant to MSBSD.
3. To remain in this program, students must maintain an overall college GPA of 3.0 for all academic coursework. As part of the program, students agree to allow UA to provide updates on your academic performance to MSBSD.
4. Program students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75 in education coursework to move into their junior year of academic study.
5. Program students must earn a grade of “C” or higher in all education coursework to qualify for graduation.

As described above, participants will complete their college coursework through distance learning, with some face-to-face class sessions held locally.

Program participants will be employed part-time (10 – 20 hours per week) within a MSBSD school serving as determined by MSBSD. Failure to remain in good

employment standing with MSBSD is grounds for removal from the program. When participants reach their senior academic year, they will complete their student teaching experience.

**Graduation:** At the completion of this program, students will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Alaska and will be eligible to apply for teaching certification in Alaska.

**Loan Forgiveness Program Components:** Program students who complete the baccalaureate degree program and obtain Alaska teacher certification are encouraged to apply for full-time teaching positions with MSBSD. MSBSD will provide forgiveness of student loans incurred for eligible expenses upon hire consistent with the supplemental agreement to be entered into between the student and MSBSD upon hire. MSBSD will have sole and complete discretion in determining those students to be hired for teaching position upon the completion of the academic program at a University of Alaska institution. In order to receive forgiveness, students must be hired within three years of their graduation from the University of Alaska and such forgiveness will be prorated over a five-year period for individuals who are retained in employment and remain in good standing.

**FAQ:**

1. Eligible expenses include tuition for required coursework, books, class fees, and interest incurred on student loans. As set forth in the MOA between the District and UA regarding this Program, the Participant may be required to provide relevant documentation to assure the integrity of and compliance with the Program.
2. Expenses that are ineligible for reimbursement include: room and board, tuition for non-required coursework, cost for elective courses and enrichment activities, and any tuition, books, or fees associated with retaking a course previously failed or in which a student withdrew from.
3. MSBSD to reimburse the teacher's University of Alaska tuition and fees over a five-year MSBSD teaching time frame.
4. Program participants have three years in which to gain full-time employment with MSBSD. Failure to gain full-time employment within this time will result in the scholarship program being void.
5. To maintain eligibility for loan forgiveness, students must obtain a Bachelor of Science in Education within six years of enrolling in the University of Alaska.