

A Look Back at X - CED

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In 1970, Alaska Methodist University, the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and the State Operated School System joined together to create a new teacher training program. The program, aimed at training Alaska Native teachers, was called the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (ARTTC). Sixty students were enrolled in ten rural sites around the state, and a teacher was hired as a full-time team leader at each site. The two Universities and SOS each hired a full-time staff person to handle the administrative and instructional responsibilities, and a Consortium Board was established to oversee the program's operation. Funding was provided by the U.S. Office of Education Teacher Corps and Career Opportunities Program.

Training was provided through a field delivery system to students on-site in the rural communities, except during the summer when students would alternate between the two campuses. Instruction was provided by program staff and by other faculty hired specifically to teach the field courses. Students enrolled in courses through both campuses, but would deal with them as a single course of study leading to a B.Ed. degree from the University of Alaska and an Alaska Type A Elementary Teaching Certificate.

By 1974, forty-two students had graduated and most took teaching positions in rural schools around the State. Others took positions such as boarding home coordinator, Johnson-O'Malley director or manpower director in their community. All but three or four continue to work in Alaska.

During the fourth year, the program underwent a review and, following a series of regional meetings, was reorganized to take into account the experience of the first four years. The two main changes were that the program was regionalized, so that students could participate without having to move to a regional center, and the team leader positions were changed to University faculty positions, but still remaining in the field. This allowed for the bulk of the instruction to be offered by faculty who had first hand knowledge of the situation in which students were working. Eventually, this led to a new characterized by close rapport between students and Field Coordinators.

The report also noted that the program needs to develop a system of communicating information about itself to those involved or concerned with education in Alaska and that it needs to include procedures to determine the degree of competence obtained in major and minor fields of specialization.