

Community college groups work for independent status

The Community College Coalition and the Alaska Association of Community College Council Inc. filed an application recently for an initiative to establish an independent community college system in the state.

The initiative is filed in response to the University of Alaska's restructuring plan developed by Donald O'Dowd, president of the University of Alaska.

Both organizations believe separation will accomplish the restructuring of Alaska's community colleges in half the time UA estimates it will take to restructure the system.

CCC and AACCC have developed budgets that they say show separation

would cost significantly less than the estimate made by UA, saving the state \$1.5 million.

CCC and AACCC have resolved that separation is in the best interest of Alaska because they fear O'Dowd's restructuring plan does not ensure the community college mission, instruction or programs.

"A statewide autonomous community college system preserves the identity of the existing schools and ensures continued local involvement," said Gail Phillips, AACCC president. "The new community college system would remain cohesive and economical with no additional costs passed on to students."