ALASKA POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND COMPLETION NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An executive summary will be incorporated into this plan after the contents is nearer to completion.

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NETWORK GOAL STATEMENT

65% by 2025 – Percentage of Working-Age Alaskans who will have a Postsecondary Credential

Postsecondary Credential – education that results in a certificate, degree or endorsement, including but not limited to:

- Completion of an apprenticeship program
- Industry-Recognized Licensure, Workforce Credential, or Occupational Endorsement Certificate
- Career or Technical Education Certificate
- Associates, Bachelors, or Master's Degree
- Doctoral, Professional or Advanced Degree

47.1% OF 25-64 YEAR OLD ALASKANS HAVE A CERTIFICATE AND HIGHER

- 37% HAVE COLLEGE DEGREES (ASSOCIATES AND HIGHER)
- 12.7% HAVE CERTIFICATES]

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MISSION STATEMENT

Increase the percentage of all Alaskans who complete postsecondary education, particularly earning those credentials relevant to a robust Alaskan economy.

WHY A NETWORK?

The Alaska Postsecondary Access & Completion Network will build and strengthen partnerships to act collectively to improve postsecondary outcomes for all Alaskans. The goal of the Network is to increase the number of credentialed workers in Alaska. Activity will address four major challenges: 1) absence of strong academic expectations in which our students aspire to and plan for education beyond high school graduation, 2) preparation for postsecondary and career success, 3) postsecondary education financing, and 4) scaling services to Alaskans' unique needs. The Network aims to raise the percent of the population with credentials and degrees from 47% to 65% by 2025 by reducing duplication of effort and creating synergy among service providers, supporting professional development, strengthening public messaging, and conducting and/or disseminating relevant research.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

For many years, Alaska has consistently ranked among the poorest performing states in postsecondary access and completion. Alaska currently ranks 49th in the United States at 29.5 undergraduate credentials awarded per 1,000 18- to 34-year-olds with no college degree[1], and is one of a minority of states with higher rates of degree completion among 35- to 64-year olds than 18- to 34-year olds[2]. Meanwhile, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development projects that roughly 65% of Alaska's fastest-growing, high-wage jobs will require some form of postsecondary credential by the year 2020.[3] With levels of postsecondary participation, retention and completion consistently rating among the lowest in the nation, immediate and focused action to improve postsecondary access and completion is critical.

Alaskan leaders, across varying stakeholder groups, are committed to improving Alaska's postsecondary access and completion rates and experience. These leaders have been working on projects within their own organizations, but recognize the potential presented through coordinated and unified effort. Toward that end a number are active as planning team members for an Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network, whose mission is to increase the percentage of all Alaskans who complete postsecondary education; particularly those earning credentials relevant to a robust Alaskan economy[4].

Planning team members, as well as participants from the November 2013 Alaska College Access and Success Summit, developed an inventory[5] of approximately 40 current postsecondary access and completion programs in Alaska, which has been expanded over time. In more recent meetings, planning team members have also elected to pursue the completion of a more comprehensive Postsecondary Access & Completion Programs & Policy Inventory funded by Alaska's federal College Access Challenge Grant – managed by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE). In the July, 2014 meeting, ACPE announced that McDowell Group, LLC. would conduct the inventory with completion expected by early November 2014. This inventory will provide a comprehensive understanding of the current postsecondary environment in Alaska, and will inform further development of this strategic plan.

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[1] Kelly, Patrick. "College Access and Success In Alaska: Data Analysis." National Center for Higher Education Management Statistics. Provided by Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. PowerPoint. 2013. 04 August 2014. <http://acpe.alaska.gov/Portals/0/CAST/AlaskaEnvironmentalScanAnalysis.pdf>

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey (ACS)

[3] Robinson, Dan. "Looking Ahead to 2020: Occupational Projections and Training Needs." Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Research and Analysis. Provided by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. 2014. 04 August 2014. <http://acpe.alaska.gov/Portals/0/CAST/DOL%20Presentation%20ACPE%20College%20Access%20and%20Success%20Team.pdf>

[4] Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. "Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network Meeting Summary – March 20, 2014." Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. 2014. 04 August 2014. <http://acpe.alaska.gov/Portals/0/CAST/Network_MeetingSummary_Mar14.pdf>.

[5] Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. "Inventory of Alaska College Access & Success Programs/Initiatives." Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. PowerPoint. 2014. 04 August 2014. <http://acpe.alaska.gov/Portals/0/CAST/AlaskaCollegeAccess_StatewideInventory.pdf>

CHALLENGES TO POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND COMPLETION IN ALASKA

In dialogue among Alaska leaders at the November 2013 summit, four themes emerged as the substantive challenges impairing postsecondary access and completion in Alaska: 1) absence of strong academic expectations in which our students aspire to and plan for education beyond high school graduation (Culture Change), 2) preparation for postsecondary and career success, 3) postsecondary education financing; and 4) scaling services to Alaskans' unique needs. Network planning team members determined that the first three themes address challenges for students, while the fourth addresses challenges for access and completion programs and service providers. Collectively these challenges will serve as a relevant frame of reference for Network planning team members to use in developing strategies and identifying appropriate measures outlined in this plan.

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EXPECTATIONS:

As demonstrated by:

- Focal points for students and staff need to extend beyond high school graduation to career pathway.
- Current strategies to motivate postsecondary credential attainment are not consistently effective across Alaska.
- Student transitions are often unplanned or poorly planned, without Personal Learning and Career Plans (PLCPs)*.
- Absence of a sense of urgency among Alaska education stakeholders regarding the individual and statewide impact of failure to act.

PREPARATION:

As demonstrated by:

- Rigorous curriculum for academic preparation for postsecondary is not consistently available; and when available is not the default option.
- Secondary exit and postsecondary entrance expectations are misaligned.
- Fewer, better measures are needed to evaluate students' postsecondary education preparation.
- Support is needed for soft skills development.

AFFORDABILITY:

As demonstrated by:

- Postsecondary education sticker price shock presents a barrier to planning conversations.
- Students are often unaware of financial support available to them.
- Disparities exist among Alaska regions in student financial aid access and awareness.
- Strengthening industry participation & community partnerships is critical to success.

SUPPORT:

As demonstrated by:

- A statewide inventory of postsecondary access and completion programs and policies does not currently exist.
- Scaling programs and services up or down can be equally challenging in different regions of Alaska.
- Service providers need a central clearinghouse as a recognized authority on postsecondary access and completion to collect and disseminate information and best practices.

*Personal Learning and Career Plans (PLCP) are a strategy outlined in the Alaska Career and Technical Education plan, developed in partnership between: the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the University of Alaska.[6]

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

In November, 2013, an Alaska College Access and Success Summit was organized by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), with funding by the federal College Access Challenge Grant program, and the support of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). This summit convened leaders and stakeholders from Alaska's education and workforce development sectors, including postsecondary institutions, school districts, and business and non-profit sectors.

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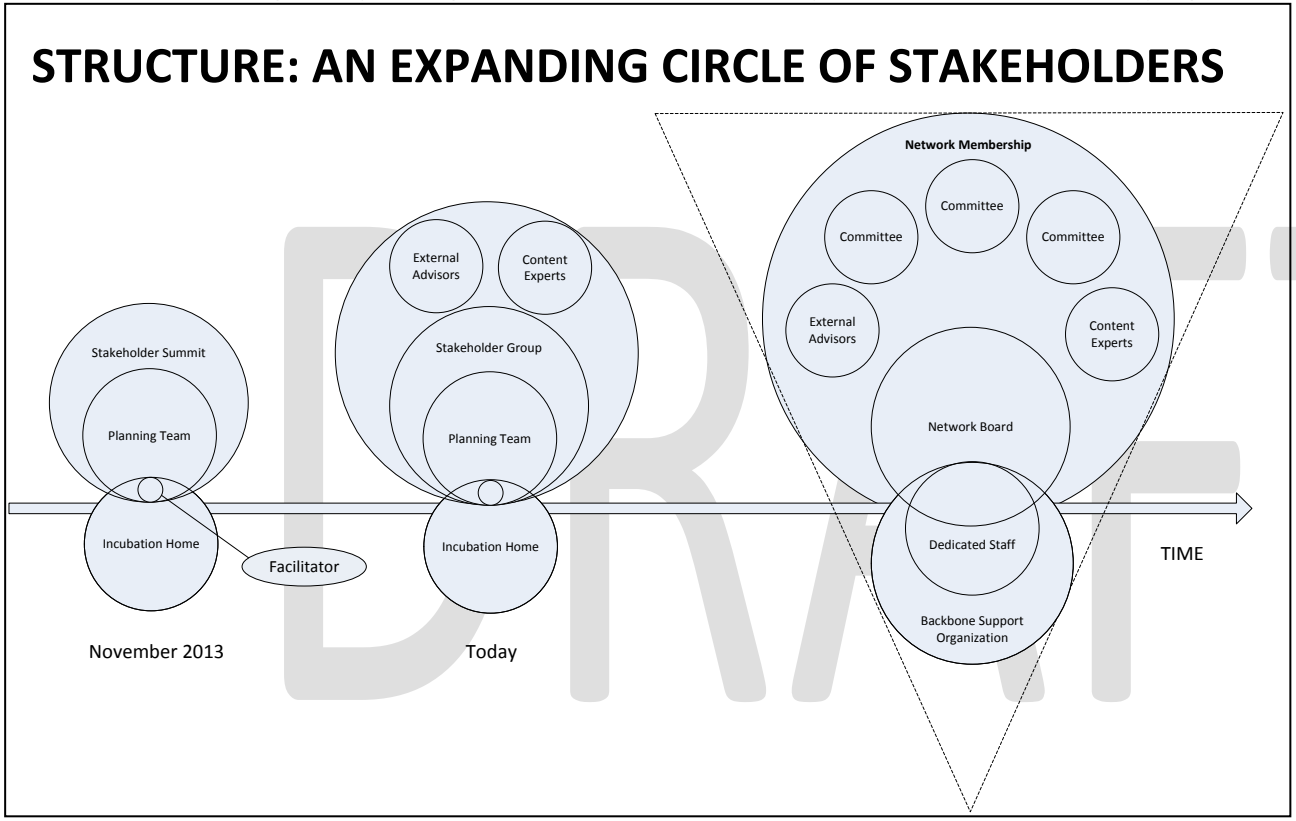
[6] 6 Mehrkens, H., Selvey, J. and Villa, F. "Alaska Career and Technical Education Plan." Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, University of Alaska. Pg. 4, Strategy 1.1. 2010. 08 August 2014. <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/cte/docs/cteplan/CTE_State_Plan.pdf>

Summit attendees explored ways to facilitate communication and advocacy among P20 education, business, and workforce training partners to positively influence the growth of a college and career-oriented culture in all regions of Alaska. Some participants extended their commitment to this effort, volunteering to be planning team members. As such, they continued to convene and progress toward the development of an Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network. This planning team continues to actively engage in dialogue on how best to positively impact Alaska's population and economy via the Network.



The planning team's work is progressing toward a statewide Network to facilitate partnerships and focus collective action to improve postsecondary outcomes for all Alaskans; focusing effort on the steps recommended for Network development by the National College Access Network. These steps are outlined in more detail in the Implementation section of this plan.

The end goal is to develop an independent Network, with a backbone organization dedicated to supporting the strategies and goals of the Network. This Network would have its own unique leadership and membership structures, and would form committees to facilitate work on Network strategies as needed.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis related to the current process of developing a statewide postsecondary access and completion Network should be conducted following the completion of the Collaborative Assessment Tool[7] survey currently being completed by planning team members. The Collaborative Assessment Subcommittee will: 1) review the results of the assessment; 2) record the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to Network development and current planning team member perspectives and understanding; and 3) make recommendations for addressing weaknesses and threats, and maximizing the benefit of strengths and opportunities. Once complete, these observations and recommendations will be incorporated into the strategic plan.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
List here.	List here.	List here.	List here.

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[7] The Collaborative Assessment Tool is a coalition building instrument developed and provided by the Institute for Coalition Building. <http://www.educationcoalition.com/#institute>

STRATEGIES TO ACCOMPLISH MISSION

To advance towards the Network goal of **65% by 2025**, it is essential that the planning team identify key areas to focus collective energy on. The four core strategy focus areas outlined in this strategic plan include: Partner Communication, Professional Development & Networking, Statewide Messaging, and Research & Data Collection. For each focus area, this plan outlines key objectives, strategies related to accomplishing that objective, and measures for evaluating success. Additionally, the relevance of each strategy to the challenges to postsecondary access and completion outlined in this plan is identified with abbreviations when appropriate: **Expectations [E], Preparation [P], Affordability [A], and Support [S]**.

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FOCUS AREA: RESEARCH & DATA COLLECTION

Access to accurate data, and conducting quality research, will enable the Network to develop strategies that significantly impact student success, and lead to achievement of the Network goal. It will also provide the Network with the means to inform the public and key stakeholders of the current state of postsecondary access and completion in Alaska, the need for changes in this area, and give the Network ability to measure success for each strategy and tactical initiative.

Objective	Measure	Related Strategies

Track Network progress towards **65% by 2025** goal, and progress on individual strategic plan objectives	GOAL:
	
	CURRENT:
		• Develop measures for each objective outlined in this plan that are: specific, actionable, results-based, and time-bound.
		• Develop a visual dashboard (through separate creation or facilitation through ANSWERS project) that tracks overall advancement towards Network goal, and measures for each objective
		• Compare Network progress to that of other similar national and local initiatives [S]
		  ○ Collect success data from national college access Networks (NCAN, MCAN, Move ED, Lumina)
		  ○ Collect data from local initiatives (Anchorage 90% By 2020)

Improve stakeholder's access to available data relevant to Alaska postsecondary access and completion	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Enhance understanding of how the ANSWERS project impacts/enables the Network's potential for data collection and research by requesting an update on ANSWERS project status and goals

		○ Identify partners who will be contributing data to ANSWERS, and whether those partnerships can be expanded within current project scope ○ Identify types of data housed by ANSWERS, and which data is accessible for research purposes (online course enrollment, residency, etc.) • Document barriers to data sharing in Alaska (privacy, rights, PII, data owners liability concerns) [E, S] • Clarify stakeholders' understanding of legal & ethical data exchange and use [S]
Strengthen data collection and dissemination around Alaska students' a) preparation for postsecondary education and training; b) postsecondary credential completion; c) workforce outcomes	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Research established measures of success in postsecondary credential attainment [E, P] • Collect and analyze data on assessment methods (Mandates, Utilization and Results) [P] ○ Accuplacer, ACT, SAT, WorkKeys, ALEKS • Identify and document data sources, partners, and required agreements for information exchange [S] • Collect, analyze, and disseminate data on in-state postsecondary credential completion [E] • Collect, analyze, and disseminate data on resident population holding postsecondary credentials [E]
Identify and document barriers and deterrents to completion of postsecondary education for Alaska students	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Develop and conduct survey of students (juniors) and/or adults who didn't choose to pursue postsecondary education: [E] ○ Reasons: - Under Prepared, Not Aware of Opportunities, Finances, Not Needed (or perception) ○ "What did you do?" 5 years later

FOCUS AREA: STATEWIDE MESSAGING

Strengthening statewide communication will support a culture change in Alaska by increasing residents' awareness of the value and importance of attaining a postsecondary credential. It can also serve to improve the knowledge base of the public, advocates for success, and professionals across Alaska preparing students for transitions into postsecondary, on how to accomplish those transitions. Collectively developed guidance on successful messaging can be found in the Essentials of Communication portion of this plan.

Objective	Measure	Related Strategies

Increase Alaskans' awareness of: a) the value and importance of attaining a postsecondary credential; and, b) workforce needs and the postsecondary attainment gap	GOAL:
	
	CURRENT:
		• Develop a public information campaign that emphasizes the value and importance of a postsecondary credential and motivates action related to attainment [E]
		  ○ Use **65% by 2025** goal and public messaging to stir excitement and draw people into the conversation [E]
		  ○ Highlight the variety of postsecondary education options available in Alaska
		  ○ Show the value of the potential/existing jobs in the community
		  ○ Identify the benefits and opportunities opened by varying levels of credentials
		  ○ Illustrate the student 'giving back' to their community through credential attainment
		  ○ Emphasize that completion is an attainable goal, and support systems are available
		• Co-Sponsor messaging from other agencies that aligns with mission [E]
		• Identify community leaders with postsecondary credentials to serve as examples and mentors [E]
		• Create a Facebook presence for the Network that encourages partners and the public to tune in for updates on postsecondary access and completion news [E]

Increase Public Awareness of Postsecondary Options and Preparation Requirements	GOAL:
	
	CURRENT:
		• Ensure resources exist that define and clearly articulate: [E, P, A, S]
		  ○ The various credentialed career pathways available to students (high school and/or returning adults)
		  ○ The requirements to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway (application, enrollment, exams, etc.)
		  ○ The resources needed – and available – to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway
		  ○ Student financial resources
		  Support existing committees and organizations already committed to increasing awareness of postsecondary options and preparation [E, S]

FOCUS AREA: PARTNER COMMUNICATION

Improved communication between professionals supporting student transitions into and throughout completion of postsecondary education will facilitate improved student outcomes. All initiatives should consider the importance of accessibility and clarity of information to students and families. It is also critical to seek collaboration amongst various advocates, civic organizations and community organizations, in all efforts. Information needs to be communicated through both dialogue and tangible materials, in language that is clear for a lay person to understand.

Objective	Measure	Related Strategies

Document the various credentialed career pathways for students (high school and/or returning adults).	GOAL:
	
	CURRENT:
		• Collect and consolidate information on the various: [E, P, A, S]
		  ○ requirements to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway (application, enrollment, exams, etc.)
		  ○ the resources needed – and available – to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway
		• Ensure resources exist that identify and explain student financial resources for postsecondary education [A]

Identify and document systemic challenges to successful student transitions.	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Analyze available data on common drop-out points for students along the educational pipeline and their causes [A, P, E] • Facilitate dialogue between secondary and postsecondary partners on assessments, entrance, and placement exams [P]

Identify and implement systemic solutions to address challenges and simplify transitions; strengthening existing partnerships between secondary, postsecondary, workforce, business, and community partners.	GOAL:
	
	CURRENT:
		• Create a forum for discussion between partners to identify options for the simplification of: [S]
		  ○ The various credentialed career pathways for students (high school and/or returning adults)
		  ○ The requirements to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway (application, enrollment, exams, etc.)
		  ○ The resources needed – and available – to successfully enter and complete a chosen pathway

FOCUS AREA: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & NETWORKING

Improved knowledge and resources among professionals supporting student transitions into and throughout completion of postsecondary education will facilitate improved student outcomes. Existing methods of collaboration and information sharing between these professionals should be utilized when possible to increase impacts without having to develop and market entirely new distribution methods.

Objective	Measure	Related Strategies
Increase Networking between key stakeholder and advocacy groups who do not otherwise get frequent opportunity for interaction.	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Provide opportunity for cross-stakeholder Networking and information sharing (i.e., parents, student organizations, high school counselors, postsecondary enrollment advisors, and employment counselors, etc.) through summits, conferences, or other gatherings. [S] • Provide support to existing local, regional and statewide Networks of support, and facilitate creation of Networks where they are absent [S] ○ Monitor interest from ACT Corporation in having an ACT board in Alaska • Identify Key Service Provider categories that should be targeted for messaging and professional development (and the organizations that represent them) [S]
Develop a common knowledge/language for professionals supporting student transitions into and throughout completion of postsecondary education	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Identify "Critical Minimum" knowledge for transitioning Alaskans [P] • Inventory College Access and Completion Programs [S] • Inventory Counselor resources and sources of information [E, A, S] • Assess need for a CE curriculum focused on postsecondary access and completion [S]
Gather, develop and promote sharing of best practices and resources for training and counseling professionals across Alaska	GOAL: CURRENT:	• Have a presence at the Alaska School Counselor Association Conference, and encourage attendance & industry support/financing [A, S] • Identify other existing platform(s) to host the best practice and resource information for distribution [S]

IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the strategic plan outlines key elements of successful implementation of Network strategies. In addition to the work that must be done to advance towards the **65% by 2025** goal, it is essential that the planning team identify and complete tasks essential to the successful creation and sustainability of the statewide Network. These implementation steps are recommended by the National College Access Network for

the successful creation and operation of a Network.[8] The outcome of, or progress towards, each step is outlined in more detail here, but a summary of activity is also available through the Network Development working document available on the Network's website at acpe.alaska.gov/Access.

NCAN'S STEPS TO NETWORK CREATION

1) *Establish a Planning Team*

Planning team members were initially identified at the Alaska College Access and Success Summit in November, 2013. Members indicated commitment to a planning process at the planning team meeting in January, 2014. Membership has expanded to diversify representation and contributions, and may continue to expand with targeted outreach after the completion of a stakeholder inventory.

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CURRENT PLANNING TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Name	Title	Organization
Secondary Education		
Kathy Moffitt	Alaska Middle College Program Administrator	Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District
John O-Brien	Director of Secondary Education	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Eric Gebhart	Superintendent	Nenana City School District
Elizabeth Congdon-McGee	Advocacy & Public Policy Chair	Alaska School Counselor Association
State Agency		
Rebekah Matrosova	Director of Outreach & Early Awareness	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Stephanie Butler	Director of Operations	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Postsecondary Education		
Ben Eveland	Director	Alaska's Institute of Technology (AVTEC)
Pearl Brower	President	Ilisagvik College
Saichi Oba	Associate Vice President	University of Alaska, Student & Enrollment Services
Mary Gower	Director	University of Alaska, Enrollment Services
Cathy LeCompte	Associate Dean	UAA, Community & Technical College
Joe Nelson	Vice Chancellor	UAS, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs
Lacy Karpilo	Associate Vice Chancellor	UAA, Student Affairs
Eric Pedersen	Associate Vice Chancellor	UAA, Enrollment Management

[8] National College Access Network. "Guidebook: Creating and Operating a Statewide, Regional, or Citywide College Access and Success Network." National College Access Network. Guidebook. 2011. 04 August 2014. <http://www.collegeaccess.org/Networkguidebooks>

Kacey Miller	Student Services Manager	UAF, Northwest Campus
Lael Oldmixon	Executive Director	UA College Savings Plan & UA Scholars
Community Organizations / Non-Profits		
Brenda Riley	Executive Director	Fairbanks Children's Museum
Luisa Machuca	Vice President	Kawerak Inc., Education, Employment and Training
June Sobocinski	Vice President	United Way of Anchorage
Carol Wren	Shareholder Development Manager	Bristol Bay Native Corporation, Ed/Training/Workforce
Moriah Sallaffie		Bering Strait Native Corp. Scholarship & Higher Ed.
Sheryl Weinberg	Executive Director	Southeast Regional Resource Center
Dan Henry	Education Specialist	Southeast Regional Resource Center
Business/Chambers of Commerce		
Bill Popp	President & CEO	Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
Archana Mishra	Live. Work. Play. Director	Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
Kathleen Castle	Executive Director	Construction Education Foundation
Students		
Chris Terry	Coalition Speaker	UA Coalition of Student Leaders

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2) Research the Needs of the State

Presentations on the current state of Alaska's postsecondary access and completion environment, as well as workforce projections and education needs for Alaska's economy were part of the summit and subsequent meetings of the planning team. These presentations are available on the Network's website at acpe.alaska.gov/Access. Four themes around challenges to postsecondary access and completion in Alaska were identified and are highlighted in the Environmental Analysis section of this plan. Additionally, summit participants identified three major needs for a statewide collective to address (Statewide Messaging, K-16 Communication, and Professional Development), which are included in Network strategies.

- Members express the need for additional information related to Alaska's demographics and population projections, to better understand what factors may impact progress towards the **65% by 2025** goal.

3) Inventory Existing Programs and Identify Gaps

An initial inventory of Alaska College Access and Success Programs/Initiatives was created after the November, 2013 summit and is available on the Network's website at acpe.alaska.gov/Access. Updates submitted by planning team members and other interested partners have been incorporated over time.

Additionally, planning team members have elected to pursue the completion of a more comprehensive Postsecondary Access & Completion Programs & Policy Inventory funded by Alaska's federal College Access Challenge Grant – managed by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE). McDowell Group, LLC. is conducting the inventory which is expected to be complete by early November 2014.

4) Determine the Mission of the Network

The mission statement was crafted at the inaugural planning team meeting in January, 2014, and was further refined and adopted in March, 2014. The Network's mission is to "increase the percentage of all Alaskans who complete postsecondary education, particularly credentials relevant to a robust Alaskan economy".

5) Secure Seed Funding for Network Creation

Seed funding for Network creation is currently provided through Alaska's federal College Access Challenge Grant. This grant is managed by ACPE and expected to continue through August 2016.

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ESTABLISHING A FORMAL NETWORK OPERATING STRUCTURE

Planning team members will establish a leadership and membership structure for the Network. The formal Network structure should be able to facilitate the creation of ad-hoc committees to pursue work on Network strategies as needed.

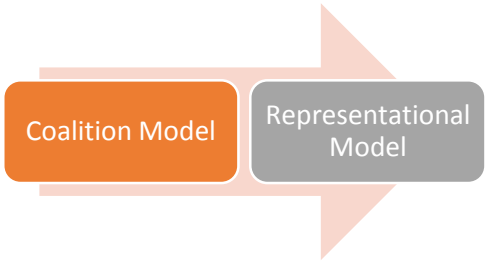
ASSUMPTIONS

At the May 2014 planning team meeting the Network Structure Subcommittee provided recommendations on operational, leadership and membership structures. These recommendations were based on an initial set of assumptions formed from earlier discussion:

- The Network will:
  - Facilitate cross-sector communication (Networking, awareness, best practices sharing)
  - Create public communication messages (reports, outreach, awareness – public advocacy)
  - Facilitate professional development (provide and/or sponsor)
  - Fundraise for the collective benefit of members
- The Network will not provide direct services to students
- Leadership will consist of a smaller, elected subgroup of members
- Membership will ultimately become very broad, across sectors and regions, and include college access professionals and practitioners at all levels of organizations

LONG-TERM GOVERNANCE MODEL

The subcommittee researched several Network governance models including: the operational model, collective/coalition model, management model, traditional model, policy governance model, advisory board model, and constituent representational model. Ultimately, the subcommittee identified that the current Network planning team functions in a collaborative Coalition Model – which was determined appropriate at this stage in the Network's development. In this model, the coalition is an alliance of individuals and organizations coming together, for a sustained and indefinite time, to address a specific problem or issue and reach common goal(s). For a coalition model to be successful, it must be able to achieve goals and objectives that its individual stakeholder organizations would benefit from, but would not be able to achieve on their own.



The subcommittee recommended developing a long-term vision for transition to a more formal Representational Model. In this model, the Network would be governed by an elected board, provide core member services, and potentially collect membership fees to sustain operations. In this model, board officers and directors are elected and advised by a representative assembly to support well-informed and strategic decision-making. Standing and special committees, commissions and task forces are appointed by the board to implement Network operations.

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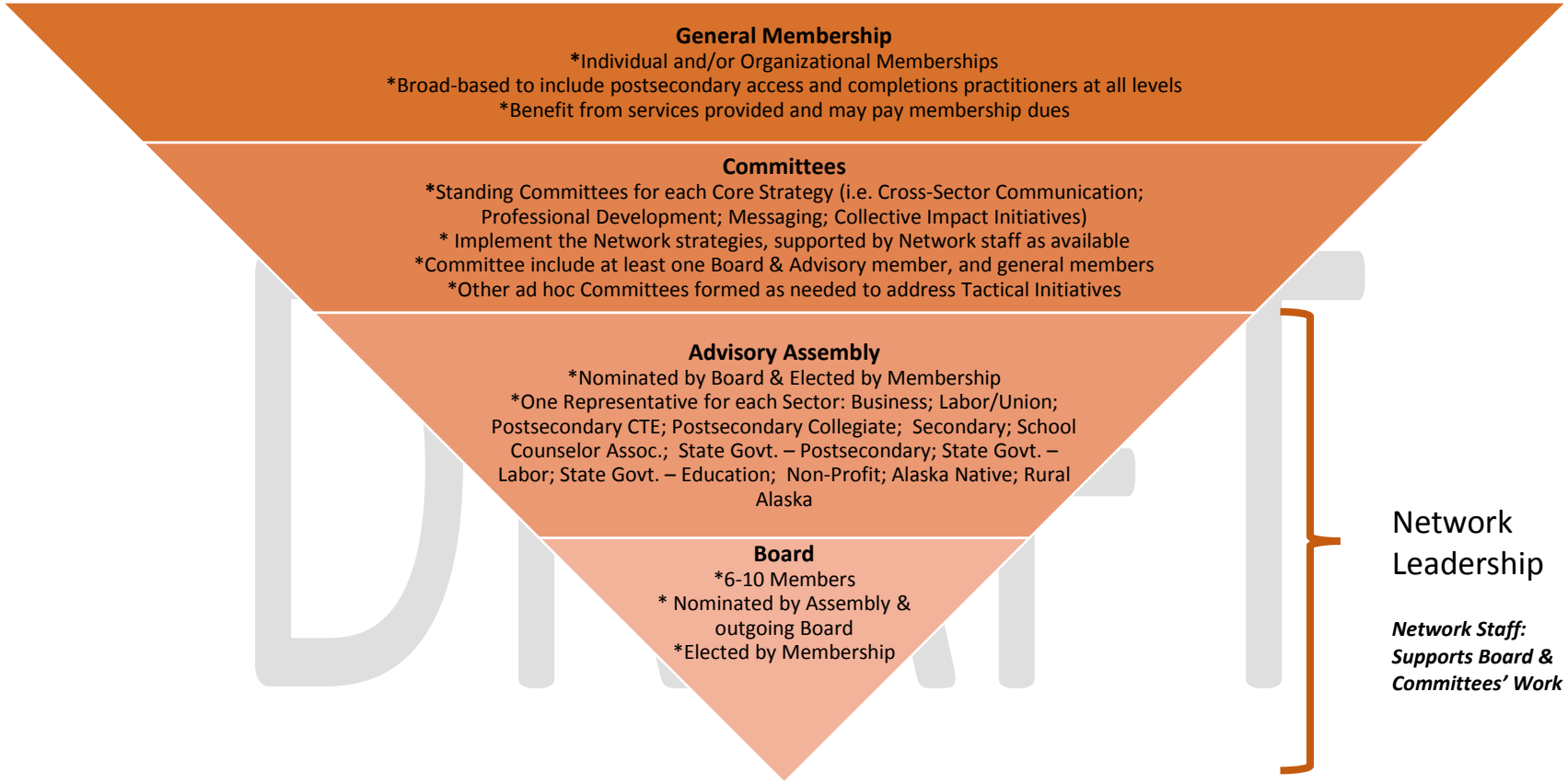
Long-Term Recommended Structure:



In the recommended Representational model, subcommittee members noted that general membership may involve some form of dues or membership fee. Any required membership contribution should be accompanied with clear information on what benefits an organization will receive with membership (i.e. Networking opportunities, resources, discounted rate at conferences, etc.).

6) *Find a Home for the Network*

As the manager for Alaska's federal College Access Challenge Grant, ACPE currently serves as the incubation home for Network development activity. At the planning team meeting in May, 2014, members were presented with benefits and challenges to three options for housing the Network after the incubation period: 1) remain with ACPE, 2) transfer to another non-profit organization, or 3) create a new backbone organization with the sole purpose of managing Network activity. Formation of a new non-profit backbone organization provided the most flexibility, as the other options would confine Network activities to the scope of the host organization's core mission and be subject to any existing organizational constraints. In addition, members felt most non-profits across the state currently operate at maximum capacity in support of existing activities and therefore lack capacity to devote sufficient attention to the Network.

501(c)3
- Strict structure requirements
- Membership dues possible, not required
- Political activity restricted
- Donations ARE tax-deductible
- Maximum eligibility for grants

501(c)4
- More structure flexibility
- Membership dues common, no specific requirements
- Political activity permitted for specific purposes
- Donations are NOT tax-deductible

501(c)6
- More structure flexibility
- Membership dues required at meaningful level
- Political activity permitted
- Donations are NOT tax-deductible

Members also reviewed the primary options for tax-exempt statuses. Fundraising capability and structure of membership dues were the most distinct differences between the three types considered, with 501(c)3 affording the most flexibility. Organizations with 501(c)4 and 501(c)6 have less ability to qualify for and receive grant funds. The Network Structure Subcommittee recommended consideration of a 501(c)3 status for the future backbone organization supporting the Network, the most common status found among other national Networks and backbone organizations. Members elected to return to this information at a later time, when the planning team has more defined strategies identified for future Network activity, and is ready to consider creation of the new backbone organization.

7) *Develop a Budget*

Basic parameters for budget for seed funding use are available through ACPE. A long-term budget outlining needs to sustain the Network is still needed.

8) *Hire Staff*

Planning team support and services are currently supported through one .4 FTE position – ACPE's Community Partnership Manager. A long-term staffing model still needs to be developed and implemented.

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9) *Create a Strategic Plan*

This document serves as the first version of the Network's Strategic Plan, and will undergo further refinement by planning team members before formal adoption.

10) *Cultivate a Diversified and Sustainable Funding Base*

Activity in this area will begin during the incubation period, after identification of the long-term home for the Network.

11) *Market and Promote the Network*

Planning team members determined in their July, 2014, meeting that the upcoming fall education conference schedule provided excellent opportunities to update practitioners in Alaska on the progress of the Network, and offer initial smaller convenings for best practices sharing. A subcommittee was formed to develop a list of upcoming conferences to submit proposals for, and develop an appropriate postsecondary access and completion Network conference sectional presentation & activity.

12) *Provide Services*

Activity in this area will begin after the incubation period is complete.

13) *Evaluate and Track Progress*

Activity in this area will begin after strategic initiatives begin.

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PUBLICS, STAKEHOLDERS & ADVOCATES

Groups categorized as 'Publics' are those targeted with messaging and services related to postsecondary access and completion. Groups identified as 'Partners' are considered potential Network members who may be involved in appropriate activity. 'Stakeholders' are those who the network believes will directly benefit from improvement in postsecondary access and completion in Alaska. Groups identified as 'Advocates' include those civic, community and faith based organizations and individuals who support and believe in postsecondary access and success of Alaskans.

Groups	Typical Role	Demographics
Secondary Students & Families	Publics	
Secondary Educators	Publics / Partners	
Secondary Institutions	Partners	

Postsecondary Students & Families	Publics	
Postsecondary Educators	Publics / Partners	
Postsecondary Institutions	Partners / Stakeholders	
Adults Interested in Returning to Postsecondary	Publics	
Community Organizations	Partners / Stakeholders / Advocates	
Faith based and civic organizations	Advocates	
Job Centers	Partners	
Businesses	Partners / Stakeholders	
Native Corporations and Shareholder Organizations	Partners / Stakeholders	

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COMMUNICATION ESSENTIALS

The Network's statewide communications will improve the knowledge-base of professionals and advocates across Alaska who help prepare students for transitions into postsecondary. Through messaging the Network strives to facilitate cultivating a strong sense of value placed on postsecondary education and credential attainment. It is critical to collaborate across various civic and community organizations in all efforts. All information needs to be communicated through both dialogue and in tangible materials.

Statewide messaging should adhere to the following agreed-upon guidelines:

- Use language that is clear to individuals from all backgrounds
- Feel customized/personal to Alaska
- Be grounded in and inspire Alaska pride and personal responsibility
- Include language that is both inspirational and directional
- Clearly outline options and direction for action by the recipient
- Clearly state the benefits of postsecondary education to the state, the community, the family, and the individual
- Customize content and language to resonate with each audience – developing multiple materials/messages when necessary

Messaging developed specifically to change the culture in Alaska around postsecondary access and completion should strive to:

- Highlight the *variety* of postsecondary education options available in Alaska
- Emphasize the value of the potential/existing jobs in the community which require postsecondary credential(s)
- Identify the benefits and opportunities available for different credential holders
- Illustrate the student 'giving back' to their community through credential attainment
- Emphasize completion as an attainable goal, and support systems are available

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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The federal College Access Challenge Grant is expected to sustain APAC Network planning team activity, and/or Network activity, through June 2016. The College Access Challenge Grant currently funds:

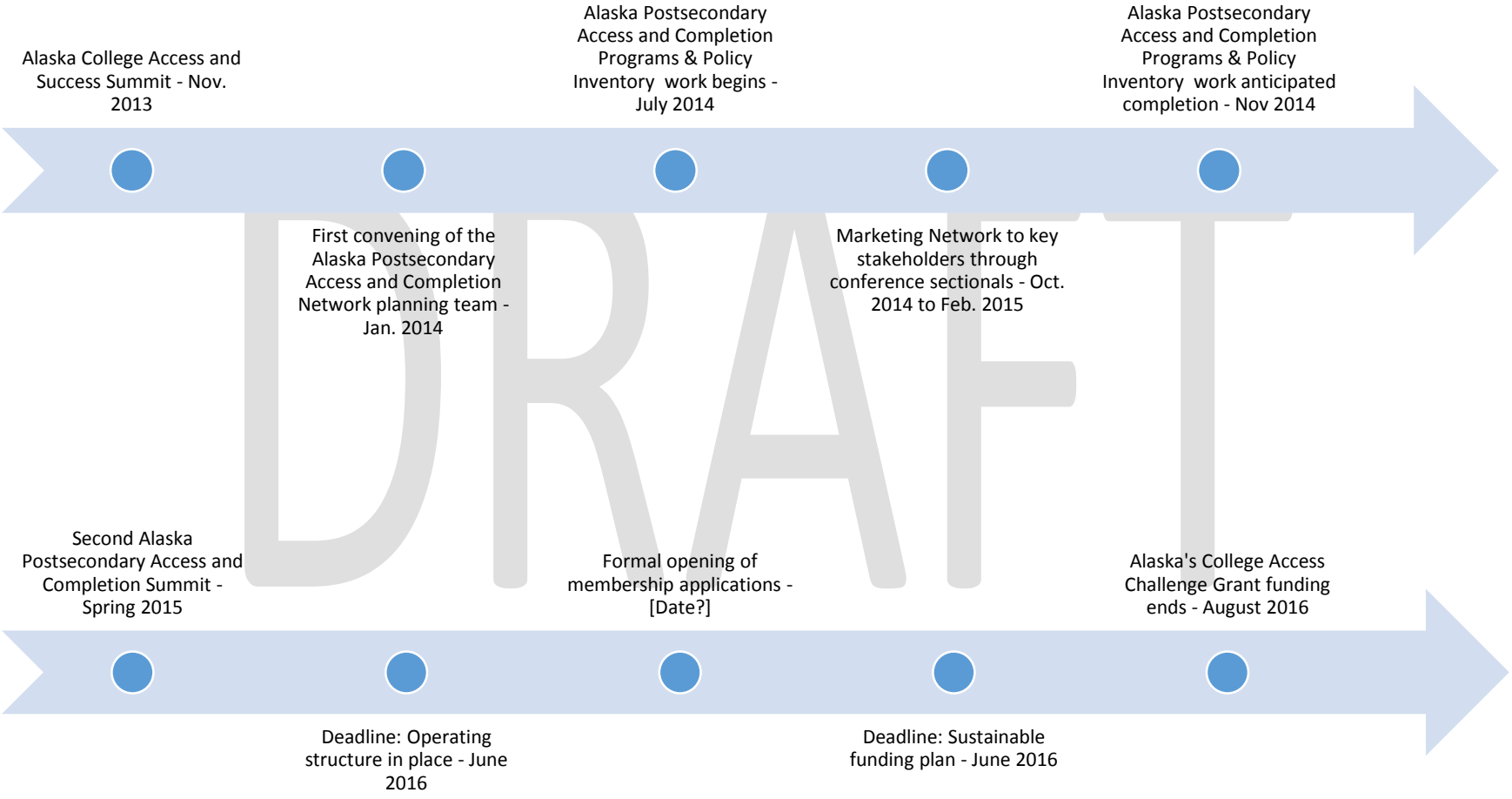
- Staffing – .4 FTE APAC Network planning team support (CJ Allison, ACPE Community Partnership Manager)
- Travel – for bi-monthly in-person convenings of the Network planning team and/or other mission-critical travel
- Materials & Supplies – for planning team meetings and resources
- Special Initiatives:
    a. Alaska Postsecondary Access & Completion Program & Policy Inventory
    b. Summits/Conferences/Convenings
    c. Consultant Services

Critical support to APAC Network planning team activity, and/or Network activity, is also provided through:

- Member in-kind staff time contributions (i.e. participation in meetings and active role in sub-committee projects)
- Member in-kind contributions of space and resources (i.e. meeting space, staff office space & equipment)
- Member in-kind contributions through access to paid services (i.e. online survey tools and/or online meeting tools, web page hosting)

It is essential that (an) alternate source(s) of funding be identified and secured by early 2016 to sustain Network activity beyond the end of the College Access Challenge Grant.

APPENDIX A: TIMELINE



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APPENDIX B: MEETING AGENDA AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

Date	Meeting Agendas and Coalition Building Process Steps
Nov 5, 2013	**Alaska College Access and Success Summit** Building College Access Partnerships: State and Regional Networks Alaska College Access & Success Initiatives: Group Inventory Activity College Access & Success in Alaska: Data Analysis A College Access & Success Team for Alaska: Group Discussion From the Field: Bethel Regional High School's "Missing Piece" >> OUTCOMES: • Identified Four Major Themes Around College Access & Success in Alaska: Finances, Academics, Scalability and Culture Change • Identified Seven Essential Components of a Network to Consider Moving Forward • Identified Three Major Categories of Needs for A Statewide Collective to Address: Statewide Messaging, K-16 Communication, and Professional Development • Compiled list of participants interested in moving forward in a leadership capacity • Developed a website for collection and provision of Network activity and resources • Developed an Informal Inventory of Alaskan College Access Programs
Jan 14, 2014	**Alaska College Access and Success Network Planning Team Meeting** Occupational Projections for Alaska: Looking Ahead to 2020 Alaska's College Access & Success: Goal Setting State and Regional Networks: Funding Structures Moving Forward: A Look at Team Structure >> MEETING OBJECTIVES: • Review occupational forecast data to inform CAST goal-setting relative to supporting the educational attainment needs of Alaska's future economy • Set SMART goal(s) for CAST to use to focus future activity • Discuss strategies to fulfill CAST goals and communicate about CAST efforts to Alaskans • Review options for organizational structure and funding structure for CAST >> OUTCOMES: • Members committed to planning effort for creation of a Network structure • Decided to Refine Name for Planning Team/Network • Drafted Initial Goal and Mission Statement • Members committed to continue outreach to additional representatives
Mar 20, 2014	**Alaska College Access and Success Network Planning Team Meeting** Update on Membership Expansion Efforts Who We Are & Why We Serve Strategy: What We Aim to Accomplish Structure: How We Come Together Alaska Postsecondary Access Program Inventory: A Closer Look >> MEETING OBJECTIVES: • Refine & adopt a name, mission statement and statewide goal for the Network • Outline high-level strategies for addressing statewide postsecondary access needs • Identify essential components of Network structure and strategies for expanding planning team membership • Determine if a vendor contract to expand and refine the statewide program inventory is worth pursuing >> OUTCOMES: • Adopted a formal Network name: Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Team • Adopted a statewide goal: 65 By 2025 (with internal measures) • Revised the Network mission statement • Agreed to move forward with a formal contract request for the development of a formal statewide inventory of college access programs • Established a sub-committee tasked with researching potential Network and funding structures

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Date	Meeting Agendas and Coalition Building Process Steps	Date	Meeting Agendas and Coalition Building Process Steps

May 8, 2014 **Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network Planning Team Meeting**

Housekeeping: Update on membership expansion efforts and inventory
Common Terminology: Proposal & Discussion
Network Structure Sub-Committee: Options & Recommendations
The Coalition Building Process: Key Takeaways from NCAN Training

>> MEETING OBJECTIVES:

- Update membership on membership expansion efforts and the current progress of the inventory request for proposals process
- Identify interim tool to effectively capture member thoughts on Network strategies, and agree on common terminology around Network structure, components, and processes
- Set goals for Network structure and organizational status based on report and recommendations from Network Structure Subcommittee members
- Determine next steps to expand on productive coalition/Network

>> OUTCOMES:

- Reviewed options for a permanent home for the Network
- Reviewed governance models and tax exempt statuses for Network structure
- Discussed importance of, and methods for, stakeholder mapping
- Introduced to The Collaborative Assessment Tool as method of reviewing Network progress and status according to member understanding

July 8, 2014 **Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network Planning Team Meeting**

Housekeeping: Update on membership expansion efforts, and inventory status, and Collaborative Assessment Tool survey status
Common Ground: Definitions and Common Understanding
Strategies: Litmus Test
Brainstorming: Core Strategies, Sub-Strategies, & Tactical Initiatives
Group Activity #1: Review of Existing Core Strategy and Sub-Strategies
Group Sharing: Compile Feedback on Strategy Statement Refinement
Group Discussion: Re-Convening Network Members

>> MEETING OBJECTIVES:

- Define postsecondary credential for consistent use, and finalize definitions of strategic terms.
- Develop common understanding and identify core characteristics for effective strategies, relative to recommended core strategies identified at summit.
- Identify possible strategies & tactical initiatives not captured at the summit.
- Review and refine strategies and sub-strategies identified at the summit. Review critical feedback on existing sub-strategies within each core strategy and continue refinement.
- Identify core components of the next Network convening for members to adopt and/or expand core strategies, share best practices, and take steps to coordinate postsecondary access, persistence, and completion efforts and activities across Alaska.

>> OUTCOMES:

- Reviewed planning team membership expansion, progress on the Postsecondary Access and Completion Programs & Policy Inventory, and survey development progress for the Collaborative Assessment Tool
- Adopted definition of Postsecondary Credential
- Refined Network core strategies, sub-strategies and tactical initiatives (new language will be proposed and incorporated into new draft strategic plan document and refined by email/phone)
- Formed a Conference Sectional Subcommittee to develop a list of upcoming conferences/statewide stakeholder meetings to request presentations at, and the content for a standard Network presentation

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APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF COMMON LANGUAGE/TERMINOLOGY

Backbone Organization – The formal organization whose mission is/will be to: support and maintain the Network, offer members regular and consistent services (i.e. best practices sharing, professional development), serve as the foundation to facilitate collective work on specific strategic initiatives.

- May be staffed by volunteers (in formal roles) from among the membership, or ideally (as funding permits), with dedicated staff separate from participating organizations.

Challenges – the substantive challenges impairing postsecondary access and completion in Alaska. Collectively these challenges will serve as a relevant frame of reference for Network planning team members to use in developing strategies and identifying appropriate measures outlined in this plan.

- **Expectations –** the absence of strong academic expectations in which our students aspire to and plan for education beyond high school graduation
- **Preparation –** the lack of preparation for postsecondary and career success
- **Affordability –** postsecondary education financing
- **Support –** scaling services to Alaskans' unique needs

College-Going – definition needed

Committee/Subcommittee – a working team (time-limited or semi-permanent) bringing together members and content experts to address and coordinate activity around a strategy

Goal Statement – the specific end result the Network wants to accomplish in Alaska (65% by 2025)

Incubation Home – ACPE: the organization providing initial staff, funding (through the federal College Access Challenge Grant) and facilitation during the period of Network formation

Leadership – formal Network members coming together to take action and make decisions about the Network's strategic direction and initiatives.

Membership –organizations, content experts, and individuals service providers forming the larger body of invested participants.

Mission Statement – describes the Network's current vision and purpose

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Network - an interconnected system of Alaskan organizations and individuals formally joining together to cooperate, coordinate, and/or collaborate to improve postsecondary access and completion in Alaska

Planning Team – the steering committee currently formed and tasked with building a more formal Network structure

Postsecondary Credential – An official certificate, degree or endorsement, including but not limited to:

- Completion of an apprenticeship program
- Industry-Recognized Licensure, Workforce Credential, or Occupational Endorsement Certificate
- Career or Technical Education Certificate
- Associates, Bachelors, or Master's Degree
- Doctoral, Professional or Advanced Degree

Postsecondary Education – education and/or training after completion of, or concurrent with, high school education, and resulting in attainment of a postsecondary credential

Strategic Plan – the intentional methods employed by Network staff and membership to achieve the goal statement. The strategic plan outlines:

- **Focus Areas** (the "what") – the regular consistent, semi-permanent services the Network provides; currently, Research & Data Collection, Partner Communication, Statewide Messaging, and Professional Development & Networking
  [Previously, Core Strategies]
- **Objectives** (the "why") – the goals outlined within each focus area which drive the development of related strategies
  [Previously, Sub-Strategies]
- **Measures** (the "what by when") – the specific, actionable, results-oriented, and time-bound method of evaluating progress on individual objectives
- **Related Strategies** (the "how") – more detailed, time-limited strategies to accomplish objectives; facilitated through ad hoc committees
  [Previously, Tactical Initiatives]

APPENDIX D: NETWORK BUDGET

A Network budget will be drafted by planning team members to accompany this strategic plan.

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