



Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
THROUGH: Diane Barrans, Executive Director
FROM: Stephanie Butler, Director of Program Operations
DATE: October 1, 2015
SUBJECT: Commission Biennial Certification of WICHE PSEP Fields

Per 20 AAC 18.007, the Commission is required to biennially certify the fields of study for which PSEP loans are available, based on:

- Non-availability of that professional program of study in Alaska
- Documentation of an Alaska labor shortage in that profession; and
- Documentation that the salaries in the given professional field are sufficient for a PSEP graduate to repay the associated PSEP debt

The WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) makes qualifying professional education available to students when opportunities are not available in their home states.

Through the Alaska PSEP participation, students generally pay a reduced tuition rate to the school, as well as a PSEP support fee, in compensation for the school's reserving slots for PSEP students and any reduction in tuition cost. The Commission finances the support fee costs in the form of a PSEP loan which the student must repay upon completion of the program of study.

The table below lists the Alaska PSEP fields and summarizes the average Alaska wages and projected need in each of the currently supported fields:

PSEP Field of Study (Years of Study)	Total # of Participating Students from Alaska	Number of New Students in FY16	15/16 PSEP Support Fee	2014 Average Alaska Salary*	Forecasted Alaska Growth through 2020**
Dentistry (4)	7	5	\$24,850	\$205,880	25%
Physical Therapy (3)	3	1	\$14,300	\$96,350	23%
Occupational Therapy (3)	0	0	\$13,050	\$75,730	20%

Optometry (4)	2	1	\$17,100	\$178,640	28%
Physician Assistant (2)	0	0	\$17,000	\$106,080	26%
Pharmacy (varies)	5	1	\$7,525	\$136,320	18%
Podiatry (4)	0	0	\$14,770	N/A	N/A

*United States Bureau of Labor Statistics

**State of Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Staff Recommendation:

Commission approval of continuing participation in the seven fields listed above