

AAQEP Annual Report for 2024

Provider/Program Name:	Alfred University
End Date of Current AAQEP Accreditation Term (or "n/a" if not yet accredited):	December 2027

PART I: Publicly Available Program Performance and Candidate Achievement Data

1. Overview and Context

This overview describes the mission and context of the educator preparation provider and the programs included in its AAQEP review.

Teacher Education at Alfred University is as old as the University itself, founded in 1836 as a normal school to train teachers to shape the new American nation. 185 years later, our mission remains a function of our context and setting. Situated in an isolated rural region at the northernmost tip of Appalachia. Allegany County--which ranks 60th in per capital income among New York's 62 counties—is home to Alfred University. Our region rarely imports teachers from other states or other parts of New York: we grow our own.

Last year we had 123 teacher education students across our five programs on two campuses. Our programs include:

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- ☐ Early Childhood/Childhood Education, offered both here and at SUNY Corning (Birth to grade six)
- ☐ Adolescent Education (with certification in Business, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, Math, Physics, Social Studies, and Spanish (7-12 with a possible middle-school extension.)
- ☐ Art Education (K-12)
- ☐ Graduate program in Literacy Education
- ☐ Graduate program in Inclusive & Special Education

The Teacher Education division partners with our local school districts to prepare and equip highly qualified educators for our regional classrooms. Alfred was one of only a handful of colleges to pioneer integrated and coeducation in the 1830s and we still strive to have all of our completers reflect Alfred's historic commitment to diversity and inclusion. We try to make an Alfred education and a teaching career accessible to students who may not have a chance elsewhere. Our partnership with Corning has made a career in teaching accessible to a variety of non-traditional and first generation college students for nearly a decade now.

Teacher Education Mission Statement: Through contemporary and innovative educational opportunities both in the classroom and in the field, the Alfred University Division of Education supports the growth of aspiring teachers. The Division programs focus on developing understanding of the learner, the learning context, instructional practice, and professional responsibilities as essential foundations for the teaching profession. Specifically, the Division supports its students in the active use of research and evidence, application of pedagogical skills found in the teaching standards with diverse P-12 students, and promotion of the meaningful use of technology in education.

Public Posting URL

Part I of this report is posted at the following web address (accredited members filing this report must post at least Part I):

https://www.alfred.edu/academics/undergrad-majors-minors/_docs/aaqep-annual-report.pdf

2. Enrollment and Completion Data

Table 1 shows current enrollment and recent completion data for each program included in the AAQEP review.

Table 1. Program Specification: Enrollment and Completers for Academic Year 2023-2024

Degree or Certificate granted by the institution or organization	State Certificate, License, Endorsement, or Other Credential	Number of Candidates enrolled in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending mm/yy)	Number of Completers in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending mm/yy)
<i>Programs that lead to initial teaching credentials</i>			
Bachelor of Science	Early Childhood/Childhood Education	63	17
Bachelor of Fine Arts	Art Education	32	6
Bachelor of Arts	Adolescent Education	17	4
Total for programs that lead to initial credentials		112	27
<i>Programs that lead to additional or advanced credentials for already-licensed educators</i>			
Master of Science in Education	Literacy	5	5
Master of Science in Education	Inclusive and Special Education	6	6
Total for programs that lead to additional/advanced credentials		11	11
<i>Programs that lead to credentials for other school professionals or to no specific credential</i>			
Total for additional programs		0	0
TOTAL enrollment and productivity for all programs		123	38
Unduplicated total of all program candidates and completers		123	38

Added or Discontinued Programs

Any programs within the AAQEP review that have been added or discontinued within the past year are listed below. (This list is required only from providers with accredited programs.)

Master of Science in Education (Inclusive and Special Education) enrolled its first students this past year)

3. Program Performance Indicators

The program performance information in Table 2 applies to the academic year indicated in Table 1.

Table 2. Program Performance Indicators

A. Total enrollment in the educator preparation programs shown in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals earning more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.
123
B. Total number of unique completers (across all programs) included in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals who earned more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.
38
C. Number of recommendations for certificate, license, or endorsement included in Table 1.
38
D. Cohort completion rates for candidates who completed the various programs within their respective program's expected timeframe and in 1.5 times the expected timeframe.
Childhood – 94% Adolescent – 100% Art Education – 100% Graduate programs – 100%
E. Summary of state license examination results , including teacher performance assessments, and specification of any examinations on which the pass rate (cumulative at time of reporting) was below 80%.

EAS	00201	90%	27/30
ELA	002	Low N	2
Social Studies	115	Low N	2
EC-Literacy/ELA	211	83%	15/18
EC-Math	246	88%	14/16
Arts/Sciences	245	94%	17/18
CE-Literacy/ELA	221	90%	19/21
CE-Math	222	90%	19/21
Visual Arts	00167	Low N	8

Notes:

- Our Childhood and Early Childhood pass rates are both up from last year, their Math scores are the highest they have been since we started with AAQEP.
- All of our Adolescent and Art Education majors from that graduating class have jobs, so even though our “N” was low, they all passed and got certification/jobs.

F. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

We have new data to include starting this year which is the scores from our internal auTPA (Alfred University Teacher Performance Assessment) Since this is an internal instrument with a unique scoring system, there are not national or state benchmarks to which to compare it, but we will review (and include) the results from each year to watch for changes and trends. Our pass rate for year one was 100% which I believe will be typical both from year to year and from one EPP to another. If the materials each student submits for the TPA are not adequate, we have them expand or redo and resubmit them, similar to how previously some students had to retake the edTPA. (Only with our new system, they do not have to pay another \$400.)

Our auTPA is based on several measures, including: CCAST scores; grades on their delivered and assessed teaching unit; scoring for their written reflections (including one on Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Teaching; as well as the culminating oral presentation of learning at the conclusion of the student teaching experience. A copy of the auTPA is available for review and has been submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

2023 auTPA scores:

Adolescent Education Average Score	163.25/216
Art Education	165.00/216
ECCE/AU	187.6/216
ECCE/Corning	178.3/216

We will continue to work on interrater reliability in the years ahead to try to be sure we are scoring similarly and fairly across our various programs. We have been pleased with our process and results thus far.

Additionally we conducted a brief email survey among recent alumni. As has been typical, our response rate was low, but a couple of interesting insights from recent completers are included below:

Percentage employed	100%
Percentage indicating satisfaction with their preparation at AU	100%
Percentage reporting satisfaction with their teaching career	100%

Comments/Suggestions:

- Get students out into classrooms earlier in the program (this has already been implemented since this group were first-year students.)
- Need additional information/support in obtaining out-of-state teaching certification. (Will add this to Seminar)
- Been surprised at the amount of time teachers devote to Social-Emotional Learning—would like to have more preparation in that area. (This has been and will continue to be expanded in our curriculum.)

G. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from employers of program completers, with a characterization of findings.**

This past year we used two methods of gathering input from employers. The first was input from a panel of local administrators who conducted interview training with our completers. The interviewers asked a series of four questions and then recorded ratings for candidates responses and provided feedback to our candidates. Employer ratings for our candidates was overwhelmingly favorable:

Question 1: Candidate Describes their educational journey:

- Exceeded standard 54%
- Met standard 31%

- Approaching standard 15%
- Did not meet standard 0%

Question 2: Consider a lesson you taught that did **not** go well. Describe the process and what you would do to improve it the next time you teach the lesson.

- Exceeded standard 62%
- Met standard 38%
- Approaching standard 0%
- Did not meet standard 0%

Question 3: Student case study scenario describing a student with a recent significant drop off in academic performance and what steps the teacher would take to remediate the situation:

- Exceeded standard 50%
- Met standard 46%
- Approaching standard 4%
- Did not meet standard 0%

Question 4: Describe a situation in which you were given corrective feedback from your mentor teacher and how you responded and how it shaped your development as a teacher:

- Exceeded standard 50%
- Met standard 31%
- Approaching standard 19%
- Did not meet standard 0%

Our second measure came from a survey of our Advisory Board members inviting them to share feedback, program/candidate evaluation, and strategies for enhancing our partnership. This was a qualitative rather than quantitative survey and will provide a framework for our Advisory Board agendas during 2025. Their responses are summarized below.

How can the partnership between your school and Alfred University be enhanced?

- Bring in local administrators as guest speakers for seminars and classes. (This has already been expanded since the survey.)

- Reach out to smaller districts that have not been student teaching destinations in the past and provide additional training for first-time mentor teachers.
- Have representatives of Education Division come to the school to speak to students and try to recruit more future teachers.
- Our doors are always open for Alfred observers, student teachers, volunteers, and job candidates!
- Highly satisfied with the AU partnership (multiple responses suggested that there is no need for improvement, the relationship with AU is valued and successful.)

What are the biggest challenges your district is facing and how might AU be able to help?

- We need candidates with greater skills in digital literacy, Social Emotional Learning, and the Science of Reading
- We need teachers with a deeper understanding of the social and emotional challenges that today's students are bringing to school.
- Increase enrollment in your Teacher Education program—we need more teachers from Alfred.
- Keep the pipeline flowing! We are facing historic teacher shortages.
- Increase candidates in significant shortage areas (STEM and Special Education)
- Send more graduates from Alfred to work in our schools who can then recruit future teachers.
- We need to work together to grow more teachers from our area.

What suggestions do you have for how we could better equip our candidates for teaching 2025 and beyond?

- Instruction on AI and how it can enhance student work
- Classroom management skills
- Authentic teaching and learning skills
- Teachers should not have an agenda: teach all sides of the subject
- Instill a strong work ethic and dependability

Do you have suggestions for strengthening the ability of candidates to effectively teach in our current political climate?

- Avoid politics; students should never know your political affiliation
- An understanding of poverty and its dramatic impact in our area.
- SEL should be taught and imbued across the teacher education curriculum
- A deep understanding of the Science of Reading, including social engagement with texts.
- How to navigate difficult conversations and controversial topics, how to avoid harmful comments/discussions.

- Give new teachers strategies for difficult discussion topics.
- An understanding of board of education policies on curriculum and instruction

- The pervasive problem of cellphones and social media and their negative impacts on our students. Our children are now in a phone-based, rather than play-based society. Connect SEL to phones and Social Media.
- Widespread problem of chronic absenteeism
- More visits to local classrooms for your students
- Teacher shortage, retention, resiliency

H. Narrative explanation of how the program investigates **employment rates for program completers**, with a characterization of findings. This section may also indicate rates of completers' ongoing education, e.g., graduate study.

Due to the smaller, high-touch nature of our program, we are in touch with nearly all of our completers and connect with (most of) them to track their post-graduation status. Note that members of our graduate Literacy and Inclusive Education cohorts must already be employed teachers to enter our program, therefore are not included in these results.

<u>Degree Area (total #)</u>	<u>Employed in Educ.</u>	<u>In Graduate School</u>	<u>Unemployed</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
ECCE-Alfred (7)	6			1
ECCE – Corning (10)	10	2		
Art Education (6)	5			1
Adolescent Education (4)	3			1

4. Candidate Academic Performance Indicators

Tables 3 and 4 report on select measures of candidate/completer performance related to AAQEP Standards 1 and 2, including the program's expectations for successful performance and indicators of the degree to which those expectations are met.

Table 3. Expectations and Performance on Standard 1: Candidate and Completer Performance

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation
NYSED/GPA requirements	All candidates for recommendation for NYS certification must attain and overall GPA of 2.75 and a 3.0 GPA in Education Division coursework	Percentage of AU completers attaining this benchmark 100%
CPAST	<div><div>Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (Developed by the Ohio State University)</div><div><div>Key:</div><div>Points:</div><div>Does not meet expectation0</div><div>Emerging1</div><div>Meets Expectations2</div><div>Exceeds Expectations3</div></div></div>	The first benchmark measure employed by our program here at Alfred is our participation in the CPAST (Candidate Pre-Service Assessment of Student Teaching) developed by the Ohio State University. This was our sixth year using the CPAST instrument. The CPAST represents a cooperative effort by the candidate, mentor teacher, and university supervisor. The CPAST scores are based on a three-way conversation-collaboration at the midpoint and conclusion of student teaching. We have been very pleased with this instrument and with the dialogue it generates and its effectiveness as a tool for evaluating our candidates. The CPAST process identifies areas of growth for students to pursue in the second half of student teaching, and indeed in their future teaching positions. There are 21 measures included in the CPAST on planning, instructional delivery, assessment, and professional conduct. Our CPAST results allow us to compare our candidates with

		<p>benchmarks set by national use. The CCAST instructional training encourages all participants to avoid the “everyone gets an A” paradigm. A snapshot of Fall 2023 student teaching results is included in the next section. The full CCAST report is available for review by AAQEP or other interested parties. Note that CCAST scores for AU completers align closely with New York and national benchmarks, suggesting both favorable and quality performance by student teachers and accurate use of the CCAST instrument. We have endeavored, per the instructions/training materials from Ohio State, to impress upon our mentor teachers to avoid the “everyone gets the top score” mentality, but rather to use the CCAST as a tool for student teacher performance improvement. The CCAST scores are disconnected from the grades they receive for student teaching and seminar, to encourage mentor teachers, candidates, and supervisors to be forthright and make the instrument meaningful. (As of last year, CCAST scores do factor in as one of multiple pieces in our auTPA.) Interestingly, this the first year that our scores came in just slightly lower than the national benchmarks. I suspect this is the result of this ongoing training initiative rather than reduced quality of student teachers</p>
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		as last year's class all excelled in their placements. (See graphic below)

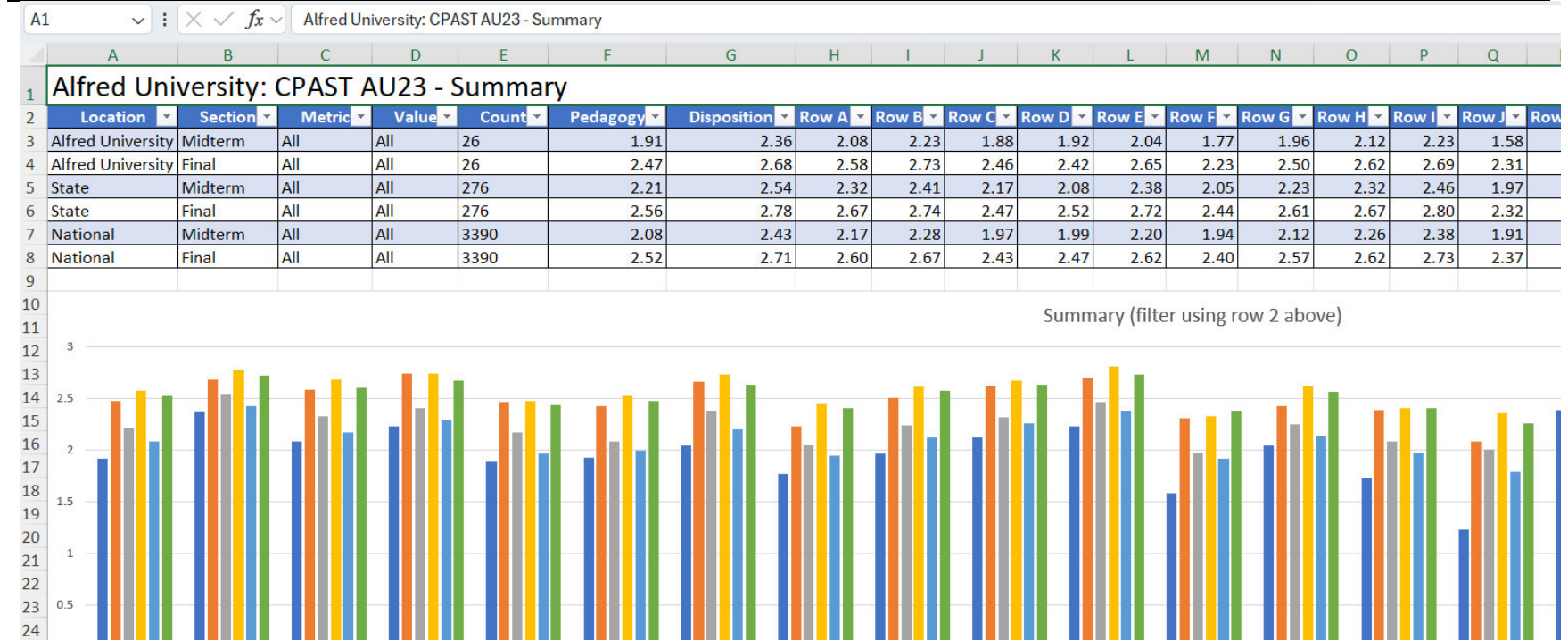


Table 4. Expectations and Performance on Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation
CPAST Results	CPAST includes a section on professional commitment and behaviors	AU candidates score at similar levels as state and national benchmarks.

		<p>Row N: Participates in professional development AU 2.58/NY 2.78/USA 2.70</p> <p>Row O: Demonstrates Effective Communication with Parents AU 2.31/NY 2.39/USA 2.50</p> <p>Row P: Demonstrates Punctuality AU 2.81/NY 2.88/USA 2.82</p> <p>Row Q: Meets Deadlines and Obligations AU 2.77/NYS 2.84/USA 2.73</p> <p>Row R – Preparation AU 2.88/NY 2.86/USA 2.76</p>
CPAST Results	CPAST includes a section on professional relationships	<p>AU candidates score at similar levels to state and national results</p> <p>Row S: Collaboration with Colleagues AU 2.77/NYS 2.89/USA 2.79</p> <p>Row T: Advocacy for the Profession AU 2.46/NYS 2.66/USA 2.59</p>
Note: Our incoming chair, Sarah Olbrantz, has a great idea that we are going to implement next year in which we will conduct video visits/case studies of recent grads in which we will observe a sampling of recent graduates in their classroom settings and gather feedback to evaluate candidate and program success.		

5. Notes on Progress, Accomplishment, and Innovation

This section describes program accomplishments, efforts, and innovations (strengths and outcomes) to address challenges and priorities over the past year.

This past year, 2023-24, was a transitional one for our Teacher Education Division. It was to have my last year as chair (Tim Nichols, the author of this report); I had announced my retirement for the Summer of 2024. After discussions across the past two years, and based on my recommendation and her acceptance, the University had offered the chair position to Dr. Danielle Cawley, our Inclusive Education Specialist in her third year at Alfred. Danielle had brought significant expertise and leadership skills to our program and had been beloved by students and colleagues alike. I felt great about turning the reins over to her as I transitioned into the retired life. Danielle and I had begun to do some transition work together. She had faced some health challenges across the past two years, but we were all hopeful and happy that it seemed to be behind her. But in May of 2024, she took a turn for the worse and entered the hospital. On June 6th I got the terrible call from her husband that she had died. We have been devastated by that. Danielle was a brilliant light in our program and in the field of Special Education, and she was the young mother of two little boys. It has been a terrible tragedy for all of us. The 2023-24 school year ended for us and our students in tears and uncertainty. In the aftermath of that, I offered to stay on one more year while we conducted a national search and to see us through the transition. The previous year, from her hospital bed, Danielle had written our NYSED proposal for our graduate program in Inclusive and Special Education. It has been an ongoing challenge to launch that program without her vision, enthusiasm, and expertise.

Thus, this is the Annual Report I did not anticipate writing and the school year I did not see coming. We've been working at trying to staff courses with adjuncts and make plans for an uncertain future. Also, in May of last year, Prof. Kelly Williams, who had led our Early Childhood/Childhood Education program for 25 years announced her retirement at the conclusion of this semester (December 2024). In many ways, this fall we have endeavored to keep our focus on continuous quality improvement, but it has also felt like our primary work had to be on keeping the ship afloat and put the right team in place for the future. We had my farewell party in May, Danielle's memorial service in August, and Kelly's retirement party in December.

Nonetheless, there have also been some highly favorable aspects and accomplishments of the past year. Our 2023 hire, Dr. Jennifer Snow, has stepped up like a pro and has fit into our program beautifully. She's been on an accelerated path to advising, evaluating, and leadership by all of the changes around her and she has risen to the occasion beautifully, vastly exceeding even my high hopes and expectations for her. She is going to be a key player in the future of our program and has a great analytical mind for program evaluation and improvement. Kathy Sherman continues to be our divisional treasure as certification and placement officer. We have had several other significant additions to our team:

- Professor Chris Brown, who served us for years as a mentor teacher in Visual Arts Education retired from teaching and has accepted a long-term clinical instructor position to head up our Art Education program and has just done an

incredible job for us, becoming the coordinator, point-person, and cheerleader that we have been needing for that growing program. Our numbers in that program continue to grow every year and it has led our enrollment rebound after the Pandemic.

- We hired Dr. Deborah Owen to work with out AUNY Corning program, and to provide the literacy credentials that are so critical to that program. She is already making a difference in that program, especially during this transition.
- Julie Dick and Deborah Finnamore-Flint have been two long-term partners for us that have singlehandedly caused our Corning program to grow and thrive. It is difficult to overestimate the valuable contributions they have made to Alfred University and to Teacher Education. So, when they both retired from SUNY Corning this past year, it seemed to only make sense to create positions for them here at Alfred to help us continue that highly successful program. So their wonderful work for us continues, but under the Alfred, rather than the Corning umbrella.
- We have a search underway for a replacement for Kelly Williams who is retiring this month after 25 years of running our Early Childhood/Childhood Education program.
- I got the terrible news about Danielle's death in June right before a monthly AAQEP cohort meeting, so at the end of the meeting I shared the news with the group. Less than an hour later I had a phone call from Mark LaCelle-Peterson who'd heard the news, expressing his condolences over our loss. After we'd chatted for awhile I said "So if you know of anyone with AAQEP experience looking, let me know." To which Mark said, "Actually, I already have a possibility for you." He shared with me the name of Sarah Olbrantz, who had been at Wells College which had just announced its closing. Well, that began a several month conversation that finally culminated with Sarah signing a contract just last month to join the team at Alfred University as chair. I couldn't be more delighted; Sarah is an outstanding and visionary young professional. We are really excited about Sarah, and so grateful to the AAQEP family, especially Mark, for orchestrating this. (He was also the matchmaker for Alfred and me seven years ago, so we owe him a huge thank you!) Sarah is in an interim position this year but will be joining us part time in January and full-time starting in June. She and I will do some transition work together in the spring and she is going to begin spearheading our process for reaccreditation in 2027. (Which sounded so far away in 2020 but is sounding closer and closer now!) I feel so happy and relieved about leaving our program in Sarah's, Jennifer's, and Kathy's highly capable hands; they are all brilliant! Alfred is going to *be in better shape than ever next year!*

Beyond personnel challenges and changes, we had several other noteworthy aspects of the year. We have continued to have such stellar service from our adjunct instructors: Prof. Jillian Putnam (Literacy) is a gifted and talented teacher and has marvelous educational technology skills, she is in her sixth year with us. Prof. Todd Goho (Inclusive/Special Education brings his wealth of experience in teaching, administration, and BOCES work to his work with our students. Both of these two faculty members receive high praise from our students and we have been fortunate to have them on the team.

As detailed above, we rolled out our first iteration of our auTPA last year and were pleased with the results. This was discussed earlier in the document. We are refining and shaping the process now during year two. The second round of “Presentations of Learning” took place this past week on both campuses and we were all very pleased with the capacity of our completers to articulate their joys, challenges and accomplishments for the students rising up through the program. We are making changes to both our methods courses and our student teaching seminar to enrich this process. We believe that this change, once we fully implement and improve it across the next couple of years, is going to provide significant benefit to our completers in their transition to professional post baccalaureate teaching.

A couple of last highlights of the year included our Educator panels for our student teaching seminars. Various partners came to both of our campuses to speak and offer wisdom to these young professionals and then returned later to conduct mock interviews. We believe this provides valuable experience for our completers, but also strengthens our relationship with these local partners and provides us with helpful feedback from them. We are so grateful for their continued investment in, and support for, our program.

This concludes my final annual report for Alfred/AAQEP as I *really* will retire this coming summer. My association with the wonderful professionals in, and leadership of, AAQEP has been a real career highlight for me. I offer my deepest thanks and appreciation for Mark LaCelle-Peterson, the brilliant and visionary leader of this organization, and all of the outstanding team members who support him. It has been an honor and privilege for all of us at Alfred to be a part of the AAQEP organization. I will miss all of you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Nichols", written over a white rectangular background.

Timothy J. Nichols, PhD
Education Division Chair

