M E M O R A N D U M

State of Alaska

Department of Administration
Division of Personnel & Labor Relaions

To: Study Stakeholders
Administrative Management Study

Date: February 16, 2007

From: Study Team

Subject: Draft Class Structure, Definitions, and Distinguishing Characteristics

Here are the draft beginnings of class specifications for the Administrative Management Study. Based on the information provided to date, and the comments received from agencies, we have crafted definitions and distinguishing characteristics for seven job classes: a two level technical series; a two level administrative (professional) series; and a three level managerial series. This study focuses on the general administrative support work performed by Administrative Assistants, Administrative Managers, Administrative Services Managers, and some Secretary positions.

When reviewing these drafts, please keep in mind the purpose of these sections of a class specification:

The **Definition** is a concise description of the type and level of work of positions in the job class.

In some job classes, the authority that would cause incumbents to be placed in the Supervisory Bargaining Unit (SU) is required for allocation to the job class. When this is the case we use standard language to show positions in the class have the authority recognized by the Alaska Labor Relations Board for placement in the SU. (We have set this standard language in green.)

The **Distinguishing Characteristics (DCs)** is a description of the characteristics that, when found to be class controlling, will result in a position being placed in the job class.

The first paragraphs in the DCs describe the characteristics of the class series, if the job class is part of one. The class series information is identical for all levels within each series. (We have set the series information in blue.)

The next paragraphs describe characteristics specific to the job class, with particular attention to the classification factors used in whole job classification.

The final paragraphs establish the boundaries of the class by comparing it with other, similar job classes.

Please note these are first drafts. We expect the concepts and descriptions to change. The changes will come first from your comments and recommendations.

What would we like for you to comment on specifically?
Class Titles – We are using titles in these drafts selected from the ideas and recommendations previously provided. We would like to receive more ideas or affirmation on these titles. In recommending titles, remember they should be brief, easily understood, gender neutral, and different from existing class titles.

Series and levels – The drafts describe the job classes we have identified so far. Does this structure work for your organization? Is there a job class or level you anticipated that is not covered? If so, how would you describe the job class or level? Do you have a specific position (PCN) in mind that we could review?

Specific wording – Are the characteristics of the job classes clear and understandable? Are the terms and phrases in the drafts clear? Are there any areas you find difficult to understand? What would you recommend to improve the clarity of the specifications? Are there specific characteristics we have not included that you feel are particularly helpful in distinguishing the work of a class or series?

As before, each agency's study contact will be coordinating the review, comments, and recommendations for his/her agency. Agency feedback is due by close of business, Friday, March 2nd.

If you have questions please contact Sarah, Aimee, or Keith. We are also available to meet with you to discuss the drafts and answer any questions you may have before providing input. If you would like to schedule a meeting, please let us know.

What's next in the study?
After we receive and review agency comments and recommendations we will revise the draft structure, definitions, and distinguishing characteristics. If the changes significantly impact our ability to meet the study timeline, we will notify study contacts and ASDs. Once the structure, definitions, and distinguishing characteristics are revised, we will draft the rest of the class specifications (examples of duties characteristic of each job class; the knowledge, skills, and abilities new hires in each job class will need on their first day of work; and the minimum qualifications that indicate an applicant has the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities). We will ask for your input again on future drafts.

Short Guide to Terms

Class controlling work can be defined as the essential purpose of a position, its chief focus, and generally the activity on which the incumbent would spend the majority of his/her time. To determine what work of a position is class controlling, we examine: 1) the reason the position exists; 2) what qualifications are required to perform the work of the position; and 3) what work the employer should be paying for.

Types of work

Technical: Work is typically associated with and supportive of a professional or administrative field. It involves extensive practical knowledge gained through experience and/or specific formal or on-the-job training. Work in these occupations may involve substantial elements of the work of the professional or administrative field, but requires less than full knowledge of the field involved. Technical employees perform tasks, methods, procedures, and computations that are covered by established precedents or guidelines and often require a high degree of skill, care, and precision.

Administrative (professional level): Work involves the exercise of analytical ability, judgment, discretion and personal responsibility, and the application of a substantial body of knowledge of principles, concepts and practices applicable to one or more fields of administration or management. While these positions do not require specialized education, they do involve the type of skills (analytical, research, writing, and judgment) typically gained through a college level education, or through progressively responsible experience. Employees engaged in administrative work are concerned with analyzing, evaluating, modifying and developing basic administrative support programs, policies and procedures, that facilitate the work of agencies and their programs.

Managerial: Primary assignment is the managerial responsibility and responsibility for a major program or programs. Emphasis is on planning, organizing, directing, and controlling program delivery.

Hierarchical level

Agency: a principal department in the executive branch.

Organization: a general term, does not indicate a specific segment or hierarchy.

Second level division management

Deputy Director: responsible for managing all line functions of a division.

Assistant Director: responsible for managing one or more, but not all, of the line functions of a division.

Associate Director: responsible for managing all division functions that are ancillary to a division's line functions.