

2023



ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Outcomes Report

APS: FALL 2011 – 2022

RESPECTFULLY PROVIDED BY: Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (**ACPE**)
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (**DEED**)
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (**DOLWD**)
University of Alaska (**UA**)

PREPARED BY: *McKinley Research Group (MRG)*

PREPARED FOR: *Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education*
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Outcomes Report



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Version 1/17/2023 2:00 PM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 APS ELIGIBILITY DEFINITIONS & REQUIREMENTS

2 – **EXHIBIT 1** APS Eligibility Requirements

3 APS AWARDS

3 – **EXHIBIT 2** APS Total Dollars Awarded & Recipients, FY2012-2023

3 APS-ELIGIBLE GRADUATES & RECIPIENTS

4 – **EXHIBIT 3** Percent of Public High School Graduates Eligible for APS by Graduating Class, 2011-2022

4 – **EXHIBIT 4** Public High School APS Eligibility by Graduating Class and Level, 2018-2022

4 – **EXHIBIT 5** Public High School Graduate APS Eligibility Rates by Region, 2018-2022

5 – **EXHIBIT 6** Class of 2022 Public High School Eligibility Rates by Race/Ethnicity

5 – **EXHIBIT 7** Public High School Graduate APS Eligibility Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2020-2022

6 APS USE BY ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

6 – **EXHIBIT 8** Percent of Public APS-Eligible Graduates Using APS the Fall After High School Graduation, 2011-2022

6 – **EXHIBIT 9** Percent of APS-Eligible Students Using APS in the Fall After High School Graduation by Region, 2022

7 – **EXHIBIT 10** Percent of APS-Eligible Students Using APS in the Fall After High School Graduation by Race/Ethnicity, 2022

7 – **EXHIBIT 11** Breakdown of Class of 2022 Public High School Graduates, APS-Eligible Graduates, and Recipients by Race/Ethnicity

8 FALL 2022 SURVEY (APS-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS)

8 – **EXHIBIT 12** Class of 2020 APS Survey: "The APS is a scholarship program offered to Alaska high school graduates with qualifying GPA and test scores. Which of the following best describes you?"

9 – **EXHIBIT 13** Class of 2020 APS Survey: "Due to APS availability, how likely were you to do any of the following in high school?"

10 – **EXHIBIT 14** Class of 2020 APS Survey: "How much of an influence was the APS in the following decisions?"

11 – **EXHIBIT 15** Class of 2020 APS Survey: "Which of the following factors influences your decision to not use the APS this academic year? (Select all that apply.)"

12 – **EXHIBIT 16** Class of 2022 APS Survey: *Comments*

14 APS & POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES

14 – **EXHIBIT 17** APS Recipients Attending Postsecondary in Alaska by Institution, FY2019-FY2022 and Preliminary FY2023

14 APS RECIPIENTS AT UA

14 – **EXHIBIT 18** Percent of Enrolled First-Time Freshmen at UA from the Class of 2022 Needing Developmental Coursework, Fall 2022

15 – **EXHIBIT 19** Average Credit Hours Attempted and Completed, High School Class of 2021

15 – **EXHIBIT 20** Percent of Attempted Credit Hours Completed, High School Class of 2017-2021

15 – **EXHIBIT 21** Percent of First-Time Freshman at UA who Persisted into a Second Year, 2016-2020

16 – **EXHIBIT 22** Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Six-Year Graduation Rates by High School Class, 2012-2016

17 – **EXHIBIT 23** Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Three Year Graduate Rates for Two-Year or Less Programs by High School Class, 2012-2019

17 – **EXHIBIT 24** Recent Alaska High School Graduates Entering University of Alaska by Degree Level Sought, Entering Fall 2022

18 APS & ALASKA RESIDENCY OUTCOMES

18 – **EXHIBIT 25** Percentage of Alaska High School Graduates Who Remain Alaska Residents After Graduation, by Class and APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2011-2022

19 APS RECIPIENTS IN THE ALASKA WORKFORCE

19 – **EXHIBIT 26** Percent of Graduates Employed in Alaska and Average Annual Wages in 2022 by APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2014 and 2015

20 – **EXHIBIT 27** Top Occupations in Alaska Among High School Graduates in FY2022 by APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2014-2016 (Combined)

21 APPENDIX A:

Methodology

22 APPENDIX B:

Public School Class of 2022 APS Headcounts, by School District

24 APPENDIX C:

Verbatim Comments Submitted by Respondents to the 2022 APS-Eligible Student Survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2011, the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) has awarded Alaska students who excel in high school with more than **\$100 million** in scholarships to help cover the cost of in-state postsecondary education. The APS has four primary objectives:

1. Offer incentive for Alaska students to excel in high school
2. Prepare Alaska students for college or career training
3. Help Alaska students succeed in college
4. Keep skilled, high-achieving graduates in Alaska



APS Eligibility & Use

Eligibility
17%

Award Use
22%

APS Eligible Students Not Wanting to Attend Post-secondary School in Alaska
56%

The eligibility rate of **17%** for the class of 2022 was the lowest since program inception. APS eligibility rates declined steadily between 2014 and 2019, after which rates increased in 2020 and 2021 due to temporary suspension of standardized testing requirements. *Reinstatement of the standardized testing requirements* in 2022 is likely related to the steep drop in eligibility among the class of 2022.

Use of the award by class of 2022 APS-eligible students remained similar to rates in 2020 and 2021: **22%** of eligible students used the award the fall following graduation, compared to **24%** in the classes of 2020 and 2021. Use of the award has steadily declined since peaking at **39%** in 2016.

In the class of 2022 APS-eligible student survey, **not wanting to attend college or a vocational/technical school in Alaska was the most common factor in students' decision to not use APS this academic year (56%** of eligible students who did not use the award), followed by students saying they had already decided on a different school outside of Alaska when they found out about APS eligibility (**44%**).

High School Outcomes

APS as a Motivator: Placement Tests

71%

APS as a Motivator: Better Grades

70%

In the class of 2022 APS-eligible survey, **71%** said APS made them more likely to take placement exams (SAT, ACT, or WorkKeys), including **51%** who said the program made them much more likely to take these exams.

Eligible students also report APS influenced their academic success: **70%** said the program made them more likely to achieve better grades in high school, and **60%** said it made them more likely to take challenging courses.

Postsecondary Outcomes

Preparedness
95%

Persistence
80%

Completions
57%

Of first-time APS recipients enrolling at a University of Alaska (UA) program fall 2022, **95%** were prepared to take college-level courses, compared to **72%** of non-APS first-time students.

Of APS recipients entering UA in fall 2020, **80%** persisted into their second year compared to **56%** of non-APS recipients.

Of first-time, full-time APS recipients beginning their enrollment in fall 2016, **57%** completed an undergraduate degree, certificate, or occupational endorsement within six years, compared to **28%** of non-recipients.

Alaska Residency and Workforce Outcomes

APS Influence on In-State Attendance

68%

Ten years after high school graduation, former APS recipients from the class of 2012 have higher rates of Alaska residency and participation in the Alaska workforce compared to APS-eligible students who did not use the scholarship.

Of APS-eligible students surveyed from the class of 2022 who are currently enrolled in postsecondary education, 68% said APS influenced their decision to attend an in-state school.

APS ELIGIBILITY DEFINITIONS & REQUIREMENTS

The following definitions are used throughout this report:

Eligible Students who have met APS requirements in high school and are eligible for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) award or collegiate level award (the latter can also be used for CTE education).

Ineligible Alaska high school graduates who did not meet APS requirements in high school.

Recipient Students who have used the APS award in at least one term.

Non-recipient Students who have not used APS for the reported term. This category includes students who were ineligible for the APS as well as APS-eligible students who are not using the award.

- Student eligibility and award levels are based on the following: **Grade Point Average (GPA), standardized testing, and high school curriculum requirements (Exhibit 1).**
- Standardized testing requirements were waived for the high school graduating classes of 2020 and 2021 due to impacts of the coronavirus pandemic **but were reinstated for the graduating class of 2022.**
- Visit [APS.Alaska.gov](https://aps.alaska.gov) for more information or to download eligibility checklists.

EXHIBIT 1

APS Eligibility Requirements

	LEVEL 1		LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Award Amount	UP TO \$4,755 PER YR		UP TO \$3,566 PER YR	UP TO \$2,378 PER YR
Required GPA	3.5 <i>or greater</i>		3.0 <i>or greater</i>	2.5 <i>or greater</i>
Required Testing ¹				
ACT/SAT: <i>For Degree or Certificate</i> ²	ACT 25 · SAT 1210		ACT 23 · SAT 1130	ACT 21 · SAT 1060
WorkKeys: <i>For Certificate Only</i>	A combination score of 13 or higher with no score below 4 is required in Applied Math, Locating Information, & Reading for Information			
Required High School Curriculum <i>Students can choose either curriculum option.</i>	Math & Science Science — 4 Credits Math — 4 Credits Social Studies — 4 Credits Language Arts — 4 Credits		OR	Social Studies & Language Arts Science — 3 Credits Math — 3 Credits Social Studies — 4 Credits Language Arts — 4 Credits World Language — 2 Credits ³

¹ Standardized testing requirements were waived for the high school graduating classes of 2020 and 2021 due to impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Testing requirements were updated fall 2016. Students who took the SAT prior to March 2016 can qualify for APS on the previous 2400 scale (Level 1 - 1680, Level 2 - 1560, Level 3 - 1450).

² "Certificate" means a career & technical education certificate (does not include associate degrees).

³ World Language courses include Alaska Native Language & American Sign Language.

APS AWARDS

Since the program's inception in 2011, **29,059** public high school graduates have earned eligibility for the APS, representing **30%** of all public high school graduates in Alaska. A total of **11,866** high school graduates have used the APS award, representing **12%** of all graduates and **41%** of all eligible students.

In FY2023, **1,823** students used the APS scholarship with an anticipated **\$7.1 million** awarded (**Exhibit 2**).⁴ The number of recipients has declined each year since FY2017, and the decline accelerated in FY2023 when emergency orders waiving standardized testing requirements expired.

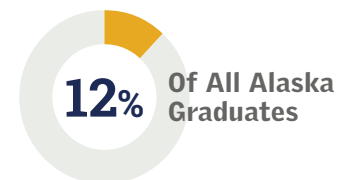
EXHIBIT 2

APS Total Dollars Awarded & Recipients, FY2012-2023

Award Year	Total Dollars Awarded	Recipients (Each Award Year)
2012	\$2,982,449	929
2013	\$5,653,223	1,717
2014	\$7,823,335	2,330
2015	\$10,046,899	2,976
2016	\$11,055,641	3,358
2017	\$11,285,711	3,423
2018	\$11,079,588	3,358
2019	\$10,156,663	3,089
2020	\$9,371,849	2,835
2021	\$9,334,253	2,798
2022	\$9,370,820	2,399
2023 ⁴	\$7,161,660	1,823
TOTAL: \$105,322,090		—

 **2 in 5**
Eligible Alaska Graduates Go On To Use the APS

12,000 High School Graduates have used the award since 2011, representing:



DATA SOURCE: Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) Alaska Student Aid Portal data & McKinley Research Group (MRG) calculations.

⁴ - Dollars awarded total for FY2023 were estimated based on twice the fall disbursed amount and number of APS recipients as of October 2022.

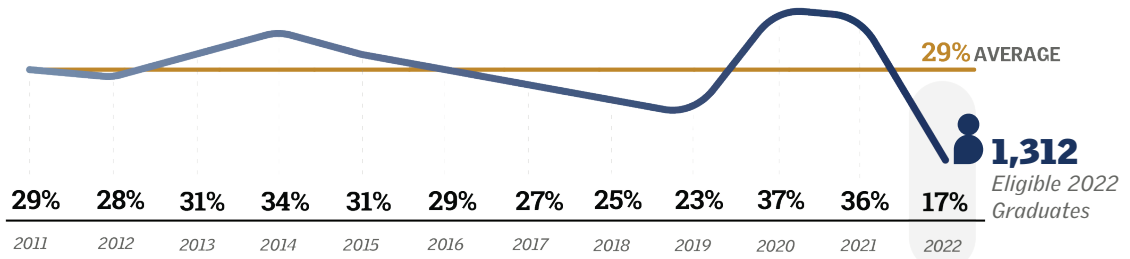
APS-ELIGIBLE GRADUATES & RECIPIENTS

APS ELIGIBILITY:

About **17%** of public high school graduates in the class of 2022 were eligible for the APS, the lowest rate since the program's inception (**Exhibit 3**). Eligibility rates for the classes of 2020 and 2021 were above average due to the temporary suspension of standardized testing requirements for APS eligibility due to test cancellations and other factors related to the coronavirus pandemic. Prior to the 2020 temporary change in eligibility criteria, APS eligibility rates had declined steadily since 2014.

EXHIBIT 3

Percent of Public High School Graduates Eligible for APS by Graduating Class, 2011-2022



ELIGIBILITY BY AWARD TYPE:

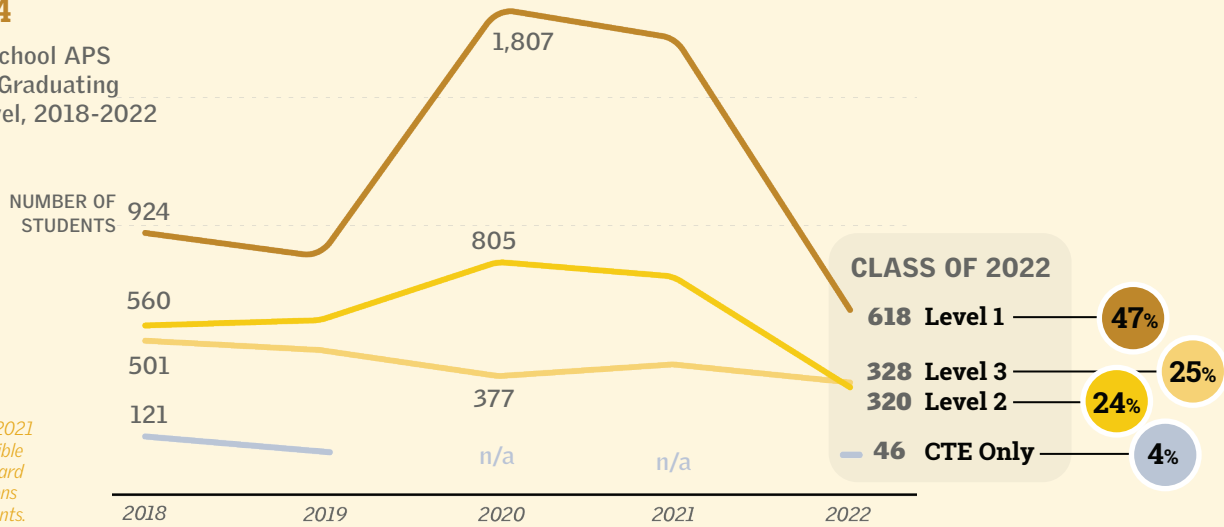
Among 2022 graduates eligible for APS, eligibility by award level was similar to the distribution prior to 2020. Of eligible 2022 graduates, **47%** were eligible for the Level 1 award, followed by **24%** for Level 2, **25%** for Level 3, and **4%** for the CTE award ([Exhibit 4](#)).

ELIGIBILITY BY REGION:

Eligibility rates declined significantly for graduates from all regions of Alaska between the graduating classes of 2021 and 2022 ([Exhibit 5](#)).

EXHIBIT 4

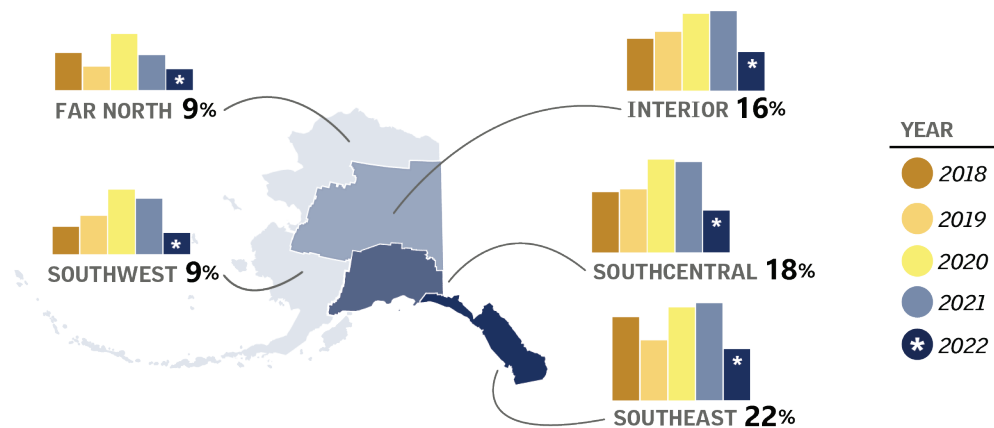
Public High School APS Eligibility by Graduating Class and Level, 2018-2022



NOTE: No 2020 or 2021 graduates were eligible for only the CTE award due to the suspensions of testing requirements.

EXHIBIT 5

Public High School Graduate APS Eligibility Rates by Region, 2018-2022



ELIGIBILITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY:

In total, **17%** of the 2022 high school graduating class was eligible for APS. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Alaska Native/American Indian, and African American/Black students were less likely to be eligible for APS than Asian, white, and Hispanic students ([Exhibit 6](#) & [Exhibit 7](#)).

Change in Eligibility

Class of 2021-22:

All ethnic groups experienced eligibility rate declines, with the greatest drop among **Asian Students**

Change in Eligibility, 2021-2022

PT = Percentage Points

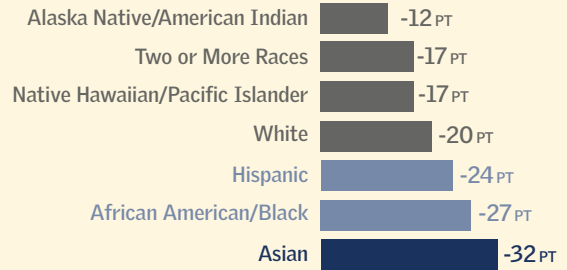


EXHIBIT 6

Class of 2022 Public High School Eligibility Rates by Race/Ethnicity

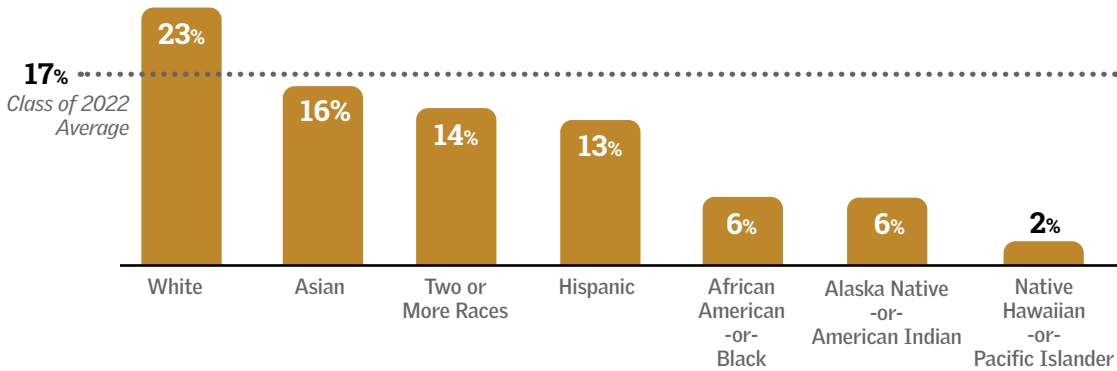
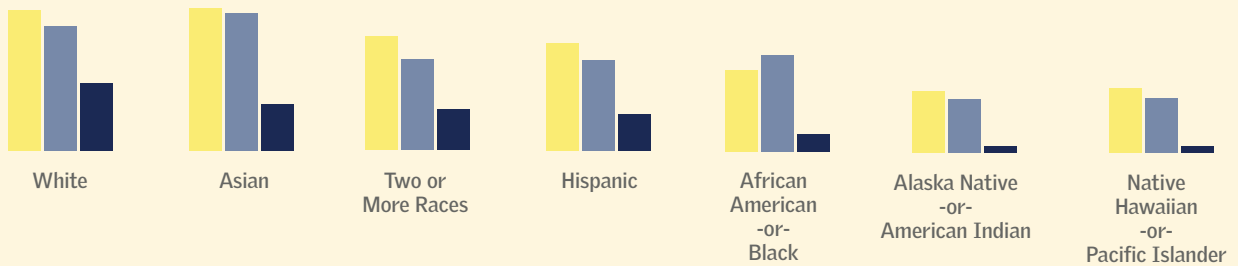


EXHIBIT 7

Public High School Graduate APS Eligibility Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2020-2022

TOTAL ELIGIBLE: **37%** **36%** **17%**
YEAR: ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022



DATA SOURCE: ACPE Alaska Student Aid Portal data, Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, and MRG calculations.

APS USE BY ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

The percentage of eligible students using the APS award in the fall after graduation **declined** between the classes of 2019 and 2020. Use of the APS award by eligible graduates in the class of 2022 was consistent with the rate of use in 2020 and 2021 (**Exhibit 8**).

Several factors that may play a role in declining use of APS include the declining **value** of the award relative to costs, declining **competitiveness** of award amounts, and late **timing** of award notification.⁵

Declining Use of APS: From 2021-2022, the number of APS recipients **DECREASED BY 57%**

FY2021 700
FY2022 300

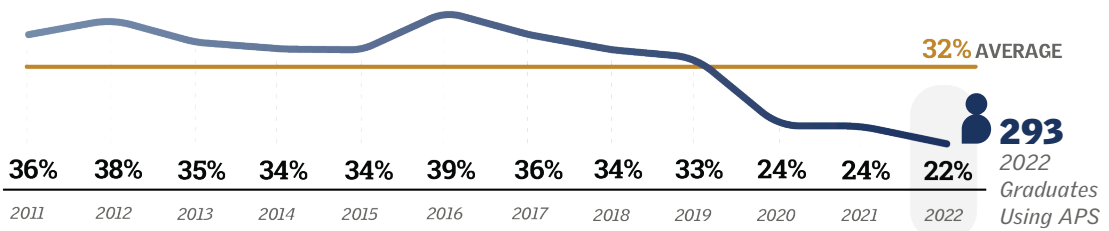
DECLINING VALUE

DECLINING COMPETITIVENESS

LATE TIMING

EXHIBIT 8

Percent of Public APS-Eligible Graduates Using APS the Fall After High School Graduation, 2011-2022

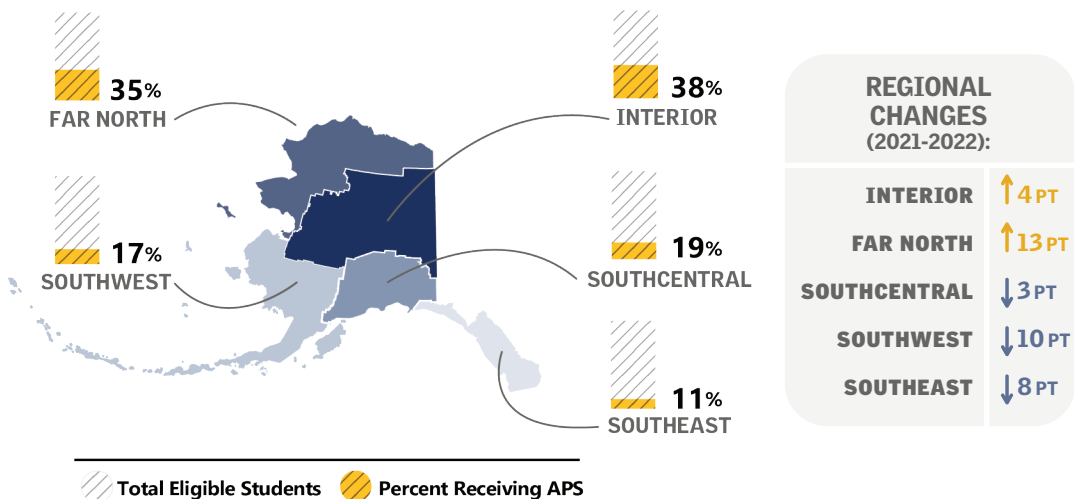


BY REGION:

Among class of 2022 public high school students, the **Interior region** had the highest proportion of eligible students using the scholarship (**38%**). The percentage of recipients using the APS in the fall increased in two regions compared to the class of 2021, with usage in the **Far North** region increasing from **22% to 35%** of eligible students, and the **Interior** region increasing from **35% to 38%** between 2021 and 2022. The rate of use declined in the remaining three regions, with use decreasing from **22% to 19%** by **Southcentral** graduates, the **Southeast** region decreasing from **19% to 11%**, and the **Southwest** region decreasing from **27% to 17%** (**Exhibit 9**).

EXHIBIT 9

Percent of APS-Eligible Students Using APS in the Fall After High School Graduation by Region, 2022



⁵ McKinley Research Group. *Alaska Performance Scholarship: Program Review and Recommendations*. January 2021.

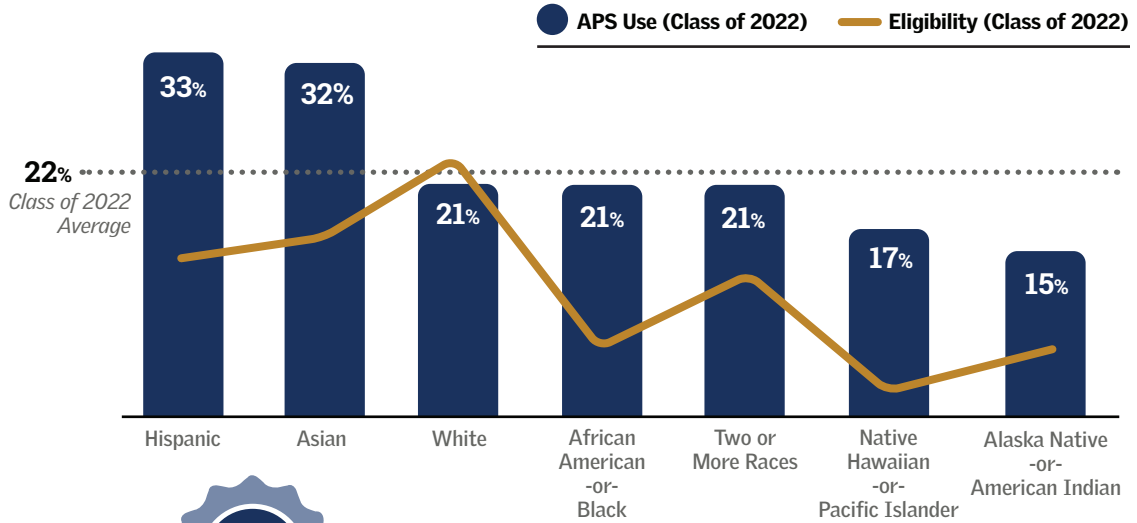
BY RACE/ETHNICITY:

Among class of 2022 public high school students, **Asian and Hispanic students** used the scholarship at higher rates compared to other eligible students (**32%** and **33%** of eligible students, respectively) (**Exhibit 10**).

Alaska Native/American Indian students are underrepresented as a proportion of those eligible for and receiving APS. Alaska Native/American Indian students represented **19%** of all graduates in the class of 2022, but **7%** of eligible students and **4%** of recipients. Conversely, white students are overrepresented, accounting for **70%** of eligible students while representing **51%** of the graduating class (**Exhibit 11**).

EXHIBIT 10

Percent of APS-Eligible Students Using APS in the Fall After High School Graduation by Race/Ethnicity, 2022



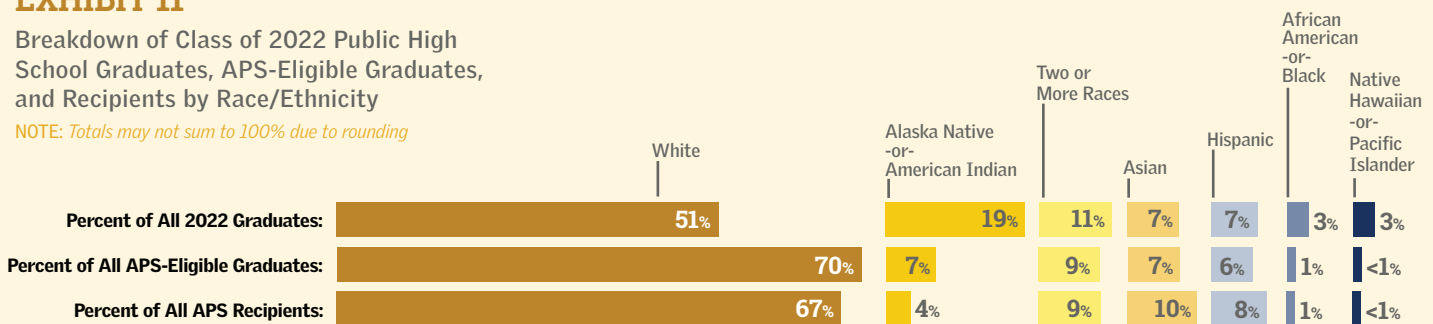
ASIAN & HISPANIC

APS-eligible students used the award at higher rates than other eligible students.

EXHIBIT 11

Breakdown of Class of 2022 Public High School Graduates, APS-Eligible Graduates, and Recipients by Race/Ethnicity

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding



Students Receiving APS:
(Compared with All Graduates)

UNDERREPRESENTED

- Alaska Native/American Indian
- African American/Black
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

OVERREPRESENTED

- White
- Asian
- Hispanic

DATA SOURCE: ACPE Alaska Student Aid Portal data, Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, & MRG calculations.

FALL 2022 SURVEY (APS-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS)

In an effort to understand the impacts of the scholarship program, ACPE sends a survey each fall to all new high school graduates who were eligible for the APS. The fall 2022 survey of eligible members of the high school class of 2022 was administered online. Responses to select questions are shared and discussed below ([Exhibits 12-16](#)).

Those who are using the scholarship responded to the survey at higher rates than those who are not currently using it: **53%** of survey respondents said they received the scholarship, more than twice the **22%** rate of use among all APS-eligible high school graduates in the class of 2022.

AWARENESS OF APS AWARD:

Among respondents to the 2022 survey of APS-eligible high school graduates, **14% were unaware they qualified for the scholarship**. This includes **7%** who said they had heard of the APS but did not know if they were eligible, **5%** who had never heard of the APS, and **2%** who erroneously said they did not qualify for the scholarship ([Exhibit 12](#)).

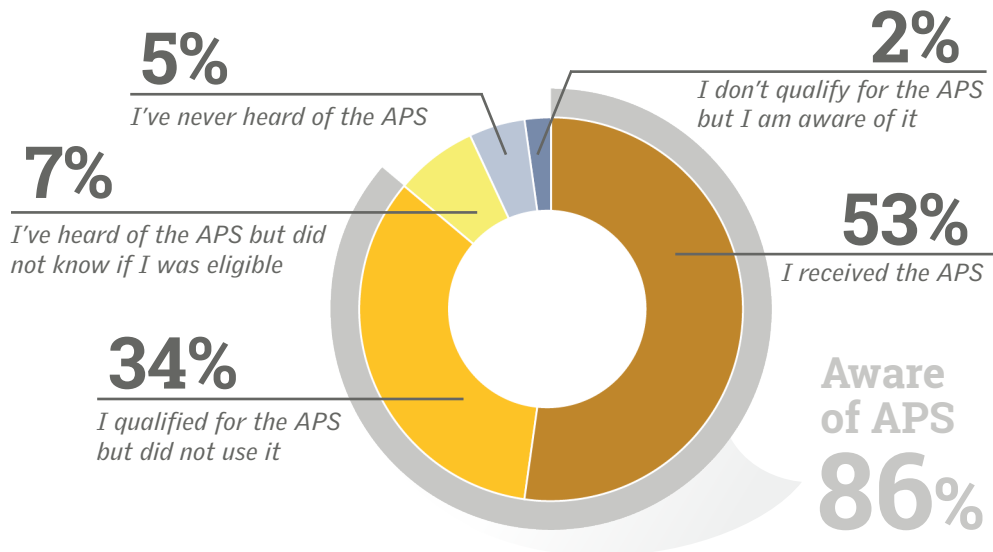
This finding suggests that a sizeable minority of APS-eligible students do not know they are eligible for the scholarship. Because students who are using the scholarship are overrepresented in the survey sample, the actual percentage of students who are not aware they qualified is **likely higher than 14%**.

EXHIBIT 12

Class of 2022 APS Survey:

"The APS is a scholarship program offered to Alaska high school graduates with qualifying GPA and test scores. Which of the following best describes you?"

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding



INFLUENCE OF APS ON DECISIONS:

The survey asked students about the influence of the APS on their choices during high school as well as their postsecondary decisions ([Exhibit 13 & Exhibit 14](#)):

Placement Tests:

71%

Better Grades:

70%

Test Preparation:

67%

Take Challenging Courses:

60%

Seek College/Academic Advising:

57%

Consider Career Options:

48%

Influence on High School Decisions:

One of the goals of the state’s merit-based scholarship is to motivate students to set high standards for themselves in high school by taking challenging coursework, achieving good grades, and actively planning for their future. Respondents were asked how much the availability of the APS influenced their high school choices and behaviors in six areas (**Exhibit 13**):

• The strongest impact related to placement exams, with **71%** saying the availability of the scholarship made them more likely to take the SAT, ACT, or WorkKeys exams.

• Over two-thirds (**70%**) said it made them much more likely (**43%**) or somewhat more likely (**27%**) to achieve better grades.

• Two-thirds (67%) said it made them more likely to prepare for placement exams.

• Sixty percent said it made them more likely to take challenging courses, including **27%** who said it made them much more likely to do so.

• More than half (**57%**) said it made them more likely to seek out college or academic advising, including **27%** who said it made them much more likely.

• Just under half (**48%**) said it made them more likely to consider career options.

EXHIBIT 13

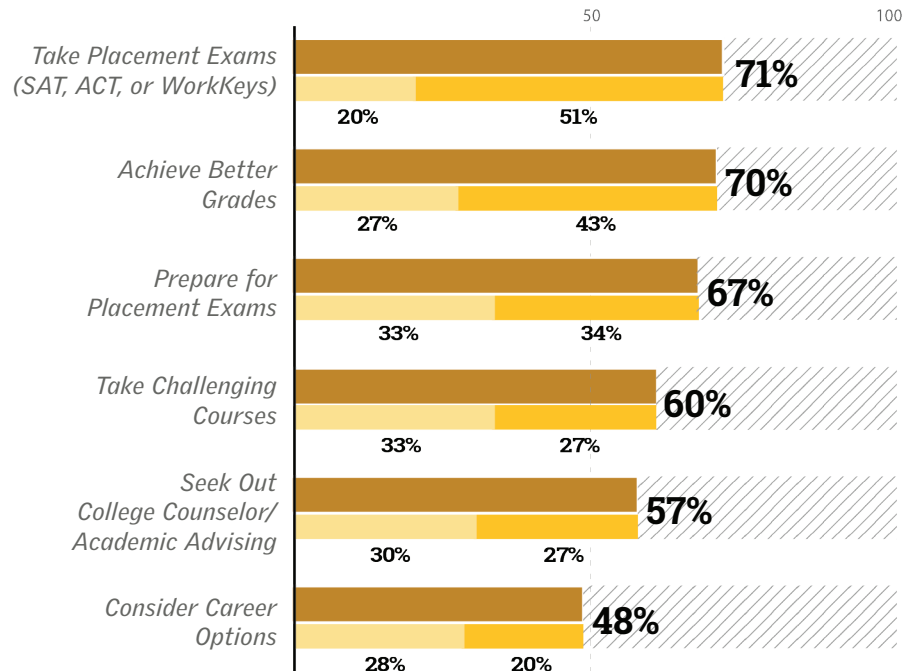
Class of 2022 APS Survey:

"Due to APS availability, how likely were you to do any of the following in high school?"

APS INFLUENCE

- TOTAL (More Likely)
- Somewhat More Likely
- Much More Likely
- ▨ No Affect

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. "Don't Know" responses were omitted.



Influence on Postsecondary School Decisions:

Key goals of the APS include motivating high-achieving students to stay in state for postsecondary training and education, and helping qualifying students achieve their postsecondary training and education goals. Respondents were asked how much the APS influenced each of five postsecondary decisions (**Exhibit 14**):

Attend Alaska School:

68%

Amount Borrowed:

56%

Hours Worked:

42%

Full-time Enrollment
Instead of Part-time:

37%

Degree/Certificate
Program Choice:

16%

• Among survey respondents, the top postsecondary decision influenced by the APS was the decision to attend school in Alaska, with two-thirds (**68%**) of students calling the scholarship either a major influence (**42%**) or a minor influence (**26%**).

• More than half (**56%**) said the APS influenced their decision on whether and how much to borrow, including **36%** who said it was a major influence and **20%** who called it a minor influence.

• Forty-two percent said the APS had either a major influence (**22%**) or a minor influence (**20%**) on the number of hours they need to work while at school.

• Over a third (**37%**) of students said the APS influenced their decision to enroll full-time rather than part-time, including **22%** who called it a major influence and **15%** who called it a minor influence.

• Only **16%** said the APS influenced their choice of degree/certificate program, with **5%** calling it a major and **11%** a minor influence.

EXHIBIT 14

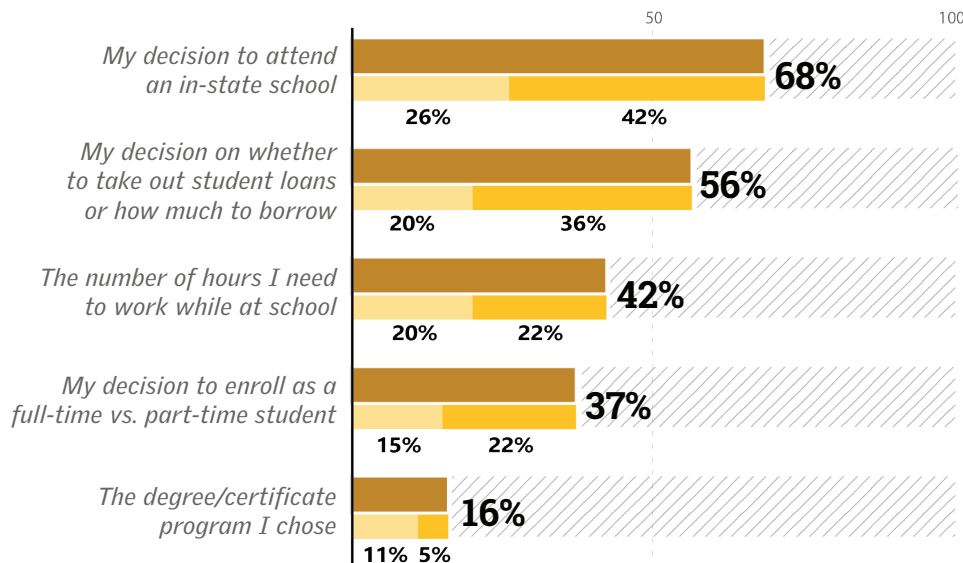
Class of 2022 APS Survey:

"How much of an influence was the APS in the following decisions?"

APS INFLUENCE

- TOTAL Influence
- Minor Influence
- Major Influence
- ▨ No Affect

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. "Don't Know" responses were omitted.



REASONS STUDENTS DID NOT USE THE APS:

Only **22%** of APS-eligible students in the high school class of 2022 used the scholarship in fall 2022, **the lowest rate** in the program's 12-year history, and 10 percentage points below the average.

Usage rates have been dropping since 2016, when APS use in the fall following high school graduation peaked at 39%. **An in-depth program review published in January 2021 identified reduced appeal of in-state institutions, late timing of APS award notifications, and declining competitiveness of APS awards as key contributors to reduced APS use.**⁶ The most recent survey of APS-eligible high school graduates corroborates these findings.

Students who did not use the APS in the 2022-2023 school year were asked to identify the factors that influenced their decision not to use the scholarship (**Exhibit 15**):

Not Wanting to Attend Alaska School:

56%

Late Timing of Eligibility Notification:

44%

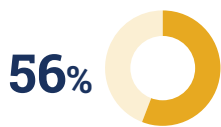
- The top factor, selected by more than half (**56%**) of respondents, was not wanting to attend school in Alaska.
- The next-biggest factor related to timing: **44%** of respondents said they had already decided to attend school outside when they learned of their APS eligibility.
- One in ten (**10%**) said they did not want to attend school this year.
- Five percent said they were unaware they were eligible, and **1%** said school remained unaffordable even with the scholarship.

Students who selected "Other" were asked to specify. Several said they plan to use the scholarship in the future or wanted to earn money before starting school. Others said Alaska institutions did not offer the programs they are interested in, such as one who noted Alaska does not have a maritime academy. "Other" verbatim responses can be found in **Appendix C**.

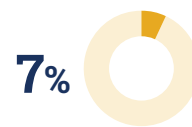
EXHIBIT 15

Class of 2022 APS Survey:

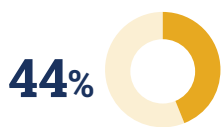
"Which of the following factors influences your decision to not use the APS this academic year? (Select all that apply.)"



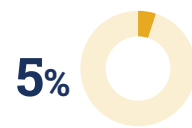
I did not want to attend college or a vocational/technical school in Alaska.



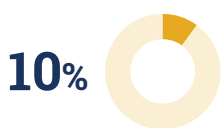
I received a better financial award from a different source.



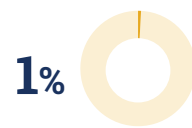
I had already decided on attending a vocational/technical school outside of Alaska when I found out about eligibility.



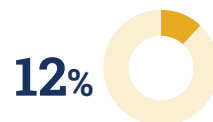
I did not know I was eligible.



I do not want to attend college or a vocational/technical school in 2022-2023.



I could not afford to attend college or a vocational/technical school even with APS assistance.



Other (see **Appendix B**)

DATA SOURCE: ACPE APS-Eligible Student Survey 2022

6 · McDowell Group (now MRG). *Alaska Performance Scholarship Program Review & Recommendations*. Prepared for ACPE, January 2021.

COMMENTS ABOUT THE APS:

Survey respondents were asked to share any comments about how the APS meets their needs and/or how it could be improved. A sample of responses follows, grouped by topic and lightly edited for clarity (**Exhibit 16**). All verbatim responses can be found in **Appendix C**.

EXHIBIT 16

Class of 2022 APS
Survey: Comments

Positive Impacts

- *I think it's a great incentive for kids to try better in school.*
- *APS has allowed me to attend UAA without the added stress of debt. It has made me able to pursue my dreams and allows me to explore others. I am very grateful for APS.*
- *I think it's great that I have 6 years instead of 4 to use it.*
- *The scholarship really encouraged me to pursue my college career and takes away the stress from worrying about paying for school.*
- *It provides me with the opportunity to focus solely on coursework and gaining knowledge within my field of study instead of also having to worry about my ability to pay for basic needs for living.*
- *The scholarship was a life saver and allowed me to pursue college without taking out loans.*
- *It has sincerely aided me in pursuing my dream degree and has allowed me to do so without too much worry of finances.*
- *APS currently has paid for a 1/3 of my semester price, which has saved me a lot of money and stress since my parents can't afford to pay for my college.*
- *I am glad that it stays valid for 6 years because I plan to use the APS for graduate school back in Alaska.*
- *The Alaska Performance Scholarship has really helped me and my parents with tuition fees and I have no problems with this except for the wait time.*

**“ THE SCHOLARSHIP WAS
A LIFE SAVER AND ALLOWED
ME TO PURSUE COLLEGE
WITHOUT TAKING OUT LOANS. ”**

Award Notification

- *I think a better job can be done of letting us know if we actually got it and what to do to make sure I can use it in the next 6 years. I am unsure of how to do this and if I actually got it.*
- *An improvement would be to reach out more often to the people who qualify.*
- *Unsure what the APS even is, would need a lot more information.*
- *I do not know if I qualified. No one ever told me.*
- *Make it easier to know if you actually received it.*



EXHIBIT 16

Class of 2022 APS
Survey: Comments
— Continued

Promotion & Awareness

- *I think it could be improved if high schools did talks about the APS for all years. I feel like since I come from the lower end of the financial spectrum, this would have been very helpful for my family and I if we knew sooner.*
- *Spread helpful, easy to understand infographics of how to benefit from Alaska Performance Scholarship to middle and high schools.*
- *Help kids learn about it before they get to high school. I learned about it a little late so I struggled to get the requirements.*
- *There was also no guidance on the tech school route. I ended up going to school for an AA in Diesel Mechanics with the Level 2 scholarship, but would have been better off taking the Work Keys test to qualify for the Level 1 scholarship and applying to a tech/trade program instead. I wish I had known this was an option.*

Impact of Standardized Testing

- *I definitely think the SAT and ACT score for the different levels should be rethought. I was a straight-A student but had a hard time with the SAT and ACT. It was disappointing to see that despite my good grades, I didn't score high enough on those tests to achieve a higher level.*
- *The APS can be improved by not using the SAT/ACT requirement as most colleges themselves do not use these scores in their admission process.*
- *A great opportunity, but the required SAT/ACT score were the only thing preventing me from reaching a higher level. I feel like standardized testing should have the least amount of impact it says about a person's knowledge level due to the inaccuracy in portraying a person's full knowledge.*
- *I don't like that the SAT and ACT have so much power over what reward you receive.*
- *In previous years, test scores weren't needed because of COVID. I was informed very late in the school year that my test scores were needed and would not be waived. Because of the short notice, it was very difficult and stressful for me to find a testing center that was still administering ACTs.*

Award Levels

- *Increase the money offered to students per level as inflation and tuition rises.*
- *It is a great help to have the Alaska Performance scholarship, though the reward levels aren't that high, even at the highest level. Any increase in scholarship amounts for the student's efforts would be helpful.*
- *It could be improved by offering some more money to higher level individuals.*

Other Suggestions

- *Being able to use the scholarship for single classes such as over the summer while pursuing a degree would be helpful.*
- *This scholarship should be applied to students if they are wishing to come back to Alaska.*



DATA SOURCE: ACPE APS-Eligible
Student Survey 2022

APS & POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES

Among APS recipients graduating in FY2022, **97%** attended University of Alaska (UA) institutions in FY2023 (preliminary), with **54%** attending University of Alaska Anchorage, **37%** attending University of Alaska Fairbanks, and **5%** attending University of Alaska Southeast. This year, an additional **79 prior-year** APS-eligible high school graduates enrolled as first-time freshmen at a UA institutions and received the award. **More than 1 in 5** first-time freshmen entering UA receiving the APS award in fall 2022 delayed entry into postsecondary education after graduating high school.

Since FY2018, the total number of APS recipients attending Alaska postsecondary institutions has **DECREASED BY 46%**

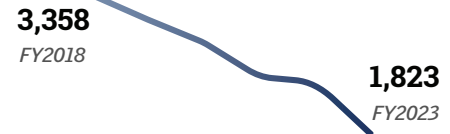
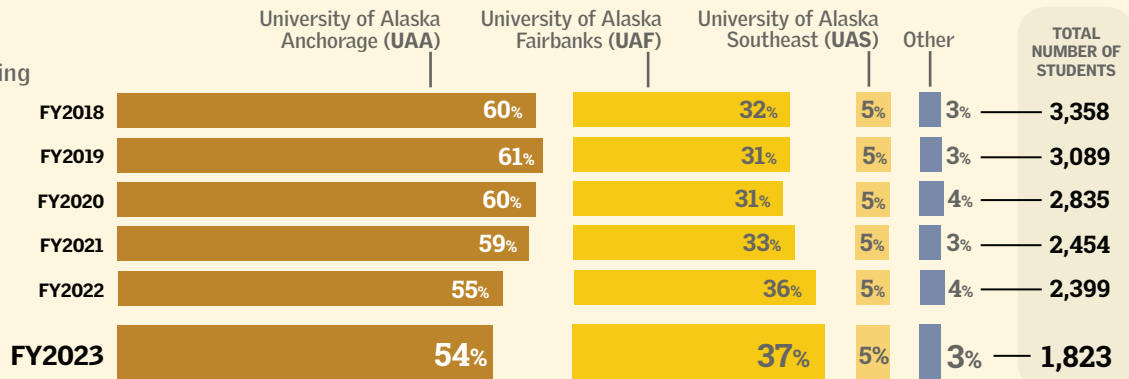


EXHIBIT 17

APS Recipients Attending Postsecondary in Alaska by Institution, FY2019-FY2022 and Preliminary FY2023

NOTE: FY2023 based on preliminary fall 2022 ASAP data. Students for whom FY2023 institution data were missing were not considered in this analysis.



DATA SOURCE: ACPE Alaska Student Aid Portal data & MRG calculations.

APS RECIPIENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

One goal of the APS is to ensure students are prepared for college or technical training.

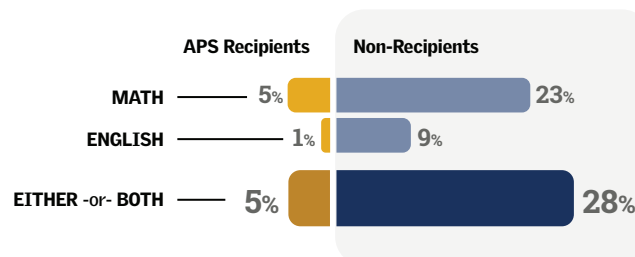
NEED FOR DEVELOPMENTAL COURSEWORK:

In fall 2022, APS recipients were significantly less likely than non-recipients enrolled at UA to require developmental coursework ([Exhibit 18](#)).

EXHIBIT 18

Percent of Enrolled First-Time Freshmen at UA from the Class of 2022 Needing Developmental Coursework, Fall 2022

Percent Requiring Developmental Coursework



CREDIT COMPLETION:

Another APS program goal is for students to succeed in college. On average, APS recipients **attempt and complete more credit hours per year** than their peers (**Exhibit 19**). APS recipients entering in fall 2022 completed **79%** of attempted credits compared to **61%** among non-recipients (**Exhibit 20**).

PERSISTENCE:

APS recipients **return for a second year of postsecondary education at higher rates** than non-recipients at UA. Of those entering in fall 2020, **80%** of APS recipients re-enrolled in fall 2021 compared to **56%** of non-recipients (**Exhibit 21**).

EXHIBIT 19

Average Credit Hours Attempted and Completed, High School Class of 2021

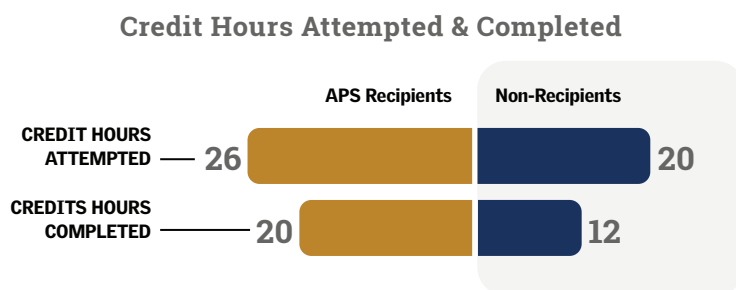
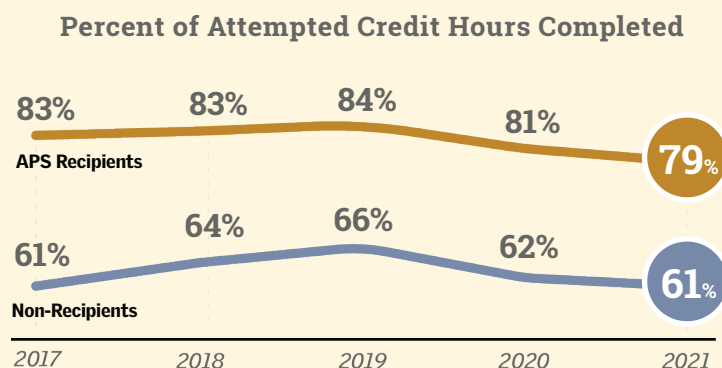


EXHIBIT 20

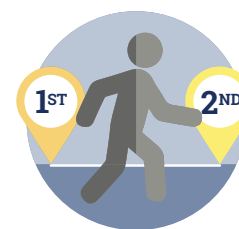
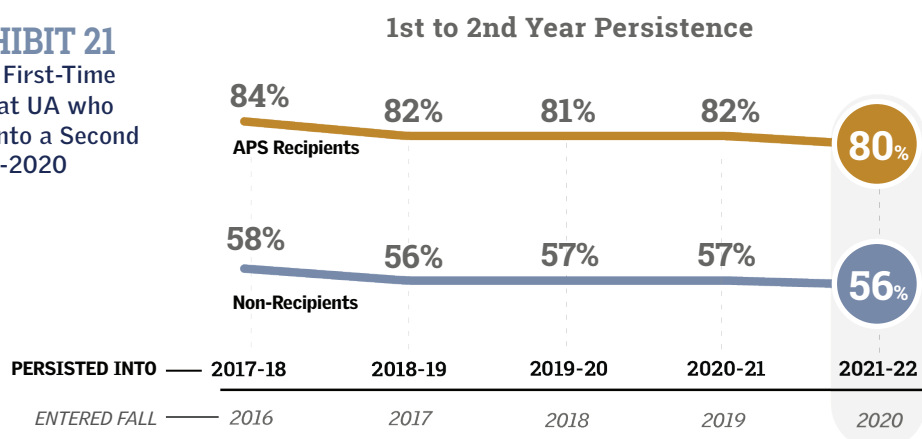
Percent of Attempted Credit Hours Completed, High School Class of 2017-2021



APS recipients attempt and complete more credit hours.

EXHIBIT 21

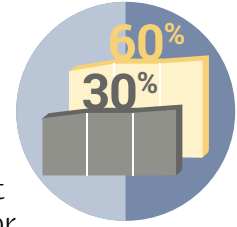
Percent of First-Time Freshmen at UA who Persisted into a Second Year, 2016-2020



More APS recipients persist into their second year of postsecondary studies.

COMPLETION RATES:

Completion rates are another way to track college success. Of first-time, full-time freshmen entering UA in fall 2016, **57%** of APS recipients graduated with an undergraduate degree, certificate, or occupational endorsement within six years, **more than double the rate (28%)** of non-recipients. The most recent available national six-year completion rate was **28%** for degree-seeking students at comparable institutions ([Exhibit 22](#)).⁷

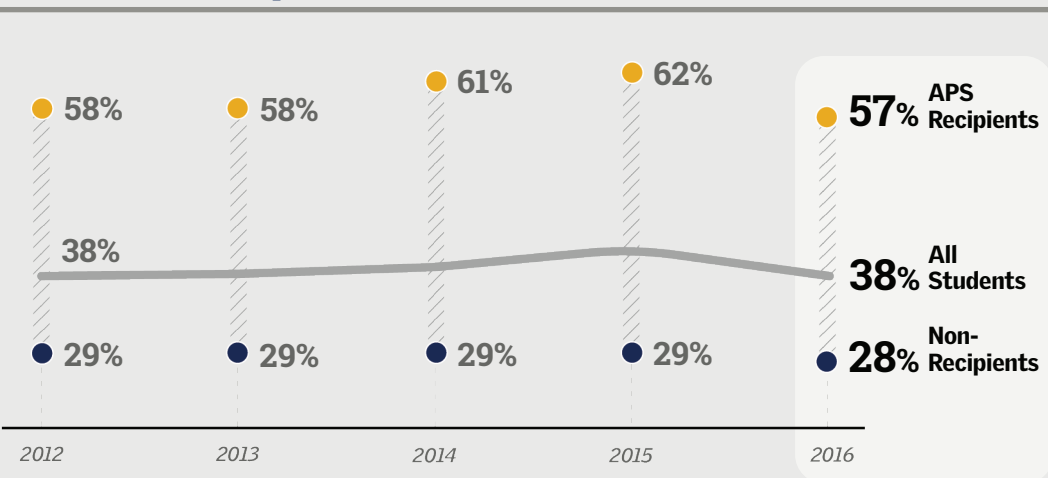


APS recipients also have higher completion rates for programs designed to be completed in two years or less. Of public high school graduates in the class of 2019 attending such programs, **37%** of APS recipients graduated from the program within three years, compared to **24%** of non-recipient first-time students. While not directly comparable, the nationwide three-year graduation rate for first-time students attending public, two-year institutions were **29%** for students entering in 2017, the most recent year available ([Exhibit 23](#)).⁸ Preliminary characteristics of first-time students entering UA in fall 2022 are provided in [Exhibit 24](#).

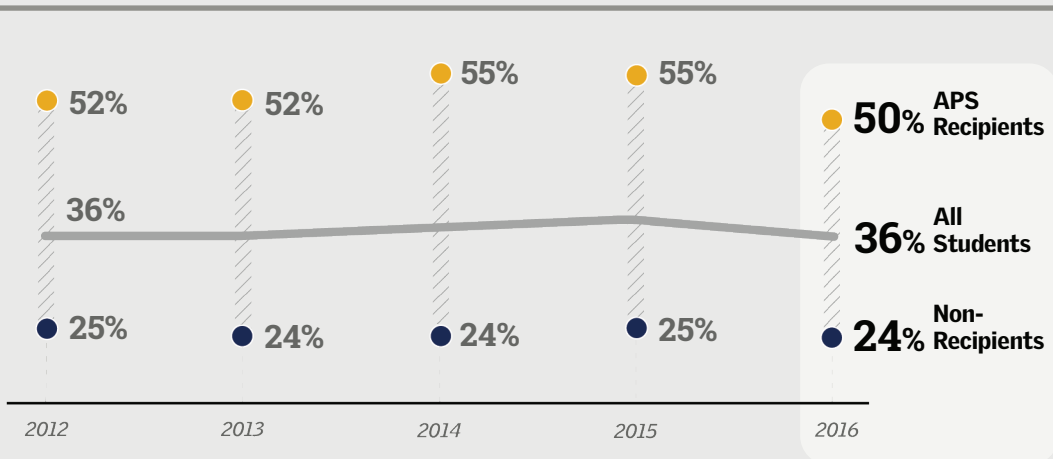
EXHIBIT 22

Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Six-Year Graduation Rates by High School Class, 2012-2016

Received Any Undergraduate Degree, Certificate, or Occupational Endorsement



Received Bachelor's Degree ⁹



⁷ National Center for Education Statistics. *Annual Report 2021*. National graduation rates are based on first-time students entering public, four-year institutions with open admissions in 2014.

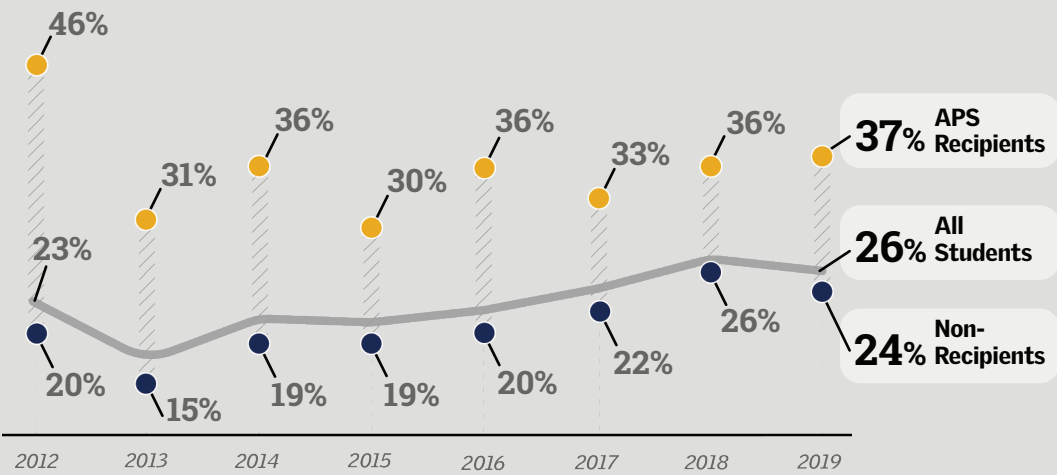
⁸ National Center for Education Statistics. *Annual Report 2021*. National graduation rates are based on first-time students entering public, two-year institutions in 2017.

⁹ Based on bachelor's degree-seeking first-time, full-time students.

Received Certificate or Occupational Endorsement for Two-Year or Less Program

EXHIBIT 23

Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Three Year Graduation Rates for Two-Year or Less Programs by High School Class, 2012-2019



The APS Helps Students Complete Postsecondary Programs Timely

RECEIVED ANY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE, CERTIFICATE, OCCUPATIONAL ENDORSEMENT WITHIN 6 YEARS (2012-16 Combined)

RECEIVED BACHELOR'S DEGREE WITHIN 6 YEARS (2012-16 Combined)

RECEIVED CERTIFICATE OR OCCUPATIONAL ENDORSEMENT WITHIN 3 YEARS Two-Year or Less (2012-19 Combined)

● APS Recipients
● Non-Recipients

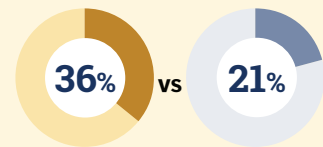
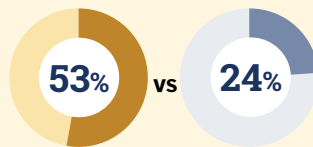
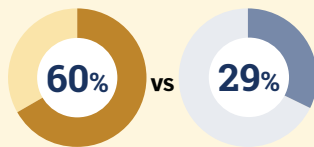
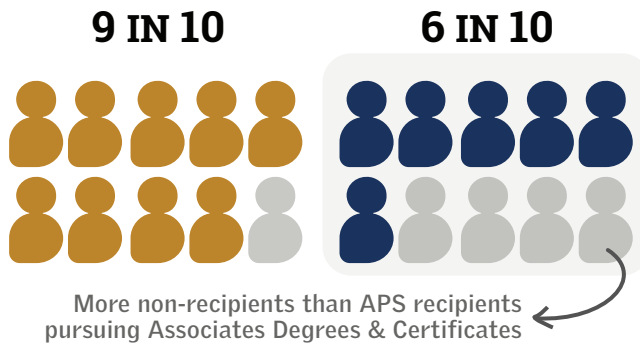


EXHIBIT 24

Recent Alaska High School Graduates Entering University of Alaska by Degree Level Sought, Entering Fall 2022

● APS Recipients
372
● Non-Recipients
842

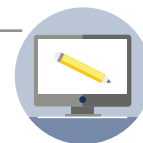
First-time Freshmen Attending UA Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree:



88%

The vast majority of APS recipient freshmen start off pursuing a Bachelor's degree

Took Developmental Coursework:



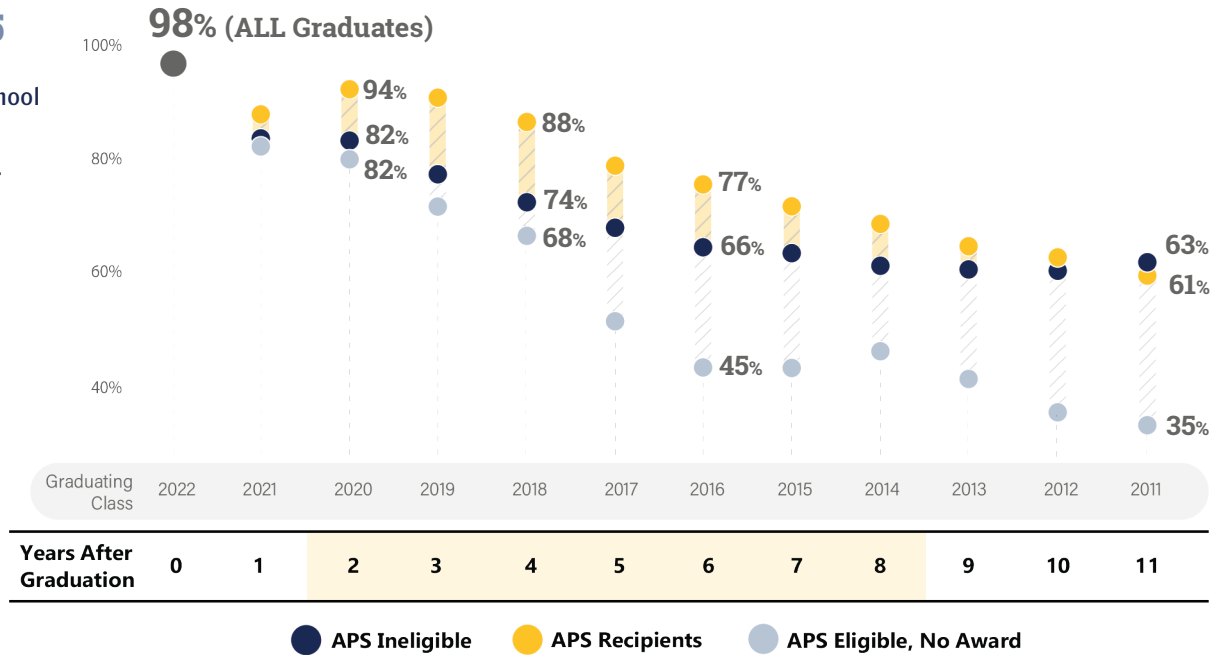
DATA SOURCE: Data supplied by universities via UA Information Systems; UA Decision Support Database, Fall 2011 - Fall 2022. Compiled by UA Data Strategy & Institutional Research Department. MRG calculations.

APS & ALASKA RESIDENCY OUTCOMES

One goal of the APS program is to help the state retain high-achieving Alaska high school graduates. APS recipients generally have higher Alaska residency rates compared to ineligible students, as well as those who were eligible but did not use the APS. For example, about **61%** of high school class of 2011 APS recipients were Alaska residents in 2022, compared to **59%** of all high school graduates, and **35%** of those who were APS-eligible but did not use the award (**Exhibit 25**).

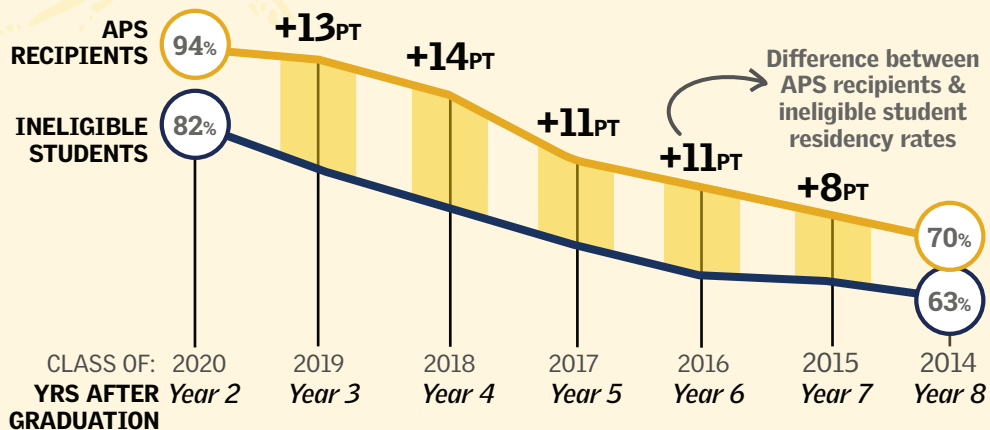
EXHIBIT 25

Percentage of Alaska High School Graduates Who Remain Alaska Residents After Graduation, by Class and APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2011-2022



The APS Helps Retain Alaska Graduates Long-term

APS recipients have higher residency rates, most notably **2-8 years after graduation**



DATA SOURCE: Alaska Department of Revenue Permanent Fund Dividend Applicant Database 2022.

APS RECIPIENTS IN THE ALASKA WORKFORCE

Another measure of the state’s retention of high-achieving students is employment in the Alaska labor force. Based on analysis by DOLWD, the strongest economic and workforce outcomes came from those who both qualified for APS and accepted the award. **Six to seven years after high school graduation, 73% of APS recipients from the class of 2014 and 70% from the class of 2015 were employed in the Alaska labor force.** By comparison, the employment rate for those that were ineligible for the APS in these two classes was **62%**. The lowest employment rates were those of students who were eligible for APS but did not accept it, with only **48%** of the class of 2014 and **43%** of the class of 2015 employed in Alaska in 2022 (**Exhibit 26**). Within this group, APS-eligible students who chose to enroll at an institution out of state had even lower employment rates: only **24%** were employed in 2022.

APS recipients in the Alaska workforce earned slightly higher average wages than their ineligible peers and those who were eligible but did not use APS (**Exhibit 26**). **Exhibit 27** lists the top occupations of former Alaska high school graduates from the classes of 2014-2016 working in Alaska in FY2022.

APS Recipients vs Ineligible Students: Class of 2014 & 2015

9% Average higher employment for APS recipients

\$4,000 Average higher wages for APS recipients

EXHIBIT 26

Percent of Graduates Employed in Alaska and Average Annual Wages in 2022 by APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2014 and 2015

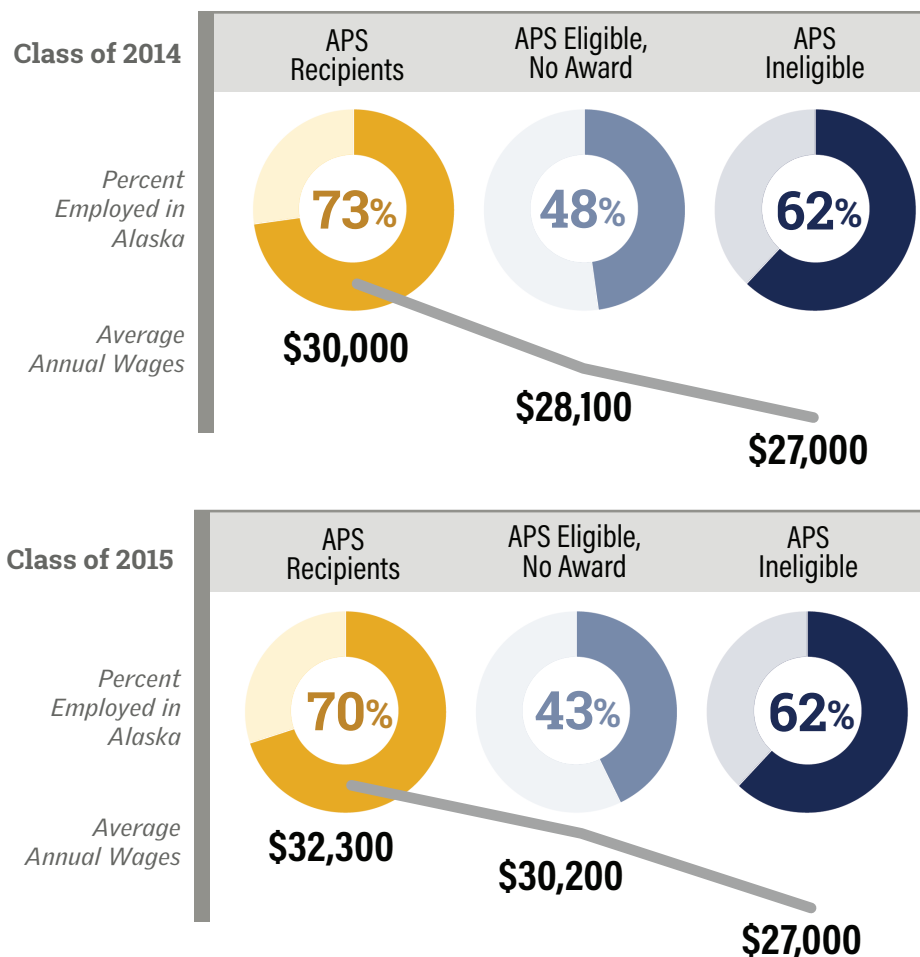


EXHIBIT 27

Top Occupations in Alaska Among High School Graduates in FY2022 by APS-Eligibility Status, Classes of 2014-2016 (Combined)

APS RECIPIENTS		APS ELIGIBLE, NO AWARD		APS INELIGIBLE	
Occupation	%	Occupation	%	Occupation	%
Retail Sales Workers	7%	Retail Sales Workers	8%	Retail Sales Workers	11%
Information & Record Clerks	5%	Food & Beverage Serving Workers	6%	Construction Trades Workers	6%
Other Office & Administrative Support Workers	5%	Other Office & Administrative Support Workers	6%	Material Moving Workers	6%
Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioner	5%	Information & Record Clerks	6%	Food & Beverage Serving Workers	5%
Other Healthcare Support Occupations	4%	Construction Trades Workers	4%	Information & Record Clerks	5%
Food & Beverage Serving Worker	4%	Other Healthcare Support Occupations	4%	Other Office & Administrative Support Workers	4%
Engineers	4%	Financial Clerks	3%	Other Healthcare Support Occupations	3%
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	3%	Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioner	3%	Home Health & Personal Care Aides; & Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, & Psychiatric Aides	3%
Construction Trades Workers	3%	—	—	Building Cleaning & Pest Control Workers	3%
Health Technologists & Technicians	3%	—	—	Cooks & Food Preparation Workers	2%
Financial Clerks	3%	—	—	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	2%
Other Occupations	54%	Other Occupations	60%	Other Occupations	48%

DATA SOURCE:
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section.

APPENDIX A

The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) is designed to reward Alaska students who excel in high school with scholarships to help cover the cost of in-state postsecondary education. The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) contracted with McKinley Research Group (MRG) to prepare a report of program outcomes for the 2023 state fiscal year (FY).

Methodology

Several data sources are used throughout this report. ACPE provided student-level data from the Alaska Student Aid Portal (ASAP). Data were analyzed by MRG to describe student demographics, eligibility, and program usage. ASAP data for academic years 2011-2012 through 2021-2022 were used to show ten-year trends. ASAP data for academic year 2022-2023 were run in September 2022 and are considered preliminary. Additional data on the total number and demographics of Alaska public high school graduates were provided by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

ACPE obtained student enrollment records from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). MRG used student-level ASAP and NSC data to request aggregated data on the percentage of Alaska high school graduates in the state workforce in FY2021 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021) from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).

In October and November 2022, ACPE surveyed APS-eligible students from the class of 2022 to better understand how the APS impacted their high school decisions and their post-secondary choices. The survey was sent to students via email. APS sent survey invitations to **1,154** high school graduates and received responses from **245** students (a response rate of **22%**).

ACPE requested aggregated data on educational persistence, credit hours attempted and achieved, and other characteristics from the University of Alaska (UA) for inclusion in the report.¹⁰ Student-level data were analyzed by UA Data Strategy and Institutional Research Department and provided to MRG in summarized form.

¹⁰ Historically 96-97% of students who use the APS attend University of Alaska.



Formerly McDowell Group

APPENDIX B

Public School Class of 2022 APS Headcounts, by School District

School District	Class of 2022 High School Graduates	APS-Eligible Graduates	Fall of 2021 APS Recipients	APS Award Amount
Alaska Gateway	19	*	*	*
Aleutian Region	1	0	0	\$0
Aleutians East Borough	8	0	0	\$0
Anchorage	2,531	438	64	\$115,627
Annette Island	14	0	0	\$0
Bering Strait	116	10	*	*
Bristol Bay Borough	12	0	0	\$0
Chatham	7	0	0	\$0
Chugach	37	9	*	*
Copper River	20	*	*	*
Cordova City	20	6	0	\$0
Craig City	28	*	0	\$0
Delta-Greely	33	5	*	*
Denali Borough	68	19	*	*
Dillingham City	23	*	*	*
Fairbanks North Star Borough	643	137	59	\$107,600
Galena City	491	72	22	\$41,316
Haines Borough	11	5	*	*
Hoonah City	6	*	*	*
Hydaburg City	5	0	0	\$0
Iditarod Area	11	*	0	\$0
Juneau Borough	331	90	10	\$17,833
Kake City	6	*	0	\$0
Kashunamiut	15	0	0	\$0
Kenai Peninsula Borough	517	80	21	\$41,018
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	153	26	*	*
Klawock City	6	*	0	\$0
Kodiak Island Borough	125	21	7	\$9,809
Kuspuk	15	0	0	\$0

NOTE: Data have been suppressed to protect student confidentiality, indicated by "*"

APPENDIX B

Public School Class of 2022 APS Headcounts, by School District — *Continued*

School District	Class of 2022 High School Graduates	APS-Eligible Graduates	Fall of 2022 APS Recipients	APS Award Amount
Lake and Peninsula Borough	22	0	0	\$0
Lower Kuskokwim	196	*	0	\$0
Lower Yukon	101	0	0	\$0
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	1,380	252	64	\$123,646
Mount Edgecumbe	70	11	*	*
Nenana City	139	10	5	\$10,700
Nome Public Schools	31	10	*	*
North Slope Borough	102	5	*	*
Northwest Arctic Borough	96	6	*	*
Pelican City	1	0	0	\$0
Petersburg Borough	31	10	*	*
Pribilof	2	*	0	\$0
Saint Mary's	11	7	0	\$0
Sitka	69	15	*	*
Skagway	5	*	0	\$0
Southeast Island	13	0	0	\$0
Southwest Region	25	0	0	\$0
Tanana City	4	0	0	\$0
Unalaska City	26	8	0	\$0
Valdez City	40	9	*	*
Wrangell Public Schools	14	*	*	*
Yakutat	4	0	0	\$0
Yukon Flats	11	0	0	\$0
Yukon-Koyukuk	234	13	7	\$11,294
Yupiiit	19	9	0	\$0
TOTAL:	7,918	1,312	293	\$544,648

Source: Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education – Alaska Student Aid Portal data and McKinley Research Group calculations.

NOTE: Data have been suppressed to protect student confidentiality, indicated by “*”

APPENDIX C

Verbatim Comments Submitted by Respondents to the 2022 APS-Eligible Student Survey.

Comments are alphabetized and lightly edited for spelling and clarity.

Which of the following factors influenced your decision to not use the Alaska Performance Scholarship this academic year? "Other" responses:

I am attending a college outside of Alaska this year.

I attended my mother's alma mater in South Dakota which isn't a recipient of the APS.

I didn't attend a school last semester and I plan on using it in the future.

I don't know how to use it.

I plan on using it in the future.

I want to earn money before going to school.

I wanted to use the APS later in life.

No Alaska school offered what I wanted.

Playing basketball for a college in North Carolina.

Received similar award elsewhere and decided to spend time outside the state.

There are no maritime academies in Alaska so it was not an option for me.

This scholarship should be applied to students if they are wishing to come back to Alaska.

Please share any comments about how the Alaska Performance Scholarship meets your needs and/or how it could be improved.

A great opportunity, but the required SAT/ACT score were the only thing preventing me from reaching a higher level. I feel like standardized testing should have the least amount of impact it says about a person's knowledge level due to the inaccuracy in portraying a person's full knowledge.

An easier portal would be helpful.

Appreciate having it available to me.

APS has allowed me to attend UAA without the added stress of debt. It has made be able to pursue my dreams and allows me to explore others. I am very grateful for APS.

APS has contributed to paying for my first semester of college using only scholarships which has relieved a great deal of financial stress/uncertainties.

APS has helped me extremely. It currently has paid for a 1/3 of my semester price, which has saved me a lot of money and stress since my parents can't afford to pay for my college.

APS has helped me immensely with paying my tuition.

APS is amazing! I worked hard to get the highest level possible to help with the cost of my future.

Being able to use the scholarship for single classes such as over the summer while pursuing a degree would be helpful.

Between the APS and my other scholarships almost all of my college was paid for. I didn't have to take any loans out and it that was one of the major influences for me staying in Alaska for college.

Due to the APS, I was able to cover half of my tuition at UAA. I'm really grateful to earn the scholarship and glad it is available to students in Alaska.

Faster time to receive the scholarship. I was a week late on my first payment because of how slow it was.

[Allow it to be used] for out of state college.

Help kids learn about it before they get to high school. I learned about it a little late so I struggled to get the requirements.

High schools should make sure that student who were eligible for the APS, get the APS.

Honestly, APS has been extremely helpful in my college career so far. It has helped me stress a lot less about my financial situation because without it I might not have been able to pay for college.

I am currently enrolled in college outside of Alaska, but if I decided to come back for school it is a lot of help towards tuition and costs.

I am glad that it stays valid for 6 years because I plan to use the APS for graduate school back in Alaska.

I am trying to figure out if I'm able to accept APS if I do the national student exchange and come back to Alaska for a semester to relearn Yup'ik.

I am very grateful for the is scholarship. I traveled out of state to see other colleges but because of this scholarship I decided to stay in state which has been the best decision for me. Thank you!

I believe that it is working perfectly right now! Keep up the great work!

I could always use more money.

I definitely think the SAT and ACT score for the different levels should be rethought. I was a straight A student, but had a hard time with the SAT and ACT. It was disappointing to see that despite my good grades, I didn't score high enough on those test to achieve a higher level.

I did not use it because I did not want to stay in Alaska.

Note: minor punctuation edits made for clarification

APPENDIX C — Continued

I didn't get it because I went to a non-Alaska college.

I do not know if I qualified. No one ever told me.

I don't like that the SAT and ACT have so much power over what reward you receive. I am Tier3, but with my GPA I would have been eligible for Tier 1.

I don't know. I haven't been able to use it.

I haven't received any scholarships.

I honestly didn't even know that I would qualify to ANY ways to begin the process of using it.

I think high school students should know about APS earlier during high school. That way, they'll know it's an opportunity that they can pursue. More talk about it in schools.

I think it could be improved if high schools did talks about the APS for all years. I feel like since I come from the lower end of the financial spectrum, this would have been very helpful for my family and I if we knew sooner.

I think it's a great incentive for kids to try better in school.

I think it's great that I have 6 years instead of 4 to use it. Nothing I would change that I can think of.

I think that the Alaska Performance scholarship is a very important resource and should be kept for the foreseeable future. Though I myself did not use the APS I have many friends and peers who have and the APS has helped them pursue undergraduate education in Alaska that they might not have been able to without it.

I think the scholarship really encouraged me to pursue my college career and takes away the stress from worrying about paying for school.

I want to know what universities it is applicable in. Also, if there is any way I can take the scholarship out of state or "trade it in" for a different states equivalent.

I was not able to qualify for the best degree of the APS because of my ACT scores. I had a 3.775 GPA but was not informed that ACT scores were not currently required. I scored a 22 instead of a 24 which was required to get the best degree, because of this I am disappointed

that I decided to take the ACT score and would not have taken it if I had been properly informed. There is no reason that taking extra steps such as the ACT should suddenly take away qualifications when they were previously met.

I was not able to use it because I went out of state.

I wasn't aware of the scholarship until the last semester of my senior year and I still barely know anything about it. I think it should be explained more/better and earlier on so people can prepare and take the required courses.

I would've liked to hear more information about the program from a counselor and/or mentor while in high school.

If it could be used out of state, that would be awesome BUT it has been helpful to know that I'm still eligible for APS for 6 years so that if I transfer to in-state I can claim it.

Increase the money offered to students per level as inflation and tuition rises. Offer an educational course to freshman in high school to make them aware of the scholarship.

It allowed for me to go to college without any need for loans.

It can be improved by not using the SAT/ACT requirement as most colleges themselves do not use these scores in their admission process.

It could be more lax with its requirements. I had an SAT score higher than what was needed to be eligible for the highest level, but because I had a cumulative GPA which was right below qualifying for the second level, I only qualified for the lowest level.

It doesn't meet my needs. I understood it as an opportunity for all Alaskan high schoolers, not just those staying in-state.

It has sincerely aided me in pursuing my dream degree and has allowed me to do so without too much worry of finances.

It helped with the financial stress of things and made there be one less thing to worry about.

It is a great help to have the Alaska Performance scholarship, though the reward levels aren't that high, even at the highest level. Any increase in scholarship amounts for the student's efforts would be helpful.

It makes it easier to focus on my work in classes, as I do not need to worry about paying for them.

It meets my needs perfectly. It gave me hope to make it through college without debt.

It meets my needs.

It met my family needs but ended up not benefiting me as I went to school outside the state.

It met my needs because it allows us to save money. It could be improved by offering some more money to higher Level individuals.

It met some of my needs for school.

It provides me with the opportunity to focus solely and coursework and gaining knowledge within my field of study instead of also having to worry about my ability to pay for basic needs for living.

It really helps pay for my college fees.

It seems very useful to those staying in-state for their college education, but since it does not apply to me as I am going out of state for education, it has not been one of the scholarships I have been awarded.

It sucks it's only for instate.

It would be a lot better introduced early on for high school freshmen, or early on each school year for all grades in high school.

It would be nice if it counted for out of state as out of state college is expensive.

It's a great scholarship, unfortunately I decided to go out of state so I cannot use it.

It's been great for me with my job and the APS I won't need to take out any loans to make it through collage.

It's alright. Wouldn't change much.

It's amazing, I will be in less debt now than I would have been without it. It influenced my choice of classes and whether I would've taken part or full-time classes. I'm very thankful.

It's an overall amazing scholarship. I just would like to know if there is an effect of APS to get a job acceptance.

Make it easier to know if you actually received it.

Note: minor punctuation edits made for clarification

APPENDIX C — Continued

Make it eligible for out-of-state schools.

My high school made us aware of APS. I think it is very important in attracting college bound kids to stay in AK. I wanted to experience living outside of AK but may decide to come back. I think a better job can be done of letting us know if we actually got it and what to do to make sure I can use it in the next 6 years. I am unsure of how to do this and if I actually got it.

I decided not to use my APS only because I wanted to go to school out of state.

One thing that made me nervous as a senior in high school was not knowing if my test scores for the SAT/ACT were needed. In previous years, test scores weren't needed because of Covid. I was informed very late in the school year that my test scores were needed and would not be waived. Because of the short notice, it was very difficult and stressful for me to find a testing center that was still administering ACTs. I'm sure there won't be any pandemics anytime soon, but I do think that information as pertinent as this would need to be given to high schools sooner rather than later.

Put up flyers for how to apply quickly.

Spread helpful, easy to understand infographics of how to benefit from Alaska Performance Scholarship to middle and high schools.

The Alaska Performance Scholarship gave me the ability to focus more on my schoolwork without worrying that I won't be able to afford it.

The Alaska Performance Scholarship has really helped me and my parents with tuition fees and I have no problems with this except for the wait time.

The Alaska Performance Scholarship is helping me pay tuition at Alaska Pacific University making it possible for me to stay on their ski team and chase my goals as a xc skier.

The APS and a few other scholarships gave me more than enough money for my college funds. I do think that they can improve in making students more aware of the program by visiting each high schools in Alaska.

The APS has been so influential in my ability to go to college, as I am paying by myself. It has allowed me to pay off all of my fees on time and be debt-free.

The APS has been very helpful in my journey to pursue higher education. I am able to explore courses I would not have been able to otherwise which will help me determine what major I want to pursue.

The APS is a great financial help if or when I do attend college.

The APS meets my needs by helping pay my tuition for college. An improvement would be to reach out more often to the people who qualify.

The APS was exactly what I needed when I needed it.

The program I want to start qualifies to use the APS so it would be a major financial aid to work towards the career I want to start.

The scholarship was a life saver and allowed me to pursue college without taking out loans. I would like more information about retaining the scholarship.

The website is hard to navigate.

They could be better advertised.

This scholarship helped me in my financial needs, but that was thanks to my grades and GPA meeting the requirements.

Tremendous help in deciding to serve and give back to Alaskans in the future.

Unsure what the APS even is, would need a lot more information.

Updated signage and at high schools would be helpful.

Wrangell High School doesn't offer many SAT/ACT test dates and has zero information and guidance on the Work Keys test. I was only 10 points shy on SAT testing to get the next level of the scholarship. There was also no guidance on the tech school route. I ended up going to school for an AA in Diesel Mechanics with the Level 2 scholarship but would have been better off taking the Work Keys test to Qualify for the Level 1 scholarship and applying to a tech/trade program instead. I wish I had known this was an option.

Y'all are doing great work!

Note: minor punctuation edits made for clarification