

ALASKA COMPETENCY-BASED APPRENTICESHIP TEACHER EDUCATION (A-CATE)

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Alaska Pacific University (APU) provides an alternative route to K-8 teacher certification through our Bachelor of Arts in Community and Place-based Education. This distinctive program combines K-8 education coursework, Indigenous studies, and classes designed to prepare students for leading cultural and place-based experiential learning activities. The ACATE teacher certification pathway specifically supports school districts emphasizing place-based education and cultural instruction in elementary and middle school classrooms. Apprentices engage in live online evening classes complemented by in-person intensives each semester and coordinated projects supervised by APU instructors and experienced field expert teachers.

PROGRAMS

- Bachelor's Degree
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

TYPES OF CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE AREAS

- K-8

COURSE DELIVERY MODEL

A-CATE is built on the belief that relationships are essential for Alaska learning needs. We offer:

- Synchronous online evening courses
- Hybrid Courses with short-term residencies
- Co-Delivered by APU Faculty and an Expert Teacher in Field
- Foundational/Educational Courses spread throughout degree completion
- Each Semester includes at least 1 education competency-based class with instruction/observation by the expert teacher
- Each semester course will also include a short intensive (3-5 days) to allow students to work in person with the professor and other students.
 - The intensive may be on APU's campus in Anchorage with apprentices and/or experts flying in, or it may be at a district hub where apprentices and experts can gather with APU professors traveling.

UNIQUE FEATURES/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Alaska Pacific University (APU) provides an alternative route to K-8 teacher certification through our Bachelor of Arts in Community and Place-Based Education. This unique program combines coursework in K-8 education, Indigenous studies, and training in cultural and experiential learning methods. The ACATE certification pathway specifically supports districts that emphasize place-based and culturally embedded instruction in elementary and middle schools.

Expert teachers collaborate directly with APU faculty, gaining adjunct faculty status at the university. These expert teachers will participate in initial training and ongoing professional development sessions each semester to prepare for upcoming courses. They also have the opportunity to pursue a Master of Arts program if desired.

Course delivery in the ACATE model includes flexible scheduling, offering semester-long courses and intensive "block" classes. Block classes are shorter, intensive sessions typically scheduled during breaks or summer months, such as culture camps. Each semester course includes a short, in-person intensive (3-5 days), held either on APU's Anchorage campus or at district hubs, facilitating direct interaction among apprentices, expert teachers, and APU professors.

GATEWAY TRANSITIONS AT ACATE

1. Potential Apprentices must be screened and evaluated by the supporting districts, hold a high school diploma or GED, and apply for APU online.
2. During the second semester of attendance at APU, the cohort GPA will be evaluated to comply with expectations. If a student does not meet the 3.0 cohort GPA, the apprentice will be put on a Student Success Plan and given a semester to meet the Director of Education and Expert Teacher's targeted goals. If they do not meet these goals by the following semester, the apprentice will be counseled out of the program toward other opportunities.
3. On or before 100 Community and Place-Based Education degree credits, the apprentice is expected to take and pass the state Basic Competency Exam (BCE). They may not progress in the program until they pass this benchmark. Successful students will then transition from students to candidates. (University support structures are in place for test preparation)
4. Before graduation, the apprentice must pass the Praxis II Core Content Knowledge (5018) in compliance with the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Potential Apprentices must be screened and evaluated by the supporting districts, hold a high school diploma or GED, and apply for admission at APU online.

COST PER CREDIT

This cost calculation is for the school year 2024-25. Tuition and scholarships are set annually for the university. This agreement will follow the tuition and scholarships approved for the year in which a cohort participates in a teacher education program. Changes in tuition or scholarships are announced a minimum of 6 months prior to implementation.

Teacher apprenticeship program assuming 12+ credits/ semester. Less than 12 credits/semester will be charged at per credit rate

Per Year Estimate:

- Tuition | \$20,350
- Regular Fees | \$ 510
- Total | \$20,860
- Estimated APU Scholarships | \$4,000-\$12,000
- Total Sponsorship* | \$16,860 - \$8,860

**External scholarships and/or federal/state aid may further reduce apprentice cost.*

FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- ALL APU Scholarships require completion of FAFSA
- Merit Based Scholarships- Based on GPA (only one):
 - Atwood Distinguished | \$7,000 (GPA 3.85+)
 - Atwood Performance | \$5,000 (GPA 3.5+)
 - Leah J. Peterson Trustee | \$2,500 (GPA 3.0+)
 - Leah J. Peterson Aspire | \$1,500 (GPA 2.75+)
 - Alaska Resident Scholarship | \$1,000 (Alaska Resident)
 - Shel ch' naq'ahnilu Scholarship | \$1,000 (AK Native or Am. Indian)
 - Alaska Tribal Health Scholarship | \$3,000 (Tribal Health System)
- Participating students must also apply for APU Donor-Based scholarships. These vary in amount, and some are specific to teacher education.
- Sealaska Heritage Institute: Indigenizing Education for Alaska (IEA)

ANTICIPATED TIME TO COMPLETION

Time varies depending on the pace of Apprentices' ability to balance academic, personal, and professional expectations.

SUPPORTS FOR MENTORS

Expert teachers will collaborate directly with Alaska Pacific University's (APU) Education Faculty. In recognition of their professional expertise and extensive field experience, these expert teachers will be granted adjunct faculty status at APU. They will participate in an initial orientation as well as ongoing professional development sessions with APU faculty each semester to effectively prepare for upcoming courses. Additionally, expert teachers may choose to pursue a Master of Arts Program through APU, allowing them to explore and address a unique problem of practice relevant to their professional interests.

SUPPORTS FOR APPRENTICES

The APU ACATE program offers comprehensive support systems designed to nurture the growth and success of future apprentices. First, the program prioritizes professional development tailored specifically to enhance each apprentice's skills and capacities as future educators. Additionally, Rural Student Support Services (RSSS) facilitates transitions related to language and culture within academic environments, creating pathways toward achieving educational objectives. RSSS provides targeted assistance, including homework support, scholarship opportunities, Native language classes, and culturally enriching community gatherings featuring elder panels, yuraq (Eskimo Dancing), beading, and Indigenous guest speakers.

Small class sizes (8:1) at APU enable faculty to build close relationships, ensuring personalized mentorship and guidance for students. Expert teachers and district liaisons deliver consistent, culturally responsive support, gradually increasing apprentices' responsibility while offering immediate assistance reflective of community contexts. Ongoing structures foster Communities of Practice (CoP), connecting ACATE cohorts statewide to collaboratively navigate professional growth and career goals. A holistic academic support services team is readily accessible both online and in-person

daily from 8 am to 11 pm, supplemented by additional health services provided by the Alaska Native Tribal Health

CONTACT INFORMATION

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<https://www.alaskapacific.edu/programs/community-placed-based-education/>