



Division

To: Members of the State Board of Education & Early Development
From: Executive Director Kerry Thomas
Date: October 14, 2026
Item: 23.0G

Standing General Report

Introduction

The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) provides sustainable solutions for college, career, and technical training. Through administration of the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS), Alaska Education Grant (AEG), and a suite of education loan programs, ACPE delivers meaningful financial aid opportunities for Alaskans to pursue and attain postsecondary education. To enhance awareness and access to the variety of postsecondary education and funding opportunities available, ACPE also offers resources to Alaskans of all ages, including the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS), Alaska FAFSA Completion Initiative, Alaska College & Career Advising Consortium, Success Center, and Institutional Authorization.

Updates

- ACPE worked with Hays Research Group (HRG) to conduct a survey related to Alaska FAFSA Completion challenges and barriers. Findings from the survey showed a notable awareness gap around FAFSA deadlines and Alaska-specific funding opportunities, along with completion barriers such as instruction confusion, difficulty gathering documents, affordability concerns, and uncertainty about reporting parent information. Recommendations focused on improving statewide outreach, simplifying FAFSA support materials, and strengthening engagement with high school and rural communities. ACPE is implementing initiatives to improve FAFSA completion in Alaska based on these recommendations including, but not limited to: enhancing online resources, implementing stronger communication campaigns, and expanding strategic advising and partnership efforts following the fall FAFSA release.
- ACPE is working with the Department of Law to establish regulations for HB28, which created a teachers' student loan repayment program allowing repayment of up to one-third of a loan balance per year, capped at \$5,000 annually for up to three years, funded by the Alaska Higher Education Investment Fund (HEIF) at up to \$1 million per year. Updates will be posted on ACPE's website regarding the implementation of HB28 as they become available.
- Education loan programs continues to show stable, positive performance. The Alaska Supplemental Education Loan (ASEL) saw a slight increase in total dollars awarded, indicating consistent demand for affordable supplemental education financing. The Family Education Loan (FEL) experienced modest growth in borrower volume along with a more notable increase in total

funds awarded, reflecting strengthened utilization among Alaska families. Out-of-state attendance among borrowers remained steady at 65%, demonstrating ongoing trends in student enrollment choices. ACPE's low, fixed interest rates continue to provide substantial long-term savings reaching as much as \$56,000 compared with private, for-profit lenders, reinforcing the value of ACPE's role as Alaska's nonprofit education lender.

- The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) saw significant growth in scholarship participation this year. Participation in the program rose from approximately 2,600 to over 3,400 in 2025-2026 with total awards increasing by more than 27%. ACPE is actively working with institutions and stakeholders to inform and prepare for the 2026-2027 academic year in connection to APS awarding processes.