ALASKA · STATE AID REFERENCE

Alaska State Aid Cheat Sheet (2027-2028)

A two-page reference for counselors and families. Free to copy, print, and share.

Alaska has no state scholarship application. The district reports each graduate to the state, the FAFSA is the only form, and the Alaska Student Aid Portal is where the answer appears, after August 15. House Bill 148 (2024) rewrote the Alaska Performance Scholarship: GPA **or** test score now qualifies, awards rose about 47%, and students get eight years to use it. The University of Alaska raised the UA Scholars Award to $15,000 the same summer. Handouts older than two years are wrong on all four points. Verified against ACPE and the UA Scholars Program, October 2026.

The Programs at a Glance

Program	What it pays and who qualifies
Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) (merit, last-dollar)	Up to **$7,000 / $5,250 / $3,500** a year (Levels 1-3), eight full-time semesters within eight years, up to $28,000. Pays toward the full cost of attendance, housing included. Requires one of three course options plus **either** a 3.5 / 3.0 / 2.5 GPA **or** a 25 / 23 / 21 ACT, 1210 / 1130 / 1060 SAT, or 18 / 15 / 12 WorkKeys. No income test. FAFSA required every year.
Alaska Education Grant (AEG) (need-based)	**$500 to $4,000** a year by FAFSA Student Aid Index, for residents of 365+ days enrolled at least half-time at a participating Alaska school with no prior bachelor's. Paid in order of need **until funds run out**; prior-year recipients, earlier FAFSA dates, and full-time enrollment get priority. No application beyond the FAFSA.
UA Scholars Award (University of Alaska)	**$15,000**, paid $1,875 a semester for eight semesters at any UA campus (UAA, UAF, UAS, community campuses). Top 10% of each high school's junior class, ranked by the school at the end of junior year. No GPA floor, no test, no application. Fixed amount, never reduced by other aid. Apply for admission by June 30; **August 15 is forfeit**.
APS Step-Up (in college)	Level 2 or 3 recipients who take two consecutive 15-credit semesters and reach a 3.0 (Level 2) or 3.5 (Level 1) move up permanently. Worth up to $10,500 over three years. A 12-credit term with a payment resets the count.
Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	Alaska residents pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at participating public colleges in 15 other western states, and those states' students get the same at UA. Leave Alaska and APS, AEG, and UA Scholars all stay behind.
Alaska Native corporation and foundation scholarships	CIRI, Doyon, Aleut, Koniag, Bristol Bay, Sealaska and others fund shareholders and descendants on their own cycles. Often the largest outside awards available. They stack with everything above and count as other aid under the APS $500 rule.

Deadlines to Post on Your Wall

Program	Deadline	Where it happens
Alaska Education Grant	The week the FAFSA opens (around Oct 1). Need order, then FAFSA date.	FAFSA, listing an Alaska school
UAF and UAS foundation scholarships; UAA portal	February 15 (UAA portal runs Oct 1 to Feb 15)	Each campus's scholarship application
APS qualifying test	Taken before June 30 of senior year; the state cautions against the June date	ACT / SAT / WorkKeys, with the high school as a score recipient
UAF admission (Nanook Pledge)	June 15 for fall	UAF application; award is automatic
APS and AEG FAFSA priority	June 30, every year	FAFSA (or Alternative APS Application in ASAP)
UA Scholars, preferred / final	June 30 preferred; **August 15 final, then forfeited**	Admission application to any UA campus
Private and homeschool APS form	July 15	Eligibility Determination Application to DEED
UA Scholars designation (schools)	September 15 of senior year	High school submits its top-10% list

Say this out loud to every senior: June 30 is the last day, not the plan. The federal FAFSA deadline is a year later, which is why families relax. The Education Grant is first-come in practice, and UA Scholars is gone on August 16.

The Rules That Trip Families Up

Either door, not both. A 3.5 GPA with no test is Level 1. A 25 ACT with a 2.4 GPA is Level 1. The level is the higher of the two. Pre-2024 handouts say both are required; that was true for the Class of 2023 and is false now.

The courses are the real gate. Every option needs 4 language arts and 4 social studies, then 4 math and 4 science (A), or 3 and 3 plus 2 credits in one subject including CTE (B), or 3 and 3 plus 2 credits from any mix of world language, Native language, fine arts, or cultural heritage (C). Letter grades only. Pass/fail dual credit does not count.

The $500 rule. APS pays only into cost of attendance left after every other grant and scholarship, including UA Scholars and AEG, and only if at least $500 remains. On campus it almost always pays in full. A commuter with Pell, UA Scholars, and an outside award can watch it shrink.

24 then 30 earned credits. First year needs 24 (12 and 12, zero margin). Every year after needs 30, which 12-credit semesters cannot reach. Plus a 2.5 GPA. Retaken courses count once. ACPE publishes no reinstatement path.

The portal is student-only. ACPE will not let a parent register or log in for a child, even under 18. Have the student create it with a personal email and write the login where a parent can find it.

Alaska Performance Scholarship: Check These Things Early

1. Which door is your student walking through?

Nobody applies. The district reports the graduate's GPA, test scores, and curriculum to the Department of Education and Early Development, and the state assigns the level. The student qualifies through **either** route below, and the level is the higher of the two.

- **GPA door:** 3.5 = Level 1, 3.0 = Level 2, 2.5 = Level 3. No test score needed.
- **Test door:** ACT 25 / 23 / 21, SAT 1210 / 1130 / 1060, or WorkKeys 18 / 15 / 12 (no section below 6 / 5 / 4). The score must reach the high school, not just colleges. Districts may use composite scores; ask yours.
- **Both doors need the curriculum:** one of Options A, B, or C, with letter grades on the official transcript. Pass/fail does not count.

2. Is the FAFSA filed, listing an Alaska school, before June 30? Residency for APS is 30 days present with intent to stay; the diploma must be from an Alaska high school. A GED does not qualify. Private and homeschool students also file the DEED determination form by July 15.

Level	Per year (max)	GPA door	ACT / SAT / WorkKeys door	Four-year total
Level 1	**$7,000**	3.5+	25 / 1210 / 18	$28,000
Level 2	**$5,250**	3.0+	23 / 1130 / 15	$21,000
Level 3	**$3,500**	2.5+	21 / 1060 / 12	$14,000

Maximums. Paid in two halves, fall and spring, directly to the school. Half-time (6 to 11 credits) earns a prorated award. UA Scholars is separate and fixed: $1,875 a semester, $15,000 total.

Counselor Calendar: What to Tell Students When

When	What has to happen
9th and 10th grade	Pick curriculum Option A, B, or C and get the district's approved APS course list. Ask for letter grades on any dual-credit course.
Junior year	Class rank at the end of junior year decides UA Scholars (top 10%). The district sends preliminary APS eligibility mid-year. Register for the ACT or SAT with the high school code so scores land on the record.
Senior fall (Oct)	FSA IDs for parent and student. File the FAFSA the week it opens, listing an Alaska school (AEG is awarded in FAFSA-date order). Student creates the Alaska Student Aid Portal account. Confirm the UA Scholars letter arrived if the student was top 10%.
By February 15	UAF and UAS foundation scholarship applications and the UAA portal. This is the only part of Alaska aid with essays.
By March	Last comfortable ACT or SAT for the test door. Scores take six to eight weeks to reach the high school; the district reports July 15.
June 15 and June 30	UAF admission (Nanook Pledge, automatic at a 3.0). June 30: FAFSA priority date, UA Scholars preferred date, last day a qualifying test can be taken.
August 15	UA Scholars final deadline. APS eligibility starts appearing in ASAP after this date; check weekly. Tell the college you plan to use APS before its enrollment certification deadline.
Freshman year	Enroll in 15 credits each semester. It covers the 24 and 30 earned-credit checkpoints, UA Scholars' 24 / 54 / 84 milestones, and the Step-Up requirement in one move.

Three Mistakes That Cost Alaska Students Money

- **Skipping the FAFSA because of income.** There is no income cap on APS, and the Student Aid Index does not reduce it, but there is also no other way to receive it. No FAFSA, no $7,000.
- **Scores sent to colleges but not the high school.** The district can only report what is in the permanent record. A 25 ACT that never reached the school is a Level 3 or nothing.
- **Dropping one class as a freshman.** Twelve and twelve is exactly 24. One dropped course is 21, the checkpoint is missed, and next fall's payment is gone. Fifteen credits a semester is the fix.

The silent scholarship

Alaska's biggest award has no application, no confirmation email, and no letter until the state's data lands in a portal only the student can open. Families who never hear anything assume they did not qualify. The default is silence, not rejection. If September arrives and the portal is empty, that is a call to the district's APS contact and to ACPE at 1-800-441-2962, not the end of the road.

Free Resources: No Account, No Cost, No Data Collection

APS rules, course checklist, FAQ	acpe.alaska.gov/Funding-Solutions/Alaska-Performance-Scholarship
Alaska Education Grant	acpe.alaska.gov/Funding-Solutions/Alaska-Education-Grant
UA Scholars Award and handbook	alaska.edu/scholars
Alaska Student Aid Portal (student only)	acpe.alaska.gov/asap
Our Alaska state aid guide	collegereadyparent.org/alaska
Scholarships at 400+ colleges, all 50 states	collegereadyparent.org/college-scholarships

Produced by CollegeReadyParent.org, an independent, parent-built resource. No paywall, no accounts, no lead forms, no student data collection. Counselors and educators: you may freely copy, print, and distribute this sheet. Questions or corrections: leo@collegereadyparent.org. Verified against the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education and the University of Alaska Scholars Program in October 2026. Alaska's 2024 overhaul is still producing updated guidance, so confirm current details at acpe.alaska.gov and with the college's financial aid office before relying on them. Institutional figures come from the CollegeReadyParent scholarship database.