

# Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education:

*Providing sustainable solutions for college, career and  
technical training*

Lunch & Learn

April 9, 2025

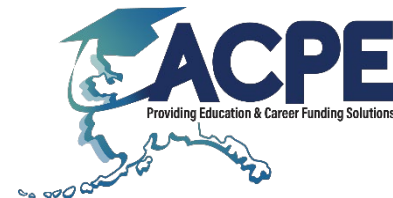
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*Kerry Thomas, Acting Executive Director*

*Kate Hillenbrand, Director of Communications & Outreach*



[acpe.alaska.gov](http://acpe.alaska.gov)



# About ACPE

## Vision

*Alaskans are educated and skilled contributors to our vibrant communities and economy.*

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## Mission

*Provide sustainable solutions for college, career and technical training.*

*We champion individuals and families through broad access to federal and state programs, grants, scholarships, and loans together with the tools and resources that allow them to make informed decisions about funding their education.*

*As the Higher Education Agency for the State of Alaska, we advance policy and foster collaboration to build a skilled workforce that meets the needs of communities and employers, supporting economic development across the state.*



# About ACPE

## *Strategic Priorities*

*Become the education lender of choice in Alaska and for Alaskans.*

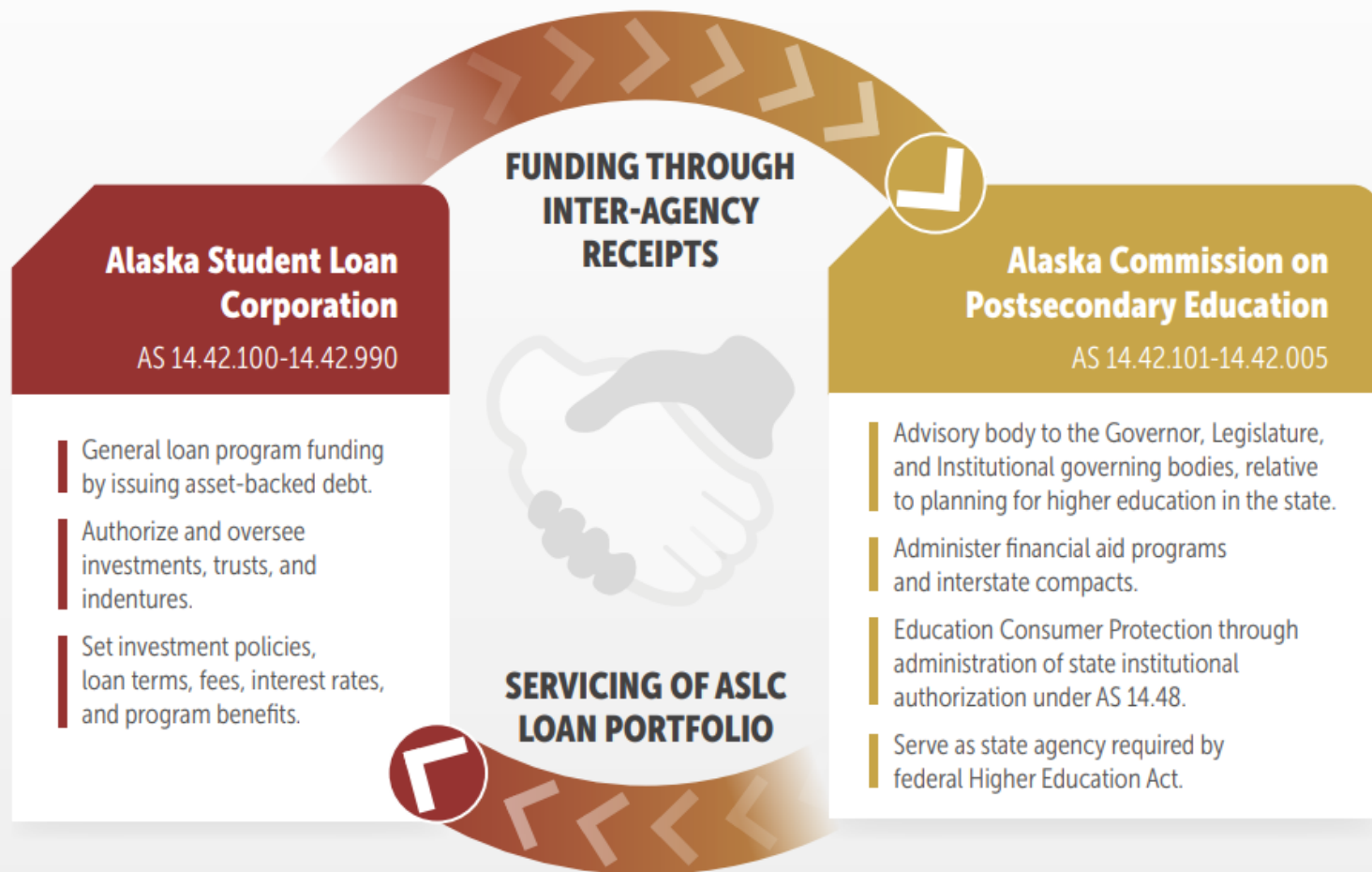
*Increase access to, and utilization of, federal and state education funding sources.*

*Operate a sustainable organization responsive to students, customers, stakeholders, and employees.*

*Position ACPE to help bridge the education gap in Alaska's current and future workforce needs.*



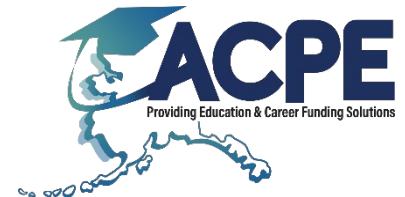
# Relationship Between ASLC & ACPE



# Education Funding Solutions



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## Alaska Education Grant (AEG)

- **Need-based** – Students must complete the FAFSA
- Alaska Resident, minimum of ½ time enrollment in undergraduate or career training program
- Grants awarded to eligible Alaskans by highest financial need and date of FAFSA filing, until available funds are exhausted
- Awards range from **\$500 to \$4,000** per academic year



## Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS)

- Up to **\$28,000** across 8 semesters (within 8 years of high school graduation)
- **Eligibility Criteria**
  - Complete a rigorous high school curriculum and
  - Earn qualifying GPA
    - **OR**
  - Earn minimum score on ACT, SAT, or WorkKeys
- **Application is the FAFSA, which must include an Alaska institution**





# APS Updates Related to Passage of HB 148 in June 2024

- Expand qualifying rigorous high school curriculum options
- Remove standardized test score requirement
  - Students can now become APS eligible by meeting a minimum GPA requirement OR minimum test score requirement
- Increase award amount for each APS award level
- Deliver earlier award notification by mid-Junior year
- Eliminate distinction between "Collegiate" and "CTE" award tracks
- Extend term of use from 6 to 8 years
- Offer step-up provision for continuing students to increase award level after two terms/semesters





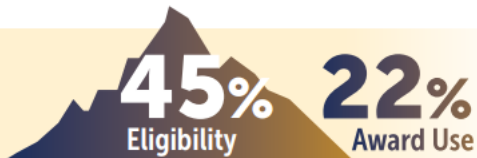
# APS Outcomes Report

Published annually, the APS Outcomes Report reflects APS eligibility and usage trends. [acpe.alaska.gov/reports](https://acpe.alaska.gov/reports)

## APS BY AWARD TYPE:

- Level I eligibility showed the most significant growth, reaching **2,180** eligible students in 2024, up from **642** in 2022.

## OVERALL APS TRENDS (2011-2024):



### APS ELIGIBILITY

- APS eligibility rates fluctuated significantly over the years, ranging from **17%** in 2022-2023 to a high of **45%** in 2024, influenced by legislative changes expanding eligibility.

*The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) program has awarded **over \$126 million** from FY2012 to FY2025.*

*The number of recipients peaked at **3,423** in 2017 and total awards surpassed **\$11 million annually** between FY2016 and FY2018.*





# ACPE's Education Loans



- **ACPE offers 3 primary education loan solutions**
  - Supplemental (Student); Family; Refinance
  - Goal is to bridge the remaining educational financial need
  - Safeguards from over-borrowing
  - Savings and protections for students
- **Students save with ACPE**
  - Students pay \$3,300 - \$15,400 more with other private lenders
  - *ACPE's ASEL & FEL programs offer lower interest rates than Federal PLUS Loans!*



# Specialty Loan Programs



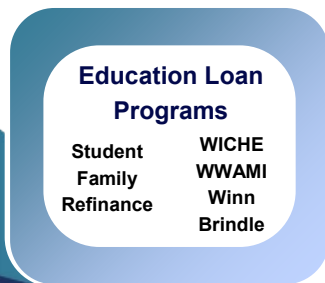
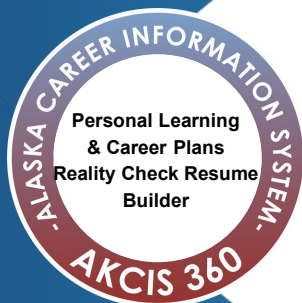
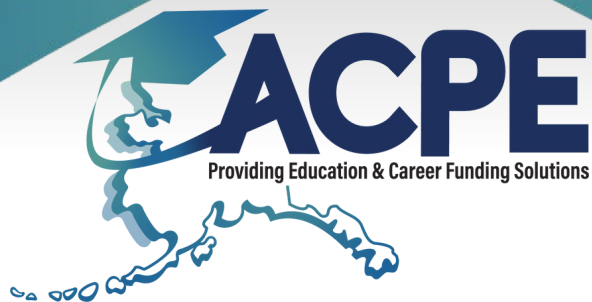
- **Winn Brindle Loan**
  - Funding for education expenses for students enrolled full-time in fisheries related programs.
- **WWAMI Medical Education Program**
  - Funding for up to 30 students in the UW School of Medicine multi-state medical education program.
- **WICHE Professional Student Exchange (PSEP)**
  - Assists Alaskan students pursuing a degree in an approved health-related education program not available in Alaska.



# Education Planning Solutions

ACPE/ASLC's resources serve an overarching purpose in gathering information on postsecondary education financial resources available to Alaskans and disseminating this information to reasonably assure that qualified residents are aware of those financial resources. ([see Statutes & Regulations](#))







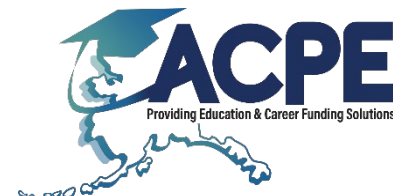
- Offers grade 5-12 resources for educators, students, families, and education partners
- Emphasis on curriculum offerings and planning guidance to bridge gap in planning for education & career training
- Additional resources available for students in grades PK – 4

[acpe.alaska.gov/Kids2Careers](http://acpe.alaska.gov/Kids2Careers)



- Online personal learning and career planning system FREE to Alaskans
- Students assess interests and explore Career Clusters and 570+ occupations
- For grades 3 through 12 and adult populations to expand educational and career opportunities

[akcis.org](http://akcis.org)





- Delivers Annual ACAC Training to equip stakeholders with knowledge, resources, & tools to support and guide students in postsecondary planning
- Leads Alaska FAFSA Completion Initiative (AFCI); delivering responsive FAFSA completion resources to stakeholders across the state
- Master the FAFSA Training for stakeholders to assist students & families with FAFSA completion

[acpe.alaska.gov/acac](https://acpe.alaska.gov/acac)

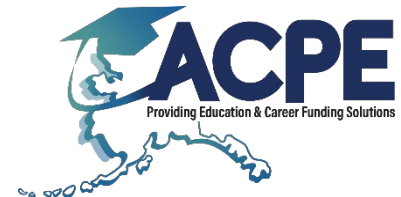


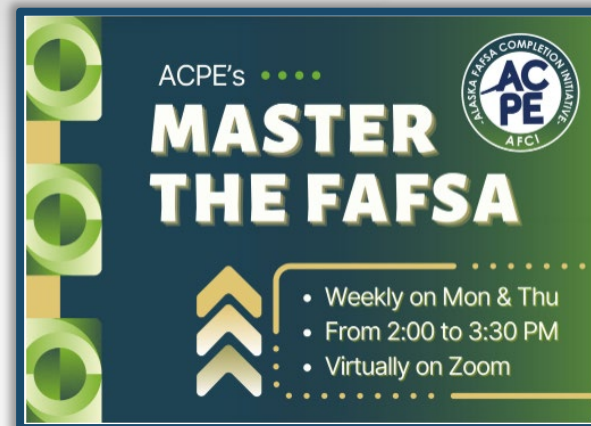
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- Offering postsecondary education resources to students, families, and a wide variety of organizations and institutions across Alaska and beyond.
- Financial Aid Support – FAFSA completion, loan application submissions, scholarship research
- Group Presentations – Schools, organizations, community groups.
- Funding Your Future, Filling out the FAFSA, Alaska Performance Scholarship

[acpe.alaska.gov/success-center](https://acpe.alaska.gov/success-center)



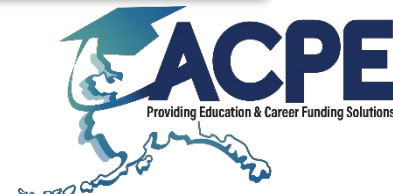


- **Alaska FAFSA Completion Initiative**
  - Education & workforce professionals connect and receive FAFSA completion training to promote and support increasing FAFSA completion activities in their communities across Alaska.
  - Alaskans (students & families) access FAFSA completion resources, tutorials, and other materials to successfully complete the FAFSA
- **Master the FAFSA Training provides a line-by-line overview of the FAFSA process. Stakeholders gain a better understanding to independently support Alaskans with FAFSA completion.**
- **Access to FAFSA Completion Resources & Videos**



[acpe.alaska.gov/alaskafafsacompletion](https://acpe.alaska.gov/alaskafafsacompletion)

[acpe.alaska.gov](https://acpe.alaska.gov)





# Institutional Authorization & Consumer Protection

Institutional Authorization (IA) is “to provide for the protection, education, and welfare of the citizens of the state, its postsecondary educational institutions, and its students” (AS 14.48.010).

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## **Authorization or Exemption:**

Through an application process documenting meeting minimum standards established in statute, institutions and training providers apply for an Authorization or Exemption status with IA. The University of Alaska is exempt from ACPE oversight.

## **Consumer Protection & Student Complaints:**

IA processes complaints alleging violations of state institutional authorization law relative to postsecondary institutions or programs in Alaska.

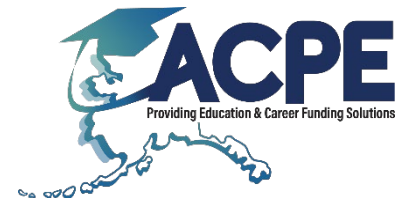




# 2024 Year in Review



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# Actions for Alaskans

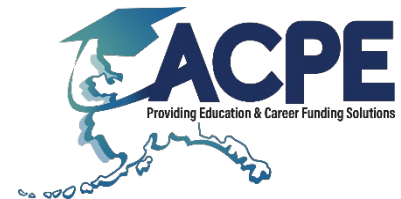
- **Alaska Performance Scholarship Updates**
  - Successful implementation of sweeping legislative changes to increase access and usage of APS
  - Increase award amount
  - Update eligibility requirements and more
- **ACPE Education Loan Program Updates**
  - Implement loan limit increase to fill cost of attendance gaps
  - Establish Immediate Repayment loan program option
  - Offer Supplemental & Family Education Loan rates lower than Federal PLUS Loan rates
- **Alaska FAFSA Completion Initiative** [www.acpe.alaska.gov/AlaskaFAFSACompletion](http://www.acpe.alaska.gov/AlaskaFAFSACompletion)
  - Increase statewide FAFSA completion efforts
  - Master the FAFSA Training, FAFSA Wednesdays, Success Center Support
  - Federal Student Aid FAFSA Student Support Campaign Grant Recipient
- **ACPE Strategic Plan & New Logo Launch**
  - New Mission, Vision, strategic priorities
  - Updated branding elements
  - Website enhancements

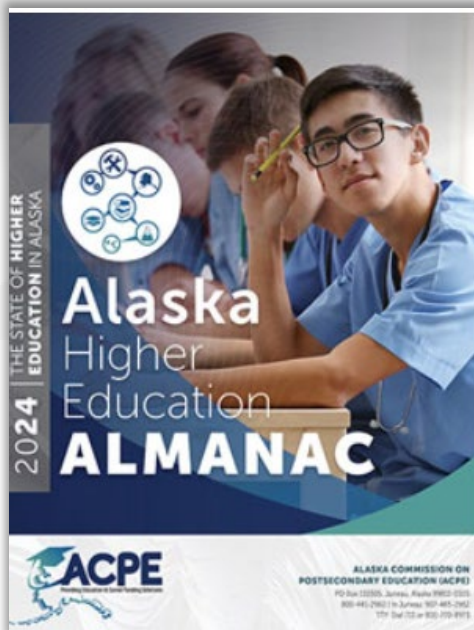


# Reports & Materials



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# Alaska Higher Education Almanac

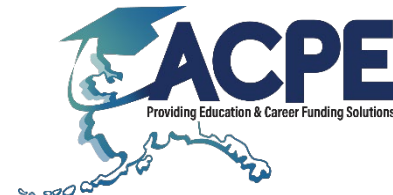
Published annually, the Almanac offers Alaska's higher education stakeholders and policy-makers a source of relevant data and content about higher education in Alaska.

The Almanac reflects both state and national trends related to enrollment and completion, education funding, and workforce needs. [acpe.alaska.gov/reports](https://acpe.alaska.gov/reports)

## APS Materials



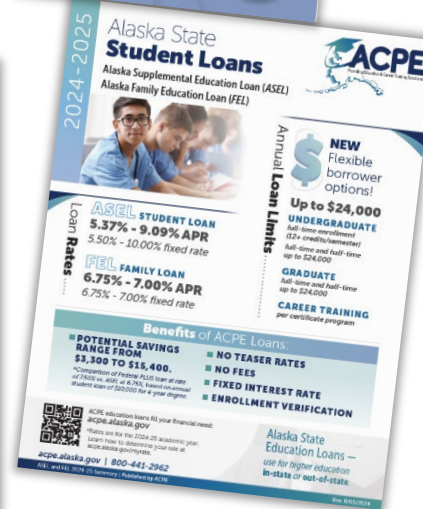
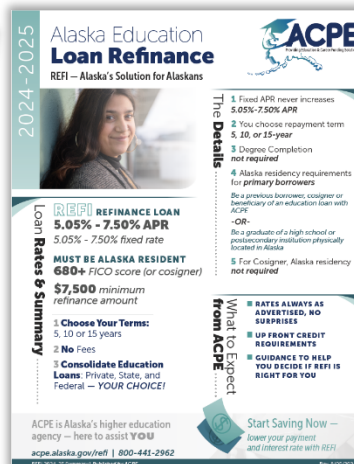
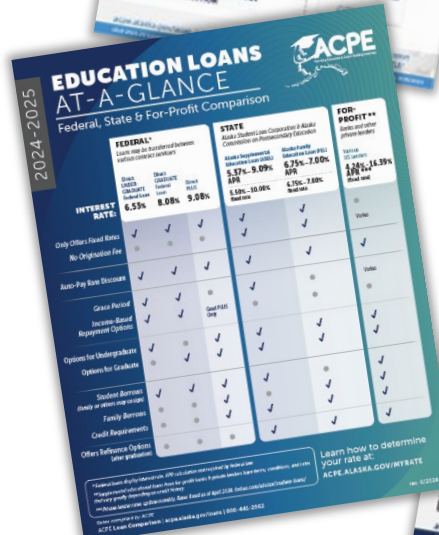
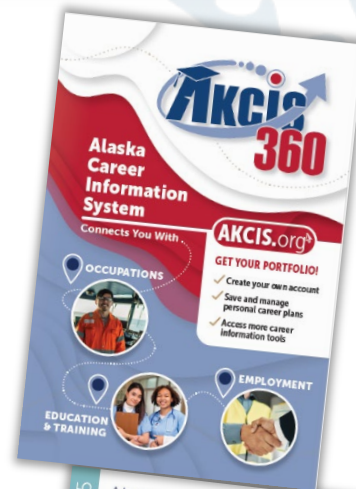
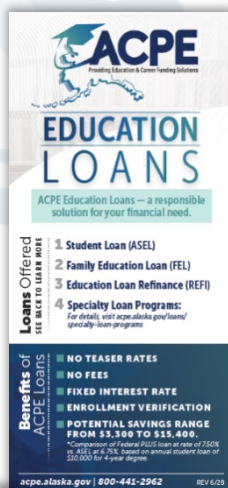
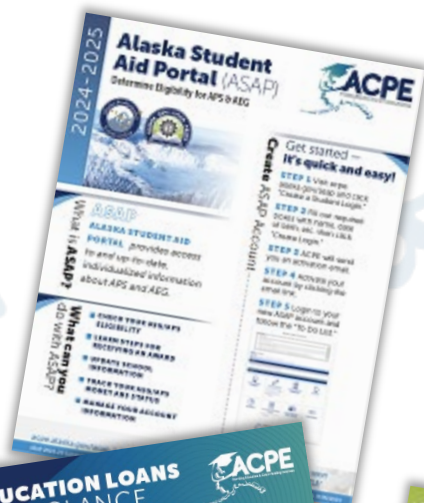
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# Program Materials

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[acpe.alaska.gov/planning/request-materials](https://acpe.alaska.gov/planning/request-materials)

[acpe.alaska.gov](https://acpe.alaska.gov)



# Thank You



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