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Executive Summary

The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) contracted with McDowell Group to conduct an online survey of Alaska high school students from graduation years 2011-2014, who were eligible for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The goal of the survey was to complement the information in the APS Outcomes Report with explanations of student choices and behaviors. The survey asked about the role of APS in high school behaviors, awareness of APS, postsecondary enrollment, and decisions to study in-state versus out-of-state, among others. Out of 9,249 total graduates (with 8,536 working email addresses), 2,121 people responded, resulting in a favorable response rate of 25 percent. Survey data was weighted by Collegiate Eligibility level as well as APS participation to ensure the data was representative of the overall target population. Following are key findings from the study.

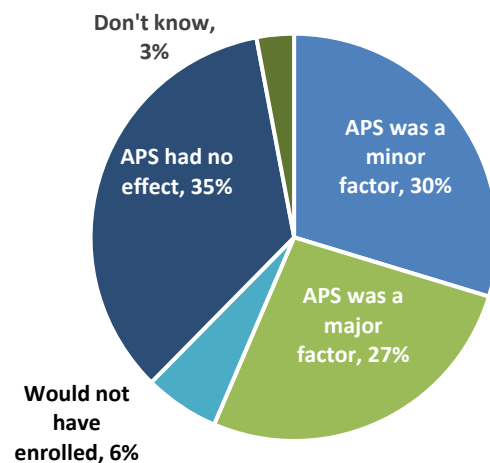
APS is an important factor in Alaska students' decision to enroll in postsecondary education.

Nearly two-thirds of APS recipients (63 percent) said that APS was a factor in their decision to enroll in a postsecondary program. This includes 30 percent who said it was a minor factor, 27 percent who said it was a major factor, and 6 percent who said they would not have enrolled without APS.

Older respondents (classes of 2011 and 2012) reported less impact from APS, with 36 and 41 percent saying APS had no effect, respectively. This compares with 34 and 31 percent among 2013 and 2014 graduates.

Chart 1. How did APS affect your decision to enroll in a degree or certificate program?

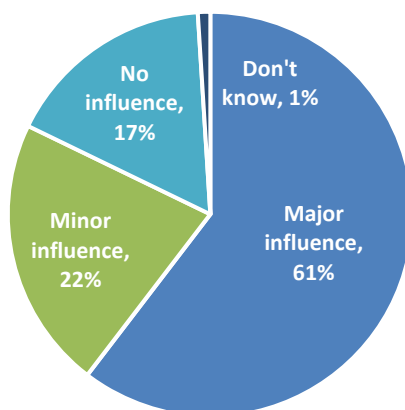
Base: APS Recipients



APS is keeping Alaska students in-state for postsecondary education.

Chart 2. How much of an influence was APS in your decision to attend an in-state school?

Base: APS Recipients



Over three-quarters of APS recipients said that APS influenced their decision to attend an in-state school, including 61 percent who said it was a major influence and 22 percent who said it was a minor influence.

APS impacted other decisions as well: it was a major or minor influence in 56 percent of respondents' decision to enroll full-time versus part-time; and it was a major or minor influence in 54 percent of respondents' decision on how many hours they needed to work while in school.

APS encourages a variety of positive high school behaviors – among APS recipients, as well as among other qualified students.

The chart below shows how 2014 graduates were impacted by the availability of APS. Between 52 and 67 percent were more likely (somewhat or much more likely combined) to engage in a variety of positive high school behaviors due to APS.

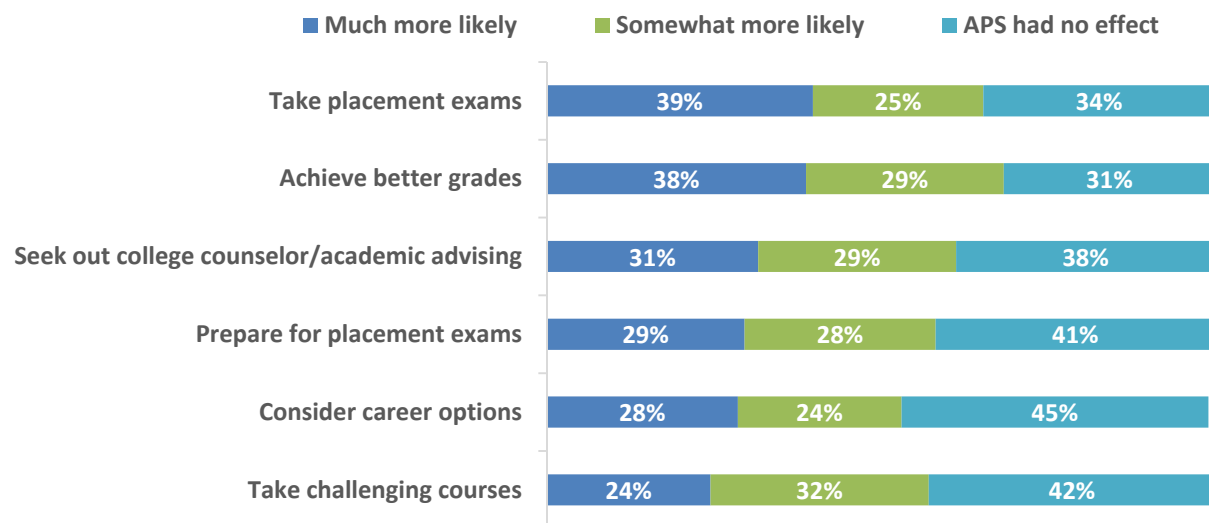
APS was particularly influential on students' likelihood of taking placement exams (39 percent were much more likely) and achieving better grades (38 percent). Close behind were seeking out advising (31 percent much more likely), preparing for placement exams (29 percent), considering new career options (28 percent), and taking challenging courses (24 percent).

Not surprisingly, APS recipients reported more influence from APS when compared to non-recipients. However, non-recipients still reported a notable impact. For example, 44 percent of non-recipients (all classes combined) were at least somewhat more likely to achieve better grades, and 40 percent were at least somewhat more likely to take placement exams, due to APS.

Please see the body of the report for results based to all respondents (Table 17), and a comparison of results for APS recipients versus non-recipients (Table 19).

Chart 3. Did the availability of APS make you more likely to do any of the following in high school?

Base: 2014 graduates



Note: Rows do not add to 100 percent due to "don't know" responses.

Students are finding out about APS earlier each year.

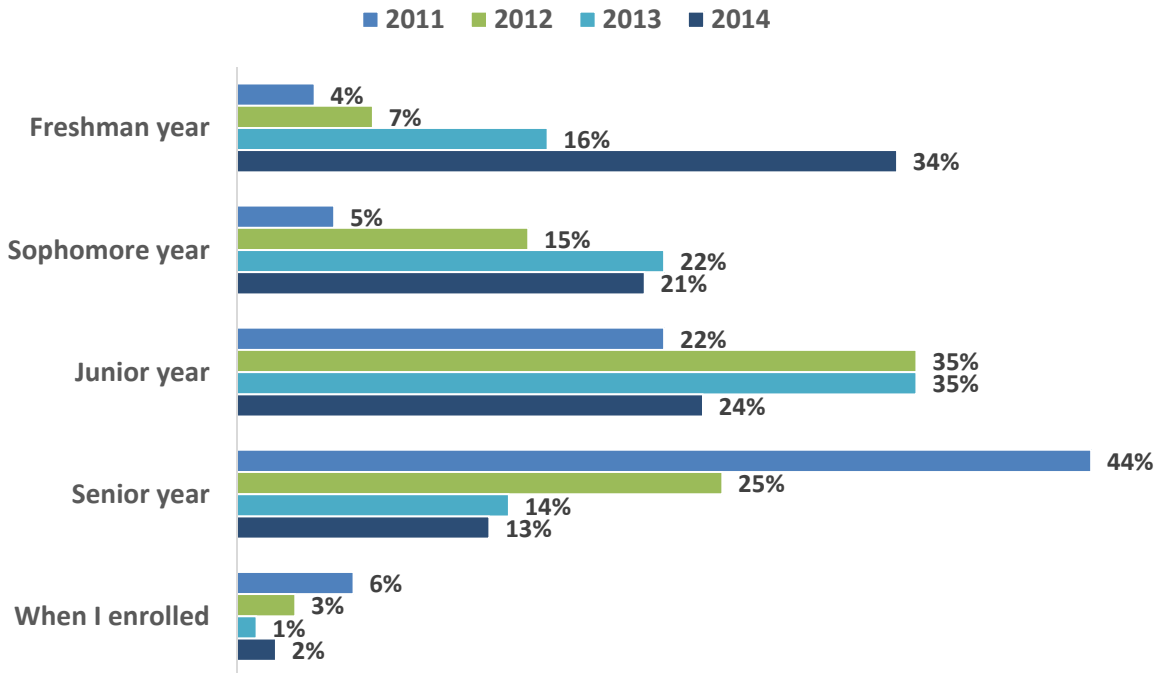
The survey asked several different questions regarding respondents' level of familiarity with APS, and when they learned about it. Several indicators show that over the program's first four years, students have become more likely to know about the program, and are finding out about it earlier.

A question asking about APS usage found that the percentage of respondents who had never heard of APS dropped from 13 percent among 2011 graduates to 4 percent among 2014 graduates. (See Table 7.)

A question later in the survey asked all respondents (who were aware of APS) when they believed they first learned about APS. The chart below shows responses by graduation year. The percentage of respondents learning about APS their freshman year grew from 4 percent among 2011 graduates to 34 percent among 2014 graduates. Conversely, the percentage not learning about APS until their senior year fell from 44 percent among 2011 graduates to 13 percent among 2014 graduates.

Chart 4. When did you first learn about APS? (By Graduation Year)

Base: All respondents aware of APS

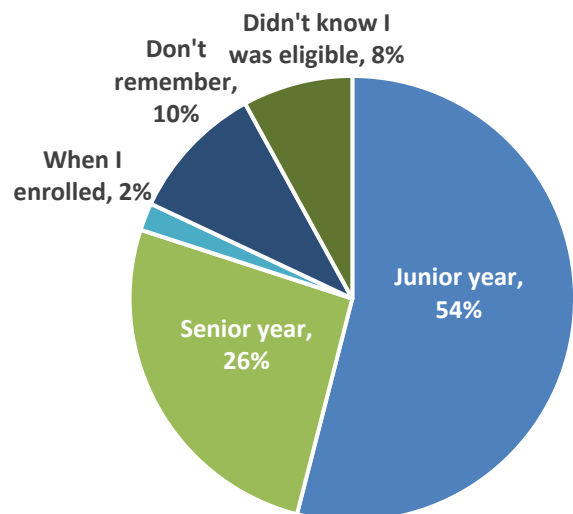


Note: Excludes “don’t remember” responses.

The chart at right shows when 2014 graduates first learned they might be eligible for APS. Over half (54 percent) learned their junior year, one-quarter (26 percent) learned their senior year, and 2 percent learned when they enrolled in a postsecondary program. Ten percent didn’t remember, and 8 percent didn’t know they were eligible.

Chart 5. When did you first learn you were eligible for APS?

Base: 2014 graduates



More recent graduates tended to learn of their eligibility earlier. Among 2011 graduates, 48 percent learned their senior year; this rate decreased to 26 percent among 2014 graduates. Conversely, 21 percent of 2011 graduates learned of their eligibility their junior year; this rate increased to 54 percent among 2014 graduates. The rate of “didn’t know I was eligible” declined over time, from 12 percent among 2011 graduates to 8 percent among 2014 graduates.

The most recent graduating class reports high levels of familiarity with APS qualification requirements, award levels, and FAFSA requirement.

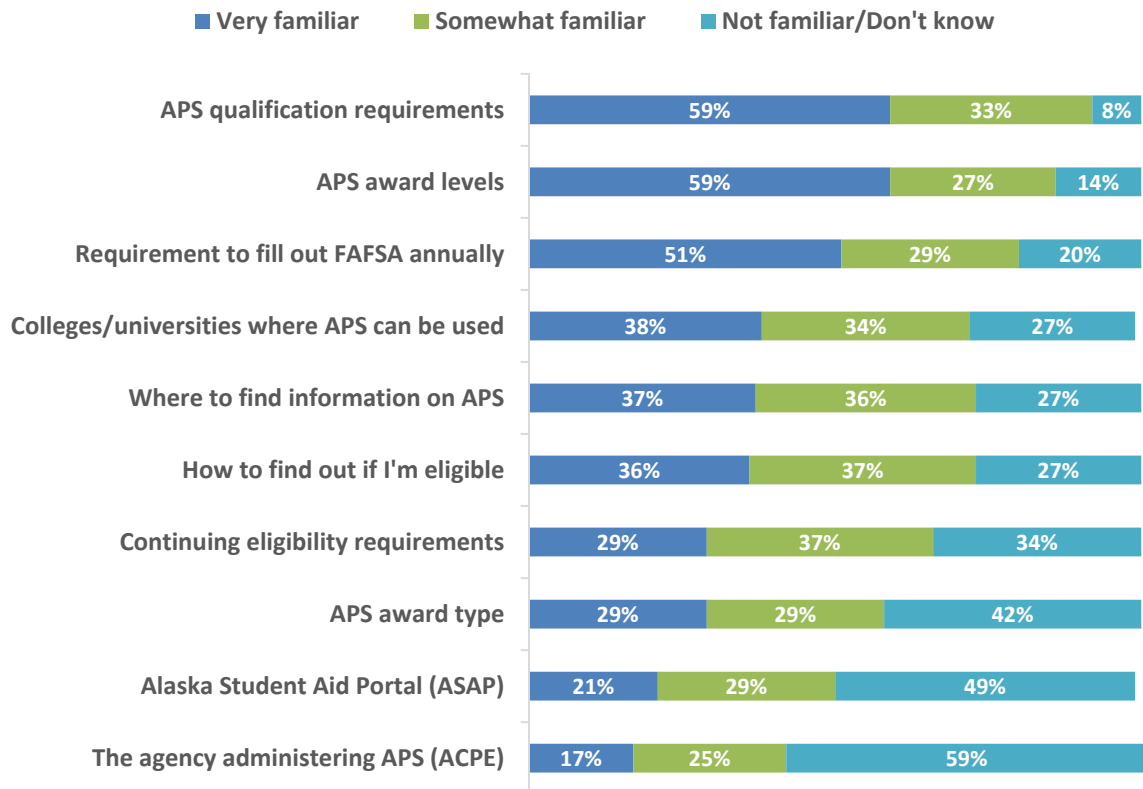
The chart below shows how familiar 2014 graduates were with various aspects of APS. Respondents were most familiar with APS qualification requirements (92 percent somewhat or very familiar), APS award levels (86 percent), and FAFSA requirements (80 percent). Respondents were least familiar with APS award type (58 percent somewhat or very familiar), Alaska Student Aid Portal (50 percent), and ACPE (42 percent).

Familiarity rates show a marked increase over time for most categories, likely due to improved publicity and outreach efforts as well as better recall among more recent graduates. For example, 59 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with APS qualification requirements, compared with 33 percent of 2011 graduates. Likewise, 59 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with APS award levels, compared with 31 percent of 2011 graduates.

Not surprisingly, APS recipients reported much higher levels of familiarity for each aspect when compared to non-recipients. For example, 71 percent of APS recipients were very familiar with the FAFSA requirement, versus 33 percent of non-recipients. Please see Table 10 for detailed results comparing APS recipients to non-recipients.

Chart 6. How familiar are you with the following aspects of APS?

Base: 2014 graduates



Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) has been established for four years, with the 2014 high school graduating class the first one to have had the program in place since their freshman year. This is an important time to take a step back and examine how the program has impacted Alaskan students. What role did APS play in their high school behaviors? What role did it play in their decision to pursue a postsecondary degree? How did it affect their decision to study in-state versus out-of-state? How aware are they of various aspects of the program? These questions, among others, prompted the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) to contract with McDowell Group to conduct a survey of APS-eligible students, to accompany the most recent annual APS outcomes report.

Methodology

Survey Instrument

The McDowell Group study team designed the online survey in consultation with ACPE staff. A copy of the survey instrument is attached to the end of this report.

Survey Population

The list of emails used for this survey was provided by ACPE and included all APS-eligible high school graduates from the classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. Just over half of the target population (52 percent) had received the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

Survey Administration

McDowell Group sent an email message with a link to the online survey instrument to 9,249 graduates in February. Subtracting the “undeliverable” addresses, the email was successfully delivered to 8,536 addresses. The email message explained the purpose of the survey and offered an incentive: two survey respondents would be randomly selected to receive \$500 Amazon.com gift certificates.

Survey Response and Weighting

A total of 2,121 people participated in the survey, for a response rate of 25 percent. Because respondents were not selected randomly, the survey sample is not necessarily representative of the overall target population. Survey results were compared to the overall population on a number of factors: gender, race, graduation year, region, collegiate eligibility level, career eligibility level, and APS usage. Results closely matched with two exceptions: those who used APS were slightly more likely to participate in the survey than those who did not use APS (52 versus 45 percent); and those with Collegiate Eligibility Level 1 were more likely to participate (48 versus 36 percent). Survey results were therefore weighted for these two factors in order for the survey data to be as representative as possible of the overall target population.

Report Organization and Subgroups

The body of this report shows tabular results based to all respondents to each question (“total” or “base”). Please note the “base” for each question listed under each table heading; many questions had unique bases. Note, in particular, that respondents who had never heard of APS (119 out of 2,121) were discontinued after the first set of questions.

Some results are broken out by subgroup in the tables: graduation year (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), and/or APS usage (yes/no). Where relevant and statistically significant, differences among these subgroups are pointed out in the text. The report also includes some analysis by additional subgroups: gender, race, and region. The two subgroups for race are Alaska Native and non-Native (which includes all other races). The four subgroups for region are Southcentral, Interior, Southeast, and Southwest; the Far North sample size was too small for most questions.

Sample sizes are indicated by “n=#” in the columns of each table. Readers are advised to be cognizant of sample sizes when viewing results. Because of the large total sample, most sample sizes in this survey allow for a high degree of confidence in the data; however, there are several instances of very small samples, where results should be viewed with caution.

The Appendix contains “other” responses (where respondents wrote in alternative responses to those offered in the survey) as well as all responses to a general open-ended question at the end of the survey.

In general, this report follows the order of the survey instrument, with the following chapter headings.

- Activities and Enrollment Status**
- Decisions to Pursue/Not Pursue Degree**
- Awareness of APS**
- Learning About APS**
- The Impact of APS on Behavior and Decisions**
- FAFSA Application**
- Enrollment In-State versus Out-of-State**
- Plans for Graduation and Residency**
- Sample Characteristics**
- Appendix**
- Survey Instrument**

Activities and Enrollment Status

The survey began by asking all respondents about their activities since graduation, as well as their enrollment status for associate, bachelor's, and certificate programs.

Post-Graduation Activities

- Nine out of ten respondents (87 percent) had participated in undergraduate study since enrollment. Three-quarters had been employed. The only other responses with more than 10 percent were travel (28 percent) and volunteer service/religious mission (16 percent).
- Not surprisingly, nearly all participation rates increased as respondents aged. For example, those who had participated in undergraduate study grew from 84 percent among 2014 graduates to 92 percent among 2011 graduates. Older respondents had more time to engage in more activities.
- APS recipients were more likely to have participated in undergraduate study (90 versus 85 percent of non-APS recipients). They were also more likely to report employment (81 versus 69 percent).

Table 1. Which of the following have you participated in since graduating from high school?
(All respondents)

	% of Total n=2,121	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=496	2012 n=511	2013 n=539	2014 n=575	Yes n=1,102	No n=1,019
Undergraduate study	87%	92%	89%	85%	84%	90%	85%
Working/employment	74	83	75	78	64	81	69
Travel	28	36	28	27	20	30	26
Volunteer service/religious mission	16	22	17	15	10	19	13
Vocational/technical school	4	6	3	4	3	6	3
Starting/raising a family	3	5	4	3	2	4	3
Graduate study	3	4	1	3	3	4	2
Military/armed services	3	2	1	4	3	1	4
Apprenticeship	2	3	2	4	1	2	3
Internship	1	1	<1	1	<1	1	1
Study abroad	<1	1	<1	-	-	<1	<1
Other	<1	<1	-	1	<1	<1	<1
Don't know	<1	<1	<1	-	1	<1	<1

Enrollment Status

- Bachelor’s degrees were the most commonly sought degree among respondents, with 79 percent currently enrolled; 6 percent previously enrolled without completing; and 1 percent completed.
- Thirteen percent of respondents were currently enrolled in an associate degree, with another 3 percent previously enrolled without completing, and 4 percent completed. The remainder (79 percent) had never enrolled in an associate degree.
- Vocational certificate was the least commonly sought degree, with 3 percent currently enrolled, 1 percent previously enrolled without completing, and 3 percent completed.
- Non-Alaska Native students were more likely to be currently enrolled in a bachelor’s degree (80 percent, compared to 64 percent of Alaska Native students). Alaska Native students were more likely to be currently enrolled in an associate degree (21 percent, compared to 13 percent of non-Native students).

Table 2. Please indicate your current enrollment status for each of the following programs.
(All respondents)

n=2,121	Never enrolled	Previously enrolled but did not complete	Currently enrolled	Completed
Vocational certificate	94%	1%	3%	3%
Bachelor’s degree	14	6	79	1
Associate degree	79	3	13	4

Decisions to Pursue/Not Pursue Degree

The respondents who said they had enrolled in either a bachelor’s or associate degree were asked whether they had considered a certificate program, and why they did not pursue a certificate. In addition, those who had never enrolled in any postsecondary program were asked why not, and those who had not completed their degree or certificate were asked why not.

Consideration of Certificate Program

- Seven out of ten respondents (who enrolled in a bachelor’s or associate program) said they never considered a certificate program. Another 14 percent said they thought about it but not seriously. Nine percent said they explored certificate options before deciding against it.
- The main difference by graduation year was 2011 and 2012 graduates were more likely to say they didn’t know, likely attributable to the longer time since the decision was made.
- APS recipients were more likely to have considered a certificate program: 28 percent either thought about it without serious consideration or explored the option, versus 19 percent of non-recipients.

Table 3. Did you consider a certificate program before selecting a degree program?
(Base: Enrolled in degree program other than vocational)

	% of Base n=1,906	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=449	2012 n=473	2013 n=473	2014 n=509	Yes n=1,006	No n=898
No, I never considered a certificate program	71%	75%	75%	68%	68%	67%	75%
Yes, I thought about it, but did not give a certificate program serious consideration	14	14	13	14	16	17	12
Yes, I explored certificate options but decided against it	9	8	7	11	8	11	7
Don’t know	6	3	5	8	8	6	7

Reasons for Not Pursuing Certificate

- Those who enrolled in a bachelor's or associate program were most likely to say they "always planned on getting a BA/AA" as explanation for not pursuing a certificate (78 percent). Other popular responses included better career options (59 percent), better wages/earning power (52 percent), and not interested in careers associated with certificates (29 percent).

Table 4. Why did you pursue a degree rather than a certificate?

(Base: Enrolled in degree program other than vocational)

n=1,906	% of Base
I always planned on getting a BA/AA	78%
Better career options	59
Better wages/earning power	52
I was not interested in the careers associated with certificate programs	29
Did not know about certificates	1
Family/personal expectations	1
Pursuing graduate degree	1
Have/will pursue certificate	<1
Other	1
Don't know	3

Reasons for Not Pursuing Further Education

- The most common reason for not pursuing further education was “planned to enroll later” at 53 percent, followed by “needed a break from school” at 39 percent, and “not sure what I want to study yet” at 38 percent. These responses are related to each other in that they both imply the respondent did intend to resume their education. Combined, 67 percent of respondents marked one or both responses.
- Other common responses included “couldn’t afford it/not enough financial aid” (32 percent) and “already had/have job” (21 percent). Sixteen percent cited personal circumstances such as medical issues or raising a family.
- The small sample size (88) precludes meaningful subgroup analysis.

Table 5. What are the main reasons you didn’t pursue further education after high school?
(Base: Has not enrolled in associate, bachelor’s, or certificate program since graduating)

n=88	% of Base
Planned to enroll later/needed a break from school	67%
Planned to enroll later	53
Needed a break from school	39
Not sure what I want to study yet	38
Couldn’t afford it/not enough financial aid	32
Already had/have job	21
Personal circumstances	16
Other personal/family issues	15
Medical issues	3
Raising a family	3
Joined military	15
Not interested/I don’t like school	13
Pursued apprenticeship instead	9
Degree not necessary	6
No programs available in my community	5
Other	8
Don’t know	2

Reasons for Not Completing Degree/Certificate

- Respondents who enrolled in a degree or certificate program but failed to complete were most likely to cite financial reasons (43 percent), including couldn't afford it, lost scholarship/financial aid, lost APS eligibility, and lost loan qualification.
- Over one-third of these respondents (36 percent) cited personal circumstances: medical issues, moved from community, raising a family, or other issues.
- One-third of respondents (33 percent) said they needed a break from school, while nearly as many (32 percent) said they changed to a different degree or certificate program. Over one-quarter (28 percent) of respondents were not interested or didn't like school. Two additional responses were mentioned by over 10 percent: not prepared academically (18 percent), and job demands (12 percent).
- Women were more likely to cite personal circumstances at 43 percent, compared to 29 percent of men.

Table 6. What are the main reasons you didn't complete the degree or certificate program?
(Base: Enrolled but did not complete)

n=164	% of Base
Financial reasons	43%
Couldn't afford it	38
Lost scholarship/financial aid	14
Lost APS eligibility	6
Lost loan qualification	4
Personal circumstances	36
Other personal/family issues	21
Medical issues	10
Moved from community	10
Raising a family	4
Need a break from school	33
Changed to a different degree or certificate program	32
Not interested	28
Was not interested in subject matter	18
Not interested	10
I don't like school	9
Not prepared academically	18
Job demands	12
Recruited for job in my career field	6
Other	4
Don't know	1

Awareness of APS

All respondents were asked about their awareness and usage of APS. Those who said they had never heard of APS (7 percent, or 119 respondents) were discontinued from the survey. Remaining respondents were asked to rate their familiarity with various aspects of the program. Those who did not use APS were asked whether they planned to use it in the future; those who did not plan to use it were asked why not.

APS Awareness and Usage

- Nearly half of respondents said they received the APS scholarship; 31 percent said they qualified but did not use it; 14 percent said they had heard of APS but didn't know they were eligible; and 7 percent said they had never heard of APS.
- Differences by graduation year show increasing awareness: 13 percent of 2011 graduates had never heard of APS, declining to 6 percent in 2012 and 2013, then 4 percent in 2014.
- There were some interesting differences by school district region:
 - Interior respondents were the most likely to have received the scholarship at 57 percent, compared to 46 percent of Southcentral, 42 percent of Southeast, and 36 percent of Southwest. (At 36 respondents, the Far North sample was too small for comparison.)
 - Southwest students were the most likely to say they had heard of it but didn't know if they were eligible at 22 percent, followed by Southcentral at 17 percent, Southeast at 13 percent, and Interior at 6 percent.
 - Southwest and Southeast students were the most likely to say they had never heard of the scholarship at 12 and 11 percent, respectively, compared with 7 percent of Southcentral and 2 percent of Interior.

Table 7. The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) is a scholarship program offered to Alaska high school graduates with qualifying GPA and test scores. Which of the following best describes you?
(All respondents)

	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				
	% of Total n=2,121	2011 n=496	2012 n=511	2013 n=539	2014 n=575
I received the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS)	48%	47%	47%	49%	48%
I qualified for the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) but did not use it	31	27	33	29	33
I've heard of the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) but didn't know if I was eligible	14	13	13	16	15
I never heard of the Alaska Performance Scholarship*	7	13	6	6	4

*Note: These respondents were screened out of all subsequent questions in the survey.

Familiarity with APS

Three tables help illustrate responses to the question gauging familiarity with APS: the first is based to all respondents (Table 8); the second is based to 2014 graduates only (Table 9); and the third shows results comparing APS recipients with non-recipients (Table 10).

- Respondents were most familiar with the FAFSA requirement, with 51 percent very familiar and another 26 percent somewhat familiar. Close behind were APS qualification requirements, at 47 percent very familiar and 39 percent somewhat familiar, and APS award levels at 45 percent very familiar and 30 percent somewhat familiar.
- Several responses fell into the one-quarter to one-third “very familiar” range: colleges/universities where APS can be used (32 percent very familiar), where to find information on APS (31 percent), continuing eligibility requirements (28 percent), and how to find out if I’m eligible (28 percent).
- The APS aspects with lowest familiar rates were APS award type (21 percent very familiar), Alaska Student Aid Portal (17 percent), and ACPE (12 percent).
- Familiarity differed by graduation year for many APS aspects, with familiarity levels generally decreasing with age. (This is likely attributable to better recall among more recent graduates as well as more extensive APS publicity/outreach.) For example:
 - 59 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with APS qualification requirements, compared with 33 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 59 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with APS award levels, compared with 31 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 36 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with how to find out about eligibility, compared with 23 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 29 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with APS award type, compared with 13 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 17 percent of 2014 graduates were very familiar with ACPE, compared with 11 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - There was little difference in familiarity by graduation year for FAFSA requirement or continuing eligibility requirements.
- As seen in previous questions, familiarity levels were consistently higher among Interior residents. For example, 54 percent of Interior respondents were very familiar with APS qualification requirements, compared to between 41 and 45 percent among Southcentral, Southeast, and Southwest respondents. (The sample of Far North respondents is too small for comparison.)

Table 8. How familiar are you with the following aspects of the APS?
(All respondents aware of APS)

n=2,002	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not familiar	Don't know
Requirements to fill out FAFSA annually	51%	26%	16%	6%
APS qualification requirements (GPS, ACT/SAT score, high school curriculum)	47	39	10	4
APS award levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3)	45	30	19	6
Colleges/universities where APS can be used	32	34	26	8
Where to find information on APS	31	36	24	9
Continuing eligibility requirements	28	32	31	9
How to find out if I'm eligible	28	36	26	9
APS award type (collegiate versus career/technical)	21	25	44	10
Alaska Student Aid Portal (ASAP)	17	27	42	14
The agency administering APS (ACPE)	12	23	49	16

Table 9. How familiar are you with the following aspects of the APS?
Supplemental Table: 2014 graduates

n=558	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not familiar	Don't know
Requirements to fill out FAFSA annually	51%	29%	14%	6%
APS qualification requirements (GPS, ACT/SAT score, high school curriculum)	59	33	6	2
APS award levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3)	59	27	10	4
Colleges/universities where APS can be used	38	34	21	6
Where to find information on APS	37	36	19	8
Continuing eligibility requirements	29	37	27	7
How to find out if I'm eligible	36	37	21	6
APS award type (collegiate versus career/technical)	29	29	34	8
Alaska Student Aid Portal (ASAP)	21	29	38	11
The agency administering APS (ACPE)	17	25	45	14

Familiarity with APS: APS Users versus Non-Users

- The table below shows APS users were much more familiar with the various aspects of APS when compared to non-users. In general, users were about twice as likely to be very familiar with each aspect when compared to non-users. For example, 71 percent of APS users were very familiar with the FAFSA requirement, versus 33 percent of non-users.
- Non-users were much more likely to respond with “don’t know” to each question, ranging from 7 to 20 percent, compared to 1 to 11 percent among APS users.

Table 10. How familiar are you with the following aspects of the APS?
Supplemental Table: APS Users versus Non-Users

	Very familiar		Somewhat familiar		Not familiar		Don't know	
	APS Users	Non-Users	APS Users	Non-Users	APS Users	Non-Users	APS Users	Non-Users
Requirements to fill out FAFSA annually	71%	33%	22%	31%	6%	26%	1%	10%
APS qualification requirements (GPS, ACT/SAT score, high school curriculum)	61	33	34	43	3	17	1	7
APS award levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3)	65	27	27	32	6	30	2	10
Colleges/universities where APS can be used	41	23	36	32	19	32	4	12
Where to find information on APS	44	19	40	32	12	34	4	14
Continuing eligibility requirements	44	13	38	27	15	47	3	13
How to find out if I'm eligible	41	17	41	32	15	36	4	14
APS Award Type (collegiate versus career/technical)	25	17	24	25	44	45	6	13
Alaska Student Aid Portal (ASAP)	26	9	34	20	30	52	9	19
The agency administering APS (ACPE)	17	8	28	18	44	54	11	20

Plans to Use APS Before Expiration

- Among the respondents who chose not to use APS, 15 percent said they planned to use APS before it expires; 42 percent said they would not use it; and 43 percent were unsure.
- Not surprisingly, more recent graduates were more likely to say they would use APS before it expired at 23 percent, compared to 12 percent of 2011 graduates and 9 percent of 2012 graduates. More recent graduates were also more likely to say they did not know: 48 percent of 2014 graduates, compared to 30 percent of 2011 graduates.
- Although the sample of Alaska Natives was small for this question at 41, they were much more likely to plan to use the APS before it expired (36 percent, compared to 13 percent of non-Natives).

Table 11. Do you plan to use the APS before it expires (six years from high school graduation)?
(Base: Chose not to use APS)

	% of Base n=616	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR			
		2011 n=132	2012 n=166	2013 n=144	2014 n=174
Yes	15%	12%	9%	15%	23%
No	42	59	46	39	29
Don't know	43	30	45	46	48

Reasons for Not Using APS

- Among the respondents who chose not to use APS and did not plan to use it in the future, nearly all (89 percent) attributed their decision to out-of-state enrollment. Other responses were mentioned by 6 percent or fewer.
- Women were more likely than men to say they were enrolled/will enroll out-of-state (96 versus 78 percent). Men were more likely than women to cite most other reasons: not planning on pursuing degree/certificate (6 percent of men versus 0 percent of women), qualified at certificate level (5 versus 1 percent), don't need financial aid (13 versus 2 percent), didn't complete FAFSA (9 versus 1 percent).

Table 12. Why aren't you using the APS?
(Base: Those who did not use APS and don't plan to)

n=277	% of Base
Enrolled/will enroll out-of-state	89%
I don't need financial aid	6
Didn't complete FAFSA	4
I qualified at certificate level, but decided to pursue a bachelor's/associate	2
Not planning on pursuing degree or certificate	2
Didn't realize I qualified	1
Other	2

Learning about APS

All respondents (who were aware of APS) were asked when they learned about APS, and when they learned of their eligibility. (It warrants noting that, since the program was created in 2010, graduates from the earlier eligible classes could not have learned about the program freshman year. Those who reported doing so may have confused the APS with another financial aid program.) Respondents also shared their information sources for APS, and their awareness of eligibility requirements, and means of regaining eligibility, once lost.

First Awareness of APS

- Respondents were most likely to have learned of APS their junior year (29 percent), followed by their senior year (23 percent), then freshman or sophomore year (both at 17 percent). A small fraction (3 percent) learned upon enrollment, and 12 percent said they didn't remember.
- There were significant differences by graduation year. The more recent the graduation year, the earlier they reported learning about APS: 34 percent of 2014 graduates learned their freshman year, compared to 16 percent of 2013 graduates, 7 percent of 2012 graduates, and 4 percent of 2011 graduates.
- The older the respondent, the more likely they were to respond with "don't remember," increasing from 7 percent among 2014 graduates to 17 percent among 2011 graduates.
- While APS recipients were slightly more likely to learn of APS during their junior or senior year (57 versus 46 percent), the difference is mostly made up for by "don't remember" responses among non-recipients (18 percent, compared to 6 percent among APS users).
- Interior respondents were most likely to learn about APS their freshman year at 24 percent, compared to 13 to 18 percent in other regions.

Table 13. When did you first learn about the Alaska Performance Scholarship?
(All respondents aware of APS)

	% of Total n=2,002	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=443	2012 n=486	2013 n=515	2014 n=558	Yes n=1,101	No n=901
Freshman year of high school	17%	4%	7%	16%	34%	17%	17%
Sophomore year of high school	17	5	15	22	21	17	16
Junior year of high school	29	22	35	35	24	32	26
Senior year of high school	23	44	25	14	13	25	20
When I enrolled in a degree or certificate program	3	6	3	1	2	3	2
Don't remember	12	17	15	12	7	6	18

First Awareness of APS Eligibility

- The most common year for learning of APS eligibility was junior year at 44 percent, followed by senior year at 32 percent. A small fraction (3 percent) learned when they enrolled. Ten percent didn't remember, and 10 percent didn't know they were eligible.
- More recent graduates were much more likely to learn of their eligibility their junior year: 54 percent among both 2013 and 2014 graduates, compared to 42 percent among 2012 graduates and 21 percent among 2011 graduates.
- APS recipients were more likely to have learned of their eligibility their junior or senior year (88 percent, compared to 66 percent of non-recipients). Non-recipients were much more likely to say they didn't know they were eligible, or they didn't remember (33 percent versus 8 percent of APS recipients).
- Interior respondents were more likely to learn of their eligibility their junior year at 55 percent, compared to 43 percent of Southeast, 42 percent of Southcentral, and 29 percent of Southwest. Interior respondents were least likely to say they didn't know they were eligible at 5 percent, compared to 11 percent among both Southcentral and Southeast respondents, and 14 percent among Southwest respondents. The sample size of Far North respondents was too small for comparison.

Table 14. When did you first learn that you might be eligible for the APS?
(All respondents aware of APS)

	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR					USED APS	
	% of Total n=2,002	2011 n=443	2012 n=486	2013 n=515	2014 n=558	Yes n=1,101	No n=901
Junior year of high school	44%	21%	42%	54%	54%	49%	40%
Senior year of high school	32	48	34	23	26	39	26
When I enrolled in a degree or certificate program	3	6	3	3	2	4	3
Don't remember	10	13	10	10	10	6	16
Didn't know I was eligible	10	12	10	9	8	2	17

APS Information Sources

- The most common APS information source among respondents was high school counselors, at 71 percent, followed by teachers at 53 percent and parents/family at 35 percent. One in five respondents mentioned friends (21 percent), APS website (19 percent), or mailings (19 percent).
- More recent graduates tended to recall more information sources; this is likely due to better recall as well as longer exposure to or increased publicity about APS. For example, 82 percent of 2014 graduates mentioned high school counselors, compared to 56 percent of 2011 graduates. Other sources mentioned more often by more recent graduates were teachers, friends, college fair, and flyers.
- One exception to this rule was parents/family: mentions of family actually increased with the age of respondent (from 31 percent among 2014 graduates to 39 percent among 2011 graduates).
- APS users were more likely to mention high school counselors (75 versus 67 percent), parents/family (39 versus 31 percent), and college/technical school (13 versus 6 percent). The difference was largest for APS website: 28 percent of APS users cited the website, versus 11 percent of non-users.
- Alaska Natives were more likely to cite high school counselors (80 percent versus 71 percent of non-Natives), and less likely to cite parents/family (17 versus 35 percent), friends (14 versus 21 percent), and media (1 versus 5 percent).

Table 15. Where did you get information on APS?
(All respondents aware of APS)

	% of Total n=2,004	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=443	2012 n=486	2013 n=515	2014 n=558	Yes n=1,101	No n=901
High school counselors	71%	56%	67%	75%	82%	75%	67%
Teachers	53	43	52	54	58	54	51
Parents/family	35	39	37	34	31	39	31
Friends	21	15	21	22	23	22	20
APS website	19	20	18	17	20	28	11
Mailings	19	19	20	17	19	15	22
College fair	12	7	11	14	16	12	12
Flyers	12	5	11	11	19	13	12
College/technical school	10	11	10	9	8	13	6
Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	5	6	7	3	4	7	4
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	2	2	1	3	3	2	2
Other websites	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
Other	1	2	1	<1	<1	1	1
Did not get information	3	5	3	4	1	1	5
Don't remember	4	7	5	4	2	1	7

Awareness of Continuing Eligibility Requirements¹

- Among APS recipients, only 17 percent said they knew how students could regain eligibility after losing it.
- Older respondents were more likely to be aware, presumably because they had had more time to lose eligibility, and get information on regaining it. Twenty percent of 2011 graduates were aware, compared to 13 percent of 2014 graduates.

Table 16. APS has continuing eligibility requirements related to college GPA and credit hours completed. Do you know how students who have lost eligibility due to low GPA or insufficient credit hours can become eligible again for APS?

(Base: APS recipients)

	% of Total n=1,155	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR			
		2011 n=255	2012 n=270	2013 n=310	2014 n=318
Yes	17%	20%	19%	17%	13%
No/not sure	83	80	81	83	87

¹ APS recipients are required to complete a minimum number of credits and earn a minimum GPA each year in order to be eligible for future disbursements. Students who fail to meet the continuing eligibility requirements may not receive additional award disbursements until they have earned the required number of credits and GPA.

The Impact of APS on Behavior and Decisions

All respondents who were aware of APS were asked how APS affected their behavior and decisions in high school. APS recipients were asked specifically about their decision to enroll in postsecondary education as well as decisions related to their degree program.

Impact of APS on High School Preparation

Three tables help illustrate results to this question: the first shows results based to all respondents (Table 17); the second shows results based only to 2014 respondents (Table 18); and the third compares responses from APS recipients to non-recipients (Table 19).

- When respondents were asked how APS affected various high school behaviors, there was little variance between behaviors. Those saying APS made each behavior much more likely ranged between 19 and 32 percent, while those saying APS made each behavior somewhat more likely ranged between 22 and 27 percent. Around half (between 44 and 52 percent) said that APS had no effect.
- APS had the biggest impact on placement exams, with 54 percent of respondents saying APS made them at least somewhat more likely to take placement tests, and achieving better grades, at 58 percent. Seeking out college counselor/academic advising was close behind at 49 percent, followed by preparing for placement exams (47 percent), taking challenging courses (46 percent), and considering career options (44 percent).
- There were a number of differences by graduation year, with more recent graduates generally being more influenced by APS. For example:
 - 39 percent of 2014 graduates were much more likely to take placement exams, compared to 22 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 38 percent of 2014 graduates were much more likely to achieve better grades, compared to 21 percent of 2011 graduates.
 - 24 percent of 2014 graduates were much more likely to take challenging courses, compared to 12 percent of 2011 graduates.

Table 17. Did the availability of APS make you more likely to do any of the following in high school?
(All respondents aware of APS)

n=2,002	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	APS had no effect	Don't know
Take placement exams (SAT, ACT)	32%	22%	44%	3%
Achieve better grades	31	27	40	3
Seek out college counselor/academic advising	23	26	48	3
Prepare for placement exams	21	26	50	3
Consider career options	21	23	52	3
Take challenging courses	19	27	51	3

Table 18. Did the availability of APS make you more likely to do any of the following in high school?
Supplemental Table: 2014 graduates

n=558	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	APS had no effect	Don't know
Take placement exams (SAT, ACT)	39%	25%	34%	3%
Achieve better grades	38	29	31	3
Seek out college counselor/academic advising	31	29	38	3
Prepare for placement exams	29	28	41	3
Consider career options	28	24	45	3
Take challenging courses	24	32	42	3

- Not surprisingly, APS recipients reported that APS had a greater influence on their high school behaviors, compared to non-APS recipients. In general, “much more likely” rates were twice as high among APS users compared to non-users. For example, 40 percent of APS users said APS made them much more likely to achieve better grades, compared to 22 percent among non-users.
- Still, non-users reported some degree of influence from APS. Those that were at least somewhat influenced by APS in high school ranged from 35 percent (preparing for placement exams and considering career options) to 44 percent (achieving better grades).

Table 19. Did the availability of APS make you more likely to do any of the following in high school?
Supplemental Table: APS Users vs. Non-Users

	Much more likely		Somewhat more likely		APS had no effect		Don't know	
	APS User	Non-user	APS User	Non-user	APS User	Non-user	APS User	Non-user
Achieve better grades	40%	22%	32%	22%	28%	51%	<1%	5%
Take challenging courses	25	13	31	24	43	59	1	4
Take placement exams (SAT, ACT)	44	20	25	20	30	56	1	5
Prepare for placement exams	29	14	30	21	39	60	1	5
Seek out college counselor/academic advising	30	17	33	20	37	58	1	5
Consider career options	29	15	27	20	43	61	1	5

Impact of APS on Postsecondary Enrollment Decision

- APS was at least a minor factor in the decision to enroll for 63 percent of APS recipients. That includes 30 percent who said APS was a minor factor, 27 percent who said it was major factor, and 6 percent who said they would not have enrolled without APS. About one-third (35 percent) said APS had no effect on their enrollment decision.
- There were a few statistically significant differences by graduation year. Graduates from 2013 were slightly more likely to say APS was a major factor; 2011 graduates were slightly more likely to say APS was a minor factor; and 2012 graduates were slightly more likely to say APS had no effect.
- Non-Natives were more likely to say APS had no effect on their decision to enroll: 37 percent, compared to 20 percent of Alaska Natives.

Table 20. How did APS affect your decision to enroll in a degree or certificate program?
(Base: APS recipients)

	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				
	% of Total n=1,153	2011 n=255	2012 n=270	2013 n=310	2014 n=318
APS had no effect on my decision to enroll	35%	36%	41%	34%	31%
APS was a minor factor in my decision to enroll	30	37	25	25	32
APS was a major factor in my decision to enroll	27	20	26	34	26
I would not have enrolled without APS	6	5	7	4	7
Don't know	3	2	2	3	5

Impact of APS on School/Program Decisions

- APS played the largest role in respondents' decision to attend an in-state school, with 61 percent saying APS was a major influence and another 22 percent saying it was a minor influence.
- APS was a major factor in the decision to enroll full-time versus part-time for 32 percent, and a minor factor for 24 percent. Results were similar for the number of hours worked while in school: 28 percent said APS was a major influence, while 26 percent said it was a minor influence.
- The decision least impacted by APS was the degree/certificate program, with only 7 percent saying APS was a major influence and 17 percent saying it was a minor influence.
- Responses to this question were generally consistent across graduation year, gender, race, and region.

Table 21. How much of an influence was APS in the following decisions regarding your degree or certificate program?
(Base: APS recipients)

n=1,155	Major influence	Minor influence	No influence	Don't know
My decision to attend an in-state school	61%	22%	17%	1%
My decision to enroll full-time versus part-time	32	24	43	<1
The number of hours I needed to work while in school	28	26	45	1
The degree/certificate program I chose	7	17	76	<1

FAFSA Application

All respondents who did not receive the APS were asked if they completed the FAFSA; if not, they were asked why not.

- Nine out of ten non-recipients (89 percent) said they completed the FAFSA at least once in the last four years.
- The most common reason for not completing a FAFSA was didn't need federal aid at 68 percent, followed by received other scholarship/loan/financial aid at 34 percent. Combining these related responses totals to 77 percent. Other reasons included unavailable parent financial information (18 percent), application was too difficult/time-consuming (11 percent), was too busy (8 percent), and missed deadline/forgot (5 percent). Note the small sample size of 61 respondents.

Table 22. Did you complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) one or more times in the last four years?
(Base: Non-APS recipients)

n=575	% of Base
Yes	89%
No	10
Don't know	1

Table 23. Why didn't you complete a FAFSA?
(Base: Non-FAFSA filers)

n=61	% of Base
No need	77%
Didn't need federal aid	68
Received other scholarship/loan/financial aid	34
Parent financial information not available	18
Busy/difficulty with application	17
Application was too difficult/time-consuming	11
Was too busy	8
Missed deadline/forgot	5
Other	9
Don't know	4

Enrollment In-State vs. Out-of-State

All respondents who had enrolled in a postsecondary program were asked whether they enrolled in-state or out-of-state, and their reasons for the decision. They were asked about where (in-state versus out-of-state) they plan to complete their degree and/or pursue additional education.

In-State versus Out-of-State Enrollment

- Over half of respondents who had enrolled in a postsecondary program since graduating did so in-state; 35 percent enrolled out-of-state; and 9 percent enrolled both in-state and out-of-state.
- The likelihood of in-state enrollment increased over time. More recent graduates were most likely to have enrolled in-state at 65 percent among 2014 graduates, decreasing to 49 percent among 2011 graduates. Enrollment both in-state and out-of-state was highest among 2011 graduates (14 percent), and lowest among 2014 graduates (3 percent).
- Not surprisingly, APS users were much more likely to have enrolled in-state at 87 percent, compared to 14 percent of non-users. They were also more likely to have enrolled both in-state and out-of-state at 12 percent, compared to 4 percent of non-users.
- Interior respondents were the most likely to have enrolled in-state at 62 percent, followed by Southcentral at 57 percent, then Southeast and Southwest at 45 percent each. (The sample for Far North was too small for comparison.)
- Men were more likely than women to have enrolled in-state: 61 versus 53 percent.

Table 24. Since graduating from high school, have you enrolled in a degree/certificate program in-state, out-of-state, or both?

(Base: All currently enrolled, completed, or did not complete)

	% of Total n=1,716	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=379	2012 n=426	2013 n=442	2014 n=469	Yes n=1,077	No n=639
In-state	56%	49%	50%	58%	65%	87%	14%
Out-of-state	35	37	37	33	32	1	81
Both in-state and out-of-state	9	14	12	8	3	12	4

Reasons for Going Out-of-State

- The most common reasons for going out-of-state had to do with “school characteristics:” quality of academics (57 percent), school reputation (50 percent), traditional college experience (46 percent), size of school (37 percent), or athletics/extracurricular opportunities (22 percent). Combined, 84 percent of respondents mentioned one or more of these reasons.
- Two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) said they went out-of-state because they wanted to leave Alaska. Other common reasons included degree programs offered (57 percent), scholarship (35 percent), and better weather (33 percent).
- Women generally cited more reasons than men, with percentages higher for wanting to leave Alaska (71 versus 51 percent), traditional college experience (50 versus 39 percent), and size of school (41 versus 31 percent), among others.

Table 25. What are the main reasons you chose to continue your education outside of Alaska?
(Base: Out-of-state students)

n=713	% of Base
School characteristics	84%
Quality of academics	57
Reputation of school	50
Wanted traditional college experience	46
Size of school	37
Athletics/extracurricular activities	22
Wanted to leave Alaska	65
Degree programs offered	57
Scholarship	35
Better weather	33
Financial aid package	19
Family/friends nearby	16
Recruited by school	10
Religious reasons	2
Moved out-of-state	1
Other	1
Don't know	<1

Reasons for Staying In-State

- The most common reasons for staying in-state had to do with finances: lower cost (84 percent), APS (78 percent), UA Scholars (37 percent), other scholarship (23 percent), or financial aid package (17 percent). Combined, 96 percent of respondents cited one or more of these reasons.
- Overall, APS was the second-most common reason for staying in-state.
- Other common reasons included living with parents/family/friends (50 percent), living *near* parents/family friends (45 percent), and degree programs offered (37 percent). Nearly one-third of respondents cited reasons having to do with the school characteristics: size of school (20 percent), quality of academics (16 percent), or reputation of school (12 percent).
- Although the sample size for Alaska Natives was small at 64, there were a few statistically significant differences by race. For example:
 - Alaska Natives were more likely to cite other scholarship (39 percent, versus 22 percent of non-Natives).
 - Alaska Natives were more likely to cite wanting to live near parents/family/friends (73 versus 43 percent).
 - Non-Natives were more likely to cite being able to live *with* parents/family/friends (51 percent, versus 35 percent of Alaska Natives).

Table 26. What are the main reasons you chose to continue your education in Alaska?
(Base: In-state students)

n=1,160	% of Base
Financial reasons	96%
Lower cost	84
APS	78
UA Scholars	37
Other scholarship	23
Financial aid package	17
Can live with parents/family/friends	50
Wanted to live near parents/family/friends	45
Degree programs offered	37
School characteristics	32
Size of school	20
Quality of academics	16
Reputation of school	12
Better career opportunities	13
Wanted to stay in Alaska	2
Other	1
Don't know	1

Completing Program In-State versus Transferring

- Those who were currently enrolled in-state were asked about their plans for completion. Over three-quarters (77 percent) planned to complete their degree at the first Alaska school they enrolled in, while 8 percent planned to complete their degree at a different Alaska school. Seven percent were planning to transfer out-of-state.
- Among the small group of respondents intending to transfer, two-thirds (66 percent) cited degree programs offered, while the same percentage cited school characteristics: quality of academics, reputation of school, traditional college experience, size of school, and/or athletics/extracurricular activities. Other popular responses included wanting to leave Alaska (46 percent), better career opportunities (44 percent), and better weather (34 percent).

Table 27. Do you plan to complete your degree/certificate at an Alaska school?
(Base: Currently enrolled in-state)

n=1,056	% of Base
Yes, complete degree at the first Alaska school I enrolled in	77%
Yes, complete degree at a different Alaska school	8
No, complete degree at an out-of-state school	7
Don't plan to complete	<1
Don't know	8

Table 28. Why do you plan to complete your degree out-of-state?
(Base: Intending to transfer out-of-state)

n=71	% of Base
Degree programs offered	66%
School characteristics	66
Quality of academics	41
Reputation of school	33
Want traditional college experience	32
Size of school	22
Athletics/extracurricular activities	11
Want to leave Alaska	46
Better career opportunities	44
Better weather	34
Family/friends nearby	12
Scholarship	7
Other	3

Out-of-State Students Completing, Continuing, and Using APS

- Half of out-of-state students (49 percent) said they would complete their degree at their current school and pursue an additional degree out-of-state. One-quarter (27 percent) said they would complete their degree at their current school, without an additional degree planned. Eleven percent planned to complete at their current school then pursue an additional degree in Alaska. Just 3 percent planned to transfer to an Alaska school.
- Among those out-of-state students planning to return to Alaska, 90 percent said they would use APS if they were still eligible.

Table 29. Which of the following best describes your plans for completing your degree and continuing your education?

(Base: Currently enrolled out-of-state)

n=532	% of Base
Complete degree at current school; pursue additional degree out-of state	49%
Complete degree at current school; no additional degree planned	27
Complete degree at current school; pursue additional degree at Alaska school	11
Transfer to an Alaska school for completion of current degree	3
Don't know	10

Table 30. If you remain eligible for APS when you return to Alaska, will you use it?

(Base: Out-of-state students planning to return to Alaska)

n=74	% of Base
Yes	90%
I won't be eligible	1
Don't know	8

Plans for Graduation and Residency

All currently enrolled students were asked when they planned to graduate and whether they had a course plan. All respondents were asked about where they planned to live in the future.

Planned Graduation Year

- Nearly all currently enrolled students (95 percent) noted a planned graduation year, with responses varying widely depending on when the respondent graduated from high school.
- While a majority of students in each graduation year planned on graduating four years after their high school graduation, more recent graduates were more likely to plan on four years: 68 percent among 2014 graduates and 60 percent among 2013 graduates, compared to 56 percent among 2012 graduates and 57 percent among 2011 graduates. A five-year span was more likely among older respondents: 27 percent among 2011 graduates, compared to 12 percent among 2014 graduates.
- The vast majority of currently enrolled students planning to graduate said they had a course plan to achieve their graduation date. Likelihood of having a course plan increased with age, from 76 percent among 2014 graduates to 93 percent among 2011 graduates.
- Interestingly, APS users were slightly less likely to have a course plan at 81 percent, compared to 91 percent of non-users.

Table 31. What year do you plan on graduation from your current degree or certificate program?

(Base: Currently enrolled students)

	% of Total n=1,585	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR			
		2011 n=323	2012 n=399	2013 n=413	2014 n=450
2015	15%	57%	8%	5%	3%
2016	23	27	56	10	3
2017	26	10	26	60	8
2018	27	3	4	18	68
2019 or later	5	1	3	4	12
Do not plan on graduating	<1	-	-	-	<1
Don't know	4	3	3	4	6

Table 32. Have you developed a course plan to achieve that graduation date?

(Base: Currently enrolled students planning to graduate)

	% of Total n=1,525	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD YEAR				USED APS	
		2011 n=315	2012 n=389	2013 n=399	2014 n=422	Yes n=935	No n=590
Yes	85%	93%	90%	84%	76%	81%	91%
No	11	5	8	13	17	15	7
Don't know	3	2	1	3	6	4	3

Alaska Residency

- All respondents were asked about their future plans for living in Alaska versus Outside. The most common plan was to live in Alaska indefinitely, at 29 percent, followed by live out-of-state temporarily, then move to Alaska (19 percent), live in Alaska temporarily, then move out-of-state (15 percent), and live out-of-state indefinitely (10 percent). Over one-quarter (27 percent) said they didn't know.
- APS users were more likely to plan on living in Alaska indefinitely (35 percent, versus 23 percent of non-users). They were also more likely to plan on living in Alaska temporarily, then moving out-of-state (20 versus 10 percent).
- Non-users were more likely to plan on living out-of-state temporarily, then moving to Alaska (25 percent of non-users, versus 14 percent of APS users). They were more likely to plan on living out-of-state indefinitely (14 versus 6 percent).
- Alaska Natives were more likely to plan on living in Alaska indefinitely (44 percent, versus 28 percent of non-Natives). Non-Natives were more likely to plan on living out-of-state indefinitely (11 percent, versus 3 percent of Alaska Natives).

Table 33. Which of the following best describes where you plan to live in the future?
(All respondents aware of APS)

	% of Total n=2,002	USED APS	
		Yes n=1,101	No n=901
Live in Alaska indefinitely	29%	35%	23%
Live in Alaska temporarily, then move out-of-state	15	20	10
Live out-of-state temporarily, then move to Alaska	19	14	25
Live out-of-state indefinitely	10	6	14
Don't know	27	26	28

Conclusion

The survey of the first four cohorts of APS-qualified high school graduates proves the numerous positive impacts of the program, as well as its increasing influence:

- **APS is an important factor in Alaska students' decision to enroll in postsecondary education.** Nearly two-thirds of APS recipients said that APS was a factor in their decision, and the impact has been increasing over time.
- **APS is keeping Alaska students in-state for postsecondary education.** Over three-quarters of APS recipients said that APS influenced their decision to attend an in-state school.
- **APS is a factor in increasing full-time enrollment and decreasing work hours.** Over half of APS recipients said APS influenced their decision to enroll full-time; a similar number said APS influenced the number of hours they needed to work while attending school.
- **APS encourages a variety of positive high school behaviors.** Among the most recent graduates, between one-half and two-thirds were influenced by APS to: take placement exams, achieve better grades, seek out advising, prepare for placement exams, consider career options, and take challenging courses. APS' influence on these behaviors has been increasing over time. Although APS recipients reported higher degrees of influence, non-recipients were also impacted.
- **Students are finding out about APS, and their APS eligibility, earlier each year.** APS has made huge strides in getting the word out to students earlier, with over half of 2014 graduates learning about APS their freshman or sophomore year (up from 22 percent among 2012 graduates and 38 percent among 2013 graduates).

A number of students took the opportunity at the end of the survey to acknowledge the important role APS played in their decisions to pursue a degree and stay in Alaska for school; these comments can be found in the Appendix.

Sample Characteristics

The following tables show the characteristics of the survey sample, such as race, gender, and school district region, compared to the total APS-eligible population from graduation years 2011 through 2014. Note that survey sample figures reflect weighted data.

Table 34. Year Graduated

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
2011	22%	24%
2012	24	24
2013	25	27
2014	28	26

Table 35. Gender

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
Female	62%	55%
Male	38	45

Table 36. Race

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
White	74%	71%
Alaska Native	7	7
Asian	7	7
Hispanic	4	5
African American	2	2
American Indian	1	1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	1
Two or more races	6	6
(blank)	n/a	2

Table 37. Region

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
Southcentral	63%	64%
Interior	19	18
Southeast	13	10
Southwest	4	4
Far North	2	2
(blank)	n/a	2

Table 38. Collegiate Eligibility Level

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
Ineligible	13%	13%
Level 1	36	36
Level 2	27	27
Level 3	24	24

Note: These percentages match exactly because the survey data was weighted based on these responses.

Table 39. Career Eligibility Level

	Survey Sample n=2,121	Total APS-Eligible Students n=9,249
Level 1	50%	45%
Level 2	31	32
Level 3	19	23

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN SINCE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

- Junior level hockey. (x3)
- Sports.

WHY DID YOU PURSUE A DEGREE RATHER THAN A CERTIFICATE?

- Athletic scholarship to 4 year college.
- Because it's what they offered.
- Changed mind.
- Don't have enough \$ for any other degree.
- Full ride scholarship lasts for 4 years.
- I wanted to continue my wrestling career.
- I was still finding out what I wanted to do.
- I was told I had to. Was not informed.
- My counselor in high school was trash.
- Opportunity for sports scholarship.
- Private programs too expensive.
- Swimming scholarship.
- UA Scholar.
- Went to trade school. I am certified.
- Working full time is better experience.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOU DIDN'T PURSUE FURTHER EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

- Continued hockey career.
- Junior hockey. Going to school after.
- Moved out of state.
- Parents made me wait a year.
- Religious service (x3)

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOU DIDN'T COMPLETE THE DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM?

- Didn't care for my instructors.
- Horrible teachers at UAA.
- Religious service.
- Self-employed, no need for courses.
- Strongly disliked type of students.
- Waiting to complete nursing in Anchorage.
- Went on a religious mission for two years.

WHY DID YOU LOSE APS ELIGIBILITY?

- Enrolled in another school.
- Limitation of APS program.
- Moved out of Alaska.

WHY AREN'T YOU USING THE APS?

- Already have enough financial aid.
- Already have high paying career.
- Military enlistment, 6 year minimum.
- Parents' assets precluded FAFSA.
- Plan to use military TA/G.I. Bill.

WHERE DID YOU GET INFORMATION ON THE APS?

- Alaska Post-Secondary Education in Juneau.
- APS reps came to our school.
- Called the APS office.
- Educational Talent Search TRIO program.
- Email. (x3)
- Employer.
- Governor Sean Parnell.
- Governor's office.
- Legislators.
- Native Student Resources at EAH.
- When I filed my FAFSA, it said eligible.
- When I received the award.
- Word of mouth.

WHY DIDN'T YOU COMPLETE A FAFSA?

- I do not qualify.
- I qualify for loans only.
- Not eligible.
- Parents' assets too many.
- Parents: lots of assets – no cash flow.
- Would not qualify for aid due to income.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOU CHOSE TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF ALASKA?

- Enlisted in the military.
- Family moved (x2)
- Internship offered.
- Job.
- Losing PEL grant after parent remarried.
- Shorter waiting period for my program.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOU CHOSE TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION IN ALASKA?

- Athletics (x3)
- Didn't get accepted to my top choice.
- Fire department scholarship.
- Good stepping stone towards other school.
- Job.
- Love Alaska.
- Medical reasons (x3)
- Off campus options.
- Seawolf debate team.
- Turned down from better school in Canada.
- Unsure of what degree I wanted.
- Was not allowed to go out-of-state.

WHY DID YOU PLAN TO COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE OUT-OF-STATE?

- I am a military wife and must move.
- UAF was not the right fit for me.
- University only wants money no education.

END-OF-SURVEY COMMENTS

Note: Respondents were given an opportunity at the end of the survey to provide feedback on the survey instrument: clarity, length, etc. Over 400 respondents made comments, nearly all of them positive with regards to the survey (clear, easy, not too long, etc.). A small number of respondents wrote comments on the APS program itself; these are provided below.

- APS is the sole reason I stayed in Alaska for college, along with the low cost of tuition. I hope that future students can benefit the way that I have.
- I really appreciate receiving this scholarship. It has motivated me to stay on track with classes. Also, I have felt less pressured about the costs of college.
- I am very grateful to be a recipient of the APS. My sister will graduate from high school this year and also plans to use the APS. It has really helped me and my family. Thank you!
- I feel we must keep this program in Alaska and continue to help out our youth to stay local and gain employment after school. I am so fortunate to have received APS and completed my associate's degree from UAA. I gained a full time job within my career field due to UAA and APS and could not be happier. Please continue to grant these scholarships to our high schoolers and increase our community's knowledge and skill set!
- APS is a great program and I hope this survey can help you continue with ACPE.
- The APS helped me with my financial costs greatly and helped me work hard in school.
- Thanks APS for helping me get through college!
- The APS has helped me a lot with school! Thank you.
- I appreciated the survey because I feel that the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education should know how appreciative people are of the educational opportunities granted to us through the APS scholarships. I personally don't know how I would have survived college without mine.
- The APS is a great scholarship that motivates students to be better in school and work towards their future.
- If I did not receive the APS and UA scholarship, I would not have gone to college.
- It was a great survey and I hope it helps keep this scholarship going because it makes a big difference. It really pushes you to work hard and study for tests.
- Keep up the great work ACPE! You're doing important work (as I'm sure you know)!
- APS is an outstanding program and gives opportunity for most Alaskans to achieve a higher education or certificate program at a manageable cost while staying in the state. Those who do use the APS, will most likely stay in the state to benefit and contribute to our workforce & economy.
- This scholarship has helped me a ton in paying for my education as well as getting done in 4 years.
- Very thankful for the opportunity to use this scholarship to help go to college.
- Thank you for the scholarship, it helped me a lot.
- Thank you so much for offering APS!!!
- Thanks for the APS :)
- I appreciate receiving the APS scholarship, it helps a lot with the costs of college!
- Thank you for providing the APS Scholarship!
- I would like to say thank you for providing APS – I would not have received my degree without it.
- This scholarship was the only reason I was able to go to college. I'm enrolled in the UAA nursing program, I never thought I'd be able to go to college until this scholarship helped me pay for most of it. It's great!
- I probably would not have stayed in Alaska for school without APS and I know many of my friends feel the same way. APS truly encouraged me, and many of my friends, to take more rigorous classes in high school and keep our grades up. It also encouraged many of us to stay in state and made college MUCH more affordable.

Survey Instrument

See attached.