



# Where Alaskans Go After Graduating from High School

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## Identifying Postsecondary Pathways

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## Acknowledgements

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University of Alaska (UA)

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## Introduction

This report examines Alaska public high school graduates' decisions to attend postsecondary education (including workforce training or college), attend in-state or out-of-state colleges, and to remain in or return to Alaska.

Three groups of high school graduates' decisions are summarized to maximize the benefit from available data in the Alaska Education and Workforce Outcomes Database. The largest group — graduates from the Classes of 2006-2013 — were studied to determine the percentage who attended college or in-state workforce training programs, the probability of students' deciding to enroll in postsecondary education, and the likelihood of students deciding to enroll at either in-state or out-of-state institutions.

The second group summarized consists of graduates from the Classes of 2011-2013 because the Class of 2011 was the first with the opportunity to become eligible for the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS). Data on APS eligibility from students' achievement in high school provides an opportunity to understand whether high grades and test scores are associated with increased postsecondary enrollment or the choice to attend out-of-state colleges.

The third group (Classes of 2006-2009) examines students' decision to stay in Alaska after high school until 2014 or, for students who left for out-of-state colleges, their decision to return to Alaska afterwards.

Key findings from this analysis include:

- Out of Alaska's public high school graduates from the Classes of 2006-2013, two-thirds chose to attend postsecondary education (college or Alaska workforce training programs).
  - The majority of college students (72%) attended the fall immediately following their high school graduation.
- A majority of the students who attended postsecondary education chose to enroll in Alaska institutions (53%), 29% chose to attend out-of-state institutions, and 18% had mixed in-state and out-of-state attendance after high school graduation.
- Students eligible for Alaska's merit scholarship, the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS), were more likely to attend college out-of-state.
- Alaska Native students and students from low-income families were more likely to stay in Alaska after high school.

- Among students who attended the University of Alaska (UA), students who earned a UA Scholars award were twice as likely to stay in Alaska as their peers.
- There was a decline in Alaska residency rates measured the year after students left college, from 79% for students who left in 2007 to 64% for students who left in 2013.
  - This decline is largely driven by students who attended out-of-state colleges, with recent cohorts choosing to be Alaska residents after college at lower rates than earlier cohorts.
- College graduates who earned a credential were less likely than non-graduates to return to Alaska after attending out-of-state colleges.

## Alaska Education and Workforce Outcomes Database

The Alaska Education and Workforce Outcomes Database is Alaska's statewide longitudinal education data system. It links K-12 data with college and Alaska workforce training program data.

### Decision 1: Attend Postsecondary Education

#### Classes of 2006-2013

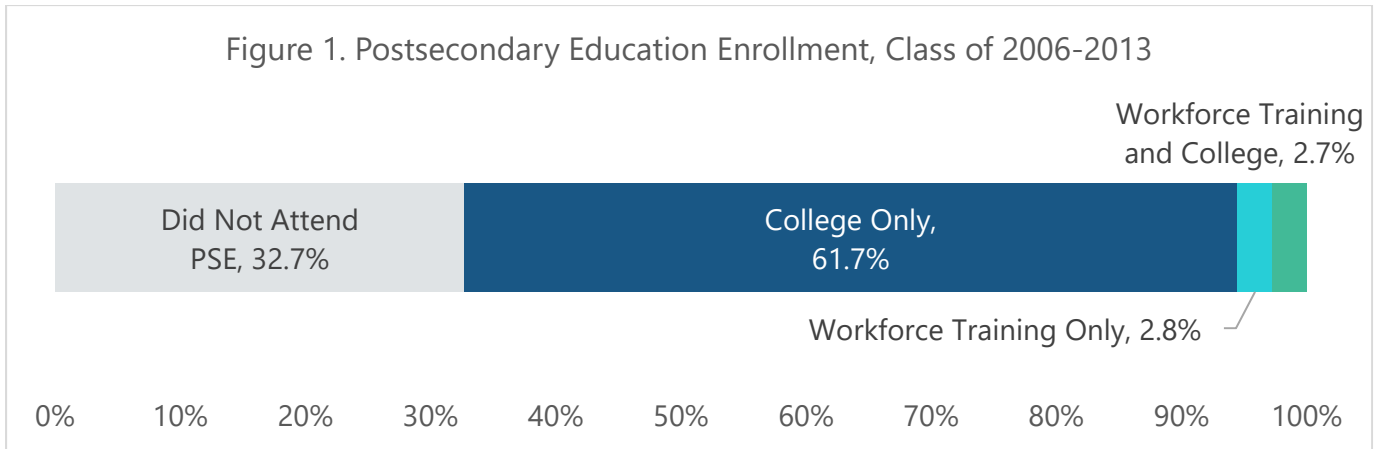
Alaska Public High School Graduates: 62,774 students

- 51% Female, 49% Male
- 60% White, 19% Alaska Native or American Indian, 7% Asian, 4% Black or African American, 5% Hispanic or Latino<sup>1</sup>, 4% two or more races, 1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- 27% low-income (students eligible for free or reduced price meals)
- 51% submitted the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)<sup>2</sup>
  - Of students who submitted the FAFSA, 44% were first generation (neither of their parents completed college).

By 2014, 67% of the graduates from the Classes of 2006-2013 had attended college in Alaska or another state or participated in Alaska training programs. (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> All multi-racial Hispanic/Latino ethnicity students are reported as Hispanic

<sup>2</sup> FAFSA records were available only for those that list Alaska postsecondary institutions on their application between the 2011-2014 academic years.



For those students who attended college (40,456 students), 72% enrolled in the fall following high school graduation.

Low-income students — defined here as students who were on free or reduced-price meal plans in high school — were half as likely to attend postsecondary education as students who were not low income.

**Table 1.** Probabilities of select high school graduates from the Classes of 2006-2013 enrolling in postsecondary education (PSE)

Student	Probability of Enrolling in PSE	
	Not Low-Income	Low-Income
White, male student	68%	51%
White, female student	75%	60%
Alaska Native, male student	58%	41%
Alaska Native, female student	67%	50%

### Alaska Performance Scholarship

Beginning with the Class of 2011, Alaska high school graduates had the potential to be eligible for the APS from their academic achievement in high school. Students obtain eligibility by meeting a high school GPA of 2.5 or higher for Level 3, scoring well on the SAT, ACT, or WorkKeys tests, and by completing rigorous high school curriculum requirements before graduation. The scholarship is awarded to eligible students if they choose to attend qualifying Alaska postsecondary institutions. Students who meet higher GPA and test score requirements (Level 2 or Level 1) are eligible for increased scholarship awards.<sup>3</sup> The WorkKeys test measures students' workforce preparedness skills, and can be used to become eligible to earn the APS for career and technical education programs (CTE) in Alaska.

<sup>3</sup> Visit [acpe.alaska.gov](http://acpe.alaska.gov) for more information about APS eligibility and award levels.

## Classes of 2011-2013

Alaska Public High School Graduates: 23,891 students

- 29% were APS-eligible overall. Out of those eligible,
  - 26% Collegiate Level 3, 28% Level 2, 36% Level 1
  - 11% additional students with CTE eligibility only

For the Classes of 2011-2013, students who met APS eligibility requirements in high school were 3.6 times more likely to go to college than ineligible high school graduates from those years.

## Decision 2: Attend In-State or Out-of-State

For high school graduates in the Classes of 2006-2013 who attended college or workforce training (workforce training is measured only for programs in Alaska), 53% enrolled in Alaska institutions, 18% had mixed enrollment in-state and out-of-state, and 29% enrolled in out-of-state colleges only.

### First Postsecondary Enrollment-Alaska Institutions

In Alaska, the majority of students first enrolled at the University of Alaska (UA). The top non-UA workforce training institutions were: 1) Alaska Vocational Technical Center, 2) Yuut Elitnaurviat, and 3) Alaska Career College.

### First Postsecondary Enrollment—Out-of-State Colleges

The largest number of Alaska high school graduates who went to college out-of-state went to schools in Washington, followed by Oregon, California, and Arizona.

Alternatively, the top schools attracting students are ranked in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Top 10 Out-of-State Colleges for the Classes of 2006-2013

Rank	College	State
1	Montana State University-Bozeman	MT
2	University of Idaho	ID
3	Northern Arizona University	AZ
4	Washington State University	WA
5	Western Washington University	WA
6	Brigham Young University	UT
7	University of Phoenix <sup>4</sup>	AZ
8	University of Montana	MT
9	Fort Lewis College	CO
10	Southern Oregon University	OR

Table 3 shows the relative statistical likelihood that students chose to attend only out-of-state colleges.

**Table 3.** Students more likely and less likely to choose to attend only out-of-state colleges, Classes of 2006-2013

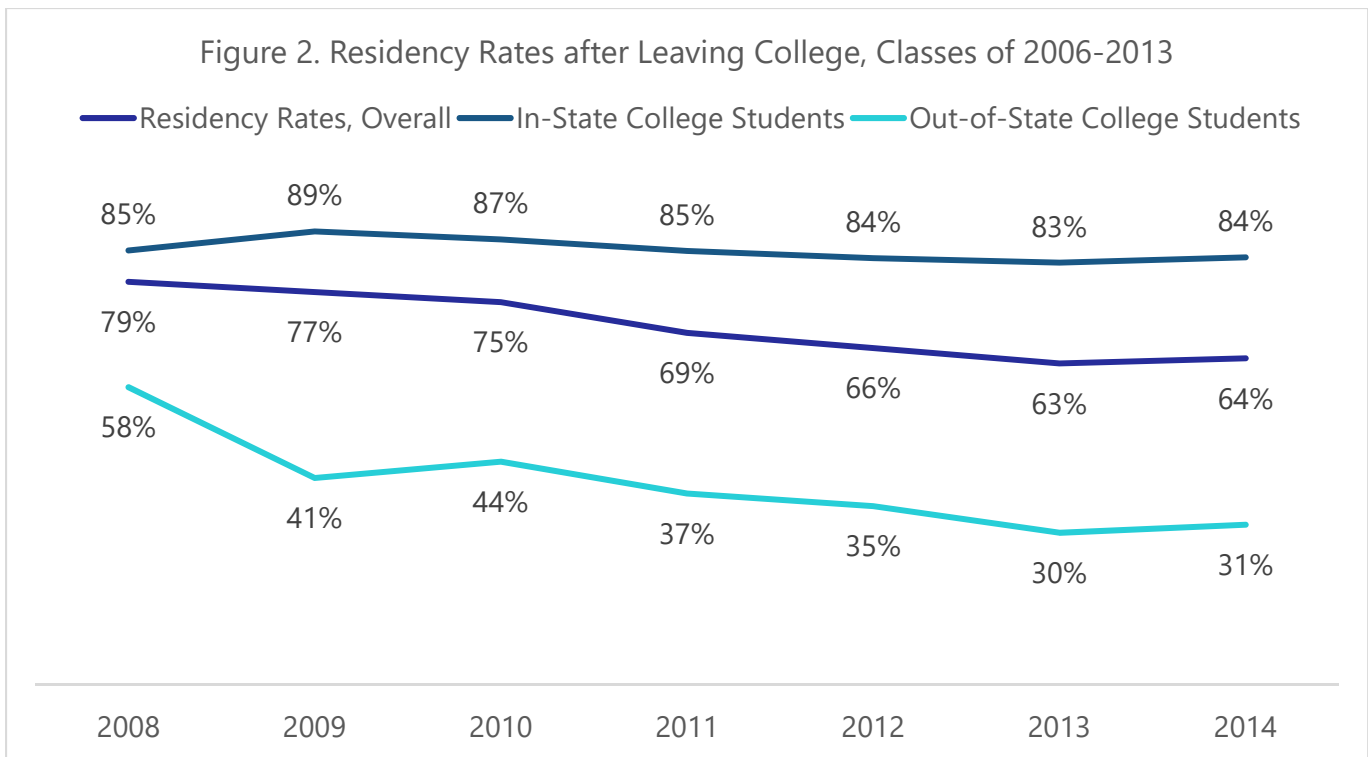
More Likely	Amount	Less Likely
Future College Graduate with Credential	3.0x	College Student without Credential
APS-Eligible	2.5x	APS Ineligible
White	1.7x	Alaska Native
Continuing Generation	1.6x	First-Generation
Black, African American	1.3x	White
White	1.3x	Hispanic
Not Low-Income	1.2x	Low-Income
White	1.2x	Asian
Male	1.2x	Female

<sup>4</sup> The majority of students at the University of Phoenix take at least one online course. Lederman, D. (2018, January 5). Who is studying online (and where). Inside Higher Ed. URL: <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2018/01/05/new-us-data-show-continued-growth-college-students-studying>

Iverson, G. J. (2016, October 20). Form 10-K, Apollo Education Group, Inc. Securities and Exchange Commission. URL: <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/929887/000092988716000225/apol-aug31201610k.htm>

### Decision 3: Stay or Return to Alaska after Postsecondary Education

There was a slight decrease in Alaska residency rates the year after students left college (with or without a credential) for students in cohorts who left in 2010-2014 compared with those who left earlier. Figure 2 compares the residency rates for students who attended college the year after they left based on in-state or out-of-state enrollment decisions.<sup>5</sup> Residency is measured with a one-year delay after college to provide an opportunity for students to regain their PFD if their Alaska residency lapsed during their college years, especially for those students who attended college out-of-state.<sup>6</sup>



#### Classes of 2006-2009

Alaska Public High School Graduates: 30,669

- 52% lived in Alaska during 2006-2014
- 72% enrolled in postsecondary education
- 69% (21,308) attended college
  - Out of those who attended college, 38% graduated with a credential by 2014.

<sup>5</sup> 2007 PFD rates after students left college were excluded because the proportion represented few students (37 students), 62% of which were residents. Most students in the Classes of 2006-2013 were either still enrolled in high school or college during that time.

<sup>6</sup> Students attending college out-of-state may, and often do, maintain their Alaska residency.



**Stayed in Alaska**

Of students in the Classes of 2006-2009, 45% (13,684) maintained consistent residency (as indicated by the student receiving a PFD for each year studied). For students with consistent residency, 78% stayed in Alaska until 2014.

Among students who attended the University of Alaska, UA Scholars were twice as likely to stay in Alaska as their peers. UA Scholars are students from the top 10% of Alaska’s high school graduates who have enrolled and received scholarships at UA.

Students who enrolled in college but left without a credential were three times as likely as college graduates with a credential to stay in Alaska. Table 4 compares the relative likelihood that a student decided to stay in Alaska.

**Table 4.** Students more likely and less likely to stay in Alaska, Classes of 2006-2009

<b>More Likely</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Less Likely</b>
Alaska Workforce Training Student	3.1x	Student without Alaska Workforce Training
College Student without Credential	2.9x	College Graduate with Credential
UA Scholar	2.4x	Non-UA Scholar UA Student
Alaska Native	2.0x	White
First-Generation	1.8x	Continuing Generation
Two or More Races	1.7x	White
Low-Income	1.5x	Not Low-Income

**Returned to Alaska after College**

Out of the students who left for college and only attended out-of-state, 35% returned to Alaska after their last documented enrollment term.

Both male students and students who graduated with a credential by 2014 were less likely to return to Alaska after college. Female students were 1.3 times as likely to return as male students, and students who did not graduate with a credential were 1.3 times as likely to return to Alaska as those who graduated before 2014 (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Students more likely and less likely to return to Alaska after enrolling in only out-of-state colleges, Classes of 2006-2009

<b>More Likely</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Less Likely</b>
Female	1.3x	Male
College Student without Credential	1.3x	College Graduate with Credential

## Data Notes

### Definitions

Alaska residents	Student records were matched with received Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) records for that year or years studied. There is a one full calendar year delay after lost eligibility for the PFD to establish residency and to become eligible again.
Stayed in Alaska	Students maintained consistent residency as indicated by their PFD records for 2006-2014 and, if they attended college, did not attend out-of-state colleges reporting to the National Student Clearinghouse.
Returned to Alaska	Students enrolled at only out-of-state colleges reporting to the National Student Clearinghouse, left college before 2014, and were Alaska residents after high school and after leaving college.
UA Scholars	Students achieved high class standing for their academic performance during high school, enrolled at the University of Alaska, and met continuing eligibility requirements in college to earn a UA Scholars scholarship award for at least one term.
Low-income	Students were eligible for free or reduced-price meal plans during high school.
First-generation	Students submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application between 2011-2014, listed an Alaska postsecondary institution on the application, and indicated that neither of their parents had completed college.

### Data Sources

The population studied in this report includes public Alaska high school graduates from the Classes of 2006-2013 within the Alaska Education and Workforce Outcomes Database. The database contains records from the following sources: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), University of Alaska (UA), and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). De-identified student records are available exclusively to partnering agencies and the University of Alaska. Approval by the database’s governing board is required to conduct research projects.

This report combines enrollment records at the University of Alaska and from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). A complete list of institutions that report to NSC is available at: [http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/colleges/studenttracker\\_for\\_outreach/participating\\_schools.php](http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/colleges/studenttracker_for_outreach/participating_schools.php).

Enrollment records for the University of Alaska supplanted NSC records. Enrollment records at the University of Alaska and through NSC excluded enrollments that began before high school graduation.

Workforce training enrollment records include students who were covered by job training funds administered by the DOLWD Division of Employment and Training Services, including students who received federal funding or participated in state job-training programs. Workforce training enrollment records were not excluded before high school graduation.