

**2026 Alabama School Transportation Association (ASTA) Conference
Charles “Chuck” Poland Education Scholarship**

This is a one-time \$1,000 education scholarship award made to a deserving public high school student in the state of Alabama. The scholarship award is made to the postsecondary school selected by the awarded student and to the student.

Application Form Must Be Completed and Received on or Before April 15, 2026

Award Guidelines

1. The parent/guardian listed has been an active employee in a local Alabama public school transportation program during the past three years. (For the purpose of this scholarship award, the past three year’s work history requirement is defined as the period since January 1, 2023.)
2. The student applicant has at least a 3.0 (B) scholastic average, will graduate from a public high school, and will attend a postsecondary educational institution in the fall of 2026.

The Scholarship Application must include the following letters of reference:

1. A letter from the parent/guardian’s most recent employer verifying employment in public school transportation since January 1, 2023.
2. A letter from the student’s high school guidance counselor or other authorized high school official verifying the student’s grade point average, anticipated graduation from high school, and planned attendance at a postsecondary educational institution in the fall of 2026.
3. A letter of support from a teacher or an adult family acquaintance of the student, stating why the award should be made to this student.

State Selection Committee

There shall be a minimum of a three-member State Selection Committee appointed by the recognized state director of Pupil Transportation Services.

Each committee member will have one vote. By majority vote, the committee will have total authority to select the state scholarship winner based on the above qualifications and any additional factors the committee deems appropriate.

Award Process

Prior to August 1, 2026, the scholarship award will be made to the postsecondary institution that the student will attend. The scholarship cannot be awarded to any student who has a family member serving on the selection committee.

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Application Information and Instructions 2026

Section I Applicant Personal Information

1. The recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship must be the child of a school bus employee in the public school pupil transportation field for at least the past three years. (Since January 1, 2023)
2. Selection of applicants will be based on the following criteria:
 - **Scholarship** - The student shall have a cumulative grade point average (Grades 9-11) of 3.0 (B) minimum, as verified by official high school academic records.
 - **Leadership** - The student shall have demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and abilities in co-curricular activities and community service activities.
 - **Citizenship** - The student shall have demonstrated exemplary citizenship qualities that include not only maturity, loyalty, responsibility, integrity, and trustworthiness; but also a concern for the well-being of all citizens.
 - **Service** - The student shall have rendered unselfish service and assistance to others, to the school, and to the community.
 - **Essay** - The student shall have explained in a typed or hand-written essay of not more than 500 words why he/she applied for the scholarship and how the scholarship will be used.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND PLANS FOR AWARDING THE SCHOLARSHIP

1. In the second semester of their senior year, students who meet the general criteria will complete an application in which information supporting excellence in the five areas above will be noted. The application must contain all information requested. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.** Applications are available from each local transportation office. Completed applications should be submitted to the local Supervisor/Director of Transportation or the local scholarship selection committee chairperson.
2. Additionally, each applicant shall be required to submit a typed or hand-written essay of *not more than* 500 words, which explains why the student has applied and how the student would use the scholarship if selected. The essay must be submitted at the time of application and applicants are encouraged to proofread their essays for spelling, grammar, and syntax.
3. A **local selection committee** established in each school system or district shall select from all local applicants a finalist whose application must be submitted to the State Scholarship Selection Committee ***no later than April 15, 2026***. **Only one application from each school system or district will be judged at the state level. If multiple applications are submitted by your school system, then all applications submitted will be disqualified.** Applications shall not be submitted to the state by student applicants.
4. The State Scholarship Selection Committee will select the state’s final applicant.
5. The finalist will be notified by the Program Coordinator of Pupil Transportation Services no later than April 30, 2026.

SECTION II **EDUCATIONAL DATA** (USE N/A IF FIELD IS NOT APPLICABLE)

1. School now attending: _____

Class Rank: _____ In class of: _____
Number

CEEB/SAT/ACT Test _____ GPA: _____
Score

2. College(s)/Vocational/Technical school(s) to which you seek admission.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. Have you been accepted at any of the above schools? If so, which one(s)?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

SECTION III **ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS**

1. List all co-curricular activities in which you have participated, including honors and awards.

2. List athletics in which you have participated.

3. List community service activities or projects in which you have participated.

(If additional space is needed for the above items, please attach a separate sheet.)

4. Why do you desire to continue your education?

SECTION IV WORK EXPERIENCE

1. List any part-time or full-time work experience(s).

2. List any special interests or hobbies.

SECTION V **ESSAY**

Please describe in a typed or hand-written essay, **500 words or less**, why you have applied for the scholarship and how you would use the scholarship.

You must submit the essay as an **attachment** to your application.

Please check the application for completeness before signing below. Applications must be post marked no later than April 15, 2026.

Date of Application

Signature of Applicant

Signature of High School Principal

Signature of Parent/Guardian

FOR LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE USE ONLY

The Local Scholarship Selection Committee will use this section in order to certify the selected local applicant to the state director and to the state selection committee.

LOCAL APPLICANT CERTIFICATION TO STATE SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE

Signature: _____
Local Scholarship Selection Committee Chairperson

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____
Local Director of Transportation

Print Name: _____

School System: _____ Telephone: _____

**THE SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE WILL RETURN ONLY ONE APPLICATION
SELECTED BY YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM OR DISTRICT TO:**

**Chad Carpenter, Administrator II
Pupil Transportation
Alabama State Department of Education
P. O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130
334-694-4545**