Student Name: _____

2026 ACET Student Scholarship Rubric

Eligibility Criterion:

- Attend a public school district or charter school
- On target to be a 2026 high school graduate
- Participation in compensatory educational programs (such as tutoring, mentoring, pregnancy-related services, services to students experiencing homelessness or after-school academic assistance)
- Demonstrated commitment to improving academic skills through engagement in such programs

Narrative Prompts (≤500 words each):

1. *Tell us your story. What unique opportunities or challenges have you experienced throughout your high school career that have shaped who you are today?* ***AND***
2. *In what ways would a college degree or postsecondary certification change your life, and in turn, the lives of your loved ones and others around you? The essay should show a sincere desire to further your education for continued self-growth, why you need this scholarship, educational goals, expressiveness, and clarity.*

Personal Story: Unique Challenge/Opportunities

(35 Points)

0-9 Points	10-19 Points	20-29 Points	30-35 Points	Total Score
Fails to provide a clear example of a challenge or opportunity, or the example lacks connection to personal growth.	Mentions at least 1 challenge or opportunity, but with limited detail. Minimal explanation of how it influenced personal growth.	Provides 1-2 examples of challenges or opportunities, but with less detail. Some explanation of how these experiences shaped personal growth.	Provides 2+ specific, detailed examples of unique challenges or opportunities experienced in high school. Clearly explains how these experiences shaped personal growth or development.	

Sincere Desire for Self-Growth & Education

(30 Points)

0-4 Points	5-14 Points	15-24 Points	25-30 Points	Total Score
No clear educational goals stated. Lacks expression of personal interest in pursuing higher education or self-growth.	Provides minimal detail on educational goals. Limited or vague expression of interest in education and self-growth.	Mentions educational goals and provides at least 1 reason for wanting to pursue higher education. Some evidence of personal commitment to self-growth.	Clearly outlines educational goals and provides 2+ specific reasons for wanting to pursue higher education. Expresses a strong, personal commitment to self-growth.	

Student Name: _____

Impact of College Degree or Certification on Future (20 Points)				
0-4 Points	**5-9 Points**	**10-14 Points**	**15-20 Points**	**Total Score**
No clear understanding of how a degree or certification will impact the applicant's life or others.	Provides a vague or unclear statement about the impact of a college degree. Minimal or incomplete vision for the future.	Provides 1-2 examples of potential impact, but they may be somewhat general. Some vision for the future is present, though not fully developed.	Provides 2+ clear, specific examples of how a college degree/certification will positively impact their life and the lives of loved ones or others. Vision for the future is well-defined.	
Need for Scholarship (10 Points)				
0 Points	**1-4 Points**	**5-8 Points**	**9-10 Points**	**Total Score**
No mention of financial need or explanation is unclear.	Mentions financial need, but without detail or specific reasons.	Provides a general explanation of financial need, with at least 1 specific reason mentioned.	Provides a clear, detailed explanation of financial need, with 2+ specific reasons why the scholarship is necessary for their educational goals.	
Expressiveness & Clarity (5 Points)				
0 Points	**1-2 Points**	**3-4 Points**	**5 Points**	**Total Score**
Essay is largely incoherent or very difficult to understand.	Essay is difficult to follow due to unclear language or lack of structure. Frequent errors in grammar or mechanics hinder understanding.	Ideas are mostly clear but may have occasional unclear or disjointed sections. Errors in grammar or mechanics may cause minor difficulty in understanding.	Essay is easy to understand, with clearly expressed ideas. Some minor errors in grammar or mechanics may be present but do not hinder understanding.	

Notes:

- Writing mechanics (grammar, spelling, etc.) should not heavily impact the score, as the focus is on content, sincerity, and personal circumstances.