



Campaign for Free College Tuition

What are the Benefits of a Promise Program for Your Community?

Promise programs have proven to be the single most effective education reform initiative communities or states can undertake to simultaneously improve high school and college performance for their students, families and economy. By making a Promise or guarantee that college tuition will be free for all qualified residents, making a family's finances irrelevant to their children's ability to attend college, the concept has proven to change the conversation, and therefore the culture, about college attendance at both the individual and institutional level. When properly designed and implemented, Promise Programs create a challenge that unifies the community in pursuit of a common goal—the future success of their youth.

Here are some particular points regarding the benefits of local promise programs:

- ★ **Promise Programs have shown to improve high school grade point averages (GPA), increase attendance at public schools, generate greater enrollment in college, and increase the chances that students will attain a post-secondary credential.**

- Promise Programs help families understand that college is attainable and affordable because tuition will not have to be paid from constrained family finances, and that, with the right preparation, their children can afford to go to college if they choose to do so.

- Students participating in Promise Programs top their non-public school peers in measures of academic performance. They have higher GPAs, college enrollment rates, and college completion rates than those students who are not Promise eligible.

- The benefits of Promise Programs have been found to be greatest for minority and female students, especially for those programs which make no distinctions beyond residency on who is eligible and provide the clearest tuition guarantees.

- Properly designed, Promise Programs improve opportunity and efficiency by providing a clear path and direct assistance for students through middle school, high school, community colleges, and universities.

- Promise Programs deliver a high economic return for each dollar spent on place-based scholarships, with one study showing each dollar spent providing \$4.60 in increased economic activity for the local community.



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Proven Promise Program Benefits

KALAMAZOO, MI

- Enrollment in Kalamazoo Public Schools went up 24% after their Promise program was announced.
- Promise program increased chances of starting college within six months of graduating High School by 14% for any college, 34% for Baccalaureate programs.
- Promise program increased cumulative number of college credits attempted by 15%.
- Six years after HS, 48% of Promise eligible students attained a credential representing a 1/3 increase in completion compared to pre-Promise performance.
- 80% of increase came from bachelor degree attainment.

TULSA, OK

- Almost half of the first group of students, which first enrolled in 2007, had earned a bachelor's degree, associate degree or certificate by 2014 -- with 48 percent earning degrees.
- Only 32 percent of non-Tulsa Achieves students who entered that year earned a credential in the same period. About 44 percent of the first class transferred, compared to 32 percent of their peers.

TENNESSEE

- More than 58,000 students applied, and nearly 16,000 students from the high school class of 2015 are using Tennessee Promise benefits during the current academic year.
- Tennessee enjoyed a 24.7% increase in freshman enrollment at its community colleges and a 20% increase in freshman enrollment at their Colleges of Applied Technology in the first year of the Tennessee Promise.
- Tennessee is now the number one state in the nation for FAFSA completions and accounted for 40% of all new financial aid submissions nationwide.

Statistics and Data compiled from:

W.E. UPJOHN INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH: The Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship on College Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion [↗](#)

Michigan Local News: Kalamazoo Promise 'significantly' increases college graduation rates, study finds [↗](#)

Tulsa Achieves

The Tennessee Promise [↗](#)

