



Columbus Promise Fact Sheet

What is the Columbus Promise?

The [Columbus Promise](#) is an exciting new program that enables Columbus City Schools graduates to go to college for free at Columbus State Community College. It covers six semesters of tuition and fees, grants an additional scholarship for expenses like books, offers special services and support, and connects them to jobs. The Columbus Promise is a collaborative initiative of the City of Columbus, Columbus City Schools, I Know I Can, and Columbus State Community College.

What is the purpose of the Columbus Promise program?

The goal is to help more Columbus students get to and through college, and ultimately, into good-paying jobs. The future of economic development is talent development: the regions that do the best job educating their people will out-compete others in jobs and innovation. Furthermore, family social mobility is dependent on educational attainment.

How do students get accepted into the program?

To become a Columbus Promise Scholar, students must:

- Complete the Columbus Promise Application, which will be available in mid-November 2021
- Complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)
- Complete the [Columbus State Community College application for admission](#)
- Graduate from Columbus City Schools in the 2021-2022 academic year

Students will get help completing these steps in high school workshops. They can apply during one of two application cycles: either by April 15, 2022, or by August 15, 2022. Please note: if students meet the criteria and complete this process, they WILL be accepted. There are not a limited number of spots. There are no particular family or income requirements.

To stay a Columbus Promise Scholar while in college, *students must*:

- Maintain at least a 2.0 GPA each semester and pass two-thirds of all the classes they take

- If they have one bad semester, they will receive one “warning” semester before losing eligibility
- Complete all mandatory student success programming, including meeting regularly with their Promise Coach

What tuition assistance or resources are available through the scholarship program?

Being a Columbus Promise Scholar means:

- Tuition and fees covered for six semesters (which is two years including summer semesters, or three years if you take summers off)
- A scholarship to help with additional costs (\$500 each semester for full-time students, or pro-rated for part-time students) like books
- Access to a Columbus Promise Coach who will help you plan your educational and career journey and stay on track
- Special opportunities for enrichment

Columbus Promise Scholars are just like any other college student, balancing school, life, and work or other activities.

What classes can students take at Columbus State?

This program applies to any associate degree and many certificates and job training programs at the college as well, including many in the skilled trades area. Students can also use the first two years to [transfer to a four-year university to get a bachelor’s degree.](#)

Who are the other partners involved, and what are their roles?

- *City of Columbus:* Acts as the overall program champion and provides the initial seed capital for Columbus Promise Fund
- *Columbus State Community College:* Core postsecondary partner institution and will support Columbus Promise Scholars with wraparound supports
- *I Know I Can:* Administer the Columbus Promise program, provide direct student outreach with staff members in each high school, counsel students, and incorporate Promise into existing scholarship offerings
- *Columbus Foundation:* Manage Columbus Promise Fund
- *Private Sector & Philanthropy:* Invest in phase one of Columbus Promise and collaborate with Columbus State to help place students in good-paying entry-level jobs

How will partners help students succeed?

Columbus State plans to implement a robust set of wraparound supports modeled on the ASAP program, a known pilot originated at the City University of New York system and that has since been [piloted at three Ohio community colleges.](#) It includes a dedicated advisor who works with a small fixed caseload of students, has capacity to follow up with them proactively, and offers both

curricular and motivational guidance. The program also includes emergency aid programs and additional academic support options.

How does this expand on existing programs to help students go to college?

I Know I Can has long administered a scholarship program in Columbus City Schools. However, this will expand their ability to serve students with lower grade-point averages (which correlate with household income), DACA and undocumented students, part-time students, and students who miss eligibility for the federal Pell program. For now, it will also layer on top of their I Know I Can Grant program, offering a larger award to anyone who receives both, and helping with more of those out-of-classroom costs. It also cuts through the complexity of traditional scholarship programs by guaranteeing students upfront they can go to college for free if they meet the criteria.