

Frequently Asked Questions – 2028

The Pittsburgh Promise is committed to raising the required resources to fund students through the high school graduating class of 2028 (8th grade during the 2023-2024 school year).

What's going to happen next?

No immediate changes will take place and there is no action needed from families and students. The Promise's scholarship work will continue to operate without disruption through 2028. While that planning work will continue through the completion of our current fundraising campaign, we know that we will advocate for the public sector to commit to a sustainable policy solution for funding post-secondary education in Pennsylvania. In addition, we will deepen our direct outreach work with students and families through Promise Coaches.

Is The Promise going away?

While the scholarship portion of our work is ending, The Promise is not going away. The Promise is in the initial planning stages of what post-2028 looks like for our organization and will operate without disruption leading up to 2028.

Why is the scholarship component of The Promise ending?

In 2016 we had served nine classes of graduates, had a better grasp of the scholarship utilization rate, and had access to performance data which did not exist in earlier years. Therefore, we were able to study and then announce exactly which class of graduates from Pittsburgh Public Schools would be the last to receive a Promise scholarship; the high school class of 2028. They were in kindergarten then, and they would be our 21st class of Promise Scholars. To ensure their inclusion, we also announced that we would have to raise \$265 million, not our original goal of \$250 million. While we are confident that we will successfully complete our fundraising campaign to fund through the class of 2028, we do not believe that there is capacity in the private sector alone to fund future classes.

What is the private sector?

The Promise operates thanks to generous donations from the private sector, meaning corporations, individuals, and foundations. We do not receive government funding from the city, state, or national government.

When did The Promise make this announcement?

We began announcing this in 2016 when we had enough data to refine the financial model of The Promise. We are sending reminders now because as the date approaches, we are committed to communicating as clearly as possible to help families understand their child's eligibility for The Promise scholarship.

What happens if there is money left after 2028?

Our Board of Directors and staff are working to craft The Pittsburgh Promise's post-2028 role and work.

Who are Promise Coaches? What do they do?

Our data show that financial access to education doesn't move the needle for all students. To support those students, we launched the Promise Coaching Initiative in 2021. Promise Coaches work in partnership with PPS staff and community stakeholders to provide post-secondary planning, personal career exploration, and appropriate interventions to high school students at Carrick, Milliones (UPrep), and Perry. While The Promise will continue to work towards post-secondary affordability through public policy solutions, Promise Coaches will maintain laser-focus on post-secondary and career prep and planning – ensuring all students identify the best post-secondary path for them.

I have more than one child. Will my younger children be able to receive a Promise scholarship if they have an older sibling who will be receiving it?

The final scholarships will be awarded to the high school graduating class of 2028.

What about the following Promise programs?

Without Exception: Any student who is officially in the class of 2028 but continues to a program designated for students ages 18-21 based on IEP goals, receives benefits from OVR, and/or requires accommodations for deafness or hard of hearing may receive their Promise scholarship funds until they've exhausted their maximum award or until June 30, 2038.

Veterans: Students who enter the military directly after high school should contact The Promise office after they are discharged to access their scholarship up to June 30, 2038.

Executive Scholars: The Executive Scholars program will continue for the high school graduating class of 2028 through the completion of their post-secondary studies in 2032.

Advancing Educators of Color: The AEC initiative is funded through the class of 2028.

Dual Enrollment: As dual enrollment funds borrow on a student's scholarship fund, including those used to fund CTE program-related courses, it will be available through the class of 2028.

Franco and Dana Harris Scholars: High school graduates will continue to be selected as Harris Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise through the class of 2028.