



## Partnership Between Seattle Colleges, Seattle School District #1 and the City of Seattle

Seattle Colleges, Seattle School District #1 (SPS) and the City of Seattle (the City) are entering a collaborative partnership to develop and implement the Seattle Promise program. The Seattle Promise program will guarantee access to a post-secondary education for all Seattle School District #1 high school graduates and help meet the city's ever-increasing need for skilled talent.

It is envisioned that this Partnership will facilitate the implementation of a program that achieves the following goals:

- Provide up to two years of free college tuition for Seattle School District #1 high school graduates.
- Increase the number of college students who complete a certificate or two-year degree.
- Increase the number of college graduates who are prepared to enter and succeed in the workforce.

The Partnership is committed to:

**Equity.** We recognize that significant gaps in educational attainment continue to persist for students of color and first-generation students. Expanding post-secondary opportunities is essential to reducing and ultimately eliminating these opportunity gaps, but we must also provide students of need with additional high-quality support services in order to ensure their full success.

**Inclusion.** Seattle Colleges are open-access institutions and Seattle is a welcoming city. We will work together to ensure that immigrants and refugees are made to feel welcome here in Seattle by opening this program to all students regardless of citizenship status.

**Access.** We recognize that the goal of increasing access to post-secondary credentials requires broadening access opportunity for both low-income and middle-income students. Even with relatively low tuition rates, most middle-income families must take out loans, as they do not

qualify for public aid and cannot afford to pay out of pocket for tuition. We are committed to reducing and removing financial barriers for all students regardless of income level.

## **Background**

By 2020, 70% of all jobs in Washington state will require some form of post-secondary education. Yet each year, one in four Seattle graduates do not pursue a continuing education pathway, and among low-income and students of color, this number increases to one in three.

A recent study by the Washington Roundtable shows that Washington State alone is expected to grow job openings by more than 740,000 in the next five years. Those jobs need to be filled by people with post-secondary degrees, certificates, or credentials. But today, only 31% of Washington state high school graduates go on to earn a postsecondary certificate or degree.

In 2008, the 13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship Program was created by the South Seattle College Foundation to assist local area high school graduates in completing - at minimum - one full year of college. The scholarship program was based on research from the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges stating that obtaining a high school diploma and one year of college education is the critical “tipping point” for many students that determines their ability to earn living wage jobs and/or continue their education.

Funded by an endowment raised by the South Seattle College Foundation, the 13<sup>th</sup> Year began at South Seattle College with the Cleveland High School class of 2008, expanding to include Chief Sealth High School in 2011, Rainier Beach High School in 2013, and West Seattle High School in 2017. A suite of support services called the Readiness Academy was also added at both the high school and college level to help students successfully make the transition from high school to post-secondary.

During the 2017-18 school year, with support from the City of Seattle, the 13<sup>th</sup> Year program was expanded to include more high schools and colleges:

- South Seattle College added West Seattle High School, in addition to serving students from Cleveland, Chief Sealth and Rainier Beach High Schools.
- Seattle Central College launched the 13<sup>th</sup> Year program at its campus to serve students from Garfield High School.
- North Seattle College launched the 13<sup>th</sup> Year program at its campus to serve students from Ingraham High School.

Building upon the success of the 13<sup>th</sup> Year program, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan signed an executive order in November 2017 to create the Seattle Promise College Tuition Program. This action launched a City interdepartmental planning effort and directed initial program implementation to begin in Fall of 2018.

## **Initial program implementation**

For the 2018-19 school year, Seattle Colleges, SPS and the City will continue to work together to provide college preparation and transition support services to high school seniors at Cleveland, Chief Sealth, Rainier Beach, West Seattle, Garfield and Ingraham High Schools.

In addition, eligible graduates from Cleveland, Chief Sealth, Rainier Beach and West Seattle high schools who earned a 13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship will matriculate to South Seattle College. Current 13<sup>th</sup> Year students at South Seattle College will receive an additional year of free tuition (the 14<sup>th</sup> Year).

Eligible graduates from Garfield High School who earned a 13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship will matriculate to Seattle Central College, while eligible graduates from Ingraham High School who earned a 13<sup>th</sup> Year Promise Scholarship will matriculate to North Seattle College.

- Seattle Colleges will be the primary program provider. In addition, Seattle Colleges will continue to fund the cost of tuition for 13<sup>th</sup> Year students under its existing 13th Year Scholarship Program at all three Colleges for the 2018-19 transitional year.
- Through a separate agreement with Seattle Colleges, the City will fund the cost of tuition for 14<sup>th</sup> Year students at South Seattle College, as well as the cost of high school and college support services for the six high schools and three colleges.
- Seattle Public Schools will collaborate with Seattle Colleges and the City in areas of communication, information sharing, and identification of potential donors and supporters.

### **Program design and implementation oversight**

A working group will be convened to support program design and implementation oversight. Initially, this group will consist of representatives from the Seattle College District, each of the three Seattle Colleges, the Mayor's Office, Seattle Public Schools, and the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning. The working group will collaboratively design the Seattle Promise program and address key elements including but not limited to the following:

- Program Evaluation
  - Shared outcomes
  - Student success metrics, including application, enrollment, retention and completion rates
  - Ongoing performance monitoring
- Program Services
  - Student Eligibility
  - High School "Readiness Academy"
  - College support services
  - Equity support for low-income and student of color
- Administration, management and governance structure
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Advisory Group
- Financial sustainability

- Fiscal agency or entity
  - Public/private funding model
- Full program implementation
  - 2019-2020
  - All Seattle Public Schools District #1 high school graduates will be eligible to receive up to two years of free tuition at the Seattle Colleges.
  - Program participants will receive support services in high school and at the college level.
  - Low-income student program participants will be eligible to receive additional financial support to cover non-tuition costs (i.e., textbooks, transportation, childcare and other college fees)

The parties acknowledge and agree that these key elements are not established by this Partnership and will be defined by the collaborative efforts of the working group. Further, it is acknowledged and agreed that some elements will require additional agreements to fully define the roles and responsibilities of the parties and the funding source(s) to support the work.

### **Sustainability**

Ensuring that Seattle Promise commitment to students and families becomes a permanent benefit will require a funding strategy that leverages both public and private dollars, and creates a mechanism that enables sustained, predictable funding of the program costs in perpetuity.

Therefore, the City and Seattle Colleges are committed to utilizing available funding, levy capacity, and to working collaboratively and innovatively to engage private donors and philanthropy in developing a strategy and structure that will sustainably fund the program (including tuition, support staff and operational costs).

### **State and Regional Efforts**

Seattle Colleges and the City are supportive of state and regional efforts to address barriers to post-secondary access and success. We will closely monitor and collaborate with Promise efforts currently being considered in King County and in the Washington State Legislature. We will align our plans where possible with state and regional efforts.

### **Signatures**

We look forward to working together to implement the Seattle Promise program and to expand the number of Seattle residents who are prepared to fully participate in the economic prosperity of our region.

SEATTLE COLLEGES

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CITY OF SEATTLE

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Dr. Shouan Pan  
Chancellor, Seattle Colleges

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Dr. Larry Nyland  
Superintendent, SPS

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Jenny A. Durkan  
Mayor, City of Seattle

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Date

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Date

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Date