

# REMOVING BARRIERS. CREATING REAL OPPORTUNITIES.

AMERICA'S FIRST PUBLICLY FUNDED  
FIRST-DOLLAR PROMISE PROGRAM



PROMISE PROGRAMS

D2 PROMISE

*Prepared for the Citizens Oversight Committee, D2 Voters and Community*

For complete program information and ongoing updates visit [D2Promise.org](https://D2Promise.org)

# DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISE



The D2 Promise Scholarship Program (D2 Promise) pays for all tuition and fees at Pikes Peak State College (PPSC). With college costs covered, students can utilize federal and state financial aid to cover living expenses, allowing them to focus on their education. When D2 voters approved the mill levy in November 2024, the community committed \$2 million annually for 10 years to ensure students can focus on their education instead of working multiple jobs to afford college. This report shows how this investment changes lives in Southeast Colorado Springs—and why it's the first program of its kind in America.

**The D2 Promise Scholarship Program believes in removing barriers, not just creating opportunities.**

## First-dollar funding

D2 Promise pays tuition and fees upfront before any other aid is applied. This means federal and state financial aid turns into money students can use for living expenses and other costs (most Promise programs work backwards, only covering what's left over after other aid is applied)

## Comprehensive coaching

Students get guidance navigating college and career paths through PPSC's dedicated Promise coaches

## Community investment

Publicly funded for 10 years with full transparency

## Proven results

75% of D2 Promise students graduate, transfer, or are still enrolled at PPSC

## D2 PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP EXAMPLES

**Allison** PPSC Tuition and Fees *(In-Person)*: \$2,702

D2 Promise: \$2,702  
(Covers in-person tuition & fees)

Pell Grant: \$3,698

Colorado Student  
Grant: \$3,000

Other Scholarships:  
\$1,500

**Total Refund: \$8,198**

*(available for online classes, textbooks, materials, and living expenses)*

**Aaron** PPSC Tuition and Fees *(In-Person)*: \$3,382

D2 Promise: \$3,382 (Covers in-person tuition & fees)

Colorado Student Grant: \$3,000

**Total Refund: \$3,000**

*(available for online classes, textbooks, materials, and living expenses)*

**Tyler** PPSC Tuition and Fees *(In-Person)*: \$2,812

D2 Promise: \$2,812 (Covers in-person tuition & fees)

Other Scholarships: \$1,000

**Total Refund: \$1,000**

*(available for online classes, textbooks, materials, and living expenses)*

**Rhianna** PPSC Tuition and Fees *(In-Person)*: \$3,896

D2 Promise: \$3,896 (Covers in-person tuition & fees)

**Total Refund: \$0**

*(Student would need to cover costs for textbooks, online classes, or materials out-of-pocket.)*



# THRIVING STUDENTS THE STORIES BEHIND THE NUMBERS



**Quetzaly Gudino**

*Sierra High School Graduate, PPSC Nursing Student*

“My time in Promise Programs has been one of the most unique, fulfilling times of my educational journey. The initially jarring transition into college became warm and welcoming through my Promise coaches. I’ve been given the chance to meet more students, become more involved in my education and finances, and ultimately achieve my career goal of becoming a nurse.”



**Spencer Harris**

*James Irwin Charter High School Graduate,  
PPSC Physical Therapy Student*

“Promise Programs is great for getting to know other people and networking. My coaches helped me a lot with finding jobs and keeping my grades up. That’s one of the great benefits of this program.”

## STUDENT IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



**48%**

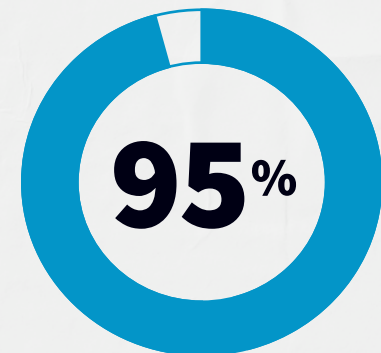
of Promise students said they would not have attended college without this program

**75% RETENTION RATE**

20 percentage points higher than PPSC’s overall rate

D2 | 75%

PPSC | 55%



of students knew at least one other Promise Scholar

# BY THE NUMBERS

# PROGRAM IMPACT 2020-2025

## THE EVOLUTION TIMELINE

2020

Dakota Promise (private funding) begins with 93 D2 students

2023

Program management transitions to D2, creating D2 Promise.

2024

Voters approve the District 2 mill levy, increasing opportunities for students

2025

America's first publicly funded first-dollar Promise program launches



682

D2 students have **benefited from the Promise program** since 2020



230

**Credentials earned**  
(145 degrees + 85 certificates)



93

students **transferred to 4-year universities**



153

D2 Promise students have **graduated from PPSC** to date



75%

of D2 Promise students who attended PPSC have **graduated, transferred, or are still enrolled**

## A STRATEGIC SHIFT

**Before 2020** most D2 college-bound students chose 4-year schools

### Starting with the Class of 2020

- ✓ Students have discovered that **2-year pathways often work better**
- ✓ **60-70% choose a 2-year college first**, completing credentials faster and entering the workforce sooner
- ✓ D2 students are making strategic decisions, choosing **free, local education** that leads to good jobs and better lives

Complete enrollment trends and analysis are available at [D2Promise.org](https://D2Promise.org)



## TRANSFER SUCCESS

Promise students who want to continue to 4-year degrees have transferred to top universities, including

**University of Colorado Boulder**  
**Colorado State University**  
**University of Colorado Colorado Springs**  
**Colorado School of Mines**  
**Colorado State University Pueblo**  
**Arizona State University**  
**Grand Canyon University**

# YOUR INVESTMENT AT WORK FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY



Mill Levy Investment

## \$2 million annually

approved by D2 voters for ten years, through 2035

**Multiple layers of transparency ensure proper stewardship:**



**Citizens Oversight Committee**

12 community members review all mill levy expenditures annually



**Quarterly public reports**

Regular updates on student progress and fund usage



**Yearly data-driven report**

Comprehensive economic impact analysis and program evaluation, including graduation rates, workforce outcomes, and detailed program statistics, will be created by Data-Driven Economic Strategies (DDES)



**Open financial records**

Full transparency at [hsd2.org/our-district/financial-transparency](https://hsd2.org/our-district/financial-transparency)

## Questions about mill levy spending?

Contact D2's Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance

Contact information available at  
[hsd2.org/our-district/financial-transparency](https://hsd2.org/our-district/financial-transparency)

# BUILDING ON SUCCESS WHAT'S NEXT

## This is just the beginning.

As America's first publicly funded first-dollar Promise program, D2 is pioneering a new model for community investment in education. The stories of Spencer and Quetzaly are just the beginning—we expect many more inspiring achievements as students complete their programs and enter careers serving our community.

**For program details, current data,  
and enrollment information**  
**[D2Promise.org](https://D2Promise.org)**

## Additional resources

D2 Promise Program

[hsd2.org/academics/direct-admissions](https://hsd2.org/academics/direct-admissions)

PPSC Promise Programs

[pikespeak.edu/costs-scholarships-aid/promise-programs/index.php](https://pikespeak.edu/costs-scholarships-aid/promise-programs/index.php)

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**Acknowledgment**

*This report supports the transparency and accountability commitments made to D2 voters who approved the mill levy in November 2024. Thank you for your continued investment in our students and community.*