



## **The Pittsburgh Promise expands eligible schools choice for students**

PITTSBURGH, Pa., March 19, 2009 – All public and private universities and colleges in Pennsylvania will be eligible for students who graduate from the Pittsburgh Public Schools starting this summer, The Pittsburgh Promise announced today.

Beginning with the school district's Class of '09, graduates who qualify for Promise scholarships will be able to choose from any Pennsylvania private institution outside Allegheny County. Until now, students have been limited to private and public schools in Allegheny County, and only public institutions state-wide.

“We have made the decision to expand the choice for our students because we believe it is right and fair to be as inclusive as possible while maintaining sound financial oversight,” said Saleem Ghubril, Executive Director of The Pittsburgh Promise. “At the same time, we believe it will increase the attractiveness of the scholarship program for families considering moving into the city.”

Approximately 70 graduates from the Class of '08 relinquished the opportunity of receiving Promise scholarships by opting for private universities and colleges within Pennsylvania but outside the Allegheny County boundary. But all of these students will now qualify for grants from the program, starting with the 2009/2010 school year.

The expanded list of eligible schools will add approximately 140 private colleges, universities and trade schools to the existing 100 institutions available for Promise scholars. “Additional schools include an Ivy with the University of Pennsylvania, and top schools in the eastern part of the state as well as many schools of choice that are closer such as Allegheny College, Grove City, Westminster, Seton Hill, Saint Vincent, Geneva, Washington and Jefferson and Waynesburg,” said Saleem Ghubril.

To qualify for grants from The Pittsburgh Promise, all students must meet residency, enrollment and Grade Point Average (GPA) criteria. Requirements include enrollment in Pittsburgh Public Schools (including schools chartered by the district) and residency within the school district continuously since at least 9<sup>th</sup> grade, for 2009 a minimum GPA of 2.25 and a minimum attendance rate of 85 percent.

Similar to the Class of '08, this year's Pittsburgh Public School graduates will qualify for scholarships of up to \$5,000 a year for four years, increasing in 2012 to a maximum of \$10,000 a year for four years.

The Pittsburgh Promise program was established at The Pittsburgh Foundation in December 2007 with a \$100 million commitment from UPMC, including an initial \$10 million to support the 2008 graduates from the School District. The remaining \$90 million is a challenge grant (\$10 million a year for nine years), intended to spur support and contributions from all sections of the community to raise an additional \$135 million (\$15 million annually for nine years).

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