



## 2026 INVESTOR PROGRAM UPDATE



**LEADERSHIP**

## Executive Board

Jim Ardis, Former, OSF Healthcare Foundation COB

Jimmy Dillon, West Central Building Trades *President*

*Laura Sutter, RLI*

*Vice President*

Lane Alster, Elias Meginnes & Seghetti

*Secretary*

Emily Valerio, Sikich

*Treasurer*

## Staff

MJ Schettler,

*Executive Director*

Jaime Darwish Director *Operations & Student Affairs*

IRS Tax ID: 13-4353454



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Andre Allen**

**Paul Beiersdorf**

**Nick Baker**

**Mike Gudat**

**Kyle Smith**

**Karen Kepple\***

**Rhonda Milburn**

**Glenn Ross**

**Sheri Lamie**

**Arnitria Shaw**

**Scott Howard\***

**1 position pending to be filled June 2026**

**Peoria County Officer, City Council**

**Educator, ICC, Dist. 150 Retired**

**AMT, ICC/PPF Alumni**

**March 2 V Real Estate**

**Assistant County Administrator**

**Volunteer**

**Keller Williams Realty**

**Retired Caterpillar**

**Richwoods High School**

**VP Illinois Central College**

**Firefighter/EMT**

**\* New Board members elected December 2025 -**



# MISSION

***Support economic development by increasing the number of City of Peoria, West Peoria and Peoria Heights\* high school graduates who complete a college or vocational program, thereby delivering a more skilled workforce for the community.***

Peoria's economic growth relies on an educated and skilled local workforce. But declining enrollments and falling graduation rates in Peoria's school district, high poverty, and family flight, stand to leave the city with fewer skilled workers. Conversely, an increase in the number of local young adults with postsecondary degrees can translate into greater job opportunities, higher incomes, new home buyers, and a reduction in crime. Ultimately, the program will help to alleviate poverty and provide skilled workers to live and work in the Peoria area. \* (Peoria Heights effective fall 2025.)



## **100% DONOR FUNDED**

- A legacy program for city of Peoria, West Peoria and as of 2025 Peoria Heights high school graduates.
- A licensed 501 C 3 all funds invested are 100% tax deductible.
- Also serves as an extension of Employee Benefits for the Peoria area workforce and their eligible children.



## **AN OPPORTUNITY**

- For students to receive out-of-pocket tuition reimbursement for successfully completed coursework at Illinois Central College.
- Aims to encourage and enable continued education for eligible students who are living in the City of Peoria, West Peoria starting in 2025 Peoria Heights.



## **TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

- At a minimum, applies to remaining tuition, ensuring all other financial aid and scholarships have been fully utilized.
- Reimbursement reinforces one's investment in his/her education and rewards successful completion.



## BY THE NUMBERS

**48%** Are the first in their family to attend college

**61%** Would not have attended college without Peoria Promise

**89%** Stayed in Central Illinois because of the program



## IMPACT TO DATE

**\$8.2 MILLION** of donor investment funds  
have supported

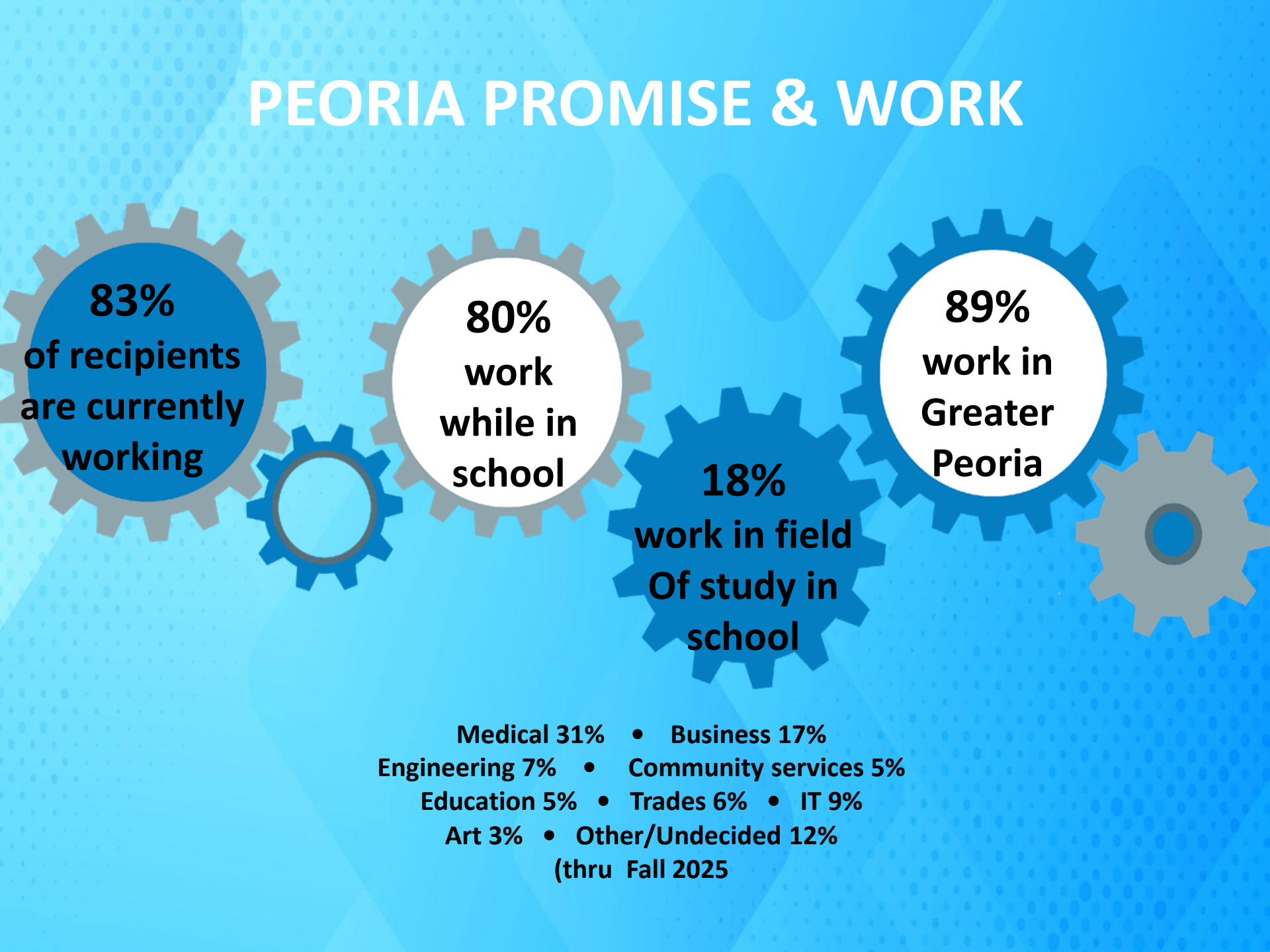
**OVER 6,000 STUDENTS**

To further their education with

**\$0 TAX DOLLARS**

from the city remains

# PEORIA PROMISE & WORK

The infographic features a background of various shades of blue with a pattern of small white dots. Several interlocking gears of different sizes and colors (dark blue, light blue, and grey) are scattered across the page. The statistics are presented in circular callouts that resemble gears or are placed within gear-like shapes.

**83%**  
of recipients  
are currently  
working

**80%**  
work  
while in  
school

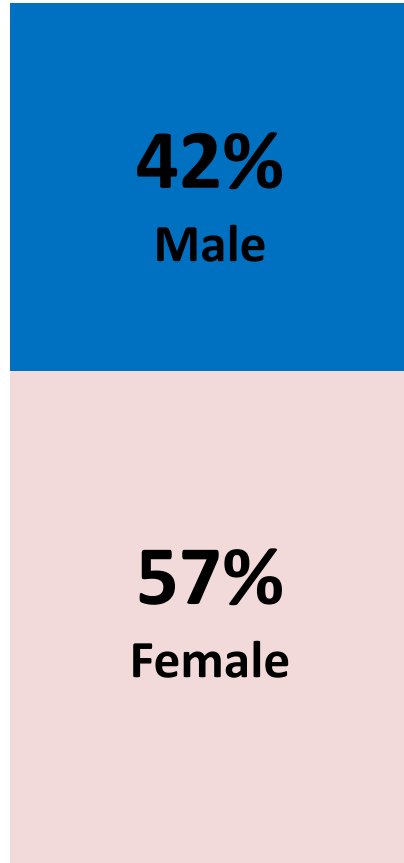
**18%**  
work in field  
Of study in  
school

**89%**  
work in  
Greater  
Peoria

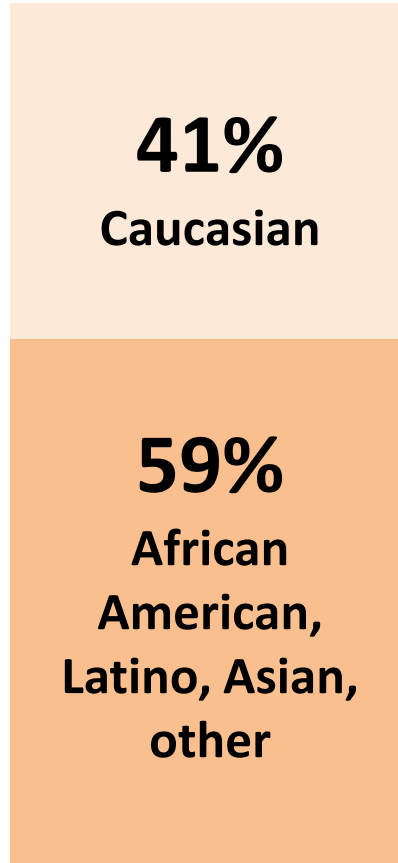
Medical 31% • Business 17%  
Engineering 7% • Community services 5%  
Education 5% • Trades 6% • IT 9%  
Art 3% • Other/Undecided 12%  
(thru Fall 2025)



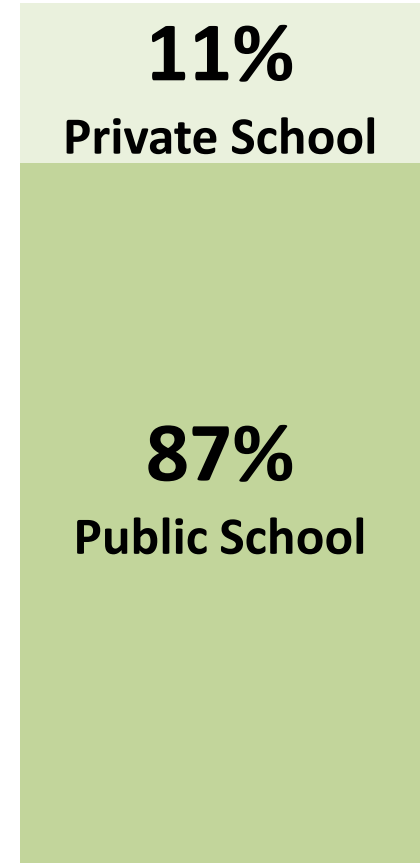
# OTHER PROGRAM STATISTICS



**GENDER**



**MAKEUP**

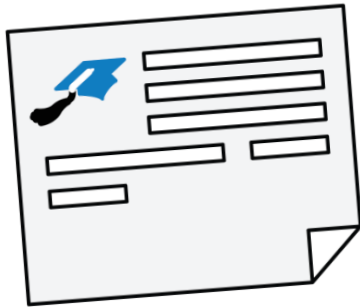


**SCHOOLING**  
(+2% home school)



# 2025 PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

## 395 Total Applications Received



**87% public schools**

**11% private schools**

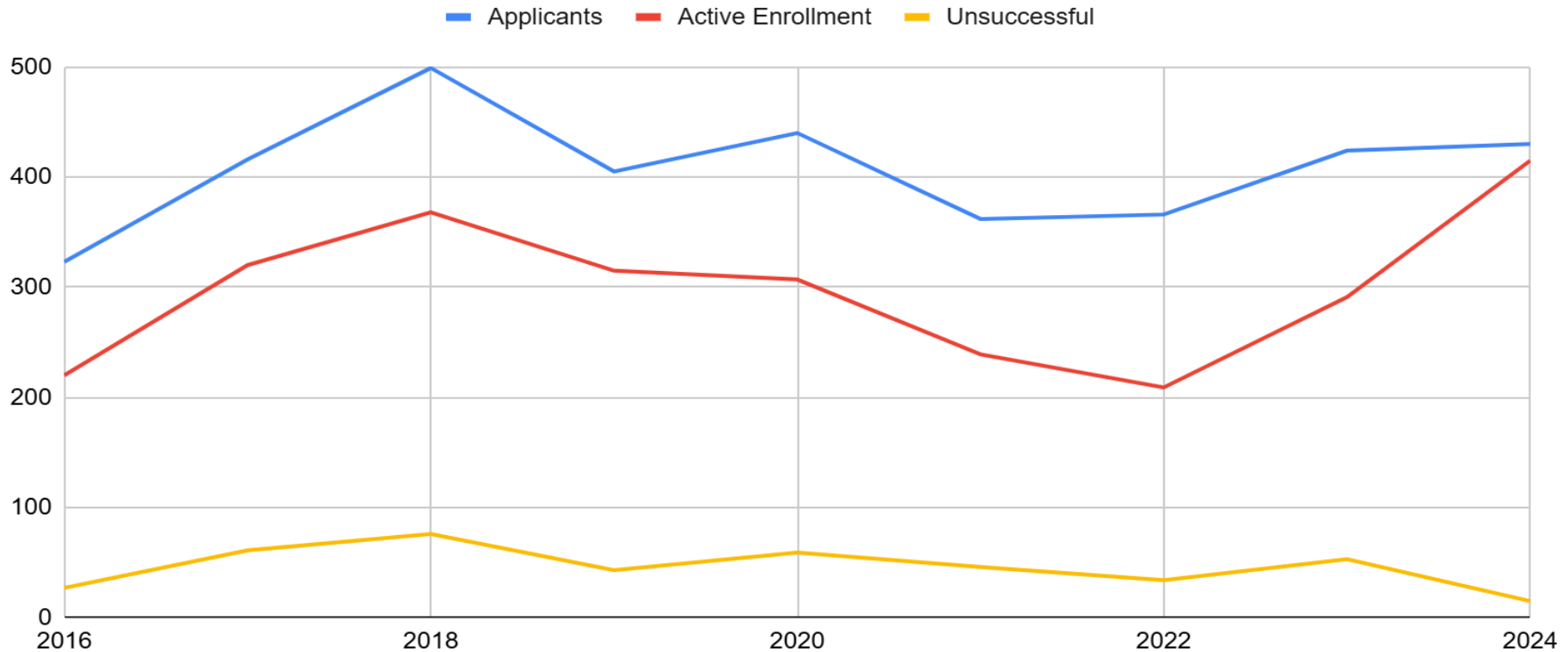
**2% Home School**

**Applicants are down slightly due to reduced overall high school enrollment**

# HISTORICAL APPLICANT DATA

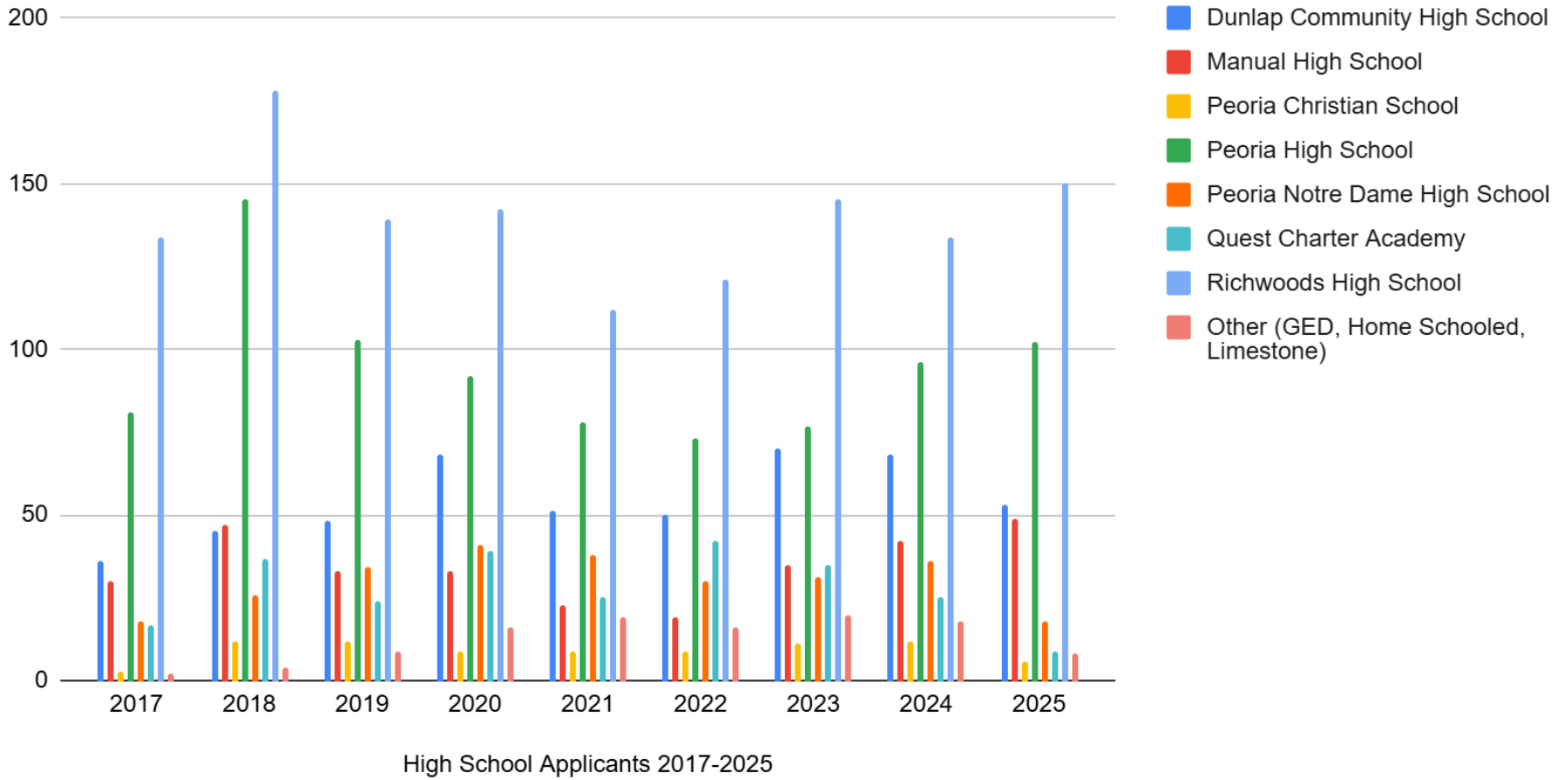
## APPLIED, ACTIVE ENROLLMENT, UNSUCCESSFUL

Applicants, Active Enrollment and Unsuccessful



**Peoria Promise students completing their coursework at ICC remains above 90%. Unsuccessful students are those who did not complete course work, dropped classes or achieve the minimum grade needed for reimbursement.**

# Dunlap Community High School, Manual High School, Peoria Christian School, Peoria High School, Peoria Notre Dame High School...





# ELIGIBLE HIGH SCHOOLS

- Richwoods
- Peoria High
- Manual
- Peoria Alternative
- Dunlap
- Limestone
- Peoria Notre Dame
- Peoria Christian
- Peoria Heights High School (as of fall 2025)
- Qualified GED students from the eligible communities and Accredited Home School students who meet program eligibility.



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## **APPLICATIONS**

- Open from February 1 – May 15 of each year.
- Students **MUST** reapply for Peoria Promise each year to remain eligible.

## **STRUCTURE :**

- Students who meet the eligibility requirements: Have 2 years from date of graduation to apply, and 3 years to complete course work.
- Have 5 years immediately following high school graduation to earn up to 64 credit hours, whichever comes first.
- Are required to maintain a “C” or better in each of their classes.

## **REIMBURSEMENT:**

- Tuition reimbursement is only provided to students who enroll at Illinois Central College and is offered at the end of each semester.

# HOW REIMBURSEMENTS ARE CALCULATED

The percentage of tuition allocation to each student is based on **SAI (Student Aid Index)** reported on FAFSA application that all students complete when enrolling in College. This is the documentation needed for students to be approved for MAP and PELL grants.



## SAI CHART

<u>adjusted gross income</u>	<u>Reimbursement</u>
\$0 - \$5K	100%
\$5K - \$15K	75%
\$15K and above	50%

Peoria Promise is a **last dollar program** – if the student does not receive any financial aid – they are still eligible for reimbursement based on reported SAI.

# Program expansion to Peoria Heights

## APPROVED!!!!

- Eligible seniors currently enrolled at Peoria Heights High School and Peoria Notre Dame. There are currently 50 seniors set to graduate at PHHS and approximately 50 at Peoria Notre Dame as well. Total of 100 Peoria Heights students graduating. On average 30% of our graduates in the region apply to Illinois Central College.
- Program for Peoria Heights students will be eligible to apply for the Fall 2026 semester at ICC. We will do a special campaign reaching out to these students via their application with ICC and via social media, community, etc, to encourage them to apply.
- We anticipate a strong enrollment within the PH students. Average household income in PH is \$57,000. Working class families make up much of the PH population.
- An average last dollar tuition paid to PPF students is \$1,300.00/year – students are reimbursed each semester and must maintain a C or better in coursework. Only attendees at Illinois Central College qualifies for program. All student data is collected and analyzed each semester via specialized surveys. PPF staff conducts in person meetings with all students at the end of each semester.



# 2026 INITIATIVES

## 1

### FUNDRAISING

- Increase fundraising revenue by \$100,000 to grow tuition funds to accommodate expansion to Peoria Heights, the increase in credit hour cost and operational costs.
- Expand our technology platform to upgrade donor software and possible mobile APP for students. Writing grants for this funding
- Meet with all current and past Investors to reactivate them and provide program outcomes, updates, and secure future investments and sponsorships.



# 2026 INITIATIVES

## MARKETING/FUNDRAISING

- Continue to use new marketing campaign videos that we own from 2024 to ensure awareness and engagement with community and expansion to West Peoria students.
- Reactive past investors with a one-on-one format, letter writing campaign. Expand this format to include Peoria Heights major businesses.
- Expand Fundraising events in new format



# 2026 INITIATIVES

## OUTREACH

- Provide support information and materials to parents via school newsletters and websites.
- Continue to hone communication with High School Principals and Counselors.
- Provide onsite application training and support collateral to all High Schools.
- Work with United Way and Agency partners (Urban League, Friendship House, Carver Center) to communicate program.
- Expand PPF Alumni Committee to work with Director of Student Affairs.



# 2026 INITIATIVES

## ORGANIZATIONAL

- Re-organize/design of what was the Community Advisory Board to include more diverse representation from different areas within the city. Board to determine if this is a direction we should go. - **pending**
- Continue to work directly with Illinois Central College and Foundation to ensure strong relationships and thorough tracking of student results.
- Maintain use of surveys each semester to ensure investor data is accurate and up to date.
- Update technology for the program with expansion to include a mobile app, texting and system upgrades needed to integrate with ICC's new software.

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# 2026 INITIATIVES

## CAREER ALIGNMENT - REVAMP

The main goal of Peoria Promise has always been to contribute to **building a more skilled workforce for the community**. We recognize that there is a disconnect between our students and employment opportunities in the area.

Peoria Promise aims to streamline this information by being a vehicle for our Investors to communicate internships as well as employment opportunities directly to Peoria Promise students. **We want our students to stay, live, and grow in Peoria**. This will be just another opportunity to achieve our mission and success for our students.

Our website, as well as our newsletter, are exclusive information vehicles for our students. **Investors are encouraged to provide us with employment links and information to share with our students. We continue to promote this every other month via email to our enrolled students.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

THE EVENT

*Sunset Soiree*

PEORIA PROMISE FOUNDATION

Friday, August 14, 2026 ● Haven on the Farm

# SAVE THE DATE



## *A Sunset Soiree*

Enjoy a new experience which will be  
THE event of the summer!

Indulge in an unforgettable evening as  
celebrity chefs prepare incredible  
cuisine, perfectly paired with custom  
libations. Enjoy lively entertainment and  
engaging experiences that will make  
for an unforgettable summer evening.  
Best of all, every moment supports the  
mission of Peoria Promise Foundation.

Watch for details at:

**peoriapromise.org** 

Mark your calendars for  
Friday August 14, 2026

for the return of Sunset Soiree. Expanded  
culinary offering from local celebrity  
chefs, exceptional entertainment,  
auctions makes for an unforgettable  
summer evening at

**HAVEN ON THE FARM.**

Tickets will be on Sale April 2026.

Fashion Show will return Wednesday November 11, 2026.



**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025**  
**5:30 - 8:30 PM • COUNTRY CLUB OF PEORIA**

benefiting **peoriapromise**   
**FOUNDATION**

*Fashion Show Committee*  
Libby Koszuta, Rhonda Milburn, MJ Schettler

**Heart of Illinois  
United Way**



**Peoria Promise is pleased to be a  
United Way Partner Agency**

**peoria** promise 