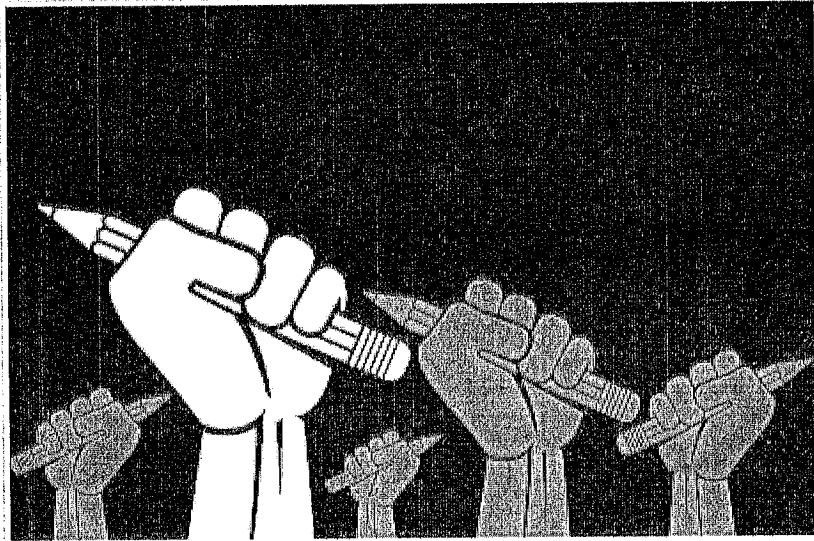


President Obama Begins Initial Stages of Free Community College

Tweet

By Kathryn Knight Randolph
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Obama pushes next phase of free community college for all.

Earlier this year, just before President Obama gave the State of the Union address, he announced his initiative for free community college to all eligible students, known as America's College Promise. At Fastweb, we promised to keep you updated on his plan as it unfolds, and last week, President Obama announced another push towards free community college.

To recap, the College Promise hopes to provide a free community college education to any student who qualifies and continues to meet the programs standards. Students hoping to utilize

the benefits of the program would have to maintain a 2.5 GPA and show that they are making progress toward completing their major or field of interest on time. In return, community colleges would have to create or redefine programs so that students could easily transfer all of their credits to a four-year institution as well as provide a quality education that is in demand within the current jobs landscape.

Federal funding for College Promise will cover roughly 75% of the cost, while states that plan to participate will cover the remain quarter.

As a further push for College Promise, President Obama announced an advisory board that will seek to develop the initiative further and garner bipartisan support from Congress. The College Promise campaign will be chaired by Jill Biden, Second Lady of the United States, Jim Geringer, a former Republican governor of Wyoming, as co-chair and several other individuals who are leaders both politically and in higher education, according to Inside Higher Ed. They expect that the advisory board will be working toward the enactment of College Promise for a minimum of three years.

The advisory board will also be working alongside Heads Up America, a grass roots campaign that hopes to mobilize students, educators and politicians to advocate for free community college, as stated by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Many of the ideas for College Promise stem from existing programs in Tennessee and Chicago. This year, Tennessee launched the inaugural class of Promise students, for which the state fills the gap between what they can pay and their financial aid package, reports Inside Higher Ed. They also report that within the past six months, two other states, Oregon and Minnesota, have jumped on board devising free community college programs. Additionally, Congressional Democrats have proposed free community college legislation, which backs President Obama's plan.

Again, Fastweb will be providing updates on America's College Promise as they become available.