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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Promise, support, and reward are keys to College Bound Scholarship students' success

Olympia—The data are in for last school year's high school graduation rates, and it's more good news for the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program. About 76 percent of CBS students graduated in the class of 2013.

To put the CBS graduation rate of 76 percent in perspective, only 60 percent of non-CBS students from low-income households graduated in 2013.

The CBS program provides financial assistance to low-income students who want to achieve the dream of a college education. Students sign up in middle school, no later than June 30 of their 8th grade year, to receive an early commitment of state funding. The scholarship, in combination with other state aid, covers tuition (at public college rates).

In addition to offering an early commitment of financial aid to low-income students, the College Bound Scholarship Program also catalyzes educators and advocates to develop local systems of support for CBS students. These support systems are crucial to CBS students' success.

School districts – in partnership with organizations like the College Success Foundation, GEAR UP and TRiO programs – sign up as many eligible students as possible in middle school, provide targeted academic support during high school, and reach out to ensure that all College Bound Scholarship students complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and apply to colleges.

The College Success Foundation employs regional officers across the state that partner with districts and schools to implement College Bound Scholarship outreach and support strategies. The foundation assists schools and community partners, using the College Bound Scholarship program to champion early college awareness in middle schools and college readiness in high schools.

Washington State GEAR UP, a federal grant program administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council, and the other nine GEAR UP partnership programs work with 72 low-income school districts to ensure students are prepared for postsecondary education. GEAR UP program staff play an important role supporting students who sign up for the College Bound Scholarship with their day-to-day academic and postsecondary preparation activities.

For more information about the College Bound Scholarship program, visit our [website](#).

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About the Washington Student Achievement Council: Established as a new cabinet-level state agency on July 1, 2012, the Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington. The Council proposes improvements and innovations to meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and the educational community. In recognition of the economic, social, and civic benefits of public education, the Council advocates for increased financial support and civic commitment to ensure a thriving Washington.

The nine-member Council includes five citizens (including a current student) and one representative from each of Washington's four major educational sectors. Find us online at www.wsac.wa.gov, on Twitter [@WSACouncil](https://twitter.com/WSACouncil), and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WSACouncil.