



# HANCOCK COUNTY PROMISE

## WELCOME TO FAMILIES

Dear parents and guardians,

We believe that every child deserves encouragement that his or her life matters. We also believe that it is our role to support the hopes and dreams our youth hold for their future.

Through the Hancock County Promise, all youth in Kindergarten will begin to build identity through classroom lessons about college and career discovery. They'll cement that identity by becoming academically ready and establishing educational savings. Our community will gather to celebrate their aspirations when children visit the campus of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) for the "Walk Into My Future" event (canceled 2020). Each of the activities that are part of the Promise will inspire hope for the future in the lives of our youth.

The benefits of instilling hope are too numerous to count; hope is the greatest predictor of future success. Yet hope cannot be nurtured without a strong support system. We hope you will become active participants and champions for all youth in our county.

We are proud to present the Hancock County Promise, because we strongly support efforts that make Hancock County a better place to work, play and live. To us, this means encouraging and supporting the hopes and dreams of the youngest members in our community. We are enthusiastic supporters of the Promise and hope you will be too.



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## WHAT IS THE PROMISE?

### WE PROMISE TO:

- Help shape the college and career identity of youth so they build hope for the future
- Help families start saving for the future using CollegeChoice 529 accounts
- Bring the county together to become champions for all youth

### ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH & FAMILIES

- Enroll in CollegeChoice 529 accounts at school registration or back-to-school night
- Participate in age appropriate college and career discovery lessons in the classroom
- Experience college at the "Walk Into My Future" field trip to IUPUI (canceled 2020)
- Invite "champions" to provide encouragement to your child and to make an investment in your child's CollegeChoice 529 account during the month of October

### INCENTIVES AND COMMUNITY MATCHING GIFTS

- Just for completing enrollment in a CollegeChoice 529 at school registration or online, our sponsors, Hancock Health, NineStar, Greenfield Banking Co., and Meijer, will make a \$25 investment in new accounts of kindergarten students.
- As part of college and career discovery lessons in their classrooms, youth ask their champions to make a gift of \$5.29 or more into their 529 college savings account
- Youth who raise \$25 or more receive an additional community matching gift

### BECOME A CHAMPION

- Champions provide words of encouragement and support for a student's aspirations and make a gift of \$5.29 or more to the student's CollegeChoice 529 account



[www.hancockcountypromise.org](http://www.hancockcountypromise.org)

[www.collegechoicedirect.com](http://www.collegechoicedirect.com)

Call our Client Service Representatives at 1.866.485.9415, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time. You can also email questions or comments to [clientservice@collegechoicedirect.com](mailto:clientservice@collegechoicedirect.com).



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- *What is a 529 account?*  
A 529 plan is a tax-advantaged savings plan designed to encourage saving for future college costs. Legally known as “qualified tuition plans,” 529s are sponsored by states, state agencies, or educational institutions and authorized by Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code. CollegeChoice 529 is Indiana’s plan.
- *If I sign up, who has access to the personal information I provide?*  
Ascensus College Savings (CollegeChoice 529’s Program Manager) is required to treat all Account Owner and Beneficiary information confidentially. Ascensus College Savings is prohibited from using or disclosing such information, except as may be necessary to perform its obligations under the terms of its contract with the Indiana Education Savings Authority and CollegeChoice Program.
- *Can a CollegeChoice 529 account only be used in Indiana?*  
You can use 529 funds at any eligible school around the country and abroad—not just in Indiana—including 2-and 4-year colleges, graduate schools (including law and medical), vocational/technical schools, and some certification programs.
- *If I move out of Indiana, does my child keep the CollegeChoice 529 account?*  
You continue to own your 529 account even if you relocate outside of Indiana. However, if you relocate you will not be eligible for matching gifts in future years.
- *If I already have a CollegeChoice 529 account can I still sign-up my Kindergarten child through the Hancock County Promise?* Yes, all kindergarten children can sign-up through the Hancock County Promise. Current account owners of CollegeChoice Direct Accounts can have accounts linked to the Hancock County Promise. CollegeChoice 529 Advisor Accounts cannot be linked to the Hancock County Promise.
- *Can I sign-up my other children who are not in Kindergarten?* Yes, you can sign-up all children for a CollegeChoice 529 account. Only Kindergarten children will receive the sign-up incentive and/or the community match.
- *Can I make contributions to my child’s CollegeChoice 529 at other times? Can friends and family also continue to make gifts to my child’s account?*  
You can contribute to your 529 account anytime at [www.collegechoicedirect.com](http://www.collegechoicedirect.com), and friends and family can make a gift at any time by using your unique Ugift code, which you can provide to them. Login to your account or visit [Ugift529.com](http://Ugift529.com) to learn more.
- *What if my child decides not to go to college?*





You, as the account owner can change the beneficiary to another eligible “member of the family” (as per plan rules) with no tax penalty. The \$25 enrollment incentive and any contributions you make to the account remain yours. However, any community matching gifts are forfeited if the beneficiary is changed.

- *Do I have to attend the “Walk Into My Future” event with my child to participate?* (canceled for 2020) All youth in Kindergarten will participate in the “Walk Into My Future” event, a field trip to IUPUI. Youth do not need to open a CollegeChoice 529 account to attend, and while we encourage families to join us, it is not required.
- *Does a champion have to make a financial gift?*  
A champion can help two ways: 1) by giving to a child’s CollegeChoice 529 account and/or 2) providing written or verbal encouragement and support for his/her dreams.

## **INCENTIVES AND COMMUNITY MATCHING GIFTS**

### **ENROLLMENT INCENTIVE**

- Youth are eligible for a \$25 initial investment into any NEW 529 account created as part of school registration or a back-to-school event.
- The enrollment incentive is available for children in Kindergarten.
- The \$25 is provided by our enrollment sponsors, Hancock Health, Greenfield Bank Co., NineStar, and Meijer.
- Parents/Guardians who open the CollegeChoice 529 DO NOT need to invest any of their own funds to qualify for this \$25 incentive. During the enrollment process there is a question about how parents will fund the account. Parents can make a deposit, but do not have to, parents can simply check the “will send in a check” option. The Hancock County Promise will send the check to open the account. This is a free account for all Hancock County Promise kindergarten students.
- Incentives will be deposited into a child’s CollegeChoice 529 account by the end of the first quarter of the next year, and will appear on their statements and online account at that time.





## COMMUNITY MATCHING GIFTS

- In October, following the "Walk Into My Future" field trip, youth with accounts will ask their champions to invest in them. Any student that raises \$25 or more and parents make a deposit into their account is eligible for a community matching gift of \$25.
- The community matching gift is available for children in Kindergarten.
- The \$25 is provided by funders and organizations in Hancock County.
- Accounts must reflect a contribution(s) totaling \$25 during the champion period (November 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>) to qualify for this \$25 community matching gift.
- A "matching grant account," linked to the child's primary CollegeChoice 529 account, will be automatically opened for any child who becomes eligible based on the criteria above. The \$25 community matching gift will be deposited into this matching grant account by the end of New Year first quarter, and will appear on their account statement and online account as a separate account.
- Community matching gifts in these accounts will only be disbursed to a qualified educational institution for use by the original beneficiary. If the primary CollegeChoice 529 is closed, a non-qualified withdrawal is made, or the beneficiary is changed, matching gift funds will be forfeited.



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