



THE CUESTA PROMISE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Cuesta College Promise?

The Cuesta Promise is a scholarship program that provides San Luis Obispo County high school graduates with two consecutive years of fee-free enrollment at Cuesta College, beginning in the summer or fall term immediately following graduation.

What fees does the Cuesta Promise pay for?

The Cuesta Promise covers these costs for the Summer, Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment (\$46 per unit)
- Health (\$19)
- ASCC Student ID Card (\$10)
- Student Center (\$10)
- Student Rep (\$2)
- Course Materials Fees*

The Cuesta Promise will pay for all unit fees for students that are a California Resident or AB540 student, whether a student is full or part-time.

What is the criteria for receiving Cuesta Promise for Summer term?

Beginning Summer 2025 the Cuesta Promise will cover 3 Summer terms.

- Summer before your first year
- Summer between year 1 and year 2
- Summer following year 2

How to qualify for Summer term?

To qualify for the Summer term between year 1 and year 2, and Summer term after year 2, all you need to do is complete the normal steps for The Cuesta Promise. Your information will be captured in the normal registration process.

To qualify for the Summer term immediately after your high school graduation/before your first Fall at Cuesta College, you will need to complete all The Cuesta Promise steps by the first day of the Summer term. The Cuesta Promise Steps.

Important: You will need to complete the FAFSA or Dream Act Application (CADAA) for the current Aid Year. Cuesta College aid year is Fall, Spring, Summer.

Example: You graduate high school in May 2026. You have completed all Promise steps, including the 2026-2027 FAFSA/CADAA. **TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FIRST SUMMER TERM, YOU MUST ALSO COMPLETE THE 2025-2026 FAFSA/CADAA.** All Promise Steps must be completed no later than June 7, 2026, including the 25-26 FAFSA/CADAA.

If I am an undocumented student, can I apply for the Promise?

Yes, follow The Cuesta Promise steps and make sure you submit the California Dream Act Application. If you need to submit an appeal, please visit The Cuesta Promise Appeal Form.

APPLICATION STEPS:

1. Submit your Cuesta College Fall 2026 admissions application

October 1, 2025-August 1, 2026

- * Student enrolling in the Summer term immediately upon graduation must complete the admission application no later than June 1

2. (Optional) Submit your Scholarship application (*Apply by priority deadline, March 2, 2026, to be considered for additional scholarships*)

October 1, 2025-August 1, 2026

3. Complete the FAFSA or the California Dream Act application

October 1, 2025-August 1, 2026

4. (Optional) Complete the Cuesta College Online Orientation

October 1, 2025-August 1, 2026

5. Check your residency classification with Admissions and Registration

6. Register for your classes

Beginning May-August 1, 2026

- * Fee indicated in the course description on the Class Finder; does not include books or items the instructor requires in his/her syllabus

How do I qualify for The Cuesta Promise for the 2026-27 year?

All graduates from San Luis Obispo County high schools, who earned their diplomas between the dates of July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026, including students who receive their GED or are homeschooled, must begin using The Cuesta Promise during Cuesta College's Fall 2026 semester.

If you attend in the Spring semesters after you graduate high school, but before the Summer or Fall 2026 semester, you would need to apply for financial aid separately to receive financial assistance for that semester.

What happens if I miss the deadline?

You will not be eligible for The Cuesta Promise Scholarship.

What if I take a break and not attend the second consecutive year at Cuesta, can I still get the second year free when I decide to return to Cuesta College later?

No, you must return to Cuesta College for the next consecutive year in order to qualify for the second-year fee-free.

Do I qualify for the Cuesta Promise Scholarship if I earned a GED, graduated from a home school or passed the CHSPE between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026?

Yes. If you are a San Luis Obispo County resident and earned your GED, graduated from a home school, or received your CHSPE results between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, and you indicated this on your Cuesta College admissions application, you qualify for the Cuesta Promise, and must begin using the Cuesta Promise during Cuesta College's Fall 2026 semester. If you attend in the Spring term after you graduate high school, but before the Summer 2026 term, you would need to apply for financial aid separately for those semesters.

*In most cases, home school students will need to submit a first year The Cuesta Promise Appeal Form when the school is not automatically recognized as eligible.

What if I received the Promise in the Fall - do I need to do anything extra to get it in the Spring?

No. Just register for classes and your fees will be paid

What if I received the Promise for first year, Fall and Spring - do I need to do anything extra to get it for the second year, Fall and Spring?

You will need to meet the following academic requirements to qualify for year two fee-free:

- Complete more than 50% of the units attempted in the Fall and Spring semesters
- Earn a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.00 or higher during the Fall and Spring semesters
- Renew the FAFSA or Dream Act before August 1 of the next academic year

If you meet these requirements, simply register for classes and your fees will be paid.

What should I do if I don't see my high school listed on the Cuesta College admissions application?

If you do not see your high school on the Cuesta College admissions application, please email admit@cuesta.edu to ensure that your high school or home school qualifies for The Cuesta Promise scholarship and find out if you will need to submit The Cuesta Promise Appeal Form.

How do I check the status of The Cuesta Promise application?

You can check the status of The Cuesta Promise application in the same place you check your financial aid status, myCuesta student portal.

Once I've completed all the requirements, when will I be awarded the Cuesta Promise?

Cuesta College begins awarding the Promise each year in May.

When you've been awarded, you will receive an email in your myCuesta email account and be mailed a congratulatory letter to your home address. You can also double-check your account balance in myCuesta to see if the fees have been paid!

LET US HELP YOU

Paying for the cost of a college education requires a partnership among parents, students, and the college. As the cost of higher education continues to rise, we want you to know that Cuesta College offers a full array of financial aid programs—grants, work study, scholarships, federal loan programs, and fee waivers. These programs are available to both full- and part-time students who are seeking a degree or certificate. For those who qualify, financial aid is available to help with tuition, fees, books and supplies, Food, housing, transportation, and childcare.

FINANCIAL AID OFFICES

SLO Campus:
 Building 3000
 Room 3126
 (805) 546-3143
 Paso Robles Campus:
 Room N1100
 (805) 591-6202

QUESTION?

Visit us online at cuesta.edu/become-student/finaid/
 email us at finaid@cuesta.edu

* Fee indicated in the course description on the Class Finder; does not include books or items the instructor requires in his/her syllabus

Find it in myCuesta: Student Self Service > Student Accounts > Account Detail for Term.

If you attend in the Spring semesters after you graduate high school, but before the Summer or Fall 2026 semester, you would need to apply for financial aid separately to receive financial assistance for that semester

Can I submit an appeal to be eligible for The Cuesta Promise

Yes, there are a few reasons you could submit an appeal to be eligible for Cuesta Promise.

If this is your first year at Cuesta, you can submit a First Year Cuesta Appeal for the following reason(s):

If you were a home school student-as your school will not be automatically recognized by the system

You submitted your FAFSA or CADAA application before the August 1st deadline, but you did not add Cuesta as a school when you originally completed the application

PLEASE NOTE: To be considered for an appeal for one of the above reasons, all remaining Cuesta Promise steps must have been completed by the August 1st deadline. Appeals submitted for missing the August 1st deadline will not be considered.

If this is your 2nd year at Cuesta, you can submit a Second Year Cuesta Appeal for the following reason(s):

Did not receive a 2.0 or higher GPA for your 1st academic year using The Cuesta Promise

Did not complete (earn a passing grade) more than 50% of your classes for your 1st academic year using The Cuesta Promise

PLEASE NOTE: You must provide supporting documentation showing why you were unable to meet the minimum The Cuesta Promise standards to support. To be considered for an appeal for one of the above reasons, all remaining The Cuesta Promise steps must have been completed by the August 1st deadline. Appeals submitted without supporting documentation will not be considered.

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