

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board
Newaygo County RESA
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Newaygo County Promise to Begin With Class of 2017

At their January 17 meeting, the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board announced that the graduating class of 2017 would be the first class to receive the Promise scholarship.

The Promise Zone will provide a tuition-free path to an associate degree at either Muskegon Community College or Baker College. Eligible students must be graduating from a Newaygo County high school and live in the NC RESA service area—including home schools meeting the same requirements—with at least a 2.5 GPA.

The level of assistance will be prorated based on the number of years a student has attended school within the NC RESA service area. Levels of assistance are defined as:

- Grades 7-12: 100 percent
- Grades 8-12: 90 percent
- Grades 9-12: 80 percent
- Grades 10-12: 60 percent
- Grades 11-12: 40 percent
- Grade 12 only: 20 percent

Promise scholarships will cover tuition and fees, and a student must begin to use their funds within one year of high school graduation.

The Promise Zone is funded in part by the partial capture of the growth in the State Education Tax; however, these funds are not available until the third year of the Promise scholarship. The first two years must be supported through local philanthropy. The Promise Zone Authority set a \$1.5 million goal in order to finance the initial years of the program. To date, one-third of the goal has already been raised.

“By supporting the Promise Zone, community members can be a part of transformational change in local education,” said Dr. Lori Tubbergen Clark, superintendent of NC RESA and chair of the Promise Zone Authority Board. “The Promise Zone will help boost our economy and

increase school enrollment and graduation rates. Most importantly, it will provide equal opportunities for all our students.”

As financial resources allow, the Promise Zone Authority intends to add more eligible universities in the future and has the power to amend criteria as the program grows. They have also created an appeal process for those with unusual circumstances.



Photo caption: Student representatives of Fremont Area Community Foundation’s Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) presented a grant of \$27,500 to the Promise Zone Authority Board at their January 17 meeting.

Pictured (l-r): Holly Moon, Becky Tuuk, Carla Roberts, Mark Guzniczak, Forest (Woody) Bowman, YAC member Sydney Noordyk, Nate Sparks, YAC member Lyndsie Proctor, Steve Witter, Lori Tubbergen Clark, Jack Hendon, Dawn Anderson, and Cathy Obits.