



Pictured front row: Deanna Joppich, Tom Boerger, Lori Tubbergen Clark, Mark Guzniczak, Dawn Anderson. Back row: Carla Roberts (ex-officio), Cathy Obits (ex-officio), Jack Hendon, Becky Tuuk, Holly Moon, Steve Witter, Forest (Woody) Bowman, and Nate Sparks.

Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board Goes to Work

A newly formed board has begun planning what the promise of a college education will look like for students living within the boundaries of the Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency (NC RESA) service area.

Earlier this year, the NC RESA service area became one of 10 Michigan Promise Zones that will use a combination of state and private dollars to send students to college.

The Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board is an eleven-member board created under the authority granted by the Michigan Promise Zone Authority Act to supervise and control the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority. Nine members of the Board were appointed by Lori Tubbergen Clark, NC RESA Superintendent and approved the NC RESA Board of Education. The remaining two members, Holly Moon and Lori Tubbergen Clark, were

appointed by the Legislature. The Promise Zone Authority Board is charged with deciding the details, including who will be eligible, how many years of college will be funded, which colleges students must attend, and how the money will be raised.

The Promise Zone must first raise enough funds to promise at least a two-year degree to students within its boundaries. The state then will allow zones to capture half of the growth in state education property taxes in their communities.

But zones must foot the bill for two years, proving they can sustain the scholarship program, before the state will release the captured tax money.

By law, Promise Zones must provide money to students who both live in the district and graduate from any high school within its boundaries. This does not include home-school students or School of Choice students who live in the district and attend school elsewhere, or vice versa. Those are considered optional populations, which the board must decide whether to include.

The Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Board hopes to release eligibility criteria early this fall.