



## **Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

NC RESA Educational Services Center Board Room

### **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Blake Prewitt (chairperson), Scott Rumsey, Holly Moon, Don VanSingel, Pat Brown, Dick Dunning, Jarred Hibma, Scott Swinehart, Kathy Pope (ex-officio)

**Absent:** Teresa Fetterley, Becky Tuuk

**Visitors:** Melissa Miller, Katie Mater, Ty Spickerman, Brandi Parsons (recorder)

Chairperson Blake Prewitt called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.

#### **Approval of the Agenda:**

Motion by Don VanSingel, supported by Dick Dunning, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes – 8 Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Holly Moon, supported by Jarred Hibma, to approve the May 13, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Ayes – 8 Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

#### **Public Participation:**

Dr. Blake Prewitt welcomed everyone.

#### **Scott Rumsey presented the following report on behalf of the Operations Subcommittee:**

- The financial statement provided in the Board packet was incomplete. The Certificates of Deposits show good interest earnings and one renewed. Our fund balance as of June 30, 2025 was \$3,042,690. Total revenue was up compared with this time last year at \$61,874. Total expenditures were \$245,789 with \$205,180 for program expenditures that includes tuition. Our fund balance as of June 30, 2024 was \$1,780,281.
- NC RESA Invoice to Promise Zone (Qtr. 2) was shared. Melissa communicated to the Board that the Operations Committee reviews the NC RESA invoice prior to presenting it at the Board meeting as an action item.
- Melissa shared the MCC invoice is still being reviewed and adjustments are being made. As the invoice is reviewed, the team is double-checking we are not overpaying or underpaying student scholarships.
- Fall 2025 Promise Scholars were shared.
  - 186 submitted a 2025 application (96 – FSU, 86 – MCC, 4 – did not select an institution)
  - 202 submitted an application in 2024
  - 162 were eligible for Promise Scholarship and 8 were eligible for apprenticeship support
  - 56 accepted for Ferris and 47 accepted for MCC
  - 88 accepted for MCC in 2024
  - 66 renewal scholarships for 2025
- Dr. Prewitt noted this is a 5% increase in Promise Zone enrollment.
- We have received clarification on parochial school expansion from the Department of Treasury. Per the law, students must graduate from a high school within the boundaries of the zone. Dr. Prewitt stated the high school must be inside the NC RESA service area.

- There are 22 appeal requests being reviewed. This is our highest number of appeals. There are an assortment of reasons for appeal requests. Some requests are students who are outside the NC RESA Service area and some were not eligible due to GPA requirement, but are apprenticeship eligible.
- The MOU Executive on Loan is up for renewal to continue the relationship between NC RESA and NCAPZA. This agreement will be in effect from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.
- Dr. Blake Prewitt shared that the Executive Committee will participate in a Promise Zone Leadership Retreat on September 23, 2025, from 12:30 – 3:30 pm. We plan to develop a strategic direction of where we want to go in the future.
- Stu Sanders has been nominated as a replacement to the open seat on the Board for a partial term, to run through 2027. Stu is from White Cloud and has an education background.
- PromiseNet 2025: Celebrating 20 Years of Impact, Innovation, and Inclusion
  - November 9 – 11, 2025
  - Venue and accommodations – Radisson Plaza Hotel & Suites, Kalamazoo
  - Registration fee is \$300 per person
  - Please reach out to Brandi if you would like to attend.

**Holly Moon presented the following report on behalf of the Fundraising and Marketing Subcommittee:**

- Our 2025 total giving is \$38,261.00. Near the end of September, we hope to receive a gift from Gerber/Nestle as part of their ongoing pledge.
- Holly Moon has completed 4 community presentations over the summer and she has another one planned for the first week of September.
- Mrs. Moon would like to see more PZ signage at local schools. Dick Dunning would like to see nice billboard signs. Don VanSingel shared that greater attention to high school students should be the marketing focus. He would like to target the high school level and would also like to include a paragraph and QR code in school newsletters.
- Events
  - National Baby Food Festival Kid's Expo – July 16
  - College and Career Night Out – September 25
- Melissa shared that Michigan College Fairs has sanctioned the CCNO event where historically 50 – 55 representatives from different entities attend this event – this means more colleges will participate. This free county-wide event brings together 350 – 400 people.

**Melissa Miller presented the following report on behalf of the Promise Success Initiatives Subcommittee:**

- Summer mailings have been ongoing for Promise Scholars.
- Success Coaches have been connecting with students one-on-one, via text, and mailings.
- 2025 – 2026 planning and preparations are underway for our engagement with Ferris-bound scholars and MCC-bound scholars.
- Promise Scholar Mandatory Orientations
  - Ferris State University – July 28, 2025, at the Dogwood Center
    - 52 Students and 21 sets of parents attended
  - Muskegon Community College – August 11, 2025, at NC RESA
    - 35 Students and 9 sets of parents attended
- In addition, we have new Promise Zone swag. The students provided their input on what they would like to have. New hats and coffee mugs are now available and we have started sharing them.

**Action Items:**

MCC Summer Tuition: Motion by Scott Swinehart, supported by Pat Brown, to approve the summer tuition from MCC totaling up to \$37,000. Ayes – 8, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

NC RESA Invoice (Qtr. 2 2025): Motion by Pat Brown, supported by Holly Moon, to approve payment in the amount of \$65,988.35. Ayes – 8, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

MOU Executive on Loan: Motion by Don VanSingel, supported by Scott Swinehart, to approve the MOU Executive on Loan between Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency (NC RESA) and Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority (NCAPZA). Ayes – 8, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Pat Brown, supported by Scott Swinehart to adjourn. Ayes – 8, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

**Information from Promise Zone Board Members:**

Dr. Blake Prewitt indicated school districts are facing significant uncertainty in both state and federal funding. Districts may be unable to fill positions due to potential budget cuts. Additionally, if mental health budgets are reduced, 10 therapists could be eliminated.

Scott Swinehart would like to highlight previous Promise Zone scholars.

Kathy Pope inquired about how the Promise Zone might know or if they are tracking where Promise Zone scholars transfer to, citing the Community Foundation's own challenges of outdated emails or lack of responses when outreach is made. Melissa Miller shared the State Association is engaged in a data project with the National Student Clearinghouse with the hope that future data can be shared.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.



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Blake Prewitt, Chairperson