



## Mason County Promise Zone 2026 Annual Report

### Background

The Mason County Promise Zone was established in 2018 to provide scholarships to Mason County high school graduates who reside in Mason County, or within the boundaries of their Mason County-based school district. In 2023, the Promise expanded to offer the scholarship to residents who graduated from any high school in Michigan or a Mason County-based homeschool. All resident graduates must reside in Mason County for their entire senior year of high school (for the year prior to and including graduation) in order to qualify for this scholarship. The Promise currently provides up to 72 post-secondary credits of tuition and fees coverage at West Shore Community College, and up to two annual \$500 awards for educational supplies for each approved scholar. There is no initial high school GPA requirement, however, scholars at WSCC must maintain good academic standing with a GPA of at least 2.0 while in college to be approved for each year of Promise scholarship funding. The Promise covers the remaining tuition and fees after federal and state grant aid is applied, and prior to other scholarships.

#### Since 2018:

- Over 700 local graduates have attended WSCC as Mason County Promise Scholars.
- The Mason County Promise Zone has funded more than \$2.5 Million in scholarships and educational supplies for our students at WSCC.
- 183 scholars have obtained 239 post-secondary credentials.
- Nearly half of the funding awarded has been used by students who have obtained a credential (\$1.13M)
- The Promise has supported over \$250,000 in educational activities in Mason County, including annual programming at local high schools for 9th graders, annual programming at WSCC about financial reality for seniors, high school FAFSA initiative funding, and around \$20,000 in scholarships for Mason County children to attend College for Kids at WSCC
- The Promise funds two high school Post-Secondary Advisor roles to serve MCC, MCE & LHS year-round, and all Mason County youth in the summer.

#### Each year:

- Around 30% of all students are the first generation in their family to attend college.
- About half of students attending WSCC as Promise Scholars pursue full-time study.
- About 5% of scholars use the Promise at WSCC to pursue partner programs in agriculture through MSU or in healthcare through another Michigan Community College.
- 47% of scholars rely on the Promise for all tuition funding.
- 28% of scholars do not need tuition assistance, but may receive educational supplies awards.
- The average amount of Promise funds used by a scholar who depends on the Promise is just under \$4000.
- The average total tuition cost for scholars while at WSCC is just under \$5500.
- 21.6% of scholars were awarded over \$5000 while at WSCC for tuition, fees and supplies.
- 33.5% of all scholars who attended WSCC went for at least 4 semesters (two academic years).



**Overall College Credential Achievement Data Since 2018**

High School Grad Year	Credentials Achieved: 239	Associate	Bachelor's	Certificate
2018	56	44	7	5
2019	63	37	17	6
2020	37	27	5	5
2021	35	31	2	2
2022	31	29	0	2
2023	12	9	0	3
2024	5	3	0	2

**CREDENTIALS BY HIGH SCHOOL**

High School	Total Promise College Credentials: 239	Percent of Overall Credentials
ASM Tech	5	2%
Gateway to Success Acad.	1	<1%
Ludington High School	128	53%
Mason County Central H.S.	80	33%
Mason County Eastern H.S.	21	15%
Other	4	1%

## Highlights from 2025

**63% of Mason County Students applied for the FAFSA from the class of 2025.**

While our goal is 75%, the completion rate in 2025 is the closest we've ever come to reaching it. Promise Post-secondary Advisors at MCC & LHS applied for state funding for Universal FAFSA, and were awarded over \$100,000 to support high school seniors in FAFSA completion and build college-going culture. (MCE received this funding in 2024-25)



Usage by High School - Class of 2025--22.8%				
Promise Zone High School: Promise Zone Goal: 30% of graduates use the Promise at WSCC w/in 6 mos.	Total	# Applied	Enrolled Fall 2025	Percentage Enrolled of Total H.S. Class (2025)
G2S Academy	23	12	4	17.3%
Ludington High School (Includes OA)	194	146	48	24.7%
Mason County Central High School	125	75	26	20.8%
Mason County Eastern High School	35	27	5	14.2%-
GED/Homeschooled/Other	n/a	15	3	n/a

Reasons for applying but not enrolling: Did not choose to attend WSCC, did not reside in Mason County, Did not complete high school, Did not complete FAFSA, Did not provide documentation. On average, about 30% of all grads use the Promise.



## 2025 ENROLLMENT

<b>2025 Promise Scholar Enrollment</b> by H.S. Graduation Year	<b>Total Enrollment</b>
<b>Winter 2025</b>	<b>171</b>
Class of 2019	2
Class of 2020	3
Class of 2021	10
Class of 2022	22
Class of 2023	45
Class of 2024	89
<b>Summer 2025</b>	<b>44</b>
Class of 2019	0
Class of 2020	1
Class of 2021	5
Class of 2022	4
Class of 2023	10
Class of 2024	24
<b>Fall 2025</b>	<b>199</b>
Class of 2020	4
Class of 2021	6
Class of 2022	11
Class of 2023	32
Class of 2024	60
Class of 2025	87

## 2025 Enrollment, Award & Completion Data by Semester for High School Cohorts 2019-2025

<b>Semester &amp; Year</b>	<b>Attended/Relieved on Promise</b>	<b>\$ Awarded</b>	<b>2025 Credentials Conferred:</b>
<b>FALL 2025</b>	199/139	\$298,512.65	7-7 degrees (6 scholars, 1 first gen 16%)
<b>SUMMER 2025</b>	44/39	\$29,496.83	2-2 degrees (2 first gen—100%)
<b>WINTER 2025</b>	171/114	\$188,275.25	31—24 degrees, 7 cert—WSCC (10 first gen—33%)

## A Promise for the Future...

Looking forward, the Promise would like to help more students pursue a college credential. Our local goal is that 70% of graduates pursue college within 12 months of graduation. With the recent Promise Zone Act changes, and the implementation of the statewide Community College Guarantee and Michigan Achievement, our Zone is looking to offer a one-time award to support students who attend other colleges in Michigan in their first year. We are working to submit an updated plan to the State for approval, with a goal for it to be implemented for the class of 2027. Students from Mason County primarily attend WSCC, however each year, the most common trajectories outside of our county include Ferris, GVSU, MSU, UofM and Michigan Tech.

### College Trajectory Trends for Mason County Students within One Year of Graduation

Top 5 College Trajectories	Served 4 Schools in one year	Served all 5 schools in one year
GVSU	GVSU	Ferris
MSU	Ferris	
Ferris	MSU	
U of M	MTU	
MTU		

### Most Recent 6 mo. College Trajectory Data

Year	Institution	# w/in 6 mo.	# of Schools
2023-24	Ferris	12	3
	MSU	9	2
	GVSU	4	1
	UofM	3	1
	NMU	4	3

If approved, the WSCC Promise scholarship would remain the same for students, with an additional offer of a one-time transfer award. These changes would help our Zone to invest more in our young people, would make the scholarship more flexible for student needs--a recommendation from the State's "Barriers to Bridges" publication, and would allow WSCC to use more state CC Guarantee funding at WSCC. The last point is significant, as it uses our dollars to supplement, rather than supplant state funding that is offered to any other Michigan resident from counties without a Promise.

Once we have approval from the State, our Zone will engage local schools and community partners to spread the word so that students can make wise financial and educational decisions. The Mason County Promise Zone staff and Authority Board are excited to be on the cusp of a big, positive, change, and we couldn't make this change without our supportive communities and our growing economic base in Mason County. Thank you for your support.