



Frequently Asked Questions

Scholarship Eligibility

Who is eligible for the scholarship?

All students who are enrolled for one or more years and graduate from Saranac Community Schools; apply for a scholarship award; and are accepted and enrolled in an eligible college, university, or vocational school in Michigan are eligible to receive a scholarship.

How is attendance calculated if the student leaves the Saranac Community Schools and then later returns?

Cumulative attendance is calculated for each qualifying year. A full qualifying year will be defined by being counted in the October and February Public School head count days during each school year. Being present for one count day will be eligible for one half qualifying year.

Will students who live in a neighboring school district and attend Saranac Community Schools under schools of choice be eligible for the Saranac Promise?

Yes.

Will students who attend Saranac Community Schools and transfer out of the system prior to graduation be eligible?

No, students must graduate from Saranac Community Schools to be eligible for the Saranac Promise.



Scholarship Application

What is the application process?

Students must apply during their senior year. Application forms will be available on this website as well as from the high school guidance office.

Do I need to fill out a FAFSA application?

A Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application is not required to be accepted into college, but it is required to be eligible for the Saranac Promise. If you need help filling out the form contact the Saranac High School guidance counselor or the financial aid office of the college/university that you plan to attend.

Monies already obtained and promised through scholarships and the Saranac Promise are not listed on the FAFSA form. The Saranac Promise will not disqualify you from other scholarship opportunities.

For more information, and to apply on-line visit www.fafsa.ed.gov

What are the eligible universities and colleges?

The Saranac Promise may be used at any college or university that is physically located in Michigan and accredited by and recognized in the U.S. Department of Education's database of accredited post-secondary institutions and programs (<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation>).

Are vocational schools eligible?

All certification or degree programs in the vocational trades at state supported community colleges and other vocational schools physically located in Michigan and accredited by and recognized in the U.S. Department of Education's database of accredited post-



secondary institutions and programs (<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation>) are eligible. Out of state colleges and vocational schools are not eligible. Private apprenticeship programs are also not eligible.

Post Scholarship Award

Are there additional requirements that must be met after the initial award?

Yes. Applicants must demonstrate, after the first semester and all following semesters, the following:

- a. Maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average per semester/trimester in college or other post-secondary institution.
- b. Apply for (FAFSA) and accept all Federal (Pell) and State (Tuition Incentive Program) grants.
- c. Apply for the continuation of the Saranac Promise scholarship.
- d. Provide a copy of their college transcript with the application, and any Federal and/or State financial aid awards for the next year of college or other post-secondary institution attendance. The amount of the Saranac Promise may be adjusted each year based on any revised financial information provided.

What happens if the student fails to meet the requirements? Is the scholarship still available?

If a student fails to meet the academic requirements of their college or university and is placed on academic probation, they will be allowed one subsequent semester to raise their academic performance to the level of the academic requirements. If a student on probation fails to meet academic requirements in the subsequent semester their scholarship will be placed in suspension status.

If the student demonstrates that they have again met all the academic requirements of their college/university the Saranac Promise scholarship can be reinstated for the next semester. The scholarship would be reinstated prospectively.



The scholarship is available for a maximum of ten (10) years following the student's graduation from Saranac Community Schools, unless interrupted by military service.

Scholarship Use

When will scholarship funds be available?

Pending fundraising efforts, Scholarships will be dispersed beginning with the fall 2016 semester for qualified 2016 graduates of Saranac Community Schools. Funds will continue to be available thereafter to all students who graduate from Saranac Community Schools and meet the eligibility requirements.

How long do students have to use the Saranac Promise?

This Saranac Promise scholarship can be used for up to five (5) years to assist with tuition, mandatory fees, and other costs for post-secondary education. The students must be a full-time student, taking 12 credit hours per semester minimum. (See for exceptions during summer school.)

Five years shall be quantified as the receipt of a bachelor degree or 130 credit hours towards a degree, whichever occurs first. The post-secondary education must be completed within 10 years of the date of high school graduation. Exceptions to this requirement are granted for military service.

Are summer school classes covered by the Saranac Promise?

Individual summer school classes will be covered as long as the class applies toward the degree or certification program in which the student is enrolled and is taken at their designated school of choice.

Is study abroad covered?



Study abroad is covered only if the program is administered by the Michigan college or university the student is attending. The only costs that are covered are the normal tuition costs for the credits taken abroad. No other expenses are covered.

Are college application fees covered?

No – However, many institutions will waive the application fee if it is requested because of financial hardship. Some colleges may also waive application fees pending an agreement with the Saranac Promise.

Scholarship Awards

How much is the scholarship award?

The amount of the scholarship award is dependent upon the size of the endowment and the annual amount of available funds distributed by the Grand Rapids Community Foundation. It will start at around \$500 and gradually increase as the endowment grows. Once the endowment is fully funded the annual scholarship award will be \$4,000 per year of college for up to five years (\$20,000 maximum five year award). Five years is determined by the receipt of a bachelor degree or 130 credit hours toward a degree, whichever occurs first.

Why is the scholarship award on a graduated scale?

The Saranac Promise is designed to provide maximum benefit to long-term attendees of Saranac Community Schools. A desired outcome of the program is to encourage families to make early decisions to enroll their students in Saranac Community Schools, and to maintain that enrollment through graduation.



How does the Saranac Promise work with the Michigan Education Trust or Michigan Educational Savings Program?

MET and MESP offer flexibility in using the funds. Your savings may be applied toward tuition as well as related qualified higher education expenses such as books, equipment and supplies, fees, and room and board costs required for enrollment or attendance.

General Information

How is the Saranac Promise Funded?

The Saranac Promise is funded through an endowment held and administered by the Grand Rapids Community Foundation (501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation), which will continue to grow through generous gifts to the fund.

How long will the Saranac Promise be available?

The Saranac Promise is intended to be available in perpetuity.

Who are the donors?

Partner donors are listed on the Saranac Promise website.

Do you have other questions?

If you have additional questions please feel free to contact us at:

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