



The Saranac Promise

bridge to success

We believe:

- All children can be successful in life;
- Every child can go to college;
- College can be affordable; and
- Saranac Community Schools can get you there.

Our Goals:

- Provide financial assistance for college or vocational education;
- 100% of students graduate from Saranac Community Schools; and
- Contribute to the education and economic development of the community of Saranac.

Our Outcomes:

- Promote a college-going culture;
- Increased high school graduation rates;
- Increased college attendance and graduation rates;
- Greater sense of community identity; and
- Attraction of families and businesses to the community.



Summary and Timeline

There are two means of financial assistance for the Saranac Promise – the current merit based scholarship programs and a new non-merit based scholarship program.

The Saranac Promise will provide reimbursement of tuition and fees for students meeting award qualifications. The total award is used to cover tuition and other mandatory fees not covered by federal or state grant sources, often referred to as “middle dollar” scholarships. Merit based scholarships are not included in the Promise scholarship award calculation.

To ensure that Promise scholarship awards are equitable they are prorated by years of enrollment in Saranac Community Schools. The Promise scholarship award may be used at public and private colleges or vocational schools in Michigan. To encourage student accountability, graduation from high school and demonstrated success in post-secondary education is required for continued receipt of the Promise scholarship.

The Saranac Promise will be phased-in over three years.

Phase I – Promotion of existing merit based scholarships and services that are currently available through Saranac Schools. This phase will enable greater application for Federal and State grants, and greater utilization of existing merit based scholarship opportunities. The typical scholarship is \$500 - \$1,000

Phase II – This phase will build upon the preceding phase by annually providing limited (up to \$1,000) universal (non-merit based) scholarships for qualified graduates of Saranac Community Schools for 2-year and 4-year colleges and vocational schools beginning with the class of 2016 Potential application and tuition fee discounts may be available for area community colleges.

Phase III – Full implementation of universal promise scholarships (up to \$4,000 annually) for all graduates of Saranac Community Schools for 2-year, 4-year colleges and vocational schools, commencing upon full endowment funding.



Details of the Program

Eligibility

To qualify for an initial Saranac Promise scholarship, students must meet all of the following criteria:

- Enroll, for one or more years, and graduate from Saranac High School. 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.

The maximum annual amount of the Saranac Promise Award will be pro-rated based upon years of enrollment, as follows:

Years Enrolled	Examples	Percent Award
12 - 13 years	K – 12	100%
7 – 11 years	Elementary – High School	75%
3 – 6 years	Middle and High School	50%
1 – 2 years	11 th – 12 th grades or GED	25%

- Start to apply for, and use, the Saranac Promise scholarship awards within four years of graduation from Saranac High School or receipt of GED.
- Must be accepted and enrolled as a full time student (typically 12 credit hours a semester) in an eligible college, university or vocational school physically located in Michigan that is 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>).
- Consideration for extended eligibility or other extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Saranac Promise Authority Board of Directors

Scholarship awards

Any Saranac High School graduate meeting Saranac Promise criteria who attends an eligible Michigan college, university, or vocational school will receive up to \$1,000



during the Phase II program; and upon implementation of the Phase III program \$4,000 or full tuition and fee payment (whichever is less) per year of enrollment for up to five years (\$20,000 maximum five year award). Five years shall be quantified as the receipt of a bachelor degree or 130 credit hours towards a degree, whichever occurs first.

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.

The Saranac Promise scholarship is intended to be a "middle dollar" scholarship that may be used to cover tuition and other mandatory fees not covered by federal or state grant sources. In the financial aid package for students, the Promise scholarship award may be used to replace loan or work study portions but should not replace federal or state grants or scholarships. All students must first apply for federal and state grants, by completing the Free Application Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, and accept all federal or state money prior to the determination of the amount of the Saranac Promise scholarship award.

The amount of a Promise scholarship award is not reduced by other merit based (competitive) scholarship awards which may be granted from private sources. Expected family contributions and subsidized loan programs also do not reduce the amount of the Saranac Promise Scholarship.

Approved Colleges and Schools

Saranac Promise scholarships may be used at any FAFSA eligible 2- or 4-year public or private post-secondary college, university, or vocational institution in Michigan.

Continuation throughout College

Each year the student attends the college of his/her choice, the student must:

- Make regular progress toward a degree or certification as defined by Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards of the school.
- Maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average per semester/trimester in college or other post-secondary institution.
- Apply for (FAFSA) and accept Federal (Pell) and State (Tuition Incentive Program) grants.
- Apply for the continuation of the Saranac Promise scholarship.



- Supply a copy of their college transcript with the application, and also supply any 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.

Beginning of the Saranac Promise Scholarship Awards

The existing merit based scholarships will continue to be awarded to eligible graduates. The first non merit based scholarships will be awarded to the graduating class of 2016 and continue thereafter.

Administration

Saranac Community Schools' administrative staff provides ongoing monitoring, oversight, and assistance to the Saranac Promise Board.

The Saranac Promise Coordinator will manage the scholarship program, establish and staff the College Access Center, develop and implement college readiness activities and report progress of the program to the Saranac Promise Board, Michigan College Access Network (MICAN), the Saranac Board of Education, and the public.

The Promise scholarship funds are held in an endowment with the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, a qualified 501(c)(3) organization.

Financial Support for Saranac Promise Scholarship Awards

Individuals, businesses and foundations have been active for several years in providing merit based scholarships for Saranac High School graduates. Most of those scholarship awards have been endowed and administered by specific and independent scholarship boards. Significant efforts to obtain major contributions to endow a Saranac Promise Program have been ongoing by a steering committee comprised of volunteers from the community of Saranac and administrators and employees of Saranac Community Schools. Efforts continue to obtain significant contributions from private sources that will be held with the Saranac Promise endowment with the Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

