



Promise Scholarship Programs: Building Assets for Community Change

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WHO BENEFITS FROM THE PROMISE?

kalamazoopublicschools.com

ADAMS



What is the Kalamazoo Promise?

- Announced November 2005, to continue in perpetuity
- Funded by anonymous private donors
- First-dollar program (before other financial aid)
- Place-based: Kalamazoo Public Schools
 - Covers 65-100% of tuition and fees at any in-state, public post-secondary institution for KPS graduates
 - Minimum 4-year residency & enrollment requirement
- Universal: every graduate is eligible
 - Students have 10 years in which to use funding

What makes Promise programs effective tools for community transformation?

Promise programs seek to **change the culture of a community**, not simply award scholarships. They are:

- Place-based – focus on a geographically bounded community
- Universal (or near universal) – everyone has a stake; broad buy-in throughout the community
- Long-term – allow time for people to make choices based on the program's benefits

The Promise movement takes off...

- Since the Kalamazoo Promise was announced, 22 communities have created Promise programs, with many more in the works.
- Annual PromiseNet conference has drawn representatives from 50+ communities.
- Promise programs exist in all parts of the country, in communities of all sizes and types .

Promise-Type Scholarship Programs (active in 2011)



Promise programs are not all alike...

Models vary by:

- **Student eligibility**
 - Universal (all graduates eligible) or minimum GPA (usually 2.5) and/or attendance requirement
- **Eligible post-secondary institutions**
 - Local only, in-state public, or any institution (with tuition cap)
 - 2-year only, 4-year included
 - Public or private (with tuition cap)
- **Level of student support services provided**
- **Funding**
 - Private (businesses, individuals); philanthropic; public (tax resources)

How Promise programs work

- Scholarship program serves as catalyst
- Changes incentives for many types of actors
 - Students, teachers, parents, businesses, residents, realtors, other school districts, etc.
- Leads to creation and/or growth of human, social, and economic capital for individuals, the city, and the region...

... IF the community is aligned.

“There’s the money, and then there’s everything else.”

Dr. Janice Brown, Kalamazoo Promise

The Kalamazoo Promise as an asset-building strategy

- “[The donors] set the bar much higher than anyone was thinking. It gives us an opportunity to let go of our short-term, short-sighted objectives and be more progressive and aggressive in thinking about the future. Somebody went in big, and they picked the right thing because it’s connected to everything.”
- Carrie Pickett-Erway, Kalamazoo Community Foundation, February 16, 2006.

Potential Outcomes: Human Capital

- Creation of college-going culture in K-12 system
- Reduced high school dropout and increased graduation rates
- Narrowing of college attendance gap by income and race
- Increased college attendance & completion rate
- Narrowing of K-12 achievement gap
- Creation of better-educated local workforce

Key Challenge: Ensuring that all students are sufficiently prepared to make use of their Promise scholarships

Potential Outcomes: Social Capital

- Boost to community morale, sense of identity
- Mobilization of multiple actors around education and economic development
- Increased volunteer activity in schools, new tutoring / mentoring programs
- New philanthropic resources
- Greater social cohesion due to better-educated residents

Key Challenges:

Coordinating and paying for support services

Aligning multiple efforts around a common goal

Potential Outcomes: Economic Assets

- New financial resources for school districts
- Freed-up savings for families
- Higher national profile (awards, media coverage, etc.)
- Alignment of organizations around education as engine of economic development
- Stronger housing market & rising property values
- New business investment
- Population growth leading to revitalized urban core

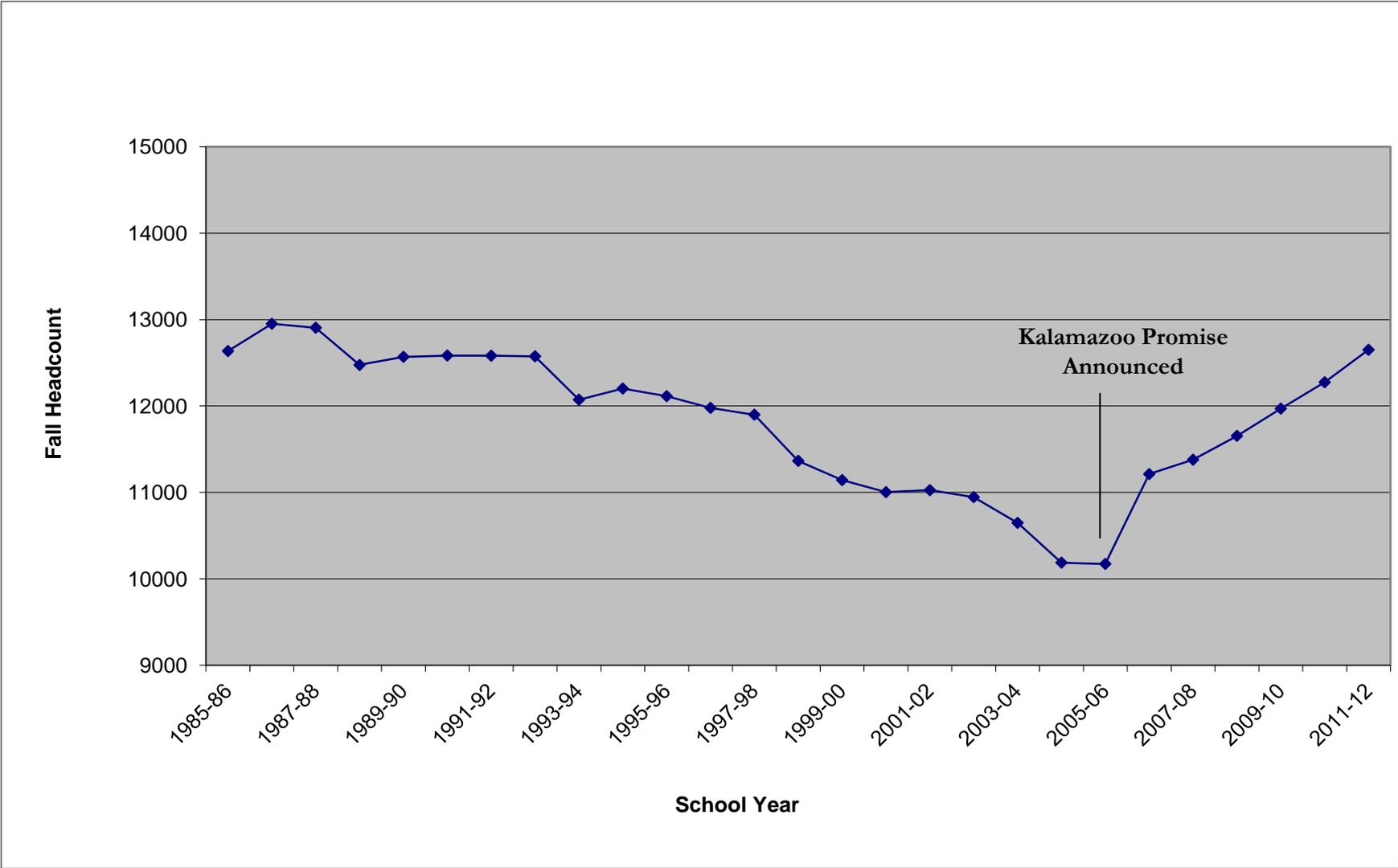
Key Challenges:

***Leveraging the Promise for new business investment;
overcoming stagnant regional and state economies***

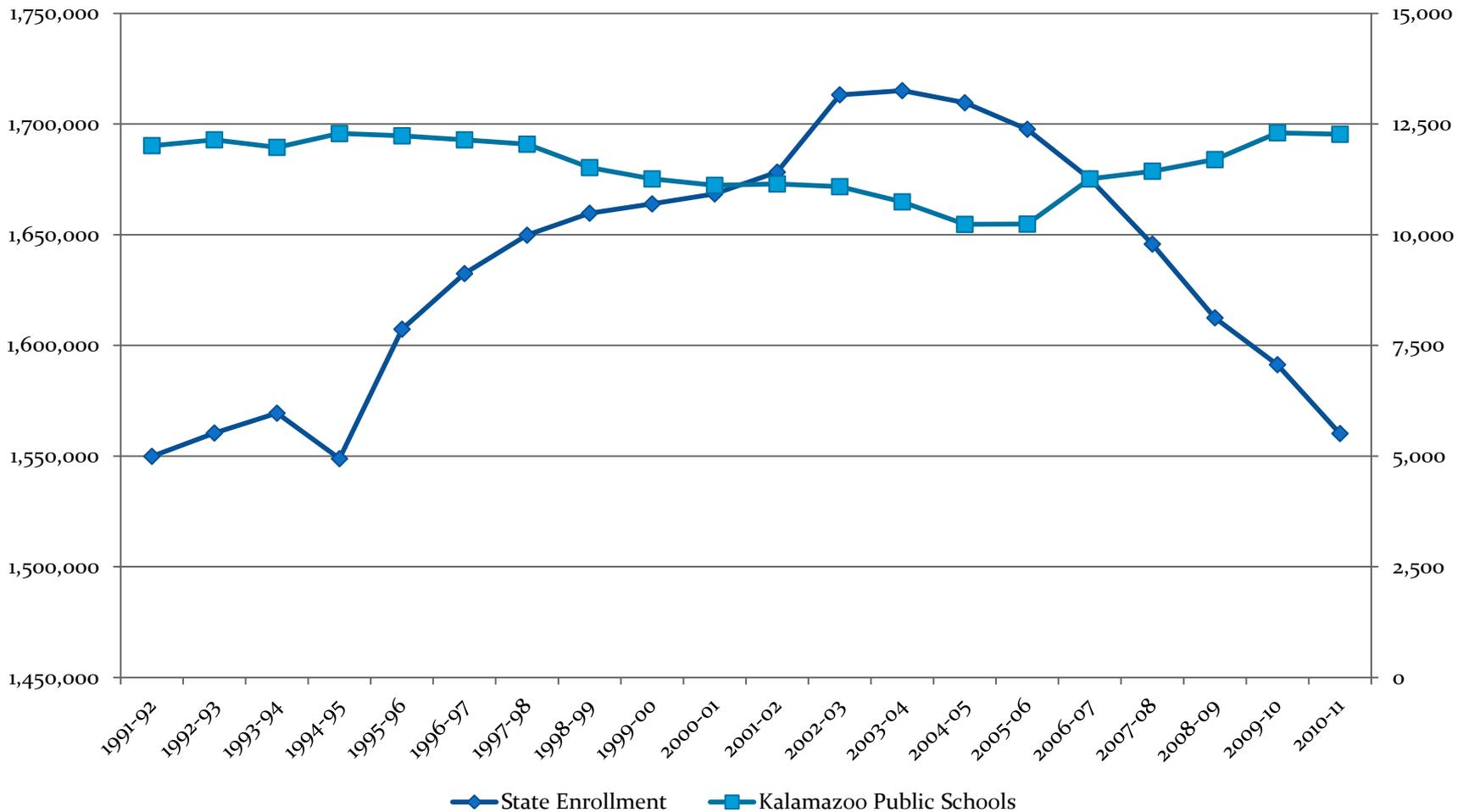
Initial Impact on School District

- Reversal of long-term enrollment decline in the Kalamazoo Public Schools
 - Enrollment growth of 24% since 2005
 - Increasing enrollment is the result of:
 - Increased entry rates and decreased exit rates
 - Stabilization of ethnic/racial balance
- Increased resources for school district
 - More students = more \$\$\$ (per-pupil funding structure)
 - Support for bond issues (regionally)
 - New school construction (first in 4 decades)

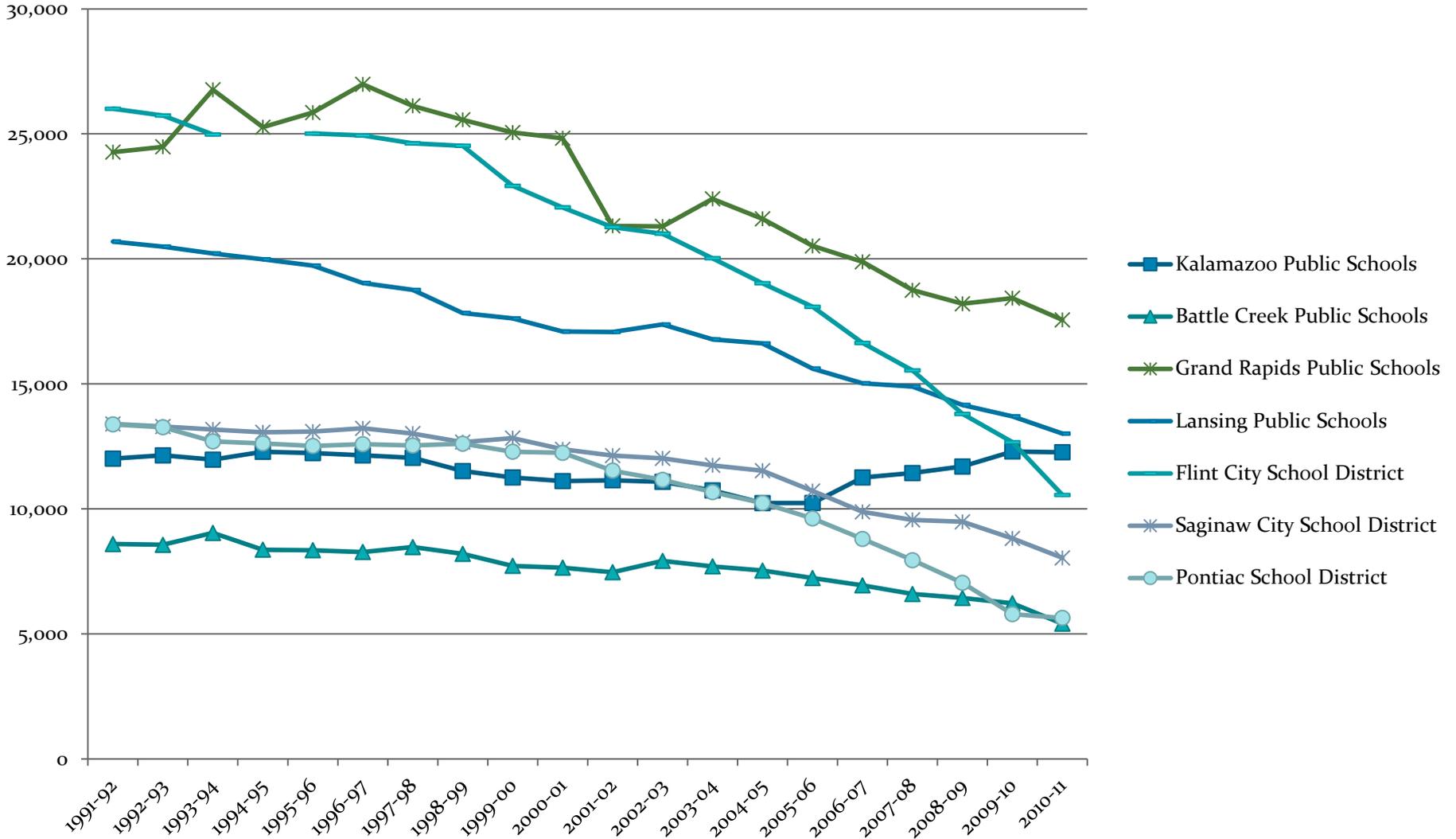
Kalamazoo Public Schools Enrollment



State of Michigan Comparison



Similar School District Comparison



Initial Impact on Students

- Increased Advanced Placement enrollment (2007-11)
 - # of AP courses taken: ↑ 225%
 - # of students enrolled ↑ 178%
 - Economically disadvantaged 63 to 320 students
 - African-American 53 to 221 students
 - Hispanic 8 to 78 students
- Immediate impact on student achievement
 - Bartik and Lachowska (2011) – positive impact on GPA, # of AP credits attempted, reduction in # of days suspended
- Middle-school college readiness curriculum
- Community-based support programs
 - Tutoring , mentoring, family literacy

Application for The Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship

I am requesting funding from The Kalamazoo Promise scholarship plan.

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

E-mail: _____

The following is my qualification information:

Grade at which continuous KPS enrollment AND continuous KPS district residency started: _____

This is the date which I expect to graduate from Kalamazoo Public Schools: _____

This is the high school which I expect to graduate from: _____

The schools listed below are the colleges/universities that I am considering for enrollment and use of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship. List your choices in order of preference, you only are required to list one. (See reverse side for list of qualified schools)

School 1: _____

School 2: _____

School 3: _____

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the terms of this scholarship and the information I have provided above concerning residency and enrollment in the Kalamazoo Public School district is true to the best of my knowledge.

Student (Student must sign): _____
Signature

Parent / Guardian: _____
(If student is under 18 years of age)

Address: _____
(If different than above)

City / State / Zip: _____

See reverse side for instructions

Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship Use

- *In first six years of program:*
 - 2,400 students used scholarship (83% of those eligible)
 - \$30 million paid out in scholarship funds (first dollar)
- *Key findings*
 - Promise students more likely to attend college than Michigan high-school students overall (88% v. 71%)
 - Promise students more likely to attend college than non-Promise students in same district (88% v. 83%)
 - Percentage of use by race/ethnicity:

● African-American	82%
● Hispanic	76%
● Caucasian	85%

Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship Use

- *Strong pattern of local usage – 85% of students (Fall 2011) attended four institutions*
 - Kalamazoo Valley Community College (32%)
 - Western Michigan University (31%)
 - Michigan State University (13%)
 - University of Michigan (9%)
- *Positive outcomes vary across type of institution:*
 - Students at four-year institutions: 85%
 - Students at two-year institutions: 52% retention
 - Students at two-year institutions: 35% successful outcomes
 - (first three cohorts)

The Challenge of Ensuring Student Success

- Use of Kalamazoo Promise by race closely matches demographics of eligibility for the program.
- Use of Kalamazoo Promise by low-income students closely matches demographics of school district.

However...

- Low-income students are more likely to attend 2-year rather than 4-year institutions.
- Low-income students are more likely to struggle once in college.

Initial Impact on Local Economy

- *Economic impact has been constrained by weak state and regional economy*
 - Housing market, population growth, etc.
- *Indirect economic benefits*
 - Students and families relocating to/remaining in district
 - New financial resources for school district
 - Local use of scholarships
 - School construction activity
 - Higher national profile (awards, media coverage, etc.)
 - Alignment of organizations around education as engine of economic development

Other Promise Programs: Selected Results

- El Dorado Promise
 - Halted enrollment decline and led to slight increase
 - Jump in college-going rate from 60% to 90%
 - Passage of bond issue for city's strategic plan
- Pittsburgh Promise
 - Slowed enrollment decline
 - Promise a large factor in decision to attend PPS
 - Students report being motivated by the program
- Denver Scholarship Foundation
 - Increased graduation and college-going rates
 - Increase in AP enrollment and dual college enrollment
 - Role of Future Centers in high schools

The Challenge of Community Alignment

- Promise programs have the potential to transform communities, but scholarship itself is not enough
- Community alignment and engagement are essential
 - Ensure that every student is “college-ready”
 - Connect education and workforce systems
 - Move beyond school district to community-wide focus on education
 - *Learning Network of Greater Kalamazoo*

Future Research Questions

- Do Promise scholarship programs
 - reduce race- and income-based disparities in college access and attainment?
 - serve as engines of local economic development?
 - catalyze broad community transformation?
- How do universal v. merit-based Promise programs differ in their impacts?



For additional information:
Kalamazoo Promise Research Web Site
<http://www.upjohninstitute.org>

Comments, questions, or ideas are most welcome!

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