Michigan Promise Programs: Locations, Designs, and What We Know So Far

Institute of Higher Education
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Meredith S. Billings, Ph.D.
meredith.billings@uga.edu

5/29/2019
College Promise Programs and Lower-Income Students:
Design, Implementation, and Impact
Acknowledgements

I thank the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and Michigan’s Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) for providing the data used in these analyses.

Statements do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of these agencies and no official endorsement by them should be inferred.
Map of Promise Programs in Michigan
Overview

**Kalamazoo Promise** (started for Class of 2006)
- Created by group of anonymous donors in November 2005
- Catalyst for the promise program movement

**Michigan Promise Zones** (started for Classes 2010–2015)
- Created by state legislation in January 2009 targeted towards economically distressed areas
- 10 zones were originally selected by the state: Baldwin, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Jackson, Hazel Park, Lansing, Muskegon Area, Pontiac, and Saginaw
- Mix of public and private funding
# Design of the Promise Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kalamazoo Promise</th>
<th>Michigan Promise Zones (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live within Kalamazoo Public Schools boundaries</td>
<td>Live within PZ boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter by 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Grade for min percent (65%)</td>
<td>Enter by 10-12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Grade for min percent (15-50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter by Kindergarten for 100%</td>
<td>Enter by 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;-11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; grade for 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA not required</td>
<td>FAFSA required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-dollar</td>
<td>Last-dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and fees up to bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>Tuition and fees up to associates degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Michigan public college or university</td>
<td>Usually the local CC; Some PZs expanded to other options, but usually capped at the local CC tuition rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence From the Research

Kalamazoo

College enrollment
Degree completion
Student subgroups comparison
  White/Asian Students to Black/Latino Students
  Low Income Students to Non Low Income Students

Michigan Promise Zones

College enrollment
Persistence to second year of college
Kalamazoo & Comparison School Districts

7 Comps (Dk Blue): Flint, Godfrey-Lee, Godwin Heights, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Muskegon, and Van Dyke.
Promise Zones & Comparison School Districts

8 PZs (Red):
Baldwin, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Hazel Park, Lansing, Pontiac, and Saginaw

13 Comps (Blue):
Clarenceville, Dearborn, Fitzgerald, Flint, Godrey-Lee, Godwin Heights, Jackson, Muskegon, Niles, Southfield, Taylor, Van Dyke, and Wyoming
College Enrollment
Kalamazoo – Enrollment in College

10 ppt increase***

*** p < 0.01
Promise Zones – Enrollment in College

4.5 ppt increase
Degree Completion/Persistence
Kalamazoo – Degree Completion

5 ppt increase***

*** p < 0.01
Promise Zones - Persistence

3.5 ppt increase
Student Subgroup Comparison
## Modest to Negative Effect on Degree Completion for More Disadvantaged Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White or Asian</th>
<th>Black or Latino</th>
<th>Not Econ Disadv</th>
<th>Econ Disadv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kalamazoo (8th Grade)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enroll in any college within 1 yr of exp hs grad</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPS pre-mean</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>12,030</td>
<td>19,424</td>
<td>22,166</td>
<td>9,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earn any degree within 6 years of exp hs grad</td>
<td>0.12***</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPS pre-mean</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>10,408</td>
<td>15,994</td>
<td>19,090</td>
<td>7,582</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.10
Main Take Aways & Next Steps

- Strong, positive effect for the Kalamazoo Promise
  - 10 percentage point increase in any college enrollment
  - 5 percentage point increase in any degree completion

- Black, Latino, and Poor students do not experience the same strong positive effects on degree completion as White, Asian, and Non Poor Students

- Next Steps: Examine how students are doing in college especially if some are not earning their degrees. Are they remaining eligible for the scholarship?
Main Take Aways & Next Steps

• Cannot definitively conclude much for the Michigan promise zones
  • 4.5 percentage point increase in any college
  • 3.5 percentage point increase in persistence to the second year of college
  • Positive point estimates, but not estimated precisely enough to be statistically significant

• However, promise zones weren’t set up for large impacts given their design

• Next Steps: How are the promise zones leveraging community resources? When are students made aware of the scholarship?
Contact Information

Meredith S. Billings, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Research & Teaching Associate
University of Georgia, Institute of Higher Education

meredith.billings@uga.edu
@BillingsMer