



Mason County Promise Scholar Handbook

I PROMISE ...



- ...TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE
- ...TO DO MY BEST WORK
- ...TO LEARN MORE EACH DAY
- ...TO SEEK OUT OPPORTUNITIES

"A PROMISE FOR ALL" MEANS PAID TUITION FOR GRADUATES FROM MASON COUNTY! MASONCOUNTPROMISE.ORG

MAKE A P R O M I S E TO YOURSELF

How to Submit an Appeal

Promise Scholarships may be suspended without formal notice for scholars who do not meet the following scholarship requirements:

- Renewing the FAFSA (FAFSA.gov)
- Renewing the Promise (on the website)
- Maintaining an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher
- Passing at least 67% of attempted credits (Satisfactory Academic Progress)

If a special circumstance or situation has contributed to falling below the 2.0 GPA or not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress, then you have the opportunity to appeal through the Mason County Promise website:

masoncountypromise.org/appeal
Appeal as soon as you can by completing the online form and emailing a copy of your current transcript to info@masoncountypromise.org. The Appeals Committee meets quarterly and will decide whether or not to grant your appeal and will promptly notify you of their decision.



How to Contact the Promise



119 S. Rath Ave.
Ludington, MI 49431



231-239-8224



info@masoncountypromise.org



MasonCountyPromise.org



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at



@MasonCountyPromise

This brochure is intended as a general guide, and does not supplant formal policies and procedures of the Promise. All information provided herein is subject to change. This brochure does not guarantee any award or funding.



Mason County Promise Scholarship

In this Brochure:

- What the Promise covers
- How funding works at WSCC
- How to stay eligible
- How to qualify for the educational supplies award
- How to appeal
- How to contact the Promise



What the Promise Covers Once You're at WSCC:

- **Six-Year Maximum:** Students will have a maximum of six academic years from the date of high school graduation, or from the date of issuance of a GED or its equivalent, to use the 72 credits of the scholarship.
- **72 Credit Total:** The Promise Scholarship covers up to 72 attempted credits (from any college; pre-college credits are excluded), the approximate equivalent to an associate's degree from WSCC.
- **Educational Supplies:** Scholars can qualify for an educational supplies award in their first and second year at WSCC to help with books and other course supplies. Details will be sent to students when they are approved for the initial scholarship or their first renewal.
- **Middle Dollar Funding:** The Promise may be used to replace or supplement loans, work-study opportunities, private scholarships, or expected family contributions, but the Promise may not be used to replace federal or state grants. (TIP, Pell Grant, SEOG, etc.) .
- **Pays for Tuition & Fees:** The Promise Scholarship is not a set amount, and will not be paid directly to the student. It is paid directly to WSCC and applied to student bills after the drop/add period.
- **FAFSA and Promise Renewal:** Students intending to use the Promise must list WSCC as their first college of choice on their FAFSA. Scholars must renew the FAFSA between October 1--August 1 each year, and complete a Promise renewal after winter semester grades post each year

How Promise Scholarship Funding Works at WSCC

- After eligible students enroll in classes, they have a tuition bill. If Scholars are approved to use the Promise and register for classes, the Promise will be applied to their bill after financial aid has been applied, and after the drop/add period has ended. It won't appear like a scholarship for a set amount of money. Instead, the Promise covers tuition and fees after state and federal grant aid are applied.
- Some scholars will not ever need Promise Scholarship funding, because federal or state grant aid covers their tuition and fees.
- Summer guest students are allowed. Approved scholars who take WSCC credits as summer guest students (have a different home college or university) may qualify to use the Promise if they have 1) submitted a renewal application and transcript, 2) not exceeded the total attempted credits, and 3) met all other requirements (GPA, etc.);
- Scholars who didn't complete the renewal process, or who exceed 72 attempted credits/six years will no longer be covered by the Promise and will not receive advanced notice.

How to Stay Eligible for the Promise Scholarship

After enrolling in classes, Scholars must:

- Maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher
- Complete 67% of all the credits you attempt
- Renew the FAFSA every year, with WSCC listed as the first choice of college
- Renew the Promise Scholarship online after Winter semester grades each year
- Email your transcript to the Promise coordinator after winter final grades post (for renewal--credit & good standing verification)
- Not exceed the total attempted credit limit
- Use the Promise within six years of graduation

How to Qualify for the Educational Supplies Award

Promise Scholars can qualify for up to two limited annual Educational Supplies awards. The award is available for a limit of two years, in the first year and the second year (renewal) of attendance. Awards may vary in amount from year-to-year. Awards will be distributed once per academic year. Awards will be placed on a qualifying scholar's WSCC account and available to use through the WSCC online bookstore from mid-August through the fall drop deadline. Scholars who use a partial award and drop classes will forfeit the remaining amount of the award for that year.

To qualify for the Year 1 award (Fall award):

- Complete the Promise Application and be approved to use the Promise
- Apply to WSCC and complete online orientation
- Attend a summer in-person orientation session at WSCC
- Register for 12 or more credits in fall semester
- Complete the FAFSA--list WSCC as first choice
- All of the above must be completed by August 1

To qualify for the Year 2 award (Fall award):

- Take First Year Seminar in your first year (or prior) and pass it with a "C" grade or better
- Complete your Promise Scholarship Renewal and be approved to use the Promise
- Register for 12 or more credits at WSCC
- Complete your FAFSA renewal
- All of the above must be completed by August 1 (prior to the start of renewal year fall classes)

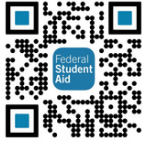
Unused award amounts will be distributed to approved scholars for use on educational supplies after the drop period. The award will be distributed once per academic year. ASM Tech graduates can substitute Core Time for orientation and FYS requirements. ESA qualification decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

Questions? Call: 231-239-8224

Email: info@masoncountypromise.org

Message us on [masoncountypromise.org](https://www.masoncountypromise.org)

New Promise Scholar Checklist



Financial Aid: Complete the FAFSA at fafsa.gov, as soon as possible, no later than August 1. Be sure to include WSCC first on your FAFSA college list to ensure they get your information (this should be changed if you decide to attend anywhere else).



Apply to West Shore Community College at westshore.edu--click on the "Apply Now" button to start and complete your application, if you haven't.

Check your email (spam, too) after applying to WSCC to find your acceptance notice and get the link for online orientation. Attending an in-person Ramp It Up session in July is recommended (and if you'd like to qualify for the educational supplies award, it's required).

Books & Educational Supplies: Make a plan to buy books before fall semester, from the WSCC bookstore website, so that you will receive them before the end of the first week of class. Qualify for the Year 1 Educational Supplies award by completing online orientation, attending a July "Ramp It Up" informational session, completing your FAFSA (with WSCC listed as your first college) and registering for 12 or more credits by August 1st.

Call or email the Promise at 231-239-8224 or info@masoncountypromise.org if you need any help with your scholarship.

New Promise Scholar College-Ready Checklist

Register for classes by August 1 (First fall billing). It is recommended that students take First Year Seminar, because students who complete that course with a C or better may qualify for a year 2 Educational Supplies Award.

Financial Aid: FAFSA--List WSCC as your first choice. Check your student portal if there are any missing documents and submit them.

Logistics: Make a plan for a consistent place to live & transportation to class.

Work: Work with your job to eliminate class schedule conflicts & plan reasonable hours.

Classes: Check your Westshore.edu email & Canvas for last minute updates.

Books: Make a plan buy books by no later than the end of the first week of class

Educational Supplies Awards are available to 1st year Scholars who complete their FAFSA, complete online orientation and a July "Ramp It Up" session at WSCC, and register for 12 or more credits by August 1.

Academic Calendar: Find out when class starts; Read for drop and W deadlines, & breaks.

Campus Calendar: Check for events and make a plan to get involved.

Planner: Use an app or paper planner to track your class schedule, assignment due dates & start dates & set a study schedule.

Success: Meet with a success coach in the first few weeks of class, and with your advisor each semester. Take First Year Seminar, get involved in student orgs, and use campus resources offered through WSCC!



PROMISE & WSCC FINANCIAL AID LAST-MINUTE CHECKLIST FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS

Complete your Promise Application, Online & In-Person Orientation (Ramp-It-Up) and FAFSA, and Register for 12 or More Credits, No Later Than August 1st to Qualify for the Year 1 Educational Supplies Award

Confirm That West Shore Community College Is Listed as 1st Choice on Your FAFSA for Michigan Achievement Scholarship and Other Michigan-based Awards

Register for classes. There Is No Minimum Credit Requirement for the Promise Scholarship. However, to Earn the Once-Annual Educational Supplies Award in Year One or Year Two, Scholars Must Register for 12 credits (full-time) by August 1

Check the Financial Aid Tab on mywestshore.edu Student Portal (online) and Complete Any "Missing Requirements"

Contact the WSCC College Financial Aid Office Right Away If Your Financial Aid Info Is Selected for "Review"

Call or Email WSCC's Financial Aid Office If Anything Is Confusing, If You Have Questions, or If There Is a Major Income Change in Your Family (i.e. job loss): finaid@westshore.edu OR 231-843-5518

If Applicable: Accept What Loans You Need and Your Overall Financial Aid Award on Your College's Student Portal (online), So Your Aid Will Be Applied to Your Bill (most students will not need loans if covered by the Promise)

Make a Plan to Purchase Books and Educational Supplies. Students who qualify for the Educational Supplies Award Can Use It at the WSCC Bookstore Online up to Two Weeks prior to the Start of Fall Classes.

Complete Required Paperwork for Financial Aid Related to Military Service (GI Bill, VA) with the Campus Coordinator for Vets (Military Benefit Recipients Only)

COLLEGE ACADEMIC TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS

GO FULL-TIME: Take 12-15 credits in the first year to understand what a full-time course load for the major or program requires. More credits could be overwhelming, while fewer may slow degree progress. If a student must work, part-time pairs best (20 hours or fewer) with a full class schedule.

ADD/DROP OPTIONS: There is a drop-add period at the beginning of each semester. Typically it is the first week (and maybe second) of each semester. If students have concerns about courseload, they should talk with an academic advisor during this time to see if it's recommended to drop a course. Dropping will remove a class from their schedule, their bill, and won't affect GPA or final transcript. (Dropping a course may affect financial aid)

BE RESOURCEFUL: Every class starts with a syllabus that informs students about all deadlines, test dates, and course requirements; Use the syllabus in the first week of class to plan out the semester. Every campus has tutoring, disabilities services and advisors. Colleges also have student emails and information portals to communicate with students. Read emails daily, check for updates in student portals at least weekly, and use the services on campus to do everything possible to meet requirements.

BE PROACTIVE: College is something that students pay for, but in college, students are not a customer. This means that they must be proactive about planning to complete classwork on-time (without waiting to be reminded), about complying with financial aid requirements by deadlines, and about understanding other responsibilities to stay enrolled. Professors and staff are at college to help, and they may remind a student of requirements and responsibilities once, but they will not seek students out or send multiple reminders like a high school teacher might. There's no financial refund for ignoring requirements or responsibilities. Every college has academic policies, which students should read so that they understand how to navigate their college academic experience.

BE SMART—GET SUPPORT: Start tutoring right away if unhappy with a grade on a quiz or assignment. If a student has had a past challenge in a subject, signing up for tutoring in that subject as soon as the class starts is recommended; it is not recommended to wait for a test or paper to get a disappointing grade as the clue to get a tutor. Success Coaches can help students with non-academic supports like motivation. Students can start tutoring or success coaching anytime, but earlier is better.

GPA RESCUE—COURSE WITHDRAWAL: College students can withdraw from a class (or classes) during their semester. Withdrawing will not harm their GPA, but they will still pay for the course(s). There is a deadline that typically happens some time after mid-terms. Talk with an advisor prior to completing a course withdrawal. If a student misses a course withdrawal deadline and gets a grade that negatively affects GPA or degree progress, talk with an advisor about remaining options (see GPA repair).

GPA REPAIR—SAP & COURSE REPEAT: Most colleges evaluate student academic progress (SAP) after each semester for both academic progress and financial aid purposes. All colleges require at least a 2.0 or better to be in good academic standing (C average) and continue as a student. (Some majors require a higher GPA.) Many colleges allow first-year students below a 2.0 to have a one-semester grace period for academic progress, which may place them on "academic warning" period after the first fall semester but not dismiss them from the college. This allows students to repair GPAs in the semester that follows by repeating failed courses, and to work with their advisor and academic support to create a stronger strategy to succeed. Students in any semester can repeat a course they've taken before, however grade replacement options may be limited to one repeat or two at the most.



YEAR 1 & YEAR 2 EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES AWARD

HOW DO I QUALIFY BY AUGUST 1ST?

1

Year 1 Award: Approved Scholar w/Completed FAFSA

In order to receive the Year 1 Educational Supplies Award (ESA) in fall, Scholars must be approved to use the Promise and have a completed FAFSA by August 1, prior to their first fall.

2

Year 1 Award: Attend Orientation In-Person

All WSCC students are required to complete online orientation after they apply to WSCC. The Promise requires Scholars to attend an in-person Summer Orientation Session ("Ramp It Up") prior to August 1st to qualify for the ESA.

3

Year 1 Award: Register for Full- Time (12+Credits)

Register for 12 or more credits prior to August 1st to qualify for the ESA. We recommend that you consult with an academic advisor to make sure the classes fit with your program.

1

Year 2 Award: Pass FYS 101 with a C or Better

In order to receive the Year 2 Educational Supplies Award (ESA) in fall of a scholar's first returning year, scholars must complete and pass First Year Seminar (FYS 101) with a C or better in (or prior to) their first year at WSCC. Returning students can qualify for the ESA once.

2

Year 2 Award: Complete Promise & FAFSA Renewals

All Promise Scholars are required to renew their Promise each year. To qualify for the Year 2 ESA, renewal of the Promise Scholarship and FAFSA must be completed by August 1 prior to a Scholar's second year.

3

Year 2 Award: Register for Full- Time (12+ Credits)

Scholars who wish to receive the ESA must be eligible for the Promise Scholarship coverage, which means that they must be registered for at least 12 credits after the fall drop period has passed. Registration must be in place by August 1 for a fall semester ESA to be awarded.

I've Qualified by August 1, Now How Do I Use the Funding?

The Promise Educational Supplies Award is available in the fall of a student's first year and second year, if they qualify. Students will be notified of fund availability in their approval/renewal letter. If all qualification steps are met by August 1, the funding will be available in your WSCC student account for use at the WSCC Online Bookstore in mid-August, prior to the start of the semester. **Use the online bookstore to order available books and supplies listed on your syllabus. Be sure to use your westshore.edu email address when ordering.** Funds will be available for bookstore use until the end of the drop-period. Unused funds will be distributed after the drop period in alignment with the WSCC Financial Aid disbursement process, for the purchase of other educational supplies. Those who use a partial award and then drop below 12 credits will forfeit any remaining award. The award will be distributed once per academic year to qualifying Promise Scholars, for a maximum of two years. The award may vary in amount from year-to-year. Related appeals are unavailable.

RESOURCES TO
SEEK OUT

**WHEN YOU
NEED SUPPORT**

ACADEMIC OR DEGREE-RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES LOCATED ON CAMPUS

Academic Advisor

In college, an advisor is your first stop for support. They can assist with academic needs like encouragement, degree path info and registration help. They can also refer you to other sources of support. Promise Scholars are encouraged to meet with an advisor each semester.

Visit: Schoenherr Campus Center, Student Services Office, 1st Floor

Call: 231-843-5510

Email: studentservices@westshore.edu

Your Professors

If you have questions about class materials or how to prepare, or if you're feeling confused or stressed out about managing course requirements, your professors are your best resource for getting the help you need for class. Office hours are time set aside for you to get help. Some courses also offer embedded tutoring--use this help!

Contact: By phone, on Canvas, by email (see your syllabus) or in their office during posted office hours (see your syllabus)

Academic Support

Students in all majors may need help to thrive personally and academically through proactive support, resource connection, and the development of essential skills.

Free academic support is available to all WSCC students.

Visit: Schoenherr Campus Ctr., 2nd Floor, Room 204

Call: 231-843-5556

Email: arozek@westshore.edu

Library

Reading and research are a major part of college-level coursework, and the Library is a great place to do both of these things. The text and digital resources available at WSCC's library are on par with any large public university. WSCC's library also offers study rooms for individuals and groups.

Visit: Schoenherr Campus Ctr., Library, 1st Floor

Call: 231-843-5869

Email: library@westshore.edu

Testing Center

Students can take admissions placement tests, college-credit tests like CLEP, and other career-related tests (GED, WorkKeys, etc.) at the Testing Center. Professors may request for tests to be proctored by staff and taken by students at this location. Students who receive testing accommodations can take tests through this Center.

Visit: Schoenherr Campus Ctr., Learning & Testing Ctr., 2nd Floor

Call: (231) 843-5528

Email: testingcenter@westshore.edu

RESOURCES TO SEEK OUT

WHEN YOU NEED SUPPORT

PERSONAL, EMOTIONAL, FINANCIAL, TRANSPORTATION & CHILDCARE SERVICES LOCATED ON-CAMPUS OR AROUND MASON COUNTY

Mental Health Support

Support for: Personal & emotional support & professional counseling
Contact: Erin Borgeson
Visit: Schoenherr Ctr., 2nd Floor
Call: 231-843-5561
Email: eborgeson@westshore.edu

The CARE Team

Support for: Referring yourself or a friend for help or support with anything personal, emotional, financial, or other need
Web: www.westshore.edu/campus-life/care-team/

Director of Access & Support

Support for: On-campus personal support, disability support & referral
Contact: Julie Dill
Visit: Schoenherr Ctr., 1st Floor
Call: 231-843-5942
Email: jdill@westshore.edu

Financial Aid

Support for: FAFSA help, student financial aid, scholarships
Contact: Candace Henry-Schroder, Kristi Hiltz, or Jessica Cooper
Visit: Schoenherr Ctr., 1st Floor
Call: 231-843-5518
Email: finaid@westshore.edu

Student Accounts

Support for: Paying your bill, payment plans, understanding bills
Contact: Mackenzie Mansour
Visit: Admin. & Conf. Building
Call: 231-843-5889
Email: businessoffice@westshore.edu

Promise Zone

Support for: Understanding your scholarship & related support
Web: MasonCountyPromise.org
Contact: Jody Maloney
Call: 231-239-8224
Email: jodym@ludington.org

Success Coaching

Support for: Motivation, getting connected, referrals to support when you don't know where to start
Visit: Talea Fournier in Student Services
Email: tfournier2@westshore.edu

Lakeshore Resource Network/United Way

Support for: Food Club, MI Works employment services, bill-pay help
Campus Contact: Molly McCarthy
Visit: Schoenherr Ctr., 2nd Floor
Call: 231-843-5722 (campus) or 211
Email: molly@masoncountyuw.org

West MI Community Mental Health

Support for: Behavioral health, disabilities, substance use services
Web: <https://www.wmcmhs.org/>
Visit: Office on Diana in Ludington
Call: 231-845-6294
Crisis Line: 1-800-992-2061

COVE

Support for: Support services & housing for women/children in domestic violence & abuse
Web: www.callcove.com
Visit: Ludington Ave. in Ludington
Call: 231-843-2541

Department of Health & Human Services

Support for: Food, heat, housing, childcare, healthcare, substance use, abuse reporting & cash assistance
Web: www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/
Visit: Office on Diana in Ludington
Call: 231-845-7391

Health Department & WIC

Support for: Child & Maternal Health Services, WIC food program
Web: DHD10.org
Visit: Office on Diana in Ludington
Call: 231-845-7381 (WIC-8584)

FOR THE PROMISE

step

1

FOR GPA-RELATED APPEALS: REACH OUT TO YOUR ADVISOR

Your advisor, or a student services professional, can help you understand if you might need a financial aid SAP (Satisfactory Academic Progress) appeal, identify what steps you can take to improve your academic performance, and discuss course repeats, major requirements, and navigating complicated processes in order to get you back on track to your degree.

step

2

FOR GPA RELATED APPEALS: SUBMIT YOUR SAP APPEAL

If you need a SAP appeal (GPA falls below 2.0 cumulative or you have successfully completed fewer than 67% of your cumulative credits), you can complete a SAP appeal with Financial Aid, using the forms provided on the WSCC Financial Aid SAP page. If this is required by WSCC, you should complete this before requesting a Promise appeal, if possible.

step

3

FOR ALL APPEALS: SUBMIT YOUR PROMISE APPEAL

The Promise appeal request is required for any student who is not meeting scholarship standards (Meeting SAP requirements for Financial Aid). Appeals should be submitted as soon as possible after a denial notice (or after a SAP appeal is approved) if applicable, at masoncountypromise.org

step

4

SEND DOCUMENTATION

All students requesting an appeal must submit a copy of their transcript (.pdf or .jpg) that includes all courses attempted and grades to info@masoncountypromise.org before an appeal can be considered.

If you feel that additional documentation (like a letter of support from a professional at WSCC, for example) could back up your appeal, you may send it, but it's not required.

step

5

WAIT FOR NOTICE

Before submitting your appeal request to the Appeals Committee of the Mason County Promise Board, the coordinator will reach out to you. Be sure to respond. When your request is fully completed, it will be submitted to the Appeals Committee for review and they will make a recommendation to the full Board. The Committee meets four times a year. Board decisions are final. Appeals are submitted to the Board without student identifying information, since all Promise Board meetings are public.

step

6

FOLLOW-UP ON RESULTS

You will be notified of the decision related to your appeal in the same week following the Board meeting at which your request was considered. You may attend these meetings but it is not required. If your appeal is approved, you can move forward with the Promise Scholarship. Up to three appeals can be requested (one per issue).