Longer-term Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise: College Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion

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Kalamazoo Promise: Basic Principles

First and foremost—A place-based economic development initiative centered on student scholarship

- **Place-based** – recipients must reside in the district and attend/graduate from Kalamazoo Public Schools (minimum of four years)
- **Universal** – every student who graduates & meets residency/attendance requirements is eligible
- **Generous** – covers 65% to 100% of tuition and fees for up to 4 years of college; indefinite duration (guaranteed at any point for at least the next 13 years)
- **Flexible** – may be used at any of 44 public colleges or universities in Michigan, including vocational education programs; and selected private colleges; may be used within 10 years
Intended Effects

- Attract **additional firms** that value a skilled workforce
- Attract **additional families** that value education
- Increase **skilled workforce**

- Increase **graduation rates**
- Increase **college application and admission rates**
- Increase **high school graduation rates**
- Improve **student outcomes and behavior**
- Increase **enrollment and retention rates**
Increase enrollment and retention rates...
NOTE: A new entrant is a student enrolled in KPS as of fall count day in the given school year who was not enrolled as of the fall count day in the preceding year. Average new entrants per year shown.
Origin of New Students Induced by the Promise to Enter KPS (%)
Exits

• Exit rates fall by one-third the first year after the Promise announcement and stay at the level over the next four years of the study.

• Proportion of exiting students going to neighboring districts fell from 80 percent before the Promise announcement to 50 percent afterward.

• White and Black student percentages stabilized after the Promise, whereas white percentage was expected to continue to decline
Improve student outcomes and behavior...
Data

• KPS administrative student data, including transcript information on GPA
• Counterfactual: length of enrollment in KPS and thus percentage of tuition and fees paid
  – Prior to Promise, enrollment decisions were made without knowledge of the benefit of the Promise
  – Arguably, changes in student achievement and behavior that are statistically linked to such exogenous tuition (enrollment) changes can be considered program effects
Promise benefit profile

Percent of Tuition Covered vs. Grade Level of Enrollment

- Grade Level of Enrollment: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
- Percent of Tuition Covered: 100, 80, 65, 40, 20

65% at Grade 11
Behavior Effects of Promise

Estimated effect of KP on days in suspension

Note: dots indicate statistical significance at 10 percent level, p<0.10
Behavior Effects of Promise

Estimated effect of KP on days in detention

Note: dots indicate statistical significance at 10 percent level, p<0.10
Achievement Effects of Promise

Estimated effect of KP on credits earned dummy

Note: dots indicate statistical significance at 10 percent level, p<0.10
Achievement Effects of Promise

Estimated effect of KP on GPA

Note: dots indicate statistical significance at 10 percent level, $p<0.10$
Increase college application and admission rates...

Increase college graduation rates...
Data

• KPS and Promise administrative data merged with National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker data
• Capture graduating cohorts of 2003 through 2013
• Core demographic data plus transcript data for GPA, AP, highest math completed
• Observe tenure data in KPS to construct binary eligibility indicator
• NSC data provide school and intensity of enrollment by term, earned degrees
• Promise data show eligibility and amounts paid (for future use)
Results

• Promise eligible students were 8-9 percentage points more likely to enroll in any college within 6 months of high school graduation.
  – This is from a base of 62 percent in the pre-Promise period.
• Promise eligible students were 9-11 percentage points more likely to enroll in a 4-year college within 6 months of high school graduation.
  – This is from a base of 40 percent in the pre-Promise period.
  – This means, on net, the increase in enrollment was more than fully concentrated among 4-years.
• Promise eligible students completed about 5 more credits (1.5 classes' worth) within 2 years of high school graduation.
  – This is from a base of 34 credits in the pre-Promise period.
• Promise eligible students were about 5 percentage points more likely to earn a bachelor's degree within 6 years of high school graduation
  – Although the result is not statistically significant.
  – This is from a base of 30 percent in the pre-Promise period.
Choice of Post-Secondary Schools

• One of the largest and most significant impacts is on choice of first institution attended.
• Two-thirds of the students who would have attended private colleges in Michigan or schools outside the state instead attended a Promise-eligible institution, generally a state university.
• Previous research, based on preferences revealed on ACT applications, shows an upgrading of schools
College Attendance Spring 2010

- KVCC: 27%
- WMU: 26%
- MSU: 11%
- UM: 9%
- Other: 27%
Measured Effects:

- Increased graduation rates, though not statistically significant
- Increased college application and admission rates
- Increase high school graduation rates
- Improved student outcomes and behavior
- Increased enrollment and retention rates

Effects estimated using district administrative data and used rigorous methodologies for constructing counterfactuals.
Possible Secondary Effects

- Increased in-migration of people with higher education and the desire to live in a community that places a high priority on education
  - Increase in housing values
  - Greater resources in area
  - Focus on development of the urban core
  - Benefits the entire region

- Increase in discretionary dollars in the region

- Greater demand for local higher education institutions

- Improvement in local educational institutions from increased resources and better alignment with goals and objectives
References


