




Place-Based Universal Scholarship Programs

An Economic Development Tool

School District of La Crosse
City of La Crosse
La Crosse County



La Crosse Community Collaboration

- Regular meetings between local government officials:
 - City of La Crosse
 - La Crosse County
 - School District of La Crosse
- Mission: To strengthen collaboration and improve communication between our organizations.
 - Work together to identify issues affecting the region and possible solutions.



Shifting Enrollments

The Challenging Trends Report indicated, we are shifting student enrollment around the County

- Total enrollment increase of 5.9% over past 15 years
 - La Crosse: 12% decrease
 - Holmen: 44% increase
- Total referenda of \$119,954,000 over the same 15 year period
- End result: minimal increase in school revenue, but at a significant expense to taxpayers



Educational Attainment

- 64% of La Crosse County residents 25 years and older have less than an associates degree from college
- Jobs requiring an associate degree (at a minimum) are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience





Place-Based, Universal Scholarships

- **Place-Based**: Students residing in a defined geographic area are eligible for the scholarship
- **Universal**: Available to all students in that defined geographic area
 - Financial need or academic merit are not factors



“Education Communities”

- Kalamazoo, MI announced the Kalamazoo Promise in November 2005.
- Others have followed with similar programs:
 - The El Dorado Promise
 - The Pittsburgh Promise
 - The Denver Scholarship Foundation
- More communities across the country are working on “promise” programs

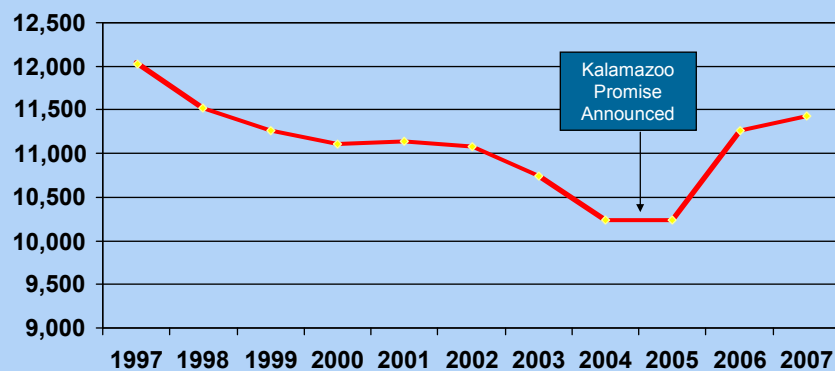


The Kalamazoo Promise

- Provides full tuition for graduates of the Kalamazoo School District to any school in the State of Michigan
- Has reversed the downward trend of enrollment in the school district
- Has made college a real possibility for all students



Impact: Reversal of Negative Enrollment Trend





Impact: Local Economic Development Benefits

- Taxable value of homes rose more than expected in 2008
- 2/3 of scholarship recipients stay local
- Economic development aligned around the vision of an “Education Community”
- Improved recruitment and retention of employees through community’s commitment to education

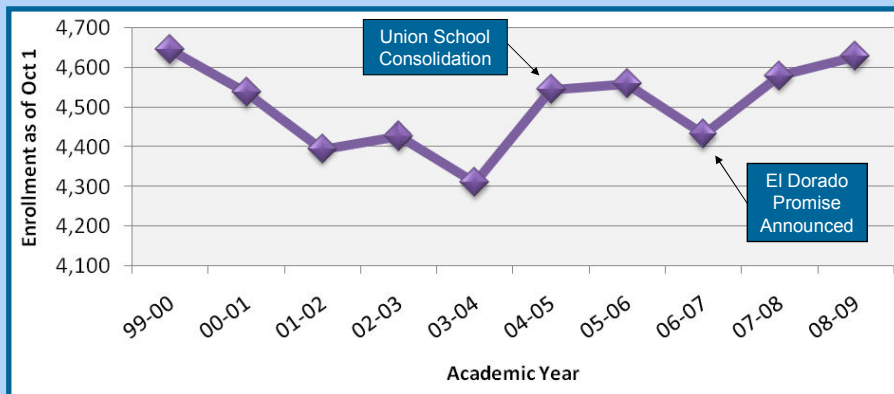


El Dorado Promise

- Announced in January 2007, this program replicates the Kalamazoo Promise
- El Dorado saw immediate positive effects on the community and public schools
- Realized the inseparable link between quality education and economic vitality of the region



Impact: Reversal of Negative Enrollment Trend



Impact: Local Economic Development Benefits

- Home sales in Union County up nearly 4% in 2007 - despite a 9% decrease statewide
- The City implemented an economic development initiative: “El Dorado Forward” – includes construction of a conference/convention center
- Local community college enrollment grew by 16 percent



Pittsburgh Promise

- Pittsburgh's goals focused around:
 - Reversing population & school enrollment declines;
 - Increasing high school completion rates and college preparedness
 - Creating a well-prepared workforce and eager community volunteers
- Program has just begun
 - results have yet to be realized



Denver Scholarship Foundation

- Mission: Inspire and empower students to achieve their post secondary education goals by providing the tools, knowledge, and financial resources for success
- Community leaders and private donors created a powerful resource for financial assistance and guidance
- Targeted to highest poverty schools



Denver Scholarship Foundation

- Future Centers – resource centers for promoting student success during and beyond high school
- Focus on preparedness for college
 - Assure scholarships are a good investment
 - Provide application assistance



What about a.... La Crosse Promise

- Feasibility study completed in 2009
- Supported by City, County & School District along with 13 other businesses and organizations
- Conducted by the W. E. Upjohn Institute
- Includes:
 - ✓ Strengths & weaknesses analysis for our region
 - ✓ Options for a La Crosse program model
 - ✓ Cost of implementation
 - ✓ Economic & fiscal impact estimates
 - ✓ Identifies the cost of inaction
 - ✓ Next steps for possible implementation



Recommendation

(Upjohn Institute)

2009 feasibility study indicated that a successful program in La Crosse should include three components:

1. Universal, place-based scholarship program
2. Future Centers – to provide new resources for college preparedness
3. Integrated community development efforts – providing new housing and employment opportunities for projected growth



Expected Outcomes

(Upjohn Institute)

- Population & enrollment growth in school district
 - Year 1 estimates:
 - 845 new residents
 - 240 new households
 - 360 new students
 - Year 10 estimate:
 - Total enrollment increases of about 850 students



Expected Outcomes

- Positive fiscal impact on city and county, and stabilization of area's tax base
 - New development
 - Increased value of existing development
- Increased revenues for the schools
 - Development of new tax base
 - Increase in state aid
- Increased ability to retain a skilled, educated workforce
- Boost to community image & identity
- Increased disposable incomes to support greater local retail activity



Return on Investment

- Create an economic development pull and new job opportunities
- Make college more accessible for all students
- Increase real estate values
- Improve ability to attract and retain top-level talent for employment
- Reverse challenging economic trends
- Improve quality of life throughout the region



Return on Investment (continued)

- Turn around troubled neighborhoods
- Increase the efficiencies of local government
- Raise recognition as an “Education Community”
- Improve vitality and economic condition of the region



What about a.... La Crosse Promise



Everyone Does!!



What about a...
La Crosse Promise

“Study after study indicates that an investment in education adds to the quality of our community and the quality of life for all its citizens.”

- Dr. Janice Brown,
From *“The Power of a Promise”*

