



MINNESOTA STATE
Board of Trustees

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

NAME: Outreach and Engagement Committee

DATE: October 17, 2023

TITLE: Promoting the North Star Promise and Affordability

Action

Review and Discussion

This item is required by policy

PRESENTERS

Noelle Hawton, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Paul Shepherd, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

Sharon Pierce, President, Minneapolis College

PURPOSE

The Outreach and Engagement Committee will learn how Minnesota State is driving awareness of the opportunity for free tuition as a result of the North Star Promise program. In addition, committee members will learn about efforts to engage with prospective students and their influencers about overall affordability and the value proposition at the colleges and universities of Minnesota State.

The North Star Promise has foundation donors questioning their giving practices, and the committee members will hear from Minneapolis College about how they're keeping donors engaged.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

North Star Promise Scholarship

- Available Fall 2024
- Creates a tuition and fee-free pathway to higher education for eligible Minnesota residents
- Last dollar program covering the balance of tuition and fees remaining after other scholarships, grants, stipends, and tuition waivers have been applied
- Estimated to help 15,000-20,000 students in first year of scholarship

Who Qualifies?

- Must be a Minnesota resident

- Attend a Minnesota State college or university, University of Minnesota, or Tribal College
- Adjusted gross income under \$80,000
- Not be in default on a state or federal student loan
- New students, returning students, transfer students
- Be enrolled taking at least one credit
- No age limit
- Meet satisfactory academic progress standards
- Have not earned a baccalaureate degree
- Be enrolled in a program or course of study that applies to a degree, diploma, or certificate

North Star Promise Scholarship Program Operations

- Complete the FAFSA or Minnesota Dream Act application
- The college or university will assess the student's eligibility on a term-by-term basis and award the scholarship to all eligible students
- North Star Promise administered like State of Minnesota Grant/Financial Aid program
- Schools will identify
- Schools will calculate the award
- Schools will make the award
- Schools will make a request to OHE for reimbursement

Office of Higher Education Marketing for North Star Promise Scholarship

- Basic information on website: <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mpg.cfm?pageid=2590>
- Fact sheets created in English and Spanish
- Virtually met with financial aid directors on campuses
- Working on hiring a vendor to create marketing assets to be shared with Minnesota State and the University of Minnesota
- Minnesota State marketing team is coordinating with OHE team

Minnesota State Marketing for North Star Promise Scholarship

- State Fair
- North Star Promise Scholarship Toolkit shared with colleges and universities
- National College Fair
- Minnesota State Month
- Tuition Freeze Toolkit shared with colleges and universities
- Testimonial marketing
- New Marketing Frame: Minnesota State Promise
Minnesota State promises to provide an extraordinary education that is affordable, accessible, enhances quality of life, and ensures prosperous communities.

Our promise to you:

- **FREE** tuition and fees for all Minnesota students with a family income under \$80,000 with the North Star Promise Scholarship (starting Fall of 2024)
- **Tuition freeze** at each of the 33 colleges and universities of Minnesota through spring 2025

- **Thousands of scholarships available** based on areas of study, high demand careers, financial need, academic excellence, and more!
- The **LOWEST** tuition in the state
- **Wrap-around support** for basic needs, including campus food pantries, help with transportation, housing and childcare assistance programs, and mental health resources
- Assigned **academic and faculty advisors** to guide students and keep them on track for graduation
- **Caring, engaged faculty** who personally teach classes
- **Free tutoring and writing support services** to ensure students understand and are prepared for their classes
- Specific resources for **first-generation students** (those who are the first in their family to attend college)
- Seamless **transfer pathways** from our colleges to our universities
- **Credit for prior learning** and career experience to save students time and money
- Academic programs in the **trades, sciences, and liberal arts**
- **On campus and online** classes and academic programs
- 54 campuses across the state — students can **attend school anywhere in the state** of Minnesota
- **Flexibility** to meet students' schedules, including taking one class at a time or going to school full-time

Affordability messaging

- Testimonials
- Video Advertising
- Net costs in guidebook and web graphics

Addressing Donor Concerns

- Donors at foundations across the state are questioning the need to donate funds to support students due to the North Star Promise.
- Unfortunately, tuition and fees alone won't make college possible for many students who must make a choice between staying in school or feeding themselves or their families or paying rent. They need additional support to persist and graduate with credentials that will provide a long-term, family-sustaining wage.
- At Minneapolis College, foundation leaders are speaking with individual donors about supporting the non-tuition/fee needs of students to ensure they can persist.
- A recent survey of students revealed that the major reason students stop-out of a program is due to juggling work (often 2 jobs) and school or managing personal and family obligations.
- Many Minneapolis College students have experienced food insecurity and homelessness, foster care, are low income, first-generation, parents themselves, or have newly immigrated to this country. These students require basic needs support to take advantage of the North Star Scholarship Program.

TRUSTEE DISCUSSION

How can these efforts be further leveraged?

- For further awareness among those who qualify for the North Star Promise
- For those who don't qualify
- For foundation donors