What is it?
This Promise Pathway Program is designed to address the financial barriers for Washington County students who have the academic readiness and commitment to succeed in college, but lack all the necessary financial resources to do so, even if they qualify for federal financial aid. The primary goal of the Promise Pathway Program is to assist eligible students in earning a college credential at HCC (a letter of recognition, program certificate, or associate degree), through financial assistance and academic guidance.

Who benefits?
Officials at HCC and WCPS are working together to identify and recruit Washington County students who are appropriate candidates for the program. Public, private, and home-schooled students living in Washington County can apply to the program, with the support of their parents and school officials, as early as sixth grade, as program “prospects.” Student prospects will need to do well in school to be admitted in the program. They will not receive the financial support promise until 10th grade or later, when the student is formally awarded early admission status into an HCC program of study.

What is the criteria for admission?
The primary criteria for admission into and retention within the program are maintenance of a minimum 2.5 GPA in high school and at HCC, documented family financial need, commitment to complete the FAFSA application, and intent to complete an HCC program. All applicants must apply for and use all available federal and state aid, as well as external scholarships they have, before the “promise dollars” are awarded.

How is the program funded?
The program is being funded through current resources and ongoing fundraising and grants development efforts of Hagerstown Community College and the HCC Foundation.

How many will be served by the program?
HCC is estimating a total of 70 students being identified and actively involved in 2017, of which approximately 35 will be in middle school, 20 in high school, and 15 who will graduate from high school in June of 2017. These 15 graduates, along with approximately 10 junior and senior high school students who have been admitted to the program in high school and are academically ready for early college courses, are projected to be registered in courses for fall 2017 and/or spring 2018.

To apply or learn more:
Visit www.hagerstowncc.edu/promise or contact Samantha Willard at 240-500-2340 or slwillard@hagerstowncc.edu.

*Those who are uncertain about meeting financial need criteria are encouraged to apply.
What is the application process?

The Promise Pathway Program has a two-tiered application process. Washington County students can apply as early as sixth grade to become prospects. Prospect applicants will need to do well in school to be admitted to the program as prospects. Prospects will not receive the financial support promise until 10th grade or later, when prospect students are invited to apply for a Promise Scholarship through the HCC Foundation. If accepted, prospect students will transition to Promise Pathway Program scholarship students and awarded early admission status into an HCC program of study.

HCC’s Promise Pathway Program first round of funded participants will be eligible to enroll in HCC as early as Fall 2017 as ESSENCE students, STEMM Technical Middle College students, or as part-time/full-time undergraduate students; these students’ cost of attendance will be funded through the Promise Pathway Program.

Priority Prospect Application Process

**Step 1:** Students complete the Student Information Form. Parents/Legal Guardians complete the Parent/Legal Guardian Information Form and Consent to Release Information Form.

**Step 2:** Forms completed in Step 1 are turned into the school Principal’s Office. Home-schooled students can mail their forms directly to HCC. Priority consideration to complete Step 2 is the end of April 2017.

**Step 3:** School Principal completes the Recommendation Form and returns all forms and student information to HCC. This step should be completed by the end of May 2017.

**Step 4:** School Principals, students and Parents/Legal Guardians will be notified in early June 2017 regarding application status.

**Step 5:** Accepted prospect students who are rising 10th-12th graders and recent high school graduates are required to participate in the annual Promise Pathway Program Summer Bridge Program to take place July 13-14 from 8:30 am-4:30 pm on HCC’s campus. Families are expected to provide transportation and at least one parent/legal guardian should participate with their student on Friday, July 14 from 3:00 pm-4:30 pm. Details about the Summer Bridge Program will be sent after students are accepted as prospects in early June.

Rising 6th-9th graders will be required to participate in two bridge program meetings during the 2017-18 school year, exact dates and location TBD. Rising 6th-9th graders will receive details from HCC about these meetings in the fall.

The program will create a new, viable college financing solution for local economically disadvantaged students to earn a post-secondary education, elevating family incomes and strengthening the local workforce.