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As the school year comes to an end, high school seniors are more urgent as they search for financial aid. Money is important and is taken into account when deciding which colleges to attend. Detroit Public School students take advantage of local opportunities, like the Detroit Compact Scholarship, Wade H. McCree Jr. Incentive Scholars Program, and the Detroit College Promise.

Detroit Compact, which began in 1990, covers tuition and fees at over thirty Michigan colleges and universities. To qualify, students must attend participating middle schools, score at least a 21 or 990 (critical reading and math) on the ACT or SAT respectively, maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average with a 95% attendance rate, and be accepted to a participating college/university.

Middle schools advertise the program as a guaranteed college scholarship. While these are popular spoken assumptions, some recent high school graduates never received the scholarship.

"When Michigan State University released my financial aid letter, I saw that Compact only gave me \$27. Then, they took that away and it was completely removed from my aid," said Renaissance 2010 alumna Rokeyta Roberson.

Like Roberson, other graduating seniors have experienced similar problems. Compact headquarters explained, however, that their funds are supplementary to other forms of financial aid received and are only provided if necessary.

"Because I had won the Free Press scholarship (\$24,000 recommended to be spread equally over four years), I could no longer use Compact," said Roberson. "They should make it clear that those are the requirements for receiving the money. I feel as if they deceived us."

"The Detroit Compact funds are a part of the student's total financial aid package. If the student's financial aid is such that it is not enough to cover the cost of tuition, the Compact Program is built in to ensure that the cost of the students' tuition is covered, depending upon the college/university's agreement," said Dr. Barbara K. Smith, Director of Guidance Counseling and the Detroit Compact Program.

To keep Compact, college students must attend school full-time, maintain a 2.5 grade point average, submit a transcript to headquarters each semester, and file for financial aid every year. Compact cannot be used with the Wade McCree scholarship at Michigan State University and other institutions.

Beginning in 1986, Wade McCree provides tuition for up to 32 credit hours every year in college (four year maximum). Only students who have completed middle school in DPS with a 3.0 or better, received a recommendation from middle school principal and counselor, and passed the Metropolitan Achievement Test with excellent reading and math scores are eligible. A 3.0, at least a 21 on the ACT, and admission to a Michigan public university or four-year college, are required.

Schools throughout DPS have also pushed high school students to apply for the Detroit College Promise scholarship, which began operations in 2009. Though \$500 awards were offered to any student residing in Detroit from December 2010 through graduation, these awards may have to be reduced.

"This year, we have about 3800 students compared to 400 last year, because last year we were only at 6 schools, and this year we are at all 33 DPS high schools," said Detroit College Promise Executive Director Dr. Nat Pernick. "Since we have not yet raised 10 times as much money as last year, we probably will not be able to give as much as last year, but everyone will get something."