CASS KICKSTART TO CAREERS – FAQs

What is Cass Kickstart To Careers?

Cass Kickstart To Careers is a 501(c)3 organization designed to assist with post-secondary education expenses. The program is managed by the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, 111 Days Avenue, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3521, with partner support from Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union, the Cassopolis Public Schools. Each kindergarten student attending kindergarten within the Cassopolis Public Schools has the opportunity to be the beneficiary of an account at Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union with a $25 deposit from Cass Kickstart To Careers.

What type of account is it?

It is a Children’s Savings Account (CSA). This means the funds remain on deposit until the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation approves your withdrawal for future college and training expenses or until maturity. It is a deposit only account.

Do I own the account?

No. The Michigan Gateway Community Foundation is the owner of the account, but the funds are held in trust for you when you need them for post-secondary education.

Do I have to provide my child’s social security number?

No. Since the account is for the benefit of, but not owned by, the student, a unique number, other than the child’s social security number, will be assigned to each child’s account for identification purposes.

Does my account earn interest?

Yes, your account earns interest.

How is my interest paid to me?

Interest will be compounded each calendar quarter and will be credited to your account each calendar quarter.

Is there a minimum balance to open the account?

No. Cass Kickstart To Careers has opened each account with a deposit of $25. You may add to your child’s account by making deposits of any size at Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union, and identifying the deposit by your child’s name and unique account number.
What fees will be charged to my account?

Your account is NOT subject to balance or transaction fees. It has been set up at Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union as a free account as a service to you and the community.

May I or my family members make additional deposits?

Yes, additional deposits are encouraged and accepted at any time.

How do I make deposits to my account?

You can come into any Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union branch to make a deposit or mail a deposit to Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union, 1050 East State Street, Cassopolis, MI 49031. If you would like to set up recurring deposits, please see any Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union representative. You will need to provide your child’s name and unique account number for each deposit.

Are there limits on how much I may deposit?

No. This is a savings account for the benefit of students. Only the limits imposed by Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union would apply.

How do I make withdrawals from my account?

The Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation will approve your qualified withdrawals for college expenses after your graduation from Cassopolis Public Schools.

What income taxes will be owed?

No income taxes will be owed on the withdrawal of the account if 100% of the funds are used for post-secondary education. If the funds are not used for post-secondary education income tax will be owed on the portion of the withdrawal that are interest earnings.

What if I don’t use all the funds in my account?

If there are any funds remaining after students turn age 25, you may request a withdrawal for the total of your private fund balance, including any earned interest.

What if I graduate from college and still have funds left in my account?

You can contact the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation and complete an Education Completion Withdrawal form.
What if my family encounters a hardship?

Please contact the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation to discuss the possibility of an early withdrawal of private funds. Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, as account custodian, will determine the eligibility of non-qualified withdrawals.

What if I join the military before college?

Please contact the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation to arrange an extension to the withdrawal date of your account.

Do I or my parents have to claim the interest earned as income?

Interest earned on private deposits NOT used for educational purposes may be subject to IRS reporting; please seek professional tax advice.

Are my deposits tax deductible?

No, they are not.

How will I know what my balance is?

Only Michigan Gateway Community Foundation can access account information as owner of the account. You may contact the Foundation for updates on balance during our regular business hours. We recommend that you keep track of your own deposit activity.

Is there a matching program available?

Yes. The match is dependent upon funds available and will be paid to your fund.

What if I move?

If you wish to keep the account, you are still considered a participant in the program and can continue to make deposits and request withdrawals for post-secondary education needs. It is your responsibility to keep your contact information current by contacting the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation.

What if students no longer attend Cassopolis Public Schools?

If you wish to keep the account, you are still considered a participant in the program and can continue to make deposits and request withdrawals for post-secondary education needs. It is your responsibility to keep your contact information current by contacting the Cass Kickstart Administrator at Michigan Gateway Community Foundation.

Who can inquire about my account?
A parent or guardian can be added to the account as an Account Contact. This will allow them to inquire about balances and update your address with the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation.

NOTES:

1. The size of the matching dollar benefit will be determined by such things as funds available, number of eligible enrolled students, and a giving incentive minimum amount by the student.
2. All kindergarten students may open an account.
3. Students may commence withdrawals from their account when they graduate from Cassopolis Public Schools. If a student leaves the district before graduation, the funds in the account deposited by the student may be withdrawn. A portion of this withdrawal may be taxable income. Consult your tax professional. The initial deposit from Cass Kickstart To Careers and any matching dollars will be kept at the Foundation and redirected to new students entering kindergarten.

Cass Kickstart Administrator
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