



# SCHOOL EQUITY CAUCUS

*Making a difference for the public school children of Michigan*

121 W Allegan • Lansing, Michigan 48933  
www.schoolequitycaucus.org  
schoolequitycaucus@gmail.com  
989-551-9245

October 4, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

Fall is upon us and the leaves have begun to turn - one of my favorite times of year in this great state of Michigan! I hope this newsletter finds you well.

## **Fall Conference**

Thanks so much to those who were able to make it to our School Equity Caucus luncheon at the MASA fall conference. We had a nice turnout of about 80 members and guests. Thank you to Diane Dick at MASA for the help in coordinating the event, and to our sponsors - Christman Construction, American Fidelity, and Northland Securities - for their generous donations and support.

## **Legislative Update**

Our School Equity lobbyist, Matt Kurta, offers the following update regarding last week's return to action in Lansing. This will likely signal the end of activity until the lame duck session kicks off following the election.

MPSERS:

[House Bill 5803](#), sponsored by Rep. Matt Koleszar (D-Plymouth), tallied a final approval by votes of 56-52 and 20-18 in the House and Senate, respectively, and was signed by the Governor this week.

At the start of the session, HB 5803 and SB 911, sponsored by Sen. Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shores), were both potential bills on the Legislature's agenda to codify the 5.75% MPSERS rate reduction into law and eliminate the 3% retiree health care contribution requirement for public school employees hired

prior to September 4, 2012. This legislation will take effect next spring, as it was not granted immediate effect.

While the 5.75% reduction included in the FY 2024-2025 School Aid budget will now be made permanent, remember that school districts are still required to collect and remit the 3% retiree health care contribution until September 30, 2025, as that 3% contribution requirement will be repealed at the start of the 2025-2026 state fiscal year. The FY 2024-25 School Aid budget appropriates \$181.5 million in one-time School Aid revenue to reimburse eligible public school employees for their 3% contribution, an amount estimated to cover a full year of costs.

Supplemental:

The Legislature also sent [HB 5503](#) to the Governor's desk, which is a supplemental appropriations bill that would appropriate \$125 million in one-time School Aid funding to Section 31aa for per-pupil school safety and mental health funding. The supplemental also includes \$1 million to establish a tip line for students to anonymously report improperly stored firearms accessible to a minor and have MDE develop educational materials on the topic to distribute to school districts.

HB 5503 passed 98-11 in the House, and passed 23-15 in the Senate. However, as HB 5503 did not receive the necessary 2/3 vote in the Senate for immediate effect, it will not take effect until 90 days after the end of the current two-year legislative session sometime at the end of this year. It is likely the Governor will host a signing ceremony to commemorate this action next week.

Dyslexia:

[SB 567 and 568](#) passed the House today by votes of 100-8 and 99-10, respectively. Following amendments in the House, the Senate was able to concur shortly after.

## **Member Survey**

Special thanks to those who participated in our School Equity Survey. We had a response rate of nearly 40%, which is great by survey standards, and we appreciate the time you took to make your voice heard.

As promised, we are sharing the results of the survey with our members in the accompanying document. Our Board met this past week and had some good discussion around this feedback and how to use it to focus and improve our work. The Board asked that Matt Kurta and I spend some additional time working with the data and to return with some goal recommendations at our November meeting, which we will do. Stay tuned for more on that.

That concludes this month's newsletter. Our next newsletter will follow the election with detailed updates on the results and implications for school funding equity. It should be an interesting time across our state and nation. Remember to get out and vote!

We wish you a great month of October and remind you to reach out with any specific questions, concerns, and ideas that the Caucus can address.

Best regards,

Brian Keim  
Executive Director

(989) 551-9245  
[schoolequitycaucus@gmail.com](mailto:schoolequitycaucus@gmail.com)