



SCHOOL EQUITY CAUCUS

Making a difference for the public school children of Michigan

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Dear Colleagues:

The month of October was extremely quiet in Lansing, with very little happening legislatively. Therefore, this month's newsletter will focus on just a few other brief items...

1. The 2022 General Election is Almost Here!

It seems like it has been a long time coming, but Michigan voters will head to the polls next Tuesday to vote for a wide variety of elected officials, as well as determining the fate of three ballot proposals. The complexion of these races has continued to change over the last few weeks, as is usually the case as election day draws near.

Mid-term elections in Michigan direct much attention to the races for Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, and seats in Michigan Legislature. This year is no exception as ever-growing campaign budgets are inundating the airwaves. Adding to the dynamic this particular election cycle is the fact that these are the first elections conducted using the new district lines for the US House of Representatives along with both the State Senate and House.

While media coverage tends to focus on those races, a number of other positions often fly under the radar including the races for State Supreme Court, State Board of Education, university boards, and other judicial positions. Often, voters simply choose to leave those portions of the ballot blank because they do not know enough about the individuals involved.

And, of course, there are also an enormous number of local races and ballot proposals on the docket, including local school board races that have, in some cases, seen heightened political tension and reports of thousands of dollars being spent.

Of note for those in the educational arena are the races for the State Board of Education, which has oversight of public education under our State Constitution. Michigan is one of only eleven states with a popularly-elected board. While the legislature has gradually gained more and more authority through legislation and funding, the Board has the responsibility to implement policy passed into law at the state and federal levels and hires the State Superintendent to assist in this regard (as is the case in only five other states). Unlikely many other states, this means that the Michigan State Superintendent fills an independent constitutional role and does not report directly to the Governor.

Barring the need to fill partial terms, every two years the State Board of Education has two seats up for election out of the eight seats in total. Individuals elected to the State Board serve for eight years. Democrats currently have a 5-2 majority on the Board, with one vacancy that came about after the resignation of another Democrat in July whose seat has not yet been filled by Governor Whitmer.

The two seats appearing on the ballot this year are currently held by Democrats, with Pamela Pugh, the current Board Vice President as the only incumbent seeking reelection. (Board President Cassandra Ulbrich, a Democrat, is not running for reelection.)

For those interested in more information, the links below will take you to the websites of the four major-party State Board candidates:

- [Tamara Carlone](#) (Republican)
- [Pamela Pugh](#) (Democrat, incumbent)
- [Mitchell Robinson](#) Democrat)
- [Linda Lee Tarver](#) (Republican)

2. Scholarship/Stipend Applications Now Available

The MI Future Educator program was created as part of this year's state budget in an effort to help improve the number of students in the teacher preparation pipeline, in hopes of giving districts a larger number of qualified teachers to select from at hiring time. As of today, applications are available for both of the following programs:

- **MI Future Educator Fellowship** ([Website link](#))
The MI Future Educator Fellowship provides aspiring teachers assistance in the form of a scholarship to help eliminate or lower the cost of tuition for their educator training program. These scholarships cover up to \$10,000 annually of the cost of tuition and fees, and are renewable for up to three years. In return, students receiving the scholarships commit to teaching in Michigan classroom for at least three years after graduation or they must return the funds.

To qualify, students must:

- Be a Michigan resident working toward their first teacher certification
- Start their teacher training in the fall of 2022 or later
- Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Apply through the [Michigan Student Scholarships and Grants \(MiSSG\) portal](#)
- Submit their [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)

- **MI Future Educator Stipend** ([Website link](#))

The MI Future Educator Stipend provides compensation for full-time student teachers. Starting fall 2022, student teachers can earn \$9,600 while they complete their final semester(s) of teacher preparation.

To qualify, students must:

- Be participating in a full-time student teaching program through a Michigan teacher preparation program

- Be unpaid by their local district
- Apply through the [Michigan Student Scholarships and Grants \(MiSSG\) portal](#)

Please be sure to share this information with any students you know that may be interested in pursuing a career in education!

3. **State Revenue Update**

As the state closes out the 2021-22 budget year, the September state revenue report continued to show strong state revenue collections for both the month and for the year-to-date, keeping overall revenue for the year well ahead of projections from the May Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference (CREC). Due to accounting rules, the final numbers for the 2021-22 budget year will not be finalized for some time yet, but the picture continues to look very promising.

At the present time, 2021-22 revenue in the state's School Aid Fund looks to be running more than \$400 million ahead of the level predicted at the May CREC, while the state's General Fund (GF/GP) is faring even better. The GF/GP currently looks to be running approximately \$1 billion ahead of projections from the May CREC.

Leading the way were receipts from the personal income tax, with net 2021-22 year-to-date income tax collections running some 21.9% ahead of where they were a year ago at this time. While strong increases were seen nearly everywhere across the board for the year, the sales tax and corporate income tax also performed particularly well, running 14.4% and 19.6% ahead of last year respectively.

The next CREC will be coming up shortly after the New Year, and should provide an interesting look at whether these trends will continue in the face of the latest economic news.

That's it for this brief update! We'll be watching to see what choices Michigan voters make next Tuesday. It should be interesting!

As always, please be in touch with questions or concerns.



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