



## **Resolution of Support: School Finance Research Collaborative**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Constitution states that The legislature shall maintain and support a system of free public elementary and secondary schools as defined by law, and

WHEREAS, Michigan ranks 32nd in student achievement nationwide, according to recent research; and

WHEREAS, the Governors 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education Commission states that the urgency could not be greater regarding the falling K-12 performance, further stating that Michiganders underperform their peers, ranking 41st on fourth-grade reading performance nationally, that is simply not true that these unacceptable statewide outcomes are a result of changing demographics as Michigan's higher-income and white students are also among the worst performing in the country and that Michigan is one of only three states that has seen a decline in fourth-grade reading achievement since 2003 ; and

WHEREAS, the Commission further stated that Michigan needs to efficiently distribute resources, and efficient distribution requires a transparent calculation of what it costs to meet performance standards, that students with greater educational needs should be provided with additional resources where needed to have an equal chance of meeting the performance standards ; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 the State of Michigan conducted a comprehensive statewide cost study (Adequacy Study) to determine the sufficient resources per pupil to provide a public education that enables a pupil to demonstrate successful completion, in terms of proficiency, of all of the credit requirements of the Michigan merit standard and to determine whether public resources being committed to public education are distributed in such a way that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed in school; and

WHEREAS, the State funded Adequacy Study produced and provided valuable information but used only one methodology and did not fully examine special education costs due to data availability issues, did not examine preschool, charter schools, career and technical education, the impact of high concentrations of special needs students and the cost challenges faced by geographically isolated schools and or very small school districts; and

WHEREAS, the way we fund Michigan's public schools is fundamentally broken; and that Michigan needs to develop funding formulas that efficiently and effectively distribute these resources to the proper entities to support student success; and

WHEREAS, we must reexamine our approach so ALL students, regardless of their circumstances, can achieve and succeed; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative is a broad-based, diverse and bipartisan group of business leaders and education experts, from Metro Detroit to the U.P., who agree it's time to determine the cost of student achievement for all students Pk-12 and then change how our schools are funded; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative has brought together top industry experts to reexamine our approach to how we fund Michigan's schools to fully prepare ALL students for jobs and success; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative is supporting Michigan's first comprehensive school adequacy study using multiple methodologies to determine the cost of educating a student; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative has hired the nation's top two school finance research firms which have a proven ability to combine the data generated from multiple research approaches to examine cost issues associated with key factors, including preschool, poverty, special education, Career and Technical Education, English Language Learners, at-risk students, and schools that are geographically isolated; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative study will be the only statewide study ever performed to include a statewide panel to examine all the costs faced by charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the research team will work with 20 educator panels involving more than 240 Michigan educators including teachers, teacher leaders, principals, superintendents, school business officials, special education directors and other specialists; and

WHEREAS, adequacy studies have been performed in more than 30 other states over the past 15 years, with over 90% of these studies using multiple methodologies, as Step One in considering any comprehensive school reform; and

WHEREAS, many states have conducted multiple adequacy studies to make sure lawmakers have the very best, most reliable and valid information on what it costs to educate a student; and

WHEREAS, the School Finance Research Collaborative adequacy study is expected to be completed in early 2018, and will provide lawmakers and the public with the best, most accurate and most reliable information on what it truly costs to educate ALL Michigan students.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Vicksburg Community Schools supports the School Finance Research Collaborative and its efforts to determine the true cost of educating ALL Michigan public school students (pk-12).