



MASA Legislative Update

Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators

August 7, 2020

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Summary

This week in Lansing ended up being a light week for the legislature. Initially, our Government Relations team was prepared for a long week of education policy discussions. We anticipated a heated debate in the Senate about the so-called Return to Learn package. However, as you know by now everything this week in Lansing was canceled after a member of the Senate tested positive for COVID-19.

To that end, yesterday MASA in concert with MAISA, MASB, and MASSP [released a statement](#) calling on the legislature to take action to ensure that Michigan schools can operate safely and efficiently in the 2020-21 school year. It's time to set any legislative changes coming for the 2020-2021 school year into law so that district leaders have certainty.

Finally, a big congratulations to all our members who had successful ballot initiatives on Tuesday. Despite some setbacks, communities across the state demonstrated their commitment to supporting investments in our public schools.

As always, please [contact MASA](#) with any questions or concerns. We hope to see you next week at [MASA's Virtual Fall Conference!](#)

MDE Releases Education Equity Grant Application

In early May, the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) grant application was approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for the Education Equity Grant Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, under the umbrella of the CARES Act. MDE was awarded \$389,796,984 in federal dollars.

MDE previously stated that of those federal dollars, 90% will be awarded to eligible local school districts based on the 2019-20 Title I, Part A funding formula, as required by the CARES Act. Eligible districts were able to begin the application process for these funds on May 8, 2020.

Further, **MDE announced they would reserve up to 10 percent of the remaining state ESSER fund award to establish an education equity fund.** This week, [MDE released](#) the grant application for those dollars.

Starting on August 4, 2020 all school districts and public-school academies can apply for these funds. Priority for funding will be given to 332 districts that have been identified as meeting at least one of the following need-based criteria; the district is over 85% economically disadvantaged, at

least one school in the district is over 85% economically disadvantaged, the district is over 20% students with disabilities, and the district is over 10% English learners. A district's standing is determined as information that was reported during the 2019-20 school year.

Applications are due no later than September 30, 2020 and can be submitted in the Michigan Electronic Grant System Plus (MEGS+).

Register Today: Town Hall with Dr. Khaldun

MASA will be hosting a **members-only Town Hall meeting with Dr. Joneigh S. Khaldun**, Chief Medical Executive and Chief Deputy Director for Health and Human Services for the State of Michigan, along with a panel of local public health officials, on **Friday, Aug. 14 at 10 a.m.** [Click here](#) to reserve your spot for the webinar and be sure to bring your health-related questions for Dr. Khaldun and the panel.

ICYMI: MDE Updates

MEMO #068-20

Special Populations Conference 2020

The Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) 2020 Special Populations Conference will be offered in a new and reimagined setting. In accordance with recommendations from Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services designed to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the 2020 Special Populations Conference will not be held in-person. [Read the full memo.](#)

MEMO #069-20

Supporting Hard-to-Fill Positions with Teaching Candidates

Students enrolled in teacher preparation programs have long been an underutilized resource for filling vacancies when a district is having difficulty finding fully certified teachers—particularly in a time of teacher shortage and during a pandemic. While certainly not as advantageous as their fully certified counterparts, student teachers may be beneficial to school districts as employees in certain limited circumstances due to their demonstrated commitment to the teaching profession and essential entry-level knowledge and skills for working with students. Though this approach should not be used to circumvent the hiring of fully credentialed staff, or be implemented in a widespread manner, hiring student teachers does provide a choice that is better than hiring an individual with no training or no experience. [Read the full memo.](#)



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