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Partners in building full potential

COLLABORATION INTEGRITY INNOVATION SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY DATA-DRIVEN

Board Report---June 12, 2025

- **Policy Update:** We have a second reading and approval today for a policy addition to Article VI-Finances. The Office of Career Technical Education has required districts to have a policy on CTE expenditure practices. This will be a new policy and this required language will become Article VI, Section 21.
- **Property Transfer Update:** The property owners of the recently denied property transfer request between Belding Area Schools, Lowell Area Schools, Kent ISD and Ionia County ISD elected to appeal the denial to the state as is their right. On May 22, a preliminary hearing for the appeal was conducted with an administrative law judge assigned to the case. The appeal was progressed to a hearing scheduled for July 22.

District legal counsel spoke with the legal representation of the property owners on June 4. It has been indicated that the owners wish to end their appeal and will be filing for a dismissal. We should be receiving formal notification in the next 7-14 days.

- **Legislative Update:** During the recent Detroit Chamber's Mackinac Policy Conference, Michigan House Speaker Matt Hall held a press conference about the state budget. While the House has not yet released any department budgets, he shared a few important details. He also stated that the budget would be done "shortly" but not before July 1.

The Speaker stated that the House School Aid budget would include a \$12,000 per-pupil allowance, a 20% increase. This would be reached by combining many current categoricals into the foundation allowance. Without details to examine, it is unknown exactly what has been included in that roll up. The proposal also includes a \$1 billion deposit into the School Stabilization Fund. With less than a month left to reach an agreement, it does seem unlikely a budget will get done.

During his keynote speech at the same Mackinac Policy Conference, Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, a leading candidate in the 2026 governor's race, unveiled a five-year, \$4.5 billion plan to turn around Michigan's education system while campaigning for office. Michigan's education system and the state's population loss are the two issues that Duggan said got him into the gubernatorial race. Duggan said that he has had many conversations with superintendents, principals, and teachers about the challenges facing the education system, arguing that the system and continual changes in policy from both sides of the

aisle from Lansing for decades are largely to blame, rather than teachers or principals.

As part of the first year of his proposal, schools would receive an initial grade. If they were failing, the school would have to develop a credible improvement plan. During the second year, if schools fail to improve, the state will offer a support team to help the principal's school improvement plan. In the third year, if the school still failed to improve, the principal would be removed, and a new leadership team would be put in place. As part of the fourth year, the new leadership team would be given a chance to improve the school. If there is still no improvement in the fifth year, the district superintendent, or the charter system administrator responsible, would be removed.

At the Federal government level, it remains imperative to continue watching the House funding bill that was presented to the US Senate. If the Senate passes the bill without change, there will be several detrimental cuts to Ionia County residents and families.