

**Resolution of Support: School Finance Research Collaborative
November 13, 2017**

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 Governor's 21st Century Education Commission states that the urgency could not be greater regarding the failing K-12 performance, further stating that Michigan students underperform their peers, ranking 41st on fourth-grade reading performance nationally; and

WHEREAS, the Commission further stated that Michigan needs to efficiently distribute resources to public schools, 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) that 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., working together to determine the cost of student achievement for all students PK-12 and make recommendations to change how our schools are funded; 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 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, 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, 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; and

WHEREAS, any changes to the current legislation related to school funding should take into consideration these recommendations;

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