



SCHOOL EQUITY CAUCUS

Making a difference for the public school children of Michigan

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Dear Colleagues:

Greetings from the School Equity desk! I hope you are enjoying a great start to the new school year. It seems impossible that summer is gone and we are suddenly beyond Labor Day. We'll be bundling up for football games and raking leaves before we know it!

This month's update will be rather brief, as it's election season and a slow time in Lansing. Our lobbyist, Matt Kurta, shares a few thoughts on key races below.

Budget Work Completed, Election Season in Full Swing, Lame Duck Awaits

As the Legislature and Governor completed work on the FY 2024-2025 state budget at the end of June, Lansing has been much quieter this summer with legislators out on the campaign trail.

Aside from a few policy issues that may potentially see action yet this year, attention in Lansing is mainly focused on the upcoming November elections for control of the Michigan House of Representatives next year. With competitive races at the topic of the ticket statewide between former President Trump and Vice President Harris as well as the U.S. Senate race to succeed retiring U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow between Rep. Elissa Slotkin and former Rep. Mike Rogers, expect to see no shortage of campaign advertising this fall in your mailboxes, on TV, on radio, and on your smart phones.

Those of you lucky enough to live in the 7th or 8th Congressional Districts will enjoy a bonus of campaign advertising and outreach in what are likely to be two of the most hotly contested Congressional races in the country. In the 7th, Former State Sen. Curtis Hertel (D-East Lansing) is facing off with former State Sen. Tom Barrett (R-Charlotte) to succeed Rep. Slotkin, while in the 8th, State Sen. Kristen McDonald-Rivet (D-Bay City) facing off with Paul Junge (R-Fenton) to succeed retiring Congressman Dan Kildee (D-Flint).

With respect to the Michigan House in particular, there are roughly a dozen races that will decide control of the chamber next year, and we are seeing fewer races in "open" seats this year largely due to voter adoption of Proposal 1 in 2022 that modified Michigan legislator term limits. While a few House members have chosen to forego re-election in order to

pursue potential Senate races (The new term limit provisions in state law allow for a combined 12 years of service between the House and Senate, rather than the previous 14 year limit that specified 3 2-year terms in the House and 2 two-year terms in the Senate), only 1 lawmaker lost in the August Primary. As a result, we are seeing a number of rematches from 2022 throughout the state as Democrats seek to hold on to their 56-54 majority while Republicans are working to recapture control of the House they enjoyed from 2011-2022 in order to regain a foothold in a state government that is currently controlled by Democrats at all levels for the first time in about four decades.

Regardless of how Election Day pans out in November, we expect some of the aforementioned school issues to get some consideration before the end of the year, and as always, there is the possibility for other issues that have not garnered much attention or legislative action to appear on the agenda in lame duck as well. As always, please take a minute to get to know candidates on the campaign trail, as relationships on both sides of the aisle certainly matter with respect to our ability to influence education policy now and going forward in Lansing.

Housekeeping Dates & Details:

1. Coming Soon—Fall General Meeting!

The annual MASA Fall Conference in Traverse City is just around the corner! Make plans now to join us for our September luncheon meeting immediately preceding the conference! We will meet in the Michigan Ballroom of the Grand Traverse Resort (just past the hotel registration desks on lobby level) beginning at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 18. Doors will open at 11:15, and the meeting will conclude no later than 12:45 p.m.

Thanks to our business partners – American Fidelity, Northland Public Finance, and The Christman Company – for their support of the School Equity Caucus.

You should find an email RSVP in your mailbox shortly. Please respond as soon as possible so we can get our lunch numbers in!

2. 2024-25 Membership Dues

Also, just a quick reminder to those of you who have not yet submitted your membership dues for 2024-25. Your support of the School Equity Caucus is what keeps the critical cause of equity at the forefront of discussions around the state! Please contact us if you have any questions regarding membership.

3. Member Survey

You should have received an invitation to complete an important member survey a couple of weeks ago. This is your second reminder to take the survey if you have not already done so. The results will help to refocus our vision and goals for the coming years. We will offer one final reminder to complete the survey at the upcoming School Equity Luncheon. Please use the link below:

<https://forms.gle/TVyYucUoCVp9gcUb9>

That's all for this update! As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, ideas, or concerns about our efforts and advocacy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Keim', with a stylized, cursive script.

Brian Keim
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