



SCHOOL EQUITY CAUCUS

Making a difference for the public school children of Michigan

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CAUCUS INFORMATION ALERT

March 5, 2019

Re: Governor Whitmer's FY 2020 Budget Proposal

Dear Colleagues:

This overview is intended to provide a "first look" at Governor Gretchen Whitmer's K-12 education budget proposal and assist members of the School Equity Caucus in their interactions with school staff, the public, and the media.

In general terms, we want to be very positive and supportive of the governor's moves as a whole without getting into the specifics of the proposal. The governor is taking a courageous step politically to recommend additional funding for roads and other priorities, and we applaud the investment being proposed in Michigan's future.

We also appreciate the governor's move to begin basing funding decisions on research and data, and look forward to continuing the discussion on revamping the funding mechanism of Michigan's schools.

Recommended Talking Points for Immediate Reaction

- We very much appreciate Governor Whitmer's recognition of the need to increase the amount of money being spent on K-12 schools. For too long Michigan has seen a disinvestment in education, and the results are becoming painfully obvious.
- The use of research and data-based studies in preparing this budget is welcomed. The governor is right to be looking at high-performing states and research-based recommendations as we look at how best to meet the needs of students in Michigan.
- There is a significant amount of detail in this budget that deserves further study.
- We look forward to continuing to work with the governor's office and legislature to eliminate the equity gap and ensure that all Michigan students, no matter their zip code, receive equitable access to educational opportunities.

Overview of the Governor's K-12 Education Proposal

- Total increase in K-12 funding of \$507 million
- MPSERS rate buy-down continues (\$1.3 billion, applied prior to the foundation allowance calculation)

- \$235 million increase to foundation allowances
 - \$180 to minimum foundation districts
 - \$120 to those above the minimum
 - 1.5x (not 2x)
- \$120 million additional to special education reimbursement
 - Increases reimbursement from 28% to 32%
- \$102 million more for At Risk funding
 - Increases amount from about \$720 per student to \$894 (11% of minimum foundation allowance amount per pupil)
- \$50 million additional funding for CTE
 - Equates to approximately \$487 per CTE student (6% of minimum foundation allowance amount per pupil)
- Increased GSRP per pupil allocation; expansion of access to families up to 300% of the federal poverty level
- Funding for universities returns completely to the General Fund, community colleges remain 100% in the School Aid Fund
- Cyber school foundation allowance reduced by 20%
- Increase for ISD Operations of 3.5% to a total of \$70.8 million
- Triple the number of literacy coaches across the state with the state paying for the entire expense (no required ISD match)
- \$61.5 million to replace drinking fountains in older school buildings

Initial Analysis and Comments

The governor's budget proposal is the beginning of a lengthy budget process. We very much appreciate the governor's commitment to providing more money to Michigan's K-12 schools.

We will look forward to hearing the budget proposals that will be put forth by both the House and the Senate K-12 Appropriations Committees, and look forward to being a part of budget discussions as they move forward.

The SFRC's recommendations provide a potential roadmap for bringing equity to funding Michigan's schools based on the true costs associated with educating all children. Incorporating some of those suggestions into this budget is a positive first step. There is obviously much more work that needs to be done to fully fund all of the SFRC's recommendations, including per pupil cost allocations for English Language Learner (ELL) students and for pupil transportation (recommended at \$973 per rider until a more complete study can be done).

The School Equity Caucus has, from its inception, advocated for equity in funding for all of Michigan's school districts. We have not yet reached that point. Continuing to move toward that goal is not mutually exclusive with the goals of the SFRC.

Please be sure to contact us if you have additional questions or need more information.



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