

## Superintendent Report- April

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**Month:** April 2025

**Administrator:** Dedrick Martin

**Update:**

**Career Connect Campus Plaque:**

Attached you will find a draft of the Career Connect Campus plaque. This plaque should be ready by the open house date and placed near the entrance of the building. Additionally, there will be an enormous dedication wall honoring the Anonymous Donor as well as other major financial donors. The plaque is in the process of being priced and the Donor wall will begin taking shape this summer and will be ready for the opening of school. I will send an email of the donor wall PowerPoint that may provide an understanding of how the wall will look, recognize donors and grow over the years. If you have any questions or input that you would like to share, please feel free to contact myself or Sandy.

**Certification under Title VI in Exchange for Federal Funding:**

On April 3rd, the Michigan Department of Education received a certification request from the U.S. Department of Education. This certification request is framed as a reminder to all State and Local Educational Agencies (SEAs/LEAs) of their binding legal obligations with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when receiving federal financial assistance. Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, is a mandatory condition for funding. According to the U.S. Department of Education, all agencies are now required to certify that they have read and understood these obligations and are fully compliant as a precondition for funding.

Additionally, in light of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, the U.S. Department of Education has positioned that the use of race-conscious practices in educational programs, including certain Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, may violate Title VI. The Court clarified that race-based actions are only permissible under extremely narrow exceptions, and even then, must meet strict scrutiny standards. Continued use of impermissible DEI practices can result in severe consequences, such as loss of federal funding, civil litigation for breach of contract, and liability under the False Claims Act.



Under the original email sent to the department of Education, MDE should sign this agreement on behalf of all schools in the state of Michigan. A follow-up email has given the department an additional 10 days to sign this letter and devise a system to have each SEA/LEA certify their compliance or face potential loss of funding. To date, MDE has not signed off on the certification request and has instead submitted a letter to the U.S. DOE indicating that Michigan is already in compliance with all applicable non-discrimination laws. This has set up a potential showdown between states that have already refused to sign the certification agreement and potential loss of federal funding. We are awaiting to see if there are further developments that would require each district to sign something from MDE and will consult with our attorney as needed.

#### **Resolution E:**

The Michigan Department of Education recently opposed the House Joint Resolution E, which seeks to transfer the board's authority to hire the state superintendent to the governor. A few existing board members have argued that this transfer would negatively affect Michigan's public-school students and give too much power to governors.

The board resolution states that frequent changes in education policy due to governors' four-year terms would lead to confusion and frustration among school officials. The resolution also mentions that newly elected governors might focus on short-term, flashy education policies harmful to long-term educational success. House Joint Resolution E requires approval by two-thirds of both the House and Senate to be put before voters in the next even-numbered November election, which would be in 2026. If approved, the State Board of Education would maintain authority over hiring or replacing the state superintendent until January 1, 2027, when Gretchen Whitmer's term as governor ends. However, at this time, it is viewed as unlikely to pass.

#### **Action Item:**

N/A

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

#### **Attachments:**

**Response to the US Department of Education Request for Title IV Compliance Recertification**

**Career Connect Campus Plaque**

