

Perspectives on Organization and Financing of Michigan Schools

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OaklandSchools

Learning today. Transforming tomorrow.

Evidence Abounds



Marc S. Tucker, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants* says that successful school systems...

“benchmark what works”

Perspective: Foster those things proven to work and do not distract those who work in our schools from doing that work.

Places that are doing **well**:

Ontario – “Reform without Rancor”

- ◆ A small number of ambitious goals
- ◆ A guiding coalition at the top
- ◆ High standards and expectations
- ◆ Investment in leadership and capacity building related to instruction

continued...

Places that are doing **well**:

Ontario – “Reform without Rancor”

- ◆ Mobilizing data and effective practices as a strategy for improvement
- ◆ Intervention in a non-punitive way
- ◆ Being vigilant about distractors
- ◆ Being transparent, relentless and increasingly challenging

U.S. places doing **better**

Tennessee and Massachusetts:

- ◆ Rigorous Standards
- ◆ Increased support to teachers
- ◆ Input from the field
- ◆ Research-based reform
- ◆ Increased funding with increased equity
 - ◆ More dollars to more challenged learners
 - ◆ Expanded learning time
 - ◆ Professional development for improvement strategies

The Education Trust – *Midwest Stalled to Soaring: Michigan's Path to Educational Recovery, 2014*

What are the **RESULTS** of their reforms?

- ◆ Ontario: from 54% proficiency to 67% (2003-2009)
- ◆ Ontario: gaps reduced by 39% to 62%
- ◆ Massachusetts: 90% pass H.S. competency test
- ◆ Massachusetts: African-American 8th graders rank first in math on 2013 NAEP
- ◆ Tennessee: from 43rd to 37th on NAEP rank (2003-2013)
- ◆ Tennessee: African-American 8th graders gain 10 points in reading from 2011 to 2013 on NAEP

Michigan's Decades of Reform/Results

“Since the early 1990’s, our state’s practically singular focus on governance, choice and charter schools as a panacea to our challenges has not led to a world-class educational system. Rather, on almost every metric, our state has slipped further behind its peers nationally and internationally.”

Amber Arellano, Executive Director, The Education Trust-Midwest

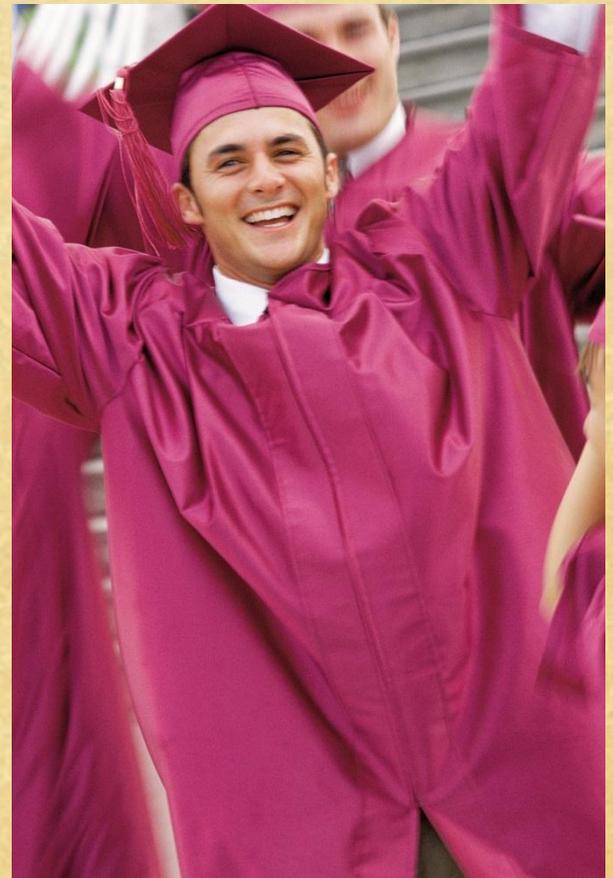
Michigan has made gains despite growing poverty and economic storms:

- ◆ Steady **upward trend of ACT scores** for high school students
- ◆ **Over 60% of graduating Michigan high school seniors** enter college and successfully complete their freshman year with no remediation
- ◆ **Rigorous** college- and career-ready standards have been adopted

continued...

Michigan has made gains despite growing poverty and economic storms:

- ◆ Graduation requirements *have been raised*
- ◆ *Reward* and *Beating the Odds* schools across Michigan are showing the way to improved student achievement



but

MORE

is needed...

Reforms and School Finance

Tennessee and Massachusetts

- ◆ State/Local Revenue (2011)
 - ◆ Tennessee - \$8,765
 - ◆ Massachusetts - \$16,495
- ◆ Tennessee sustained investment in implementation of improvement initiative for multiple years
- ◆ Tennessee supported and trained 700 teachers to coach 30,000 other teachers in Common Core
- ◆ Massachusetts invested in extended day programs, transport for special education and more for inflation and for pension programs
- ◆ Massachusetts invested in the capacity of teachers and higher quality teaching and learning.

Michigan

- ◆ State/Local Revenue (2011)
 - ◆ Michigan - \$12,644
- ◆ Invested in “Best Practices” like:
 - ◆ Cooperative purchasing/bidding
 - ◆ Opening more school choice
 - ◆ Holding health insurance policies
 - ◆ Bargaining issues
 - ◆ Expanded PE and health instruction
 - ◆ Proposal to expand counseling and elementary Foreign Language
- ◆ Grew categorical programs tying more strings to fewer dollars
- ◆ Decreased per pupil funding for at-risk student populations

Recalibrate the Course

The Michigan Department of Education as THE state school system will support all schools:

- ♦ **Provide** the field with evidence about what works
- ♦ **Work** with and educate Michigan's legislature on sound public policy for public education
- ♦ **Ensure** that federal/state resources are provided for schools to use for their own improvement in the most flexible manner possible

continued...

Recalibrate the Course

The Michigan Department of Education as THE state school system will support all schools:

- ♦ **Guide** schools to audit themselves to find what is and what is not working – academically and financially
- ♦ **Intervene** in meaningful ways when schools are unable to raise the bar for student achievement to proficiency or to financial stability.

Accountability and Quality Learning Standards

- ♦ A **paragraph...** *is a paragraph is a paragraph from coast to coast, in rural, urban, or suburban America*
- ♦ And **algebra...** *is algebra is algebra*
- ♦ So let's **STOP** **arguing about the standards**
- ♦ And **START** **accomplishing the standards!**

Raising the Academic Bar

At the **local level** we would see:

- ♦ A very focused curriculum around ***rigorous standards***
- ♦ The teaching of that curriculum using ***best practices***
- ♦ ***Instructionally embedded formative assessments*** that measure student learning throughout the curriculum

Raising the Academic Bar

At the **local level** we would see:

- ♦ ***Systems of intervention*** that remediate student learning in real time when proficiency is not demonstrated or enrich student learning when proficiency is demonstrated
- ♦ ***Teacher collaboration*** around student work that continuously improves the teaching/learning process
- ♦ An ***accountability dashboard*** that gives parents multiple points of information about the school - not a single metric

What that Dashboard might have on it:

- ◆ Student proficiency in core subjects
- ◆ Achievement gaps to proficiency between student groups
- ◆ Student growth toward proficiency
- ◆ Graduation rate
- ◆ Drop-out rate
- ◆ Percent and type of student discipline referrals
- ◆ Percent of students in honors/AP courses

continued...

What that Dashboard might have on it:

- ◆ Percent of graduates successfully completing their freshman year of college
- ◆ Percent of highly qualified teachers
- ◆ Class sizes
- ◆ Fund balances
- ◆ Demographic information
- ◆ Course offerings including electives

Delivery System to **Raise the Bar**

- ◆ The Michigan Department of Education
 - ◆ Provides systemic supports to all schools
 - ◆ Provides access to knowledge base of best practices
 - ◆ Maintains a fair, reliable state assessment system to benchmark how well schools are moving student achievement to proficiency
 - ◆ Revamps School Reform Office to an Office for School Improvement and Intervention

continued...

Delivery System to **Raise the Bar**

- ◆ Deployed by Intermediate School Districts
- ◆ Supported by university and business partners
- ◆ Implemented by all public schools in the state
 - ◆ Not as “one size fits all”
 - ◆ But a tool-box of things that work
 - ◆ Customized to the audited needs of each local school

And when it doesn't work, student learning is the default...

When schools continue to be persistently low performing despite their best efforts...

MDE's Office of School Improvement and Intervention MUST:

- ♦ Audit what is/what is not working in the school, and
- ♦ Put research-based interventions in place such as;
 - ♦ Entities like the EAA (once its model has proven itself),
 - ♦ ISD administered models proven to work,
 - ♦ Inter-local agreements with successful neighboring schools,
 - ♦ Third party operators with records of success,
 - ♦ Other interventions identified to work.

Raising the **FINANCIAL** Bar

*Michigan's Adequacy Study for school funding is **long past due***

- ◆ Other states have done it and we should too
- ◆ Proposal A was good for the 90's, but not now

Raising the **FINANCIAL** Bar

- ◆ What might we find from a school funding study???
- ◆ That we likely need more funding
- ◆ Recognition that where there are higher concentrations of special education and at-risk learners there will need to be more dollars spent on instruction
- ◆ Regional cost differences are real
- ◆ Costs for K-5 are different than 6-8 are different than K-12, are different for special education, are different for career technical education, etc.

Polled voters say **education needs more funding**

- ◆ Polled voters think Michigan's K-12 education system is ***vital to the state's economic health***
- ◆ Polled voters think funding to Michigan's K-12 education system ***has decreased over time***

continued...

And it has, so...

- ◆ **Grow**, then keep Michigan's K-12 funding protected for K-12 programs.
- ◆ **Create** a separate and dedicated funding source for early childhood.
- ◆ **Separate** and **maintain** a dedicated funding source for community colleges, colleges and universities.
- ◆ Keep funding for all three **separate and transparent** so taxpayers know where their money goes.

What about “choice” in Michigan

- ◆ Choice is not necessarily the problem; but the *unbridled public policies* that we have passed in this state around “choice” reforms are.
- ◆ We need *public policy* around “choice” whether it is for charters, or districts of choice, or cyber schools that ensures...
 - ◆ Fair operating and funding platforms
 - ◆ Accountability for quality
 - ◆ Transparency for use of public funds

“Choice” in other States

Tennessee

- ◆ Local school boards and the achievement school district are the only entities that can charter schools by going through the State Board of Education
- ◆ For-profit charters are outlawed in the state
- ◆ Less than 2% of students are enrolled in charters

“Choice” in other States

Massachusetts

- ◆ In the early 1990’s a huge condition for opening charters was accountability
- ◆ State guided authorizing process regulates for high standards and proven track records
- ◆ Charter growth is capped at 120 schools
- ◆ State Board of Education is sole authorizer

Raising the bar **REQUIRES:**

- ◆ **Highly skilled people** with expertise in the field
- ◆ A **strong commitment** to quality and transparency
- ◆ A **stable, fair, and adequate funding** platform matched to the needs of Michigan's diverse learners



Raising the bar **REQUIRES:**

- ◆ A *guiding coalition of leaders* that fosters collaboration rather than competition
- ◆ A *political and governance system* that will stay the course without distractions
- ◆ A *vision for excellence* with a can-do attitude

Thank you

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