



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

February 5, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Martin Ackley, Director, Office of Public and Governmental Affairs

SUBJECT: State and Federal Legislative Update

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Several pieces of legislation have been introduced and referred to the House Education Committee in the last few weeks. Please see a brief list of key legislation:

- Alteration of Michigan Merit Curriculum (HBs 4072, 4073, 4088)
- Requires cyber schools to post curriculum online and submit to MDE (HB 4032)
- Change in membership count to be count day from previous year (HB 4041)
- Prohibition of school funds for lobbying (HB 4043)
- Cyber-bullying prevention (HB 4056)

Also, Committee Chairwoman Rep. Lisa Posthumus Lyons asked MDE Legislative Liaison Wendy Larvick to provide a "Public Education 101" to the House Education committee members at the Feb. 6 meeting.

MICHIGAN SENATE

Several pieces of legislation have been introduced and referred to the Senate Education Committee. Please see a brief list of key legislation below:

- Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) start date (SB 47)
- Alteration of Michigan Merit Curriculum (SBs 66 and 133)
- Transparency increase for reimbursement of administrators/board (SB 80-81)
- Parent trigger/conversion schools (SB 83)

The committee has yet to schedule a hearing this year.

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FEDERAL

Debt Ceiling

Federal lawmakers have taken a major step toward avoiding the negative consequences of hitting the debt ceiling – the internal limit on how much the nation can borrow from creditors. The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that would increase the debt ceiling, delaying its impact for about three months, and allowing the federal government to continue borrowing money until mid-May. The measure then would automatically increase the current \$16.4 trillion debt ceiling to accommodate additional debt accumulated between now and May 18th. The bill also would require the Senate and House to pass budget legislation by April 15th.

School Athletics and Students with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Education's (USED) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) released guidance for school districts regarding existing legal obligations of schools to provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in after-school athletics and clubs. The guidance was drafted in response to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report from 2010, which underscored that access to, and participation in, extracurricular athletic opportunities provide important health and social benefits to all students, particularly those with disabilities. The guidance does not create any new requirements, according to OCR, but instead clarifies existing requirements. The guidance is available here:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201301-504.pdf>

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these or other legislative issues, please contact me at (517) 241-4395.