



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

September 4, 2014

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

The House held legislative session on Wednesday, August 27, 2014. **HB 5728** (Geiss) was introduced and referred to the House Committee on Education. The bill allows receiving schools in a district to decline ownership of buildings and property of dissolved school districts.

The House Education Committee met August 27, 2014, and referred **HB 4148** (Shirkey) to the Michigan Competitiveness Committee. The bill grants community colleges the authority to grant baccalaureate degrees in certain fields.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

The House Appropriations Committee did not address any education related issues during the month of August.

MICHIGAN SENATE

The Senate held legislative session on Wednesday, July 16th and Wednesday, July 30th taking attendance only. There was no new legislation introduced pertaining to education on either of those days.

The Senate Education Committee did not meet in August.

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

The Senate Appropriations Committee did not address any education related issues during the month of August.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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FEDERAL UPDATE

Improving College Opportunity

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council Cecilia Munoz met with community college leaders on August 12 and made new commitments to ensure student success.

Following the meeting, the White House announced a number of developments in the effort to expand college opportunity. Among them:

- The White House will host another College Opportunity Summit on December 4. The goal is to build on the work launched in the first summit last January, while launching initiatives in new areas. This second summit will focus on building sustainable collaborations in communities with strong K-12 and higher education partnerships and supporting colleges to work together to dramatically improve persistence and increase college completion, especially for first-generation, low-income, and under-represented students.
- Since January, 14 additional community colleges made commitments to implement strategies to help improve college persistence and completion for students who enter college academically under-prepared, including reducing the need for excess developmental courses via better curricular alignment; redesigning assessment and placement to more accurately identify students' academic needs; and improving design and delivery to accelerate student progress, ensure the relevancy of instruction, and provide better student supports.
- The U.S. Department of Education (USED) Institute for Education Studies (IES) is launching a new Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness led by the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College and the social policy research firm MDRC that will work to strengthen the research, evaluation, and support of college-readiness efforts across the nation.

Moreover, to ensure more families can afford a higher education and promote the responsible use of taxpayer dollars, USED has proposed new regulations to update eligibility standards and improve access for student and parent borrowers under the federal Direct PLUS loan program. In particular, the proposed regulations would update the definition of adverse credit history and require PLUS loan counseling for approved borrowers with an adverse credit history. USED plans to publish the final rules by November 1, allowing borrowers to take out a PLUS loan under the new criteria for the 2015-16 school year. Meanwhile, those who are denied for a PLUS loan under the current rules can continue to apply for reconsideration. The agency also is considering implementing final regulations before the 2015-16 school year begins so borrowers could benefit even sooner.

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