



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING



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**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Michael P. Flanagan, Chairperson

**SUBJECT:** State and Federal Legislative Update

### State Update

#### Supplemental Appropriations related to State Education Reform Legislation.

I had the opportunity to testify along with Michigan Department of Education (MDE) staff and State Board of Education Members John Austin and Nancy Danhof, before the Joint House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on K-12 Education in mid-February. The testimony focused on the importance of state funding in implementing the landmark education reform legislation that was enacted in January 2010. This funding is for both the current (FY 2010) and the next (FY 2011) fiscal years. Since that time, the FY 2010 GF supplemental – HB 5394 - was passed and sent to the Governor for her signature, which is expected soon.

In addition to this initial GF supplemental, there was a second supplemental bill with federal funding – specifically Race to the Top funding – to appropriate the funds had Michigan been selected as a winner. Since Michigan was not selected for this round, additional GF/GP dollars are needed to fund the work required by the new state education reform legislation. The State Budget Office is expected to release a Revised Executive Recommendation that addresses this in late April/early May.

Behind the scenes, some in the Legislature are questioning the need for the funding and the legislation. It is critical that the Legislature remain strong in its support for this landmark legislation. Improving the circle of data and feedback to school leaders and teachers on how students are doing is critical to their improvement, to targeted professional development, and to student achievement.

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Holding the bottom five percent of schools accountable is a huge step in turning around the economy of our state as we move to double the number of college graduates. There was much positive movement in that legislation; we now need the funding to implement it. Any assistance from the State Board members in supporting that funding is appreciated.

#### FY 2011 Budgets

The Senate completed its initial work on the Michigan Department of Education and School Aid budgets (SBs 1154 and 1163, respectively). The House Subcommittee on K-12 Education will begin its work after the spring break. The Governor is pushing for revenues and reforms, however at this time, there is a straight party-line Republican opposition to any revenues. The lines are drawn for the battles that are likely to occur in the conference committees on all the budget bills.

#### Finance Issues before House Education Committee

The House Education Committee is looking at several finance bills related to capping superintendent salaries, limiting school district general fund balances, and retirement reforms. The schedule for action on these bills and others has not been set, but the House Education Committee will continue in this direction.

#### **Federal Update**

##### Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

As you know, the discussion has begun on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The U.S. House and Senate Committees that cover Education have begun hearings and the plan is to finish work on this by August of this year.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has continued his push for reforms that were first unveiled through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. In testimony and at public speaking opportunities, Secretary Duncan has focused on "loose means, tight ends." He believes that states should be given some flexibility in how to achieve improvement, but held accountable for setting high standards and reaching high achievement goals.

From Michigan's perspective, we must focus not only on that flexibility and high standards and goals, but also on capacity. Many of the reforms will need significant investment in infrastructure at the state level for data systems, assessments, standards, etc. The ESEA must address building states' capacity to implement those changes. Any assistance from the State Board in ensuring Michigan's Congressional delegation understands those needs is appreciated.

## Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act of 2009

Work on the House Resolution 4223, creating the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act has continued at the federal level.

According to the Congressional Research Service and text of the legislation at Thomas.gov, "The purpose of this title is to advance student achievement, attainment, and social and emotional development by establishing Federal grant programs to support social and emotional learning programming in elementary and secondary schools."

Grant funds provided under this section shall be used--

- (1) to provide technical assistance to states, local educational agencies, and community-based organizations on the effective implementation of social and emotional learning standards and programming to states, including technical assistance on coordinated classroom and school-wide programming, as well as how to engage families and communities in social and emotional learning efforts;
- (2) to provide ongoing high-quality professional development to support effective implementation of social and emotional learning standards and programming;
- (3) to conduct research and disseminate information on social and emotional learning standards and programming;
- (4) to develop and disseminate reliable assessment tools to measure student progress in social and emotional development; and
- (5) to evaluate social and emotional learning programming to determine the impact of such programming on student achievement and behavior.

There has not been any action on the bill yet. The committee is looking at ESEA for the vehicle. Congress will probably push to integrate the concepts throughout the ESEA bill instead of passing legislation for a stand-alone program, as one of the goals of ESEA reauthorization is consolidation of some of the grants and programs (Titles, etc.).

I hope this information is helpful to you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these or other legislative issues, please contact Lisa Hansknecht, Director of the Office of State and Federal Relations at 517-335-4913.