

Memorandum

To: Michigan State Board of Education

From: Michigan Association of Non-public Schools (MANS)
Brian D. Broderick, Executive Director

Re: State Superintendent Search

Date: August 29, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the very important task in front of the State Board of Education – the appointment of the next Superintendent of Public Instruction for the state of Michigan. Mike Flanagan will be leave big shoes to fill. His passion, thoughtfulness and focus on what is best for children are certainly qualities that the next Superintendent will need to possess.

The Michigan Association of Non-public Schools represents more than 400 pre-K to grade 12 schools in the seven Roman Catholic Dioceses of Michigan, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and Christian Schools International. MANS is recognized as the essential voice advancing equity and excellence for all of Michigan’s faith-based, Christ-centered schools.

MANS convenes Christian educational leaders from multiple faith traditions to:

- Advocate for and empower faith-based administrators toward excellence
- Advocate for faith-based schools with public policy makers
- Raise visibility, value, and awareness of faith-based schools
- Provide resources for quality instruction and managerial practice that enhance faith-based education

MANS’ overarching mission is to preserve and promote educational pluralism so that parents have a choice in the schooling of their children. MANS believes that all educational institutions have a responsibility to provide their students with the knowledge, skills, values, ethics, and social commitment they will need to succeed, to be good citizens, and to be positive forces in a dynamically changing society and global environment.

Ultimately, each faith-based school is most immediately accountable to students and their families. Faith-based education has its foundation in choice.

With that framework in mind, MANS offers the following criteria which we believe must be considered in the selection of the new Superintendent of Schools:

- respects the vital role of faith-based schools in Michigan and their significant contribution to educating the public and promoting the common good;
- supports the right of parents to educate their children in the school of their choice;
- encourages excellence and pluralism in education and promotes the right of faith-based schools to fulfill their unique missions;
- fosters the participation of the faith-based school community in shaping the state's education agenda, and develops and promotes positions on education policy;
- understands the cost to the state every time a faith-based school closes (cost to the state school aid fund, loss of ability to pass on moral and religious values, communities become less attractive to families, crime rates increase, loss of social cohesion).
- invests in resources and policies that create a level playing field for **ALL** schools in the state, including faith-based schools.
- supports **full** choice in education, allowing parents a most basic right to choose the education that is best for their children.

MANS would again like to thank the State Board of Education for this opportunity to offer input into the Superintendent search and selection process. We wish the best to all of those involved in this important effort that will so meaningfully impact Michigan's future.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the MANS office.