STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

June 28, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and Public School Academy Directors and Principals with 2012 Cohort Title I Priority Schools

FROM: Linda Forward, Director
Office of Education Improvement & Innovation

Deborah Clemmons, Executive Director
School Reform Office

SUBJECT: 2013-2014 School Year Title I Set-asides, Required and Optional Interventions for Title I Priority Schools

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) provides districts and schools with this information regarding the changes in the recently approved amendment to the ESEA Flexibility Waiver of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA). The status of elementary and middle schools, alternative schools, and high schools that are 2012 and 2013 cohort Priority schools in your district will be released publicly August 2013, and is based on the academic achievement, improvement and achievement gap status of the schools and the ranking on the Top to Bottom List, as determined by the MDE. Those activities and interventions are summarized in the enclosed documents. Also articulated are the required Title I set-sides for these purposes. **Title I schools** that are identified as Priority schools in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts must engage in the requirements associated with this identification.

- **Letter of Identification and Notification** – A letter sent to parents of students enrolled in a Priority school, both those named last August to the 2012 cohort of Priority schools, and those yet to be named this summer to the 2013 cohort of Priority schools. The letter must be sent to parents of those students enrolled in the 2012-2013 school year and those anticipated by the district to enroll in a Priority school for the 2013-2014 school year. Also to be included in the letter are the reasons for its identification and the school's and district's plans to improve student achievement. The MDE has determined this letter must be sent so that it will be received by parents no later than August 20, 2013.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
DANIEL VARNER – SECRETARY • RICHARD ZEILE – TREASURER
MICHELLE FECTEAU – NASBE DELEGATE • LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY
KATHLEEN N. STRAUS • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

NOTE: A school identified as Priority for the 2012-2013 school year remains part of a four-year cohort of schools supervised by the MDE State School Reform/Redesign Office until Spring 2016, even if the school is not re-identified as a Priority school in the 2013 cohort.

Please note the following information about the amended ESEA Waiver effective with the 2013-2014 school year and applicable to Title I Priority schools in both the 2012 and 2013 cohorts:

- Schools identified as Priority schools are no longer required to offer Choice/Transfer and Transportation for students
- Schools and districts are no longer required to continue transportation for students whose parents had in past years chosen to transfer students under the Choice/Transfer option (districts and schools are encouraged to be sensitive to the burdens that this will place upon families and students affected by this change)
- Districts **may elect** to provide or to pay for transportation costs to allow students in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts of Priority schools to attend a Choice/Transfer option school chosen for the 2013-2014 school year, and a building already elected by parents in prior years, using the district's Title I funds to pay for transportation costs
- Districts that elect Choice/Transfer and Transportation **may determine the amount budgeted** using Title I funds for Choice/Transfer and Transportation based upon locally determined need and anticipated actual costs for transportation; such funds should be identified in the Consolidated Application budget as Pupil Transportation Services, Function Code 271
- If a district elects to implement Choice/Transfer and Transportation for students enrolled in a building identified as Priority in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts of Priority schools, and/or for students whose parents had in past years chosen to transfer students under the Choice/Transfer option, it **must** have written policy and procedures for implementation of the Choice/Transfer option
- Parents must be provided at least a 14 day notice before the start of the school year if transportation is to be discontinued by the district, and/or if students will no longer be allowed to attend the Choice/Transfer option school elected in previous years
- If a district elects to implement Choice/Transfer and Transportation in the 2013-2014 school year, Title I set-asides may **not** be used to pay for Choice/Transfer and Transportation costs
- Title I set-asides and required interventions for **Priority Schools** are otherwise essentially unchanged
- If a district elects to implement Choice/Transfer and Transportation in the 2013-2014 school year, see additional information found on the MDE Priority Schools page at: http://mi.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_57510---,00.html

Specific questions regarding the amounts of set-asides required in the Consolidated Application should be directed to the district's Office of Field Services (OFS) Regional Consultant. The enclosed documents provide summaries and comparison

of changes in the Title I set-asides and required interventions and strategies from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year.

Sample/template letters are attached to this correspondence. All template letters must be revised by the district to reflect current and accurate information for the building and the district before the letters are sent to parents.

If the district elects to implement the Choice/Transfer option for the 2013-2014 school year, Choice option schools offered to parents and students must not be identified by the MDE as a Priority school in the 2012 or 2013 cohorts, or identified as a Focus school in the 2013 cohort. Additional information is attached with this memorandum.

To reiterate, the above requirements apply only to **Title I schools**.

Parent notification letters and documents must be submitted to the MDE later this year as evidence of compliance with these requirements for Title I schools identified as Priority schools in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts. A future communication will be sent notifying districts to upload the letters and documents in the MDE Grants Electronic Monitoring System (GEMS).

Thank you for your attention to these requirements. If you have questions about this communication or need more information, please feel free to contact Greg Olszta at 517-241-4715 or olsztag@michigan.gov.

Enclosures

2013-2014 Set-Aside Requirements for Title I Priority Schools

Set-Aside Requirements for Title I Priority Schools
All Set-Aside Requirements must be approved by the LEAs Office of Field Services Representative through the Consolidated Application Process
District Title I Obligation (20% of the LEA Title I Allocation) ***All regular Title I rules apply when using set-asides.***
NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR 2013-2014: Transportation for students taking advantage of Public School Choice
A District must choose one or more from the options below:
Option 1: Support Increased Learning Time
Option 2: Implement or strengthen a multi-tiered system of supports that includes scaffolded instruction for ELL and SWD students if the professional dialogue has identified this as a primary turnaround strategy for lifting whole-school performance.
Option 3: Professional learning for the staff aligned to the building's needs assessment paying particular attention to the needs of SWD and ELL students as appropriate.
Option 4: Obtain a process improvement consultation for district system-level redesign in service of rapid school turnaround.
Option 5: Release time for a teacher-leader from the Priority School for one year to provide technical assistance to school and district stakeholders to understand the school's reform-redesign requirements, and to incorporate elements of the Priority School's reform-redesign requirements into the school and district improvement plans during the planning year. Hire a full-year replacement teacher for the released teacher-leader's classroom.
Option 6: Administer interim baseline assessments which will supplement the district's universal screening assessment with additional diagnostic data and progress monitoring of student achievement.
Building Level 10% Obligation will be used for any of the following purposes aligned with the building's needs (*All regular Title I rules apply when using set-asides*):
Option 1: Professional learning on implementation of strategies aligned to the data-derived School Improvement/Reform-Redesign Plan, including adoption of rapid turnaround practices.
Option 2: Contract with a local ISD/ESA for a School Improvement Review, which will give the school an external perspective on the processes that best support student achievement.
Option 3: Provide daily/weekly time for teacher collaboration.
Option 4: Culture/climate interventions, use of time analysis, or culturally responsive teaching interventions as needed.

SAMPLE 2013 COHORT PRIORITY SCHOOL NOTIFICATION LETTER TEMPLATE

<Date>

<Parent>
<Address>
<City, State, Zip>

Dear <Parent>:

Your child is a student at <ABC School>. You know that your child is important to us and that we want to provide every opportunity for success. Each school in Michigan is required to test students every year using the <Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests/Michigan Merit Exam (MME)>. The results of these tests, as well as participation on the tests are used to determine whether our school is meeting Michigan School Proficiency Targets and where it ranks in a "Top to Bottom" list of schools and their performance. As a result of this ranking in a "Top to Bottom" list of schools and their performance, a low achieving school may be identified as a Priority or Focus school. This year, <ABC School> is a Priority school in the 2013 cohort because it is among the bottom 5% of the Top to Bottom list. A school identified as Priority for the 2013 cohort remains in that cohort of schools supervised by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) until Spring 2017.

In order to address this problem, <explain what the school is doing to address the problem and how the district is helping-see enclosed document Priority School Identification Letter Requirements>.

If the district has elected to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for the 2013-2014 school year, include additional language:
Since <ABC School> is a Priority school in the 2013 cohort, the district has elected to offer you the opportunity to transfer your child to <specify other school(s) in this district or another neighboring school> that is not identified as a Priority school in the 2012 or 2013 cohorts, or a Focus school. If the district receives more applications than can be accommodated, priority will be given to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families. You will be notified by mail of your child's transfer status.)

To help you decide, we have provided information about the available Choice/Transfer option schools so you can compare them. Based on this information, you may choose a school using the enclosed transfer form. Transportation to this school will/may be provided. You must complete this form by <date> and return it to <name and number> for consideration.

Or, if the district has NOT elected to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for the 2013-2014 school year, include additional language:
The <ABC School District> has received communication from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) about a recently approved Flexibility Waiver of the requirements of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). School districts with Priority schools in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts, and Focus schools, are no longer required to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for students. Schools and districts are no longer required to continue transportation for students whose parents had in past years elected to transfer students under the Choice/Transfer option.

Districts should select and revise as appropriate to the district election of options regarding Choice/Transfer and transportation the following language for inclusion in the letter for parents:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school until the

student has completed the highest grade in that school. However, transportation to the Choice/Transfer option school will be discontinued by the <ABC School District>. If your student is unable to continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school because the district will no longer provide transportation, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

Or:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may not continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school; however, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year. Parents should contact the school to confirm the student's return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

Or:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school until the student has completed the highest grade in that school. Transportation to the Choice/Transfer option school will be continued by the <ABC School District>. However, if you wish, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

To discuss this information further, please call <name and number> and <he/she/they> will be happy to help you.

Sincerely,

School Official

Enclosures

SAMPLE 2012 COHORT PRIORITY SCHOOL NOTIFICATION LETTER TEMPLATE (PRIORITY SCHOOLS IN THE 2012 COHORT BUT NOT THE 2013 COHORT)

<Date>

<Parent>
<Address>
<City, State, Zip>

Dear <Parent>:

Your child is a student at <ABC School>. You know that your child is important to us and that we want to provide every opportunity for success. Each school in Michigan is required to test students every year using the <Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests/Michigan Merit Exam (MME)>. The results of these tests, as well as participation on the tests are used to determine whether our school is meeting Michigan School Proficiency Targets and where it ranks in a "Top to Bottom" list of schools and their performance. As a result of this ranking in a "Top to Bottom" list of schools and their performance, a low achieving school may be identified as a Priority or Focus school.

This year, <ABC School> is at the <XXth percentile> of the Top to Bottom list, but will continue to be identified as a Priority school until Spring 2016 because it was among the bottom 5% of the Top to Bottom list in 2012.

We are proud of the improvements in student achievement made at <ABC School> last year. In order to continue to improve student learning and to address this problem, <explain what the school is doing to address the problem and how the district is helping-see enclosed document Priority School Identification Letter Requirements>.

If the district has elected to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for the 2013-2014 school year, include additional language:
Since <ABC School> was identified as a Priority school for the 2012-2013 school year, requiring improvement, the district has elected to offer you the opportunity to transfer your child to <specify other school(s) in this district or another neighboring school> that is not identified as a 2012 or 2013 cohort Priority, or Focus school. If the district receives more applications than can be accommodated, priority will be given to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families. You will be notified by mail of your child's transfer status.)

To help you decide, we have provided information about the available Choice/Transfer option schools so you can compare them. Based on this information, you may choose a school using the enclosed transfer form. Transportation to this school will/may be provided. You must complete this form by <date> and return it to <name and number> for consideration.

Or, if the district has NOT elected to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for the 2013-2014 school year, include additional language:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school until the student has completed the highest grade in that school. However, transportation to the Choice/Transfer option school will be discontinued by the <ABC School District>. If your student is unable to continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school because the district will no longer provide transportation, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

Or:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may not continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school; however, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year. Parents should contact the school to confirm the student's return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

Or, if the district has NOT elected to offer Choice/Transfer and transportation for the 2013-2014 school year, but will continue transportation for students to Choice option schools elected in past years, include additional language:
For the 2013-2014 school year, the <ABC School District> will not offer students the opportunity to transfer to another school that is not identified as a Priority or Focus school. Students whose parents elected to transfer to another school under the Choice/Transfer option selected in previous years may continue to attend the Choice/Transfer option school until the student has completed the highest grade in that school. Transportation to the Choice/Transfer option school will be continued by the <ABC School District>. However, if you wish, your student may return to the <ABC School> for the 2013-2014 school year.

To discuss this information further, please call <name and number> and <he/she/they> will be happy to help you.

Sincerely,

School Official

Enclosures

Priority School Identification and Notification Letter Requirements For Use in Customizing the Template

☐ Letter explains what identification as a Priority school means.

☐ Letter explains the reasons for identification as a Priority school in the 2012 or 2013 cohorts (be specific).

☐ Letter includes a description of what the **school and district** is doing to improve student achievement. The following provides *a partial list of required and/or optional activities and interventions* that may be described in the letter:

- A new principal was hired to lead the school in a different direction with increased emphasis upon academics and college and career preparation
- The school and district are collaborating with the Intermediate School District (ISD) and Michigan State University to better understand the school's strengths and weaknesses by looking at the achievement data more closely to make changes in how instruction is delivered in the classroom
- The school is working with the ISD and a School Support Team to develop and implement new strategies for classroom instruction to improve teaching methods and enhance student achievement
- The school is Implement the Superintendent's Dropout Challenge to assist students at-risk of dropping out of school
- The school has extended the learning day and school year by adding <X> number of hours per day of instruction in math and English, and <Y> number of hours of instruction in those subjects over the 2013-2014 school year
- The school has made an additional <X> hours per year available to teachers to collaborate with their teacher peers on improving instructional strategies in the classroom

SAMPLE CHOICE LETTER ATTACHMENT
IF ELECTING TO OFFER CHOICE/TRANSFER AND TRANSPORTATION

<ABC School> Transfer Information

Your student may be able to transfer to the following schools that are not identified as a Focus school, or a Priority school in the 2012 or 2013 cohorts. Please complete the attached Transfer Request Form or contact <name> at <number> for more information.

<School Name>
<Other information that will help parents decide what choice would be best for their child(ren) (e.g., rank on the Top to Bottom list, grades served, support services, extracurricular activities, application requirements.)>

<School Name>
<Other information that will help parents decide what choice would be best for their child(ren) (e.g., rank on the Top to Bottom list, grades served, support services, extracurricular activities, application requirements.)>

<School Name>
<Other Information that will help parents decide what choice would be best for their child(ren) (e.g., rank on the Top to Bottom list, grades served, support services, extracurricular activities, application requirements.)>