



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 2, 2021

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Michael F. Rice, Ph.D., State Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Promoting Great Start Readiness Program Enrollment to Parents

The Michigan legislature and Governor Gretchen Whitmer have made a significant investment of roughly \$168 million in Michigan's nationally recognized Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) for fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022.

The governor and I recently had the opportunity to share briefly with MAISA and intermediate school district (ISD) superintendents. As she said in the virtual meeting, the short-term goal of this investment is to provide access to the remaining eligible children for GSRP, while the longer-term goal is to raise reading proficiency of our children. As many of you may recall, Michigan's GSRP program is tied for first nationally in early childhood education *quality*, but only 21st in *access*. Our success in expanding GSRP not only can make us a top state in early childhood access but can also help us enormously to improve literacy outcomes, broader academic outcomes, and life outcomes for our students.

To help promote the expansion of GSRP access across the state, the team at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has created a public service [video](#) for your districts to share on your websites, social media platforms, and any local media outlets and public access vehicles in your communities. We know that the expansion of GSRP to the last third of our children who are eligible but who have yet to receive GSRP services is a challenge.

For more than five decades, research has shown children who attend quality preschool programs are more prepared for school and are less likely to be identified as having special needs or to be held back in elementary school than children who did not attend preschool. GSRP has also found these outcomes through its [research since 1995](#). National studies show clear positive effects on children's early elementary literacy and mathematics skills. GSRP is proud to be able to be included among state pre-K programs in the country that have generated these outcomes, based on [research](#) out of the National Institute for Early Education Research.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – PRESIDENT • PAMELA PUGH – VICE PRESIDENT
TIFFANY D. TILLEY – SECRETARY • TOM MCMILLIN – TREASURER
JUDITH PRITCHETT – NASBE DELEGATE • ELLEN COGEN LIPTON
NIKKI SNYDER • JASON STRAYHORN

Page 2
September 2, 2021

For further questions related to this memo, please contact Marty Ackley, director of MDE's Office of Public and Governmental Affairs at ackleyM@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors