



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

RESOLUTION OF THE MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**DEFENDING PUBLIC EDUCATION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND DEMOCRACY
AGAINST EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND DIRECTIVES THAT THREATEN OUR
CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES**

WHEREAS, public education is a fundamental pillar of democracy, ensuring that every child, regardless of race, income, or background, has access to a free, high-quality education; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has issued approximately 83 executive orders and directives, many of which pose direct threats to children, public education, and fundamental civil rights, including efforts to:

- a. Dismantle and defund the U.S. Department of Education, jeopardizing more than \$1 billion in funding for Title I, other titles, and special education funding for Michigan's schools, placing the futures of low-income, special education, and at-risk students in jeopardy;
- b. Undermine birthright citizenship, challenging the 14th Amendment and creating uncertainty for millions of children born in the United States;
- c. Eliminate advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion, undermining civil rights protections and educational equity;
- d. Promote federal overreach into curriculum and school policies, fostering an environment of censorship that threatens truthful, inclusive, and historically accurate education;
- e. Promote diverting public education funding toward privatization and school vouchers, pulling much-needed resources away from public schools without ensuring accountability for student outcomes;
- f. Threaten educators and school administrators with penalties for teaching topics related to systemic racism, gender equity, and historical injustices, thereby limiting students' ability to engage in critical thinking and civic discourse;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education has threatened loss of federal funding if schools fail to comply with the directive to dismantle efforts which

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promote diversity equity and inclusion, despite existing federal civil rights protections that require equitable access to education;

WHEREAS, these actions represent a direct assault on democracy, equity, and state sovereignty over public education, undermining the fundamental values of diversity, equity, and inclusion that strengthen our schools, drive innovation, and prepare all children to succeed in an increasingly global society; and

WHEREAS, these actions represent a direct assault disproportionately harming Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, immigrant, special education, and other historically marginalized communities;

WHEREAS, the Michigan State Board of Education, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Attorney General's Office, is committed to defending the constitutional and civil rights of all students, families, and educators in Michigan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan State Board of Education:

- a. Strongly condemns these executive orders and directives as attacks on educational access, civil rights, existing federal and state laws, and democracy;
- b. Affirms its unwavering commitment to public education, diversity, equity, and inclusion, rejecting any federal efforts that undermine these principles;
- c. Supports continued legal action by the Michigan Attorney General and state leaders, including the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to challenge these executive orders in court and prevent their enforcement in Michigan;
- d. Urges the Michigan Legislature to enact protections for state-level diversity, equity, and inclusion, special education funding, and local control of curriculum, ensuring that Michigan's educational system remains guided by evidence-based policies, not political ideology;
- e. Calls on Congress and the U.S. Department of Education to reverse these harmful policies and uphold federal laws that safeguard equitable access to education for all students;
- f. Encourages school districts across Michigan to:
 - i. Refer to guidance from the Michigan Department of Education, which outlines current Michigan statutes protecting equity and inclusion in education;
 - ii. Consult with legal counsel to ensure compliance with state and federal civil rights protections before making any policy changes in response to federal directives;

- iii. Maintain diversity, equity, and inclusion within the framework of existing legal frameworks and continue to provide safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments;
- g. Stands in solidarity with students, educators, and families directly impacted by these directives, reaffirming that Michigan will not be silenced in the fight for educational justice;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be distributed to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, The Michigan Legislature, The U.S. Department of Education, Michigan's Congressional Delegation, Local School Boards, Education Advocacy Groups, and The Public, to make clear that Michigan remains steadfast in its commitment to equitable education for all students and will continue to uphold policies that ensure access, opportunity, and inclusion in our schools.

Resolution passed on March 11, 2025, by a vote of 5 – 2.