

## Governor's Educator Advisory Council Supports Funding and Legislative Change Focused on Educator Recruitment and Retention

Governor Whitmer:

The educator shortage is a major issue facing Michigan schools and school children. Recently, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) provided the legislature with a menu of strategic investment options to respond to the teacher shortage that include:

1. Grow-Your-Own programs for students and support staff to become teachers.
2. Scholarships for high school seniors who aspire to and commit to careers in teaching.
3. Tuition reimbursement and a teacher internship stipend for current college students who make a commitment to pursue teaching.
4. Loan repayment for recently certified college graduates who commit to careers in education and for current teachers who are working to pay off college loans.
5. Development of programs that will help strengthen the teacher preparation pipeline in the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula, which face particular geographic challenges in the preparation of teacher candidates.
6. Support for improved mentoring of new teachers to help retain quality teachers in Michigan
7. Easing of restrictions on accepting teacher licenses from other states to help recruit quality teachers to Michigan.

The Governor's Educator Advisory Council (GEAC) strongly supports the recommendations MDE has put forth to increase the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers from diverse backgrounds.

Additionally, the GEAC recommends an expansion of requested funding and/or legislative change to:

1. Make similar investments for all educators, including, but not limited to, paraprofessionals, librarians, school social workers, and school counselors.
2. Provide school library resources and a state-level library consultant/coordinator in accordance with GEAC's Recommendation for Funding Libraries <Attachment A>.
3. Eliminate the legislative requirements for educator evaluation.
4. Mandate class size maximums to ensure educators can meet student needs.
5. Provide more flexibility around days and clock hours requirements to better meet student needs.
6. Drastically reduce state student assessment requirements, while adopting GEAC's Standardized Testing Recommendations <Attachment B>.
7. Ensure teachers are paid for the hours they work, including time spent after hours grading papers, noting that one paid preparation period per day is insufficient.
8. Equalize school funding models so that schools in low-income areas are not inequitably funded.
9. Incentivize teachers to remain in assignments in high-needs districts/classrooms to ensure students most at-risk receive the most experienced supports.
10. Prioritize investment in preparation programs that are designed to retain teachers long-term rather than programs that focus on teaching as a short-term career.



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## ATTACHMENT A

### GEAC's Recommendation for Funding Libraries

The School Finance Research Collaboration (SFRC) best practices [study](#) and funding model includes one library media specialist per school building and \$20.00 per pupil for library materials. The Michigan legislature has been working to fund schools per the SFRC model; however, has not provided specific funding or incentives for schools to hire library media specialists (also called certified school librarians) or to purchase library materials.

Possible ideas to provide specific funding for library media specialists (certified school librarians) in order to move toward equitable access for students to quality school libraries.

I. Grants for school library resources

Grants shall be awarded to qualifying school buildings in the amount of \$10.00 per student *{or other amount}*. Qualifying school buildings must employ a certified library media specialist for a minimum of 15 hours per week. The grant shall be used to purchase diverse and up-to-date print and electronic library materials to meet curricular and student interest needs. The materials shall be curated and maintained by the school building's certified library media specialist.

II. Grants to promote schools to hire certified school librarians

Allow school districts to apply for grants ranging from \$75,000 (districts with 2500 students or less) to \$30 per pupil (for districts larger than 2500 students) to hire certified library media specialists and purchase library resources. Limit the total available grants to \$xx million and require school districts receiving funds for this grant to submit a plan to meet the standards of "Qualified" or "Exemplary" Status of the School Libraries for the 21st Century Benchmarks (SL 21) ([www.michigan.gov/sl21](http://www.michigan.gov/sl21)). The SL21 Benchmarks are a tool to measure the quality of Michigan School Library Programs. The district must also submit an end of the year report on the specific use of the funds toward creating an effective school library program. Possibly provide a three year commitment similar to counselors in this school year's budget (HB4411, Sec. 31o)

III. Grants for partnership with districts to have current teachers earn Library Media Endorsement by completing Wayne State University 15-credit program

\$12,500 per teacher to earn library media endorsement. Limit the total available grants to \$xx million and require school districts receiving funds for this grant to submit a plan to meet the standards of "Qualified" or "Exemplary" Status of the School Libraries for the 21st Century Benchmarks (SL 21) ([www.michigan.gov/sl21](http://www.michigan.gov/sl21)). The SL21 Benchmarks are a tool to measure the quality of Michigan School Library Programs. The district must also submit an end of the year report on the specific use of the funds toward creating an effective school library program.

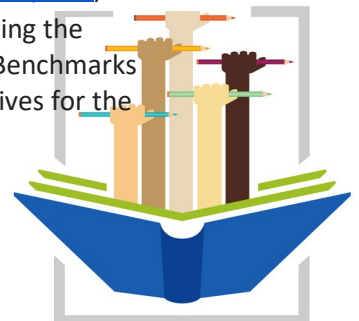
IV. Budget item for state-level school library consultant/coordinator ([draft job description](#))

A state-level school library consultant/coordinator could assist schools in meeting the "Qualified" or "Exemplary" Status of the School Libraries for the 21st Century Benchmarks (SL21) and include school libraries in Michigan Department of Education initiatives for the benefit of all students

#### Resource documents:

School Finance Research Collaborative [Recommendation](#).

[Grant Fact Sheet](#)



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## ATTACHMENT B

### GEAC's Recommendations for Standardized Testing

Standardized testing has been the measure for learning and accountability for decades in the state of Michigan. It is a billion-dollar industry that is supported by public education. The time and resources needed to carry out such assessments have altered how teaching and learning are conducted. In fact, testing has become the dominant force to measure learning, often shaping what we teach and how we teach it. Though standardized tests can reflect parts of a student's knowledge, they are limited and have no bearing on preparing students for success in future careers. Standardized tests fall short of representing the true potential of individual learners, placing an additional burden on traditionally underserved and over-strained school communities.

GEAC would like to recommend to the Governor's Office that standardized tests, such as the M-STEP & SAT, should not be a predominant criterion used to measure student learning and district accountability. Two action recommendations include:

- I. Conducting more research on PK-12 summative assessment to examine:
  - a. learning outcomes for all students, particularly in **marginalized communities** (economically disadvantaged, English-language learners, special education, etc.). Do standardized tests improve learning for our most vulnerable students? What impact has the past two decades of standardized testing had on learning outcomes for all Michigan students?
  - b. the **social-emotional impact** of standardized testing. Do standardized tests cause or increase anxiety in children?
- II. Evaluate the research data and determine the **next steps in developing alternative criteria** used to measure student learning and district accountability to determine whether standardized tests accurately measure accountability for P-20 students (because not all students are college bound). What alternatives are available that will ensure educational justice across Michigan communities?



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