



Michiganders' Stories on How Affordable Education Offers A Brighter Future

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How will this proposal benefit Michiganders?

Pre-K For All --- **Detroit Region**

Alyssa D • St. Clair County

"In our area, pre-K would cost my family close to 8 thousand dollars. That is 8 thousand dollars that could be used for retirement savings or college tuition. It also makes me think of the fact that it would be more than \$8000 since I have two children over the next few years instead of being able to save for my children's college tuition or putting a money away to be able to help them buy their first house. We would be spending tens of thousands of dollars to put them through preschool programs. As an educator, I know how important these pre-K programs are, and I would hate to deny my child the opportunity to excel just because it is so unbelievably expensive."

Amanda L • Genesee County

"It would save us so much money on childcare. We have been relying on family to care for our daughters. This would allow our second daughter to receive education sooner."

Austin S • Genesee County

"It would enable us to afford to live a little more comfortably and ensure our daughter is best prepared for her continued education. Pre-K currently costs more than our mortgage and we are barely surviving. We may be able to explore more of our fabulous state and create memories with our family. We would be able to support more local businesses with added funds in our budget. It would be a miracle."

Ben B • Wayne County

"As a married man, and couple, who are planning a family, this would be a massive benefit. Besides that, a more educated society is a better society. It is amazing to think about what our future children can do with this significant benefit."

Brienne R • Wayne County

"It would save me \$800 a month. This would help me greatly as I am a single mom who is supporting her mom. I love the preschool my daughter is in. Already at 2.5 she is speaking well, uses the right pronouns, and knows how to count and identify shapes and colors! It's so great for them."

Catherine H • Oakland County

"My husband and I both work full time. We have been paying for full time childcare since having our three children. The cost is so much that I considered quitting my teaching job to stay home with the kids. Free pre-K would not solve ALL the problems with the cost of childcare but would help us tremendously as the children turn 4-years-old."

Carolyn E • Oakland County

“Free pre-K would save our family \$9,500 dollars that we are currently paying for daycare. Not only would it allow for an easier transition to kindergarten, but it is also not feasible to take kids to 2-3 hours of preschool while trying to work full time. My husband and I both work full-time. This would be significant. Thank you.”

Cheryl W • Washtenaw County

“It would mean more money freed up for medical bills.”

Christina O • Genesee County

“As a family with two full-time working professionals, this would allow us to send our youngest to preschool and to afford to do so, which will otherwise be part time just a couple of days. Our daughter is ready for more, but finances hold us back from enrolling her in preschool she deserves. As a school psychologist, I know the importance of early childhood educational experiences and fully support this initiative for my own kids as well as the students and community in which I work.”

Cody H • Macomb County

“It would allow us to save money for our children for their future and ensure they are getting an education early. I pay out of pocket for this currently and the cost puts a burden on our family monthly.”

Danielle K • Oakland County

“Currently between daycare for 1 child and paid pre-school for another, we spent \$29,000+ last year on child care expenses. This isn't allowing us to invest in our or our children's futures or pay down bills with high interest rates. Free pre-K could help families achieve long term financial success.”

Denisa L • Wayne County

“Pre-K is very expensive, and it will save money for me and my family. The living cost has gone significantly higher, and that money saved from pre-K could go towards food expenses.”

Fernanda M • Oakland County

“It would save us at least \$400/month in pre-K tuition and give us some more flexibility to work more hours and bring more money to my family since my daughter will be in pre-k. That would mean we would be able to pay down our debt faster and have a better life quality.”

Jessica S • Wayne County

“Free pre-K would allow my family stability by being able to save that additional cost.”

Jeremy O • Genesee County

"It would allow me to send my child and soon to be newborn to pre-K more easily. With my oldest who is now in Kindergarten it created a financial hardship each month coming up with \$400 for pre-K. With inflation and lack of wage growth in the public safety sector I do not think it will be something we can achieve for our other kids."

Joy R • Livingston County

"It will give my grandson the best start to his educational foundation. If daycare benefits from funding it will improve the quality of programming."

Julia R • Livingston County

"Having pre-K covered by the state would help our family be able to not worry about meeting our monthly bills. Paying for child care right now is hard on our budget and makes it hard to have anything extra money wise for savings at the end of the month once we pay out our child care. And that is only 3 days a week for them. To have a little cushion for emergencies would be ideal for us, if we could swing it."

Kathryn P • Oakland County

"This would be incredibly impactful for our family. We are fortunate enough to both have great full-time jobs; however, we spend over 3k a month on childcare. This makes it incredibly difficult to save money for our family expenses, let alone to save for our kid's futures (i.e., college)."

Kaylene C • Livingston County

"We have our first child currently, 9-months-old, and plan to have more. It's been a struggle to figure out child care. Even though we're a two-income family with good jobs, if we had 3 kids like we want, we'd be living paycheck to paycheck. Any early education that is free like public school would tremendously help and encourage women to stay in the workforce. Women leaving the workforce and part of the reason there is gap in pay is often due to childcare expenses."

Kelly G • Wayne County

"While I no longer have preschool aged children, I will speak to how free pre-K would have benefited our family. I would have been able to work part time which would have greatly aided my mental health and our financial health. Instead, my husband took on various jobs in addition to his full-time high school teaching position. He would have been able to spend more nights with our kids. As it stood, he often arrived home after the kids went to bed. I was a full-time caregiver and as such I was unable to work."

Laura D • Macomb County

"It would benefit our son going to school and learning basics prior to the start of K-12."

Laura O • Washtenaw County

"We just adopted a 1-year-old and free pre-K would help us financially."

Laura P • Washtenaw County

"We would save 30,000 a year because we unexpectedly had twins and only budgeted ourselves for two children. We are full-time working middle class family who just wants the best for our kids. We are overjoyed to have an "extra" son but the extra money for childcare is really a hinder on our ability to get a larger house and save for college. Thank you Governor!"

Lenna I • Macomb County

"With the exorbitant cost of childcare, as a household where we rely on dual, full-time income from both parents in order to survive, pre-K would help to eliminate a substantial financial burden."

Lindsay K • Monroe County

"The pre-K for all would save my family over \$6k next year for part-time childcare and while offering our daughter a solid foundation for kindergarten."

Meghan C • Oakland County

"My husband and I have a great deal of college debt and would be able to pay more toward that if we didn't have to worry about the cost of pre-K."

Nicholas P • Washtenaw County

"My wife is pregnant with our first child, due this August. Before pregnancy, the cost of childcare was our biggest barrier to conceiving. Now, we're in a place financially where we feel like we can do it, but things will obviously be tighter money-wise. From what we've calculated, pre-K for all would save us about \$10,000/year as you've mentioned. It would also allow every family who aren't as financially capable as us to let their child(ren) experience the benefits of a pre-K education too, providing more socioeconomic equality in our state."

Paul R • Washtenaw County

"Pre-k for all will help us get our son into preschool without having to borrow money or make tough choices on sacrificing on other things we spend our money on. Thank you for getting this done (hopefully)."

Raul P • Washtenaw County

"After the surprise addition of twins to my family last February we watched our childcare costs, even for just two days a week, skyrocket to over \$2,000 a month. These childcare costs are a huge burden to bear and 80% higher than our mortgage. I can't even imagine how my wife and I could afford full time childcare. Our oldest turns four this year and expanded free pre-K would change our economic situation significantly for the better. I was so glad to hear the governor proposing ways to ease this burden for Michigan families."

Robert P • Oakland County

"My eldest child is almost 4 right now and will be able to enter pre-K for 4-year-olds this year. And my second, is almost 2, and my third is almost 0 (any day now!) So, getting pre-K covered will be of great benefit for getting all my kids prepared for kindergarten and save lots of money vs. paying for all three (and hopefully all four eventually) into pre-K."

Samariyan G • Genesee County

"Free pre-K would allow my family to use the funds and time set aside for my child's pre-K to be put towards pursuing my education, which will further benefit my child."

Sarah M • Oakland County

"Easing the financial burden of education should/will benefit all families; ours included. As we look forward to expecting our second child, both of whom will be in daycare full time until Kindergarten any financial help we can get with their education is welcome."

Tiffany C • Oakland County

"We have a 4-year-old, 2-year-old and baby due in July. My husband and I are college graduates with master and doctorate degrees. We don't qualify for free preschool and paying for preschool is an added financial stress (even with 2 incomes). We pay for part-time preschool for our oldest, but full-time preschool is not an option for our family budget."

Tiffany K • Wayne County

"My daughter wants to go to school SO bad, she loves playing school at home and with being a COVID baby she could really use the social interaction with children her age as she has missed out on so much, but preschool in my area is too expensive for us to send her and still be able to provide necessities for her. Free pre-K would be AMAZING for us and her development as she is so eager to grow and learn so she can become a police officer one day."

Trevor L • Wayne County

"My son would be able to attend preschool when he turns 4 next year. My wife would then be able to go back to work. She isn't working right now because childcare costs more than she could make from working."

Tyler C • Oakland County

"It would enable my 4 year old to obtain an early start to his education and help our family significantly from a work perspective."

Jackson Region

Brian D • Jackson County

"We currently pay for pre-K at a facility in Jackson and for 3 days a week it's over \$800 a month. The savings would allow us to start investing in a 529 account for our kids post high school education. It would also help us save an emergency fund and fully fund our retirement."

Lansing Region

Bryan M • Ingham County

"This would allow our 4-year-old son an opportunity to get to learn and play with others and save us about 10K! That's money we can spend on food and save for college and retirement!!"

Brandon L • Eaton County

"Free pre-K would allow my family and I to afford a new(er) vehicle that we desperately need, put healthier food on our table, and better the future of my children. It will also allow me, the sole bread-winner, to be able to save for my retirement."

Carol P • Macomb County

"My grandchildren are almost at that 4-year-old mark. Both of them have a single mom supporting them with minimal help from the father. Free pre-K will allow them to thrive in school without second jobs for their moms."

Erin H • Ingham County

"It was be a huge financial benefit. We could save more money toward our children's college funds."

Hannah D • Ingham County

"Pre-k for all would mean everything for our family! It is something we would not be able to afford otherwise at this time and I feel is so necessary in order to help children develop social skills, routines, and gain exposure!"

Jessica M • Eaton County

"Having free pre-K would save our family at least \$15,000."

Kalli D • Shiawassee County

"Being able to keep more of my paycheck instead of it going to tuition for a school I work at."

Karlie M • Ingham County

"My 3-year-old is currently attending preschool two half days per week, and he loves it! I am amazed every day at the progress he is making, especially in language, creative play, and socializing with new friends. My hope is to send him more days next year, but balancing the cost of preschool and daycare outside the hours of school is challenging. His younger brother will be ready for preschool in two years, and I hope to be able to send him full-time as well, because I can see how beneficial it is!"

Lisa T • Clinton County

"I paid \$14,000 for childcare last year. Having free pre-K would let me save money and create more memories with my family. I could even maybe afford to have another child; the cost of daycare has been stopping me. I don't want to stay home because I am the breadwinner, have great health insurance and I want to keep my career moving forward."

Grand Rapids Region

Allie G • Ottawa County

"As a single mom this is going to be lifting a burden and I am very thankful."

Amber E • Montcalm County

“Pre-k for all would benefit my son and family by providing access to free learning opportunities while we can continue to work. The cost of childcare and worrying about having enough money to pay our bills is beyond stressful. For people who have a lot of debt but fall through the cracks in qualifying for any kind of assistance this would be magical. Knowing my son would have access to a foundation of learning prior to starting school would also help me feel better prepared to have him start school in addition to feeling like he is ready to go to kindergarten.”

Antoinette V • Ottawa County

“It would allow my soon to be 4-year-old to start school this fall. We have been hesitant to enroll her due to the cost of the programs in our area.”

Brooke B • Isabella County

“I cannot afford preschool for my son who is almost 3. I am only able to work part time with him at home.”

Holly H • Kent County

“My children, 3-year-old and 18 months, currently go to a daycare center which incorporates curriculum. We are so lucky to have finally secured placements in this specific daycare, but it took us 2.5 years of being on the waitlist to finally get in. Additionally, we pay so much in daycare (currently \$628/week but going up to \$715/week in March) for our two children, it's the largest expense we have, nearly double our mortgage! pre-K for all would ensure everyone has access to great curriculum at a young age (instead of waitlisting a lot of kids) as well as provide financial relief. My 3-year-old doesn't start kindergarten until 2026, which is the soonest we would catch a break in daycare expenses which is really daunting.”

Julie E • Kent County

“Having pre-K for our family would allow myself to complete my doctorate without worry or distraction that my daughter needs to also focus on her education. My daughter is home with me right now and both of our educational goals would suffer if we did not find an education center for her to attend on a consistent basis that allows her to flourish. If we put the hard work in now, we will have better outcomes for our future success.”

Jamie L • Montcalm County

“My daughter would have been able to send her children to school earlier and save thousands of dollars in day care costs. A professional pre-K program can better prepare children for future learning.”

Melanie L • Ottawa County

“I am a single mother of two boys, age 8 and 6 months. According to the charts, I make ‘too much’ money to get any type of assistance. But it's not enough to bridge that gap. I pay for full time daycare so that I can continue working my job. Free pre-K would mean my 6-month-old can someday attend, as paying for daycare and pre-K at the same time would be impossible. I want the best for my kids and can see evidence in my oldest that pre-K absolutely sets kids up for success!”

Meghan F • Muskegon County

"Being able to put our kids in pre-K would save us \$12,000 in childcare costs per child."

Wesley J • Ottawa County

"Giving our kids the best education is extremely important to us. Allowing them to start early not only helps us achieve that goal, but also gives us the peace of mind that the kids are in a stable environment. The savings on childcare will not also allow us to begin our savings for their future years before planned."

Kalamazoo Region

Abbey S • Allegan County

"We are so excited at the prospect of our son attending pre-K. His daycare has done a great job in caring for him, but they are not equipped to provide the academic environment we desire. Due to the way things are currently set up, we have had to make the decision between pre school and daycare. Most preschools near us only run for a few hours each day, forcing us to continue with him in daycare. Not only will this save us thousands of dollars, but I believe it will benefit our son in the long run as well."

Alison P • Kalamazoo County

"Pre-K for all would benefit our family by being able to utilize the money we would save from not having to pay for daycare for our son. We could use that money to renovate our house and we would feel confident he would be prepared for kindergarten by having the pre-K education. This would help our family immensely especially financially."

Angela B • Morgan County

"As a pre-K teacher/educator, it would continue to keep me employed and making a difference in the lives of our early learners."

Ariel L • St. Joseph County

"I have three toddlers (4-year-old, 3-year-old and, 2-year-old). This program would free up funds to pay for other activities that promote wellness (physical activity, family counseling, medical expenses)."

Ella S • Barry County

"More money to pay bills. More money to save for our children, home upkeep, family outings, or general savings."

Gwenevere M • Berrien County

"We were fortunate enough to have free-PreK at 3 through Strong Beginnings and Great Start Readiness Program at 4 for both of my kiddos and they have excelled in school both academically and socially because of it. Free pre-K for all kids means more diversity and accessibility for more families."

Christie D • Grand Travers County

"Free pre-K would be a total blessing! We have three young kids and we're paying for daycare for all three for a while. We've roughly paid \$100k over the course of the last 5 years for daycare. Our oldest is in kindergarten and our middle child will be off to junior kindergarten in the fall. Free pre-K will benefit our son who is 18 months right now."

Charles S • Grand Travers County

"It would save us over \$200 per week, which is a lot. It would allow both parents to work full time."

Crystal H • Manistee County

"As a preschool teacher, free universal preschool would benefit the families and children in my rural area by taking the stress of paying for child care off the families and setting children up for success in their academic futures."

Sabrina H • Grand Traverse County

"We would get to eliminate the expense of child care 2 years earlier, effectively saving \$24,000 or more (per child!)"

If we had an extra \$20k-\$50k over 2-4 years, we'd be debt free (student loans) and building a house. Maybe even purchasing a vehicle. All things that boost the economic cycle in our state.

We would even be able to spend more time building and growing our locally-owned businesses, and create a few more jobs.

Or, I'd be able to consider changing careers from private sector marketing to something supporting state or federal natural resources - but entry level jobs in that industry don't pay enough to off set the cost of child care.

Or, I'd be able to consider staying home with my youngest child because our oldest would be out of paid care earlier. (This option would have really been nice to have when I was laid off in April 2023.)

So many options that just aren't available to us while we're on the hook for that amount of money."

Saginaw Region

Andrew T • Saginaw County

"I would be able to move my son from daycare into a preschool where he would become more prepared for kindergarten."

Donna M • Iosco County

"I have always felt that a pre-K program always is a benefit to help prepare for all the education that is needed to successfully complete their education. Sadly, it's very expensive and families are having to decide if they can afford another \$800 plus bill per month to do it. This should be available to everyone.... not just those that have the higher income."

Jasmine C • Saginaw County

"I am a single mom to a 3-year-old. After staying home with my daughter until she was 2.5 years of age, I had no choice but to return to work which meant my baby had to go into daycare. Daycare is my largest monthly expense, second to housing and I receive no assistance. Being able to enroll her in a safe, clean, and free pre-K program next year would financially relieve me, but also continue to prepare her for kindergarten when it is time."

Upper Peninsula Region

Aimee M • Houghton County

"It would save us money on childcare and remove the cost of preschool."

SHARE YOUR STORY!

How will this proposal benefit Michiganders?

Community College For All ————— Detroit Region

Tiffany G • Wayne County

“TREMENDOUSLY!!! I have twin daughters graduating this year. If this passes, this will put both my girls on the path to a debt free education when we believed this would be impossible. They both aspire to become nurses.”

Melinda S • Wayne County

“It would mean less out of pocket money to obtain an entry level career degree or certificate for our daughter, and she can enter a career field that will offer tuition reimbursement or growth within. Thus, preventing her from accumulating lifelong debt and/or poor credit and allowing her to be a successful and thriving, young adult member of her community!”

Stephanie J• Livingston County

“It would be amazing for my three 20-something children! Whether getting a 2-year degree or a skilled trades certificate, they’d be able to pursue a career without incurring student debt. We just can’t afford to send 3 children to college & this would be a blessing. We live in a district that doesn’t qualify for the current tuition help because we are out of district. We would get a discount, but I’ve always thought 2 years of free community college is so important. Michigan and its residents would only be better for it!!”

Kathryn G • Washtenaw County

“Free community college for all would benefit our family by preventing our kids from the crippling debt of student loans that my husband and I have been paying on for 12 years. We started with \$130,000 in student loans between us and now we owe \$177,000. We don't want our kids to suffer like we have. This program will make that a reality. Thank you!”

Marisa P • Wayne County

“We have four children. To have free community college available to them would be a big financial burden lifted from us and them! This would be amazing!”

Robert R. • Livingston County

"It will allow my 5 children to get the first 2 years of their college education out of the way without incurring student loan debt, which is absolutely incredible!"

Tina D • Macomb County

"That would be huge!!! My daughter is currently at Macomb Community College on a softball scholarship, and it's been a huge help to not have to worry about the extra expenses! My son will be a senior next year and who knows what his future holds. I started MCC in fall of 96 and was unable to finish due to costs. Fast forward more than 25 years, as a 46-year-old mother of 2, I just finished my associate degree using the MI reconnect program!!! That was huge for my family!!"

Starleesha W • Wayne County

"Community college being free would greatly benefit my family. I have 9 children, one in college now and one on the way. This would really help us out. Being low to no income at all, my son doesn't have many options for college. Making community college free would really benefit us. My son would be able to start his journey towards a degree and great career without having to worry about money."

Kalamazoo Region

Mona S • Berrien County

"My 21-year-old son is working full time and taking 1-2 online classes per semester. He is paying for it himself, so not having that expense would be a blessing for him."

Naomi L • Cass County

"It would have helped my granddaughter whose parents had no resources to help her. She lived with us but still had tuition and books to pay. As a community college educator, I saw so many students drop out or reduce course loads because they had to work to pay for tuition and books. Working too much interfered with their success. In today's world, education beyond high school is becoming more crucial."

Lansing Region

Jessica M • Eaton County

"Having free community college available for my children would ease the burden on us parents planning for our children's future education."

Kierstin M • Clinton County

"This would allow my children to attend college without the stress of finding ways to help cover the costs and assure them that they can go to college."

Renee B • Ingham County

"I am a single parent. My son is a cancer survivor. I have started and stopped my career multiple times due to his illness, treatment, and rehab. I've managed us - financially - through grit. My son having access to tuition free community college would be life changing - for him and for me. I tearfully think about not having to choose between his education and my retirement. So yes, please, tuition free."

Brittany L. • Ingham County

"It would benefit me and my family so I could finish my degree and get a better paying job and help us achieve the goal of building the life we want."

Melissa H • Clinton County

"We have three children ages 13-17 so free community college would be a huge help financially!"

Kevin S • Eaton County

"It would be a huge help financially because fall of 24 I will have two daughters in college that I help pay for."

Angela R • Clinton County

"This would be a HUGE assistance for both my child and, us the parents. To offer free community college would alleviate extra financial burden on myself as well as my child. It would help so that high school graduates can obtain higher education without the extra stress of worrying about financial support, working extra jobs that often make it difficult to attend school and work, allowing them to focus on schooling, getting a good education, and obtaining a better paying job with benefits, etc."

Sherry S • Huron County

"This would be great for the people who are just above the poverty line and are paying for their child's college. This would be a great benefit for every graduate not just the class of 2024 but previous graduates as well. I am a college student right now and having the first 2 years of college free for my child and myself would have made a huge difference in the degree I chose to pursue."

Matt P • Losco County

"I have two daughters who will both be graduating in 2025. With the increase in inflation and lagging wages our ability to fund our daughter's college goals are quickly falling behind. Having a program for the first two years of college would be a huge benefit for our working family. Tennessee has a similar program called the Hope scholarship and it has been life changing for families that live there."

Upper Peninsula Region

April A • Iron County

"Free community college would benefit my family by eliminating a financial burden for myself and my daughter. Starting off without debt from student loans will make other expenses more affordable and possible, such as health care."