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To: Council About Parochiaid
From: Cara Marie Dobie
Date: December 6, 2013
Re: Legislative Update

EAA Expansion Still A Serious Possibility

According to discussions we have had with the Governor's staff, passage of HB 4369, the bill that would codify and expand Education Achievement Authorities, remains a priority for the Governor. Rep. Lipton (D-Huntington Woods) has challenged the EAA for its failure in providing necessary service to students with special education needs. At her own expense, she has set up a website with information she has been finding regarding this and other lacks, including the treatment of educational personnel.

At its September meeting, the State Board of Education had many questions to ask EAA Chancellor John Covington regarding teachers being let go without proper observations and evaluation. He was also questioned about the reduction in special education services being provided to EAA students. In response, he contended that the EAA had acted properly and that many of the students previously being provided special education services did not actually need them.

In the meantime, Superintendent Flanagan has indicated an intention to move other districts into the EAA--without legislation! This proposal has been very controversial in the education community.

House Education Committee Reports Reading and School Accountability Bills

On December 4, the House Education Committee reported a package of bills that would affect every school in the state. HB 5111, sponsored by Rep. Amanda Price (R-Park Township), would force schools to hold back third grade students who do not score "proficient" or better on their reading assessment. HB 5112, sponsored by Rep. Lisa Lyons (R-Alto), would replace the state's color-coded school grading system with a letter grade system. HB 5111 may come up on second reading on the House floor Thursday, with possible action on final passage as soon as Friday.

MDE Moving Forward With Common Core After Senate Action

On October 24, the Senate finally passed its version of House Concurrent Resolution 11. This concurrent resolution allows the state to continue spending money to implement Common Core. Following the Senate action, Superintendent Mike Flanagan directed MDE staff to "resume all work that had been put on hold toward the implementation of the Common Core".

Superintendent Flanagan took some criticism for this staff directive, particularly from the House Speaker's office, which labeled it as "premature", given that the House had not acted on the Senate-

passed version yet. However, for the first 23 days of October, roughly 300 school districts were facing a significant cash flow problem, with a combined \$1.5 billion in federal Title I, II, III and VI money not available and causing school districts to have to use their general funds to cover the gap. Because federal rules require states to operate from a set of standards, without the Common Core in place, Michigan cannot state that it has such standards in place.

On October 29, without a roll-call vote and without any discussion on the floor, the House gavelled through HCR 11, including the amendments from the Senate. Rep. Tim Kelly (R-Saginaw), sponsor of the resolution, noted that many of the conditions in the resolution came from Common Core opponents and resulted from about 15 hours of hearings that a special House subcommittee held over the summer.

HCR 11 was needed this fall because lawmakers inserted language in the Fiscal Year 2014 budget that froze state spending on Common Core until the Legislature cast an affirmative vote for spending.

MDE Report Has Evaluated Assessment Vendors

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has completed a report that evaluated vendors who offer assessments based on Common Core Standards. The MDE sent out a survey to and received results from more than 160 vendors, including the Smarter Balanced assessment, and assessments from PARCC, NWEA, Pearson, and McGraw-Hill. The report will look at four major categories: How well aligned the assessments are to the Common Core, depth of how those standards are tested, the burden each assessment would place on local schools, and the cost-effectiveness of each assessment. The report was requested by the Michigan legislature earlier this year after passage of Common Core Standard funding. It was due back for presentation by December 1st of this year.

Science Standards Next On Deck

Michigan's State Board of Education is likely to begin reviewing new science standards under a program called Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS is a curriculum developed by a coalition of 26 states designed to allow more depth of instruction on fewer core scientific concepts. If Common Core standards for mathematics were a hot topic, expect this one to be red hot!

Controversy Over PA 96 and PA 97 Continues

Rep. David Knezek (D-Dearborn Heights) has formally requested an opinion from Attorney General Bill Schuette on the legality of legislation that allowed for the dissolution of Inkster and Buena Vista school districts. Rep. Knezek said PA 96 of 2013 and PA 97 of 2013 were rushed through the House in less than two weeks with little public input and failed to take into account needs of the students and community.

As a result of PA 96 of 2013 and PA 97 of 2013, Taylor School District absorbed many of Inkster Public School District's students and three buildings. Taylor School District is keeping the lawns mowed, paying for utilities and deterring break-ins and vandalism, but the condition of these buildings and these costs is causing continued discussion regarding the responsibilities and costs that are shifted to "receiving" districts.

Bills of Interest to CAP

SJR R For-Profit Public Schools-Sen. Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor) would prohibit operation of public school on for-profit basis in state constitution. Introduced on 4/10/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 4032 Cyber Schools-Rep. Doug Geiss (D-Taylor) requires cyber schools post materials on website and submit to Department of Education. Introduced on 1/22/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 4369 Education Achievement Authority-Rep. Lisa Lyons (R-Alto) establishes the Education Achievement Authority as part of public education system and provide for its power and duties. Received in the Senate on 4/09/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 4625 School Districts-Rep. Pete Lund (R-Shelby Township) modifies criteria for establishment of compensation levels or adjustments. Reported in the House on 5/22/13; Substitute H-1 adopted.

HB 4797 Financially Insolvent Schools-Rep. David Rutledge (D-Ypsilanti) provides for criteria and procedures for providing education to residents of a financially insolvent school district. Introduced on 5/30/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 4798 Financially Insolvent Schools-Rep. Bill Rogers (R-Brighton) considers pupils residing in district that is not financially able to provide education to residents of educating district for school aid purposes. Introduced on 5/30/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 4986 Education-Rep. Tom Hooker (R-Byron Center) Provides for certain protections regarding student rights to religious expression in public schools. Introduced on 9/17/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

HB 5112 Grades for Public Schools-Rep. Lisa Lyons (R-Alto) Establishes system for calculating and publishing letter grades for public schools. Introduced on 10/29/13 and referred to a second reading.

SB 83 Conversion Schools-Sen. Dave Robertson (R-Grand Blanc) provides for conversion schools for public school academies. Introduced on 1/29/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

SB 423 School Instruction-Sen. Patrick Colbeck (R-Canton Township) requires instruction in certain United States historical information. Introduced on 6/11/13 and Committee Hearing in Senate on 11/13/13.

SB 681 Lease Agreements-Sen. Hoon-Yung Hopgood (D-Taylor) prohibits lease agreements between public school academies and certain entities. Introduced on 11/13/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.

SB 682 Public School Academies-Sen. Hoon-Yung Hopgood (D-Taylor) provides for general amendments to public school academies to achieve greater accountability. Introduced on 11/13/13 and referred to the Committee on Education.