

To: Council About Parochiaid
From: Cara Marie Dobie and Courtney VanCamp
Date: March 13, 2020
Re: Legislative Report

Governor Whitmer’s 2021 Budget Presentation on Education

Governor Whitmer’s budget proposal was presented to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on February 6. Her proposal calls for a per-pupil increase that would benefit every district. The State Budget Office has an [interactive map](#) detailing per-pupil funding increases district-by-district. The Executive is also proposing to shrink the gap between the minimum and maximum districts to an all-time low of \$343 per pupil. Click on your district to see what the proposed increases are. Further, each pop-up on the district you click presents the overall foundation allowance increase, and then the 3 "buckets" of the Governor's proposed "weighted per-pupil" increases: special ed, at-risk, and English-language-learners.

Some general Education budget notes on the Governor’s Proposal:

- \$225 per-pupil increase for the districts at the minimum allowance (to 8,336 p-p)
- \$150 per-pupil increase for the districts at the maximum allowance (to \$8,679 p-p)
- The recommendation takes the next step in weighting the per-pupil funds:
 - Total of \$8,239 per-pupil for students hat fall in one of the categories
 - \$60 Million increase in special education
 - \$60 Million increase for "economically disadvantaged" students
 - \$5 Million increase in English language learners
 - \$60 Million for CTA is maintained from current year

Additional Weighted Foundation Payment per Pupil

	Special Education	Economically Disadvantaged and Other At-Risk	ELL Learners
Current	\$6,702	\$744	\$135
Increase	\$1,537	\$85	\$50
Total Per Pupil	\$8,239	\$829	\$185

- GSRP expanded:
 - 5,000 more students eligible for full-day preschool who live in high-poverty, high-academic need districts
 - Increase the full-day per-child preschool rate by \$1,086, which makes it the same level as the base per-pupil foundation allowance for all other students
- \$5 Million for literacy coaches

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees are working on their response to the Governor's proposal. They are expected to complete their bills by June.

House Oks \$9M for Schools in 2020 Supplemental Deal

SB 373, sponsored by Sen. Jim Stamas, (R-Midland) will allocate funds for schools and higher education. Key portions of this bill include: \$300,000 towards an online algebra tool, \$1 million for statewide online mathematics, \$2 million for local produce in school lunches, \$2 million for the Michigan Education Corps, \$1.5 million for a value-added growth and projection analytic system in teacher evaluation tools, \$600,000 for FIRST Robotics, \$1 million for Lakes Superior State University as a pass-through to Bay Mills Community College and \$250,000 for nonpublic school reimbursements.

The bill was met with both support and criticism. Education groups support the job training programs, such as Going Pro and Reconnect. However, Chris Wigent, Executive Director of the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators, spoke out against the nonpublic school reimbursement and called for Governor Whitmer to exercise her veto authority, stating:

"On behalf of public-school employees and students across our state, I feel compelled to express disappointment and frustration that the supplemental budget includes public dollars for private schools," he said. "The voters of Michigan have spoken several times on this matter. We call on Governor Gretchen Whitmer to exercise her veto authority on these unconstitutional appropriations."

SB 373 is laid over one day under the rules.

House Education Grapples with Teacher Shortage During Testimony

A shortage of teachers in Michigan means schools are often left to rely on substitute teachers with less experience. This issue was discussed while the House Education Committee heard testimony on HB 5357. This bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Johnson (R-Shelbyville) would no longer require schools to pay pension liability fees when hiring retired substitute teachers. Proponents of the change claim this is a 20% fee paid by the school to hire a retired teacher as a substitute in comparison to there being no fee to hire someone with little experience. Rep. Johnson noted this creates an economic incentive to hire substitute teachers with less experience.

However, representatives of school employee unions expressed concern over the pension changes, stating that the switch would leave a gap in an already unfunded school employee pension system.

HB 5357 was referred to the Committee on Appropriations on March 3, 2020.

Senate Oks Special Ed Interim Teaching Certificate With Dem Changes

SB 657, sponsored by Sen. Lana Theis (R-Brighton) passed the Senate on Tuesday this week. This bill would allow individuals, who obtain an interim teaching certificate, to teach special education students. Democrats offered two amendments, both of which were adopted. SB 657 passed 31-7, with no votes coming from Democrats.

Sen. Dayna Polehanki (D-Livonia) introduced the first amendment, which would increase the bill requirements from 12 college credit hours to 32 hours in a training program. Sen. Polehanki noted, "While this is a step in helping to put trained teachers in special education classrooms, we must recognize that the teaching shortage in Michigan was entirely predictable."

The second amendment that was adopted was introduced by Sen. Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids). This would require the Center for Educational Performance & the MDE to conduct a study focusing on the teacher shortage in Michigan. Additionally, one or more universities must coordinate the study information regarding educator vacancies & retention rates, which would be due by September 15.

SB 657 was referred to the House Committee on Education on March 10, 2020.