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To: Council About Parochiaid  
From: Cara Spagnuolo  
Date: March 13, 2009  
Re: Legislative Update

### **Governor Granholm Addresses Education**

Although it feels like old news now, we wanted to mention that Governor Granholm in her State of the State address gave time to education concerns. She opened that segment of her speech with her ambition to double the number of college graduates in Michigan. All high schools students are now eligible for a \$4,000 Michigan promise scholarship based on the college entrance exam all students now take. The Michigan Promise was inspired by a program Kalamazoo implemented to give students free college education at state universities and community colleges. Under legislation enacted last session, this program will now be expanded to ten Michigan communities called “promise zones.” However, the executive proposals are being criticized for reducing needs-based financial aid.

She also referenced the “21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Fund” which will help school districts replace non-working schools with smaller ones that are more effective. 25 of these new schools are now being planned all across the state, as well as a program launch in April of “Michigan College Access Network” which will bring together the entire community, to help students and parents plan for, apply to, and pay for college education.

Regarding the new standards in the high school curriculum, she referred to an “Algebra for All” incentive. This incentive will give teachers further professional development to teach any level of student algebra and obviously was mentioned because of the concerns among educators regarding the new mathematics requirements.

### **State Aid Bill Disappointing: Stimulus Package to Help Out**

The school aid bill, HB 4304, now being discussed in the House Appropriations Subcommittee, begins with the Governor’s recommendations to reduce foundation dollars for each district by \$59 per pupil, reducing Sec. 20j hold harmless funding by \$10 million to about \$42 million, eliminating “district specific” provisions, reducing adult education by \$4 million to \$20 million, eliminating bilingual education funding, and eliminating the Great Parents/Great Start ISD program at \$5 million as well as the Great Start 0-3 Secondary Prevention services at \$2.1 million. The good news is that the federal stimulus funding will certainly restore the foundation

allowance; the question is, to what extent the non-supplant requirements of the stimulus funding would require restoration of other reductions and whether they would need to be restored to the original programs.

In what also counts as good news, there were no reductions in At-Risk Funds, or in the Great Start Readiness programs for school districts and private non-profit providers. The additional funding in the stimulus package that flows through IDEA and Title I formulae will be of direct assistance to students, although exactly how it must be spent is still in question. Discussions we have had with fiscal agency and Department of Education staff as recently as this week show that they have many questions that are still unanswered. Below are links to some sites that provide some early information on the impact of stimulus dollars to specific districts:  
District and State information:

<http://edlabor.house.gov/selected-allocations-for-school-districts-under-the-american-recovery-and-reinvestment-bill/index.shtml>

Also for some state allocations to some of the other grants, please note:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/09arrastatetables.pdf>

### **Public School Academies**

HB 4490, sponsored by Rep. Tom McMillin (R-Rochester Hills), would amend section 502 in the revised school code in two significant ways. One, it would transfer the authority from the State Board of Education to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This is of concern to some because the State Board is an elected body, while the superintendent of public instruction is not.

Second, the bill would totally eliminate the cap on the number of contracts issued for public school academies by state public universities.

Please see the complete HB 4490 in your packets for further details. This bill has been referred to the House Committee on Education.

### **Consolidation of Services Report**

The House Education Committee is looking for new ways for districts to share more services and thus enhance savings. Committee Chair Tim Melton (D-Pontiac) was not impressed at a recent hearing by the Department of Education report created in May 2008, on intermediate school district consolidation of services under PA 63, 2007, legislation that he had sponsored. This report was based on a survey of ISDs to determine what services were being shared or under consideration of being shared and what was precluding these efforts.

The intent of this report was to derive recommendations regarding the 10 best practices resulting from the survey. They also requested guidelines on what the optimal sizes were to be for districts and ISDs, as well as what the best legislative initiatives would be. The Chair expressed that the report he had received was short of this goal. The report had a larger focus on what legislation could be passed in the future, instead of better ways to spend the money under current law.

Though the largest issue the committee had with this report was it is not inclusive of all information the Department of Education has on this topic, the department rebutted this by saying they did not have enough money for staffing research teams to get a complete picture. Additionally, they responded that the report answered all questions that were asked.

### **Committees Important to CAP**

The House of Representatives has appointed the newly constituted Education Committee. It now consists of:

- Tim Melton (D), Committee Chair, Auburn Hills
- Lisa Brown (D), Majority Vice-Chair, West Bloomfield
- Timothy Bledsoe (D), Grosse Pointe
- Barb Byrum (D), Onondaga
- Marc R. Corriveau (D), Northville
- Douglas A. Geiss (D), Taylor
- Jennifer Haase (D), Richmond
- Deb Kennedy (D), Brownstown
- Steven Lindberg (D), Marquette
- David E. Nathan (D), Detroit
- Gino Polidori (D), Dearborn
- Sarah Roberts (D), St. Clair Shores
- Joel Sheltroun (D), West Branch
- Mary Valentine (D), Muskegon
- Phil Pavlov (R), Minority Vice-Chair, St. Clair Township
- Justin Amash (R), Kentwood
- Richard Ball (R), Laingsburg
- Larry DeShazor (R), Portage
- Tom McMillin (R), Rochester Hills
- Tom Pearce (R), Rockford
- Paul Scott (R), Grand Blanc
- Sharon Tyler (R), Niles
- John J. Walsh (R), Livonia

Likewise the K-12/Department of Education subcommittee to the House of Appropriations has been appointed:

- Terry Brown (D), Chair, Pigeon
- Richard Hammel (D), Majority Vice Chair, Morris Township
- Dudley Spade (D), Tipton
- Rashida Tlaib (D), Detroit
- Richard LeBlanc (D), Westland
- Gail Haines (R), Minority Vice Chair, Waterford
- Chuck Moss (R), Birmingham

Lastly the House Judiciary Committee has been appointed:

- Mark Meadows (D) Chair, East Lansing
- Ellen Cogen-Lipton (D), Majority Vice Chair, Huntington Woods
- Lisa Brown (D), West Bloomfield
- Bob Constan (D), Dearborn Heights
- Mark Corriveau (D), Northville
- Andy Coulouris (D), Saginaw
- Andrew Kandrevas (D), Southgate
- Bettie Scott (D), Detroit
- Rebekah Warren (D) Ann Arbor
- Tonya Schuitmaker (R), Lawton
- Justin Amash (R), Kentwood
- Joe Haveman (R), Holland
- Rick Jones (R), Grand Ledge
- Eileen Kowall (R), White Lake
- Tory Rocca (R), Sterling Heights