Next Reform: Fully Supporting Michigan Educators

~A Message from State Superintendent Mike Flanagan

Our state and the nation have seen unprecedented education reform in the last several years. Now, students can attend school in many ways whether it’s in a traditional classroom, online, or in a blended model. The state has adopted more rigorous standards and we are on our way to an assessment that will measure those standards.

We should understand that educators can view change in a lot of ways. They can feel the pressure behind a closed classroom door that somehow what they have strived to do their entire career is now not appreciated. They also can feel demoralized when faced with splashy news stories about poor student performance.

To all of that I would say here’s a new, fresh idea – may our next reform be fully supporting Michigan educators. United, we must stand together and tell the powerful stories about what is happening in our classrooms and with Michigan children. It is not just a job for teachers; this is a job for all of us as citizens to stand behind our education professionals and say “We support you.” This reform can best reflect the positive reality of our state’s teachers, principals, school staff and local superintendents.

I shared a lot of these sentiments during my presentation at the Governor’s Education Summit and you can view the highlights in my most recent podcast: [Link](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_45256_45257-328351--,00.html) I hope you’ll take a look.

In May, I had the pleasure of surprising Melody Arabo, a third grade teacher in Walled Lake Consolidated Schools, with the announcement that she is the 2014-2015 Michigan Teacher of the Year. Standing in the Keith Elementary School gym with her students, colleagues, and family, I was again reminded that teachers like Melody can have a tremendously positive impact, not just on those individuals around them, but on the future of Michigan and our great nation. Events like that one help call attention to these success stories, but we need more of them. I would encourage all of you to find ways to tell your stories about the good work being done day in and day out with Michigan’s children. I will continue to do that also.

As another school year comes to a close, I again wish to congratulate Melody and express my gratitude to all of Michigan’s educators, administrators and support staff for their hard work and difference they make in the lives of our kids.
Low-income children around Michigan will be receiving free books and reading instruction this year through the newly-developed Culture of Reading program at the Michigan Department of Education.

State Superintendent Mike Flanagan announced in December an effort to coordinate private donations to help build a culture of reading in Michigan.

“There are too many people, including children and adults, who cannot read,” Flanagan said. “We need that to change. To help build a culture of reading in Michigan, we need to get books in their hands and in their homes.

“Here is a great opportunity for people to have a meaningful impact on a child’s future, and it’s easy to do,” he added. “A donation of as little of $5.50 will get a book into the hands of a needy child.”

A coordinated, single donation collection system has been developed through the Library of Michigan Foundation to accept contributions from individuals; businesses; and groups, clubs and civic organizations for the express purpose of providing children’s books to young readers in low-income homes.

“The earlier a child is introduced to reading, the better chance they have of success in school and life,” Flanagan said. “Too many kids don’t have their own books to have and read at home when they want to. We have developed a vehicle to not only get them books, but engage their teachers and parents in the process.

In partnership with the Library of Michigan’s Michigan Reads! program, the Michigan Department of Education will be establishing a grant opportunity that will provide copies of this year’s Michigan Reads! book to children in low-income communities, through their classrooms and early childhood programs, based on their educators’ commitment to use the books to promote scientifically-based reading instruction and/or family engagement activities focused on literacy.

The number of classrooms and early childhood programs that will receive these free books will be dependent on available resources. That’s where the public can help, Flanagan said.

Log on to: www.michigan.gov/cultureofreading to make an online donation or get information about how to donate by check, as well as find links to other similar initiatives.

During recent efforts to report kindergarten retention, it was discovered that the information currently collected in CEPI’s data collection applications does not allow differentiation between students in a two-year developmental kindergarten sequence, consisting of a developmental kindergarten year and a regular kindergarten year, from those who repeat a regular kindergarten year.

To resolve this reporting difficulty, The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is re-defining the DK/retention K fields in Michigan Student Data System, Educational Entity Master, and Registry of Educational Personnel.

Beginning with the 2014/15 school year, MDE will no longer use the term “retention K.” Instead, MDE will use “Developmental K” to refer to the first year of a two-year kindergarten sequence that occurs prior to students entering first grade. Students who attend a regular one-year kindergarten program, but then are retained in that grade for an additional year, will simply be shown in the same grade for two school years, just as a student who repeats any other grade is shown.

The Department will include additional details in each of the data manuals for the relevant collections.
Walled Lake Schools’ Melody Arabo was named 2014-15 Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY) during a school visit from State Superintendent Mike Flanagan.

Arabo, a third grade teacher at Keith Elementary School with 12 years of classroom experience, was selected from 238 applicants statewide.

Flanagan congratulated Ms. Arabo on this recognition, saying, “Melody is a dynamic example of our Michigan teachers. Her child-centered approach to learning ensures she is meeting the needs of all her students. We look forward to her continued contributions to teaching and learning.”

Flanagan noted that Arabo will carry on the valued tradition of Michigan Teachers of the Year who have shared their teaching knowledge, expertise, and skills with educators across the state.

When she first started college, Arabo was in a marketing program. At that time, she also took an opportunity to become a paraprofessional at a local elementary, using her Chaldean language skills to work with English language learners. Through this she began to recognize a sense of purpose and belonging. The more she worked with students, the more she realized what a difference she could make. By the end of the first month, she had switched her major to Elementary Education.

An alumna of the Galileo Leadership Academy, Arabo currently is one of five Michigan teachers who were selected for the NEA-sponsored Master Teacher Project, an elite national program where 96 of the nation’s best teachers share their best practices to other teachers.

Walled Lake Consolidated Schools Superintendent Kenneth Gutman described Arabo as “an inspiration to her students and their parents. Her ability to reach each of her students from a variety of backgrounds is simply incredible. She represents the ideal combination of scholarly ability, dedication, determination, maturity, and an unmatched child-centered passion.”

The Michigan Department of Education has used this award annually to honor Michigan’s exemplary educators. The State Board of Education honors the Michigan Teacher of the Year with a seat at the Board table during its regular monthly meetings, and to engage in the discussions on moving Michigan’s system of education forward.

Through the corporate support of MEEMIC Insurance Company, Walled Lake Consolidated Schools will receive a monetary award of $1,000 in honor of Ms. Arabo’s recognition as Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY) to be used for the advancement of education. Also, Arabo will receive the use of a car during her tenure as MTOY, along with the opportunity to tell her story and communicate via blog on www.meemic.com.

The corporate support agreement between the Michigan Department of Education and MEEMIC Insurance Company also includes a monetary award to be presented to the schools of each of the MTOY finalists.

The other educators selected as state-level finalists for the MTOY will be recognized at the June State Board of Education meeting in Lansing. The other finalists are:

- Mrs. Melanie Dever, math and science teacher, Mill Creek Middle School, Dexter Community Schools
- Mrs. Kay Wejrowski, media and English teacher, Swan Valley High School, Swan Valley School District

The Michigan Teacher of the Year is selected by a committee that reviews applications from teachers throughout Michigan. Applicants submit biographies and written essays that describe educational history, professional development activities, philosophy of teaching and thoughts on emerging education trends and issues.

For additional information on the Michigan Teacher of the Year program, access www.michigan.gov/mtoy.
MI School Data has new tools for evaluating college success

New and updated reports on the MI School Data website (www.mischooldata.org) provide powerful information for educators that can help improve student outcomes.

Most notable is the **Student Pathways** report introduced last fall. It’s a downloadable data file with the academic history of each high school graduate (or dropout, for those students for whom the school is the last known primary education providing entity, or PEPE). The file includes his or her college enrollments, coursework, cumulative credit and GPAs, program and credential information, high school assessment scores, demographic characteristics, and more. The report can be requested by high school cohort year, graduation year, or for a single student.

High school counselors, curriculum directors, administrators, and educators don’t always know which of their students went on to college, where they went, and how they fared. Using this report, they can answer questions such as:

- How many of our graduates enroll in college? Where are they going? Are they enrolling in 2-year or 4-year colleges, or out-of-state colleges?
- Are they persisting in college? Are they earning a diploma or other credential? How long does it take them to earn a degree?
- Did any student who attended my high school but did not graduate go on to college?
- What are we doing best to prepare kids? What can we do better?
- Did we prepare them well academically? Are they succeeding regardless of race, gender economic status, and other demographic categories?
- Are there other ways we could help them prepare? Were they accepted by a college but never matriculated?
- What programs or concentrations do student enroll in after leaving our school? Which of our academic programs are preparing our graduates well?

An added bonus is the significant cost savings for high schools, districts, and intermediate school districts. Previously they would have to send individual requests to more than 150 public and private colleges to learn how their graduates are doing. To save time and administrative expense, they would often pay other sources for similar but less complete information. Now, program evaluators at each level have ready access to complete and uniform data, at no cost.

The **Student Pathways** report is only available to educators and administrators who have been granted secure login permission by their ISD/RESD Technical and Curriculum Key Contact. The report’s [How-To Guide for K-12](#) explains how to access the report, and details about the data and sources can be found in [Student Pathways About This Report](#) and the [Data File Layout](#) document.

In addition, a new **College Transfer** report shows the transfer patterns, demographics, and performance data for undergraduate students who transferred from a Michigan community college to a 4-year Michigan or out-of-state college or university. When you select a 4-year college, results show the number of students transferring in from each community college. Or you can select a community college and see how many transferred to each of our public or independent 4-year colleges or out of state (out of state includes public and independent, 2-year and 4-year institutions). Users can also see how a community college compares to the statewide percentage of students who transfer to the three categories of colleges.

High school counselors will find the **College Transfer** data helpful for realistically informing students and parents about transfer patterns for their local community colleges. The report can be found under the Postsecondary menu in MI School Data, and is available without a secure login.

The two reports complement a set of MI School Data reports that also give indicators of a student’s preparedness for college. They can be found under the [K-12 Postsecondary Outcomes](#) and [Postsecondary](#) menus in MI School Data.

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DNR’s Summer Academy Features New Courses

STEM for Nature and MEECS WEEK are new additions for the 2014 Academy of Natural Resources, July 13-18. The week-long ANR program offers Michigan educators, both formal and non-formal, an opportunity to learn new teaching methods and the latest information on Michigan’s natural resources. The two new courses join the DNR’s core Forests, Fields and Fins program giving participants three choices this summer.

Professional development around STEM is popular and this new course will empower educators to reach STEM goals with natural resource related topics and experiences. It will also give those non-formal educators in Michigan a better chance to learn about how they too can incorporate STEM into programs at nature centers and other non-classroom venues.

MEECS week will feature training and certification in three of the six environmental education curriculum supplements. Materials and training in Energy, Climate Change and Water Quality Units not only give educators exciting new teaching methods but more than $150 in classroom materials sponsored by ANR’s partner, the American Institute of Professional Geologists. (AIPG)

The Novi Chapter of Safari Club International continues to offer $100 scholarships to defray the $350 cost for ANR week which includes 15 meals, five nights lodging, and all course materials and instruction. Credits are available through Ferris State University.

For more information, contact Kevin Frailey (517) 284-6043 or at fraileyk@michigan.gov. The Academy web page is located at www.michigan.gov/anr.

RANDY RILEY SELECTED STATE LIBRARIAN OF MICHIGAN

Randy Riley has been selected State Librarian, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) announced recently. Riley, who has been the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) coordinator, succeeds Nancy Robertson, who retired April 30th after almost a decade in that role.

Riley is a librarian’s librarian, according to State Superintendent Mike Flanagan, with 24 years of varied experience at the Library of Michigan (LM), where he coordinated Michigan’s Notable Books program and Center for the Book, plus MeL.

Riley’s current duties include oversight of MeL and promoting its resources statewide to libraries, schools and state government. He led the redesign of MeL’s website and installation of its discovery search capabilities. He also oversaw statewide database contracts and served as the Library of Michigan’s liaison with the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS). In that position, Riley criss-crossed the state presenting to schools, libraries, business support groups and other organizations.

Before joining LM in October of 1989, Riley did substitute teaching at schools in Ionia and Montcalm counties and taught history and social studies at the Valley School in Swartz Creek.

Outgoing State Librarian Nancy Robertson has served in that role since 2005.

The Department would like to thank Nancy for everything she has done for the libraries and kids of Michigan.

We would also like to congratulate Randy on his new title and look forward to his future contributions to the Library of Michigan.
Michigan Department of Education Connection Newsletter

June 2014

MI School Data has new tools for evaluating college success, Cont...

- College Enrollment by HS shows the number of Michigan public high school graduates who enrolled as an undergraduate in a U.S. college or university.
- College Remedial Coursework shows the number of Michigan public high school graduates who took at least one remedial course after enrolling at a Michigan college or university.
- 24 College Credits shows how long it is taking for Michigan public high school graduates to accumulate 24 credits in college, which is a key indicator of a student's likelihood of persisting in college.
- College Undergraduate Enrollment provides the general composition of all undergraduate students enrolled at a Michigan college or university.

Administrators and evaluators can also learn how Michigan Merit Exam (MME), ACT College Readiness, and Mi-Access scores relate to the level of college preparedness these reports suggest. Assessment scores can be found under MI School Data’s K-12 Student Testing menu.

MI School Data is a service of the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), a division of the State Budget Office. With the guidance of an advisory group comprised of K-12, community college, public and private university, and public representatives, it connected data from its K-12 and college collections and also used National Student Clearinghouse data to complete these reports. CEPI uses a unique identification code for its data collections to protect student privacy and to be able to link records from level to level and school to school.

Article courtesy of Connie Morse, CEPI

Camp Tuhsmetheta Summer 2014

Summer Camps Sponsored by MDE-LIO

This summer, the Michigan Department of Education - Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) is sponsoring a camp experience for students with visual impairments at Camp Tuhsmetheta. This unique camp experience will highlight experiential-based activities and lessons designed to develop self-confidence, skills and mastery in expanded core curriculum topics (i.e. social skills, orientation/mobility, technology, independent living skills). Hiking, canoeing, climbing, swimming, nature crafts are just a few of the fun activities campers will have the opportunity to do at camp. Two sessions are open for youth this summer: August 12-14, 2014 is the LIO Jr. Camp, and August 15-18, 2014 is the LIO Sr. Camp. Visit www.mde-lio.cenmi.org to learn more about this great summer opportunity.

“Experience + Thought = Learning” at Camp T

MDE-LIO and Camp Tuhsmetheta are seeking to reach more and more students across the state of Michigan with novel adventure-based experiences in order to inspire and motivate. With this in mind, we are hosting regional camp experiences at Camp Tuhsmetheta for students 10 years old and above. The program is designed to be co-facilitated with local Teacher Consultants for Visually Impaired/Orientation and Mobility volunteer student workers and VI professionals from around the state. Camp Tuhsmetheta is a perfect setting for providing fun and meaningful camp memories which will last a lifetime. If you are interested in partnering with us to provide this wonderful opportunity for your students, please contact MDE-LIO at 888-760-2206.
Did you know that the average age of a homeless person is just nine years old?

Students experiencing homelessness face a number of challenges when it comes to continuing and maintaining their education. Studies show that uncertainty and difficulties outside of school are a major factor in students' underperformance in school.

In Michigan, the number of students who are homeless has risen from around 7,500 in the 2007-2008 school year to more than 42,500 in the 2011-2012 school year, an increase of 66 percent. Of those, nearly 7,900 were identified as students with disabilities.

In the 2009-2010 school year, Michigan was one of 38 states that “had rates of disabilities among homeless students greater than the national average (12.3 percent) for disabilities among that group,” according to the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness (ICPH). Michigan reported the highest rate in the nation that year, with 43.6 percent of students with disabilities who were homeless.

For students who are homeless, focusing on school and learning often can be difficult. Many focus instead on finding a warm place to sleep, having something to eat, or trying to stay safe in an uncertain and frightening environment.

In children, the stress of homelessness can negatively affect growth and development. From a young age, children who are homeless demonstrate significant delays in gross and fine motor and social skills. For older children, unstable living situations often lead to multiple moves which can impact education. In fact, within a single year, 97 percent of children who are homeless move up to three times, and 40 percent will attend two different schools. One-third will repeat a grade.

For students with disabilities who are homeless, the challenges are even greater. Children who are homeless are twice as likely to have learning disabilities and three times as likely to have an emotional disturbance when compared with their non-homeless counterparts, according to the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE).

What help is available?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, along with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), mandates protections and services to children and youth who are homeless and have disabilities, ensuring that their complex needs are met.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act gives children and youth who are experiencing homelessness the right to enroll in school immediately, even without documents normally required for enrollment, and to stay in one school even if they are changing residences. Students can enroll in:

- Their original school (the school they last attended or the school attended when they were last permanently housed).
- Their school of residence (the school whose attendance area they are temporarily living in).
- Any other public school that non-homeless students living in the same area may attend.

Additionally, the act mandates that each school district has a local homelessness education liaison who must identify and serve children and youth experiencing homelessness.

For additional resources, contacts, and information, click on the resource links on the right-hand side of this page or visit the Michigan Department of Education’s homelessness webpage.

Article courtesy of “Focus on Results”
MDE’s Office of Career and Technical Education oversees high school instructional programs that teach students skills in a specific career cluster. Most programs offer early college credit opportunities to provide a seamless transition to postsecondary education.

“These outstanding students are preparing themselves to enter a career that will benefit them individually and benefit Michigan by increasing diversity in our state’s workforce,” Flanagan said. “By their determination and dedication to pursuing careers in an area nontraditional for their gender, they are role models for peers who may be considering such a career path.”

To see a list of awardees please visit: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_34785-328513--,00.html.
Summer Reading is for your Students!

Encourage your students to improve skills through reading during the summer months at the public library Summer Reading program. Most students, even those “at-risk,” make progress during the school year. Summer is the time they fall behind. Michigan’s public libraries provide free, voluntary themed reading programs throughout the summer for families, children, and teens. The 2014 program theme is Science. Programs encourage reading through onsite and online activities that engage children through their personal interests. Libraries also encourage parents to develop family literacy behaviors and provide developmentally appropriate programs for a wide range of ages to create a culture of fluent reading. In many areas, libraries participate with local social service agencies to bring these enrichment programs to underserved children. Your local public library can help your students maintain and even improve their reading skills over the summer. For more information, contact your local public library or go to www.michigan.gov/youthlibraryservices.

If you have any questions, please contact Karren Reish, Library Grants Coordinator, at reishk@michigan.gov or 517-241-0021.

Former Michigan Teacher of the Year Receives Albert Einstein Distinguished Fellowship

Washington, D.C. at sponsoring agencies, which include the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF). As Einstein Fellows, the educators will provide their host agency with practical classroom insight to inform the development and implementation of education programs and policies, especially those related STEM education.

The 2014-15 Einstein Fellows were selected through a rigorous application and interview process from a nationwide pool of competitive applicants. The new cohort includes elementary, middle, and high school teachers from public and private schools in 13 different states.

June Teisan, 2007-08 Michigan Teacher of the Year winner was recently chosen by the Triangle Coalition for STEM Education as one of fourteen new science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) educators for the 2014-15 Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship (AEF) Program.

Beginning September 1, 2014, the selected educators will serve an 11-month fellowship in Washington, D.C. as Einstein Fellows. The Department of Energy (DOE) will host June Teisan, 2007-08 Michigan Teacher of the Year winner. June, a middle school science teacher from Harper Woods Secondary School in Harper Woods, MI; will serve at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Education.

The Department would like to congratulate June on this incredible honor, and is certain she will be a great example of our Michigan teachers and a fantastic advocate for STEM education.
Summer Food Service Program Guidance

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act), Public Law 111-296, establishes requirements for conducting outreach to households on the availability of Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) meals. Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to conduct outreach on the availability of the SFSP before the end of the school year.

As instructed in the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Outreach to Households on the Availability of Summer Food Service Program Meals, SP 15-2011, MDE’s Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) office is facilitating working relationships between School Food Authorities and SFSP service institutions to ensure that schools help promote the availability of meals for children during the summer months.

MDE in collaboration with various statewide summer food partners, is pleased to continue our successful SFSP promotional brand, Meet Up and Eat Up™. A collection of new marketing materials including fliers, digital logos, and design templates are available on the SFSP webpage at www.michigan.gov/sfsp. Feel free to utilize these materials in the support and promotion of summer meals.

The USDA SFSP Outreach Toolkit for Sponsors and Feeding Sites includes brochures, letters to parents, and other materials that may help schools raise program awareness among students and their families. The SFSP toolkit is available at www.summerfood.usda.gov/library/toolkit.pdf.

Questions regarding this Administrative Policy should be directed to the School Nutrition Programs Unit by e-mail to MDE-SchoolNutrition@michigan.gov.

Smart Snacks in Schools

Do you understand how fundraisers are affected by the USDA Smart Snacks in School rule that begins July 1? Some food-based fundraisers are time-honored traditions such as the annual bake sale to support the school musical, or candy bar sales during lunch to support the 8th grade field trip. Under the Smart Snacks in School rule, any food sold to students for consumption on campus during the school day must meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards – this includes school stores, vending machines, snack carts, a la carte, and other sources of food sold to students. Healthy fundraising options make it possible to raise revenue while not undermining the healthy habits students are developing that will remain with them through their lives. Healthy food also grows healthy minds, providing the potential to boost academic achievement! Learn how to leverage events that get students and your community excited like sports, seasonal activities, and non-food celebrations to rethink these fundraisers and support student health. Being resourceful and creative are key steps to creating fundraisers that support school health and raise money. Work with your staff and community to develop innovative ways to use the school resources you already have. Talk to your food service director today!

Questions regarding Smart Snacks may be directed to the Office of School Support Services, School Nutrition Programs unit, by e-mail to mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov or telephone 517-373-3347.
WHAT’S NEXT

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . . June 17, 2014

MI School Improve Facilitators Network . . . June 18-20


MCTM Conference . . . . . . . . . . . August 5-7, 2014

MEMSPA Summer Leadership Institute . . Aug 5-6, 2014

MAASE Summer Institute . . . . . . . August 10-12, 2014

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . Aug 12, 2014

ON THE HORIZON

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . . Sept 9, 2014

MI Pupil Attendance Assoc Fall Conf . . . Sept 15-16, 2014

2014 Special Populations Conf . . . . . . . Sept 22-23

MASA Fall Conference . . . . . . . . . . . . Sept 24-26, 2014

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . Oct 14, 2014

MI AfterSchool Assoc Fall Conf . . . October 20, 2014

MiAEYC Infant Toddler Conference . . . . Oct 24, 2014

2014 State STEM Conference . . . . . . . October 28-29, 2014

ALL Michigan Counselors Conf . . . . . . . Nov 2-3, 2014

Fall 2014 School Improvement Conf . . . . Nov 17-18

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Governmental Affairs
www.michigan.gov/mdenewsletter
Learn about Michigan’s diverse natural resources, discover trends in their management, and experience activities that bring that knowledge to the classroom.

- Includes 15 meals and five nights' lodging for only $350 ($250 with scholarship)
- 35 SCECH available through MDE and both graduate and undergraduate credits are available through Ferris State University (tuition rates apply). For more information about registration, scholarships and credits go to www.michigan.gov/anr.

Centrally located at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center on the north shore of Higgins Lake.