Building A Culture of Reading in Michigan

~A Message from State Superintendent Mike Flanagan

My love for reading has been lifelong. My wife Anna and I were able to share this love with our children. As you can tell by the picture to the left, they have passed down this appreciation to their children - our grandchildren.

Having been in education for over 30 years, I know that this unfortunately isn't the case for every family. This is the reason why I recently announced an effort to coordinate private donations to help build a culture of reading in Michigan during my 2013 holiday podcast: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_45256_45257-318158--,00.html.

The project allows book donations through the existing Library of Michigan Foundation’s Michigan Reads! program, which already has a structure in place to vet and distribute books statewide to schools, libraries, Head Start and Great Start Readiness programs.

Our approach will be two-pronged:

1. Coordinate donations to provide copies of the Michigan Reads books to students in classrooms/early childhood education settings based on their teachers’ commitment to use the books to promote scientifically-based reading instruction and/or family engagement activities focused on literacy. The mechanism for selecting students/classrooms to receive books will be dependent on developed criteria and available resources.

2. We will be working to connect potential donors to programs already up and running in the state that function to provide books to low-income and/or young (0-8) children.

We also encourage families to read to their children, visit local libraries, and buy books as gifts.

Fostering resources for early childhood literacy, and building a culture of reading, will help Michigan attain the goal of having all children proficient in reading by the end of the third grade. As we all know, research shows that children typically learn to read by the third grade – then read to learn after that. Any delay in that process often leads to developmental and academic challenges for those students.

By building this foundation of learning and success in every corner of this state, we will build a stronger Michigan for generations.

Visit our Culture of Reading website for updates and information on how you can help: www.michigan.gov/cultureofreading.
2013 - 2014 Milken Family Foundation Award

Congratulations to Mark Julien, English Language Arts teacher at Henry Ford II High School of Utica Community Schools in Utica, Michigan! Mr. Julien was the first announced Milken Educator of 2013-2014. There are many reasons why Mark is the recipient of this award—read his profile here: [http://milkeneducatorawards.org/educators/view/2593](http://milkeneducatorawards.org/educators/view/2593).

The Milken is to educators what the Oscar is to film makers. This most prestigious award rewards and inspires excellence in the world of education. The award specifically targets early-to-mid career education professionals for their already impressive accomplishments and, more significantly, for the promise of what they will accomplish in the future.

Mr. Julien was surprised during a school assembly earlier this school year. Milken Family Foundation Senior Vice President Dr. Jane Foley was on site and got the crowd of nearly 2,000 staff and students excited as she let them in on the surprise.

Michigan College Access Network

The Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) is a state organization dedicated to helping communities and schools boost college-readiness, college-going, and college completion rates. By “college”, we mean the attainment of a valuable credential beyond high school -- including certificates, Associate Degrees, and Bachelor’s Degrees.

Given that 62% of all jobs in Michigan will require postsecondary education by the year 2020, we must ensure that more young people (especially students who will be first in their family to go to college) have the resources and information they need to continue their education beyond high school. It won’t just help our students -- it will make our communities healthier and economy stronger.

MCAN has set an aggressive goal of increasing the state’s educational attainment rate to 60% by the year 2025 -- check out your county’s current rate [here](#).

MCAN offers grant opportunities to build up Local College Access Networks (LCANs) that put college in reach for more Michigan youth. MCAN has created a series of college access program grant opportunities, including funds for planning, implementation, and continuous improvement. In addition, MCAN staff provides hands-on technical assistance and consulting to help develop a college access strategic plan based on each community’s baseline data and priority areas.

MCAN can provide free resources to your district -- These low-cost/high-impact strategies will help your schools move the needle on their college-going rates -- Reach out to Brandy at MCAN to learn more about programs like --

- College Application Week - The goal is to help all graduating high school seniors navigate the complex college admissions process and provide the opportunity to complete at least one application.
- Michigan College Access Portal -- An online one-stop-shop to help students plan, apply, and pay for college
- FAFSA Completion -- Get name-by-name FAFSA completion status for all your seniors
- PD Opportunities for School Counselors -- Free training opportunities for high school counselors to become postsecondary planning experts
Mike Flanagan, Michigan State Superintendent & Board Chair, Receives National Honor

Michael Flanagan, superintendent of the Michigan Department of Education and chair of the state board of education, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). The national award is given annually to a NASBE member in recognition of outstanding service to public education.

“The greatest innovations in public education these days come from the states, and most effectively from states that have strong state boards and state chiefs who work in tandem with those boards,” said NASBE Executive Director Kristen Amundson. “The bond of trust and a common goal between Michael Flanagan and the Michigan State Board clearly run deep given the board’s nomination of Mike, the first time a state superintendent has received this award. We are proud to recognize him for his diligent and continued leadership in improving public education for all of Michigan’s children.”

“I want to thank NASBE and its members for all they do for children across this nation and their dedication to public education,” Flanagan said. “I am so honored to be the first state schools chief to receive this prestigious award. Having worked with school boards and educators at many levels over the years, it is most satisfying that we, together, have helped improve the lives of children with a higher standard of education and a higher standard of living.”

Since the state board appointed Flanagan state superintendent in 2005, he spearheaded the push for more rigorous high school graduation requirements—the Michigan Merit Curriculum—through their adoption by the state board and the legislature.

In addition, as state chief he has led reforms at the state Education Department to develop and begin implementing a three-tiered teaching licensure system so teachers can advance in their careers without having to leave the classroom to become administrators. Flanagan has also improved the ratings system for teacher preparation programs and designed a system linking K-12 student performance back to those programs.

The award was presented at NASBE’s national conference in Arlington, VA.

The National Association of State Boards of Education represents America’s state and territorial boards of education. NASBE exists to strengthen State Boards as the preeminent educational policymaking bodies for citizens and students. For more, visit www.nasbe.org

IDEA State Complaints

IDEA State Complaints is a resource for guidance on special education state complaints. When a complaint is filed with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education (OSE), the state will resolve the allegations. Allegations may be resolved through an investigation. Investigations result in a final decision for each allegation, written in the form of a final report.

Publicly posted final reports, archived on this site, are modified to protect personally identifiable information. The site’s archive was initially populated with final reports starting from December 21, 2012.

The archive of final reports gives stakeholders an opportunity to read the types of issues that arise between parties and the rationale for determinations made by the OSE. This website also offers additional resources to assist stakeholders through the state complaint process.

The IDEA State Complaints website can be accessed at http://focus.cenmi.org/state-complaints/.
State Board of Education Encourages Schools to Include Cesar Chavez into Social Studies Curriculum

The State Board of Education, last month unanimously adopted a resolution honoring the late Cesar E. Chavez as an American hero, a civil rights leader, Latino, farm worker, and a labor leader; a religious and spiritual figure; a community servant and social entrepreneur; a crusader for nonviolent social change; and an environmentalist and consumer advocate. State Board member Lupe Ramos-Montigny initiated the resolution to honor the life, legacy and contributions of Chávez.

Recognizing that local school districts determine their curriculum, the resolution adopted by the State Board strongly encourages school districts to include curriculum lessons on César E. Chávez, as appropriately referenced in the Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Content Expectations in the Social Studies Standards.

You can find the resolution at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-5373_5381---,00.html.

Military Connected Children Data Collection

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is participating in a national initiative to support the children of military families. As part of this endeavor, MDE requests that local education agencies (LEA) and public school academies (PSA) identify their military-connected students by adding names and information to a reporting form and uploading the report into the MEGS+ system.

One of the most important outcomes of the identification of students whose parents are serving in the military is to raise awareness at the local school level. Studies have shown that schools are often the most important source of focus and stability for students during deployments and family separations. Military families often ask schools to grant their children excused absences so the family can spend extended time together before, during, and after a military deployment.

By being aware of military-connected children in their school districts, as well as the challenges they face, it is hoped that teachers and principals will be able to support these students and their families by helping to ensure that they are able to meet all their needs when it comes to furthering their education.

Visit www.michigan.gov/mde, choose the “Grants” tab on the left, then choose the “Military-Connected Children” link in the center of the page. The list of resources includes information on children’s concerns, advice for educators on how to help, and other resources available to military families.

If you have any questions about this endeavor, please contact Louis Burgess, Assistant Director, Office of School Support Services, at burgessl@michigan.gov or 517-373-4337.
2013 Librarian of the Year
Larry Neal

When one thinks of service to the library profession, one thinks of Larry Neal, Michigan Library Association’s (MLA) 2013 Librarian of the Year. His stand-out mentorship qualities, passionate advocacy and commitment to libraries of all types are among the reasons he was selected to receive this honor.

His contributions to the profession are broad. Larry participates in on the national level as the current president-elect of the Public Library Association. He was also recruited as a mentor for the ALA Emerging Leaders Program and Spectrum Scholarship. On the statewide level, He is a past president of MLA and former Legislative Committee chair, where he continues to serve as a committee member and whose contributions have propelled MLA’s advocacy efforts to great heights. Larry also helped design the LibraryCareers.org website, which Library Journal described as a jargon-free website that explains why the career would appeal to people with a variety of interests and skills, the kinds of libraries and positions they might fill and how to become a librarian.

Larry is a dedicated and conscientious library leader, able to bring people along to make an organization the best it can be. He is known for his intelligence, common sense and sense of humor. He has the ability to make complicated ideas easy to understand and holds firm to the belief that libraries are joyful places where all are welcome.

For over 30 years, the MLA Librarian of the Year Award has recognized a librarian’s outstanding contributions and accomplishments to the library community over a long period of time. Winners of this award provide innovative library service to his or her community and promote collaboration among libraries. The MLA Librarian of the Year shows evidence of personal and professional achievement as well as initiative and creativity. They are leaders who provide cutting edge ideas that inspire people. Only one award is given out each year.

FREE GOAL SETTING BOOKS FOR ELEMENTARY CHILDREN!!

A program to give away free, quality goal setting books - complete with beautiful illustrations, examples and a workbook - is available to all elementary students in grades 2 through 5 in the state of Michigan.

You have a choice of two books, both of which are designed to motivate, inspire and teach children at an early age about the power of setting goals.

Both books can be viewed at http://500000childrenproject.com where you can also place an order. The best news is schools can use this resource in whatever way they deem best – from supplementing what teachers, counselors or librarians are already doing in the classrooms to simply giving it away for personal reading.

For more information please contact Dawn Farmer, Co-Director, goalsr4kids@gmail.com Tel. 425-641-2733.
The Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (OAISD) has received high honors from the International Academy of the Visual Arts (IAVA) for its ground-breaking pro-education Doing More. Together. partnership effort. The OAISD received the 2013 Communicator Award of Distinction earlier this month.

Winning entries for The Communicator Awards are selected by the IAVA to uphold its commitment to fairness and merit-based achievement, ensuring that entries are judged to evaluate distinction in creative work. The Communicator Awards are sanctioned and judged by an invitation-only group consisting of top-tier professionals from acclaimed media, communications, advertising, creative and marketing firms, including executives from organizations such as Airtype Studio, Big Spaceship, Conde Nast, Coach, Disney, The Ellen Degeneres Show, Estee Lauder, Fry Hammond Barr, Lockheed Martin, MTV Networks, Pitney Bowes, rabble+rouser, Sotheby’s Institute of Art, Time, Inc, Wired, and Yahoo!

The Doing More. Together. partnership, which made its debut earlier this year, is an innovative new education collaborative – spearheaded by the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District – that works to engage businesses, community groups, and a host of education organizations throughout 2013 and beyond.

Companies and organizations across the region will actively participate in the partnership by showcasing the high-quality education offerings in local communities throughout the Ottawa region and partnering together as an integral part of the collaborative. The partnership’s website – www.doingmoretogether.org – already features a wide array of success stories from participating schools and will continue to be updated regularly.

The partnership includes faith-based schools, public schools, and public school academies – all of whom are united in the belief that high quality education is what makes good communities great.”


The Michigan Department of Education would like to congratulate Karen McPhee, OAISD Superintendent, the students, staff and Ottawa Area communities and businesses for this distinguished honor.
The State of Michigan has implemented an Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Innovation Management and Fund program, which provides venture capital loans for the development of new technology projects in support of modernization, redesign and transformation of services. School districts, state agencies, local units of government, colleges and universities in the state are eligible. Education options that can be supported through information technology (IT) include:

- Transportation systems
- Curriculum development
- Staff training and development
- Educator Evaluation systems (not the evaluations themselves)
- Education Technology
- School Accounting Functions
- School Food Service
- Assessment Coordinating
- Building-level data collection and reporting

Sample education project: the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUPISD) Integrated Information Systems, which integrates five management and education systems. The Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB) welcomes proposals from education entities and provides assistance identifying issue, solution opportunities and completing applications. Please contact us at your convenience: Andris Ozols, Senior Policy Advisor, ozolsa@michigan.gov, (517) 335-5159; Tiziana Galeazzi, Senior Executive Asst. to the State CIO, GaleazziT@Michigan.gov, (517) 373-3878.

At-Risk After School Snack/Supper Program

Today's students face difficult challenges on their path to educational success. Poor diet, lack of opportunities for movement, difficult home situations, too much television, drugs, sexual behaviors, and stress are obstacles our students must overcome to achieve academic excellence. Many students go home to an empty cupboard and absent parents. Their food needs are great, but the resources are minimal or non-existent. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk After School Snack/Supper program could be a stop-gap measure. What child wouldn’t want something to eat immediately after the school day? Students who participate in the CACFP At-Risk After School Snack/Supper program receive healthy snacks and/or balanced suppers.


CCSSO Partners with Achieve and Student Achievement Partners to Develop CCSS Alignment Tool

In joint partnership, Achieve, The Council of Chief State School Officers, and Student Achievement Partners have developed a Toolkit for Evaluating the Alignment of Instructional and Assessment Materials to the Common Core State Standards. The Toolkit is a set of interrelated, freely available instruments for evaluating alignment to the CCSS; each tool in the Toolkit supports the expectations in the CCSS and derives from the Publishers’ Criteria for the Common Core State Standards.

The Toolkit can be accessed at www.ccsso.org/alignmenttoolkit. We encourage you to share the Toolkit with your colleagues, state and district administrators, school-based educators and others working to implement the CCSS.
MDE Mailing Lists Move to GovDelivery

Official Michigan Department of Education (MDE) communications and lists have been migrated to a new distribution system called GovDelivery. MDE GovDelivery subscribers will be able to manage their own subscriptions and sign up to receive messages on a wide range of topics including curriculum, student assessment, education technology, Department of Education news and more. You can start subscribing to MDE lists at: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new, or clicking on the red envelope above.

If you already are a subscriber for MDE updates, you are not required to do anything to continue to receive your messages -- you are already in the new system and should not notice an interruption in your notifications. NOTE: Certain recipient lists are pulled from the Educational Entity Master (EEM) that is operated by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). MDE encourages all school administrators to update their contact information in the EEM so you continue to receive vital and timely information the Department shares with the field.

Two Michigan Schools Win NASA Challenge

Students at two Michigan middle schools are out of this world when it comes to helping NASA solve several vexing space exploration problems.

NASA and the U.S. Department of Education chose Michigan and two other states to participate in a challenge designed to launch student excitement in NASA STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) content as part of 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) programs.

State Superintendent Mike Flanagan recently announced the NASA selected videos produced by Atherton Junior High and Washtenaw International Middle Academy among entries from eight Michigan schools and 50 entries overall to participate in the project’s Virtual Student Showcase. The two other selected schools are in Colorado and Virginia.

Students were asked to create a 3-5 minute video documenting their response to NASA’s challenge.

With a video called “Working Today, Parachuting Tomorrow,” Atherton Junior High tackled the parachute challenge while Washtenaw students designed a video game for astronauts. The video is called: “Good Banana, Bad Banana.”

In announcing Michigan’s selection, NASA and the U.S. Department of Education said, “While many States expressed interest in this pilot project, we believe Michigan is among the best suited to lead the way in exemplifying how, with proper support, 21st CCLC projects can successfully incorporate STEM learning into program activities. We hope to learn from your participation ways the Department can better support STEM learning based in part on high quality partnerships between 21st CCLC programs and groups such as the Department’s Math and Science Partnerships program and NASA.”
WHAT’S NEXT

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . March 11, 2014
2014 MACUL Conference . . . . . . . . . . . . . . March 12-14, 2014
MSPRA Annual Conf . . . . . . . . . . . . . . March 13-14, 2014
MANS Public Policy Day . . . . . . . . . . . . . March 19, 2014
MDE-LIO Transition Success Conf . . . . . . . . . March 28, 2014

ON THE HORIZON

State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . April 8, 2014
(MiAEYC) Early Childhood Conf . . . . . . . . . . . April 3-5, 2014
4th Annual MCAN Conference . . . . . . . . . . . . . . April 14, 2014
Spring 2014 Regional SI Conf . . . . . . . . . . . . . . April 17-May 15
2014 Governor’s Education Summit . . . . . . . . . . . April 24, 2014
MI Bullying Prev and School Safety Summit . . . . . April 28
MI Division for Early Childhood Conf . . . . . . . . May 2, 2014
MSBO Annual Conference . . . . . . . . . . . . . . May 6-8, 2014

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