COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING CONFERENCE
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MASB Communications & Marketing Conference
School Finance Research Collaborative Presentation
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Presented by:
Christopher Behnan, Communications Strategist
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Who is the Collaborative?

• Diverse group of business leaders and education experts

• Members from Metro Detroit to the U.P.

• All agree: It’s time to change the way Michigan’s schools are funded
Key milestones

• Launched the Collaborative in 2016

• Completed Michigan’s first comprehensive school adequacy study in 2018

• Advocacy – Public Engagement Committee, began in 2018
Who is our audience?

- Educators/school community
- Parents
- Business community
- Policymakers
- Media
- Others?
“Michigan’s school funding approach needs a facelift”
*Grand Rapids Business Journal*, April 19, 2019

“MI schools need a fairer funding model for all students”
*Bridge Magazine*, April 11, 2019

“Letter to the Editor: Time to fix school funding method”
*Crain’s Detroit Business*, March 15, 2019

“Gov. Whitmer: Boost Michigan schools by $507 million, with more for neediest students”
*Bridge Magazine*, March 4, 2019
Core message #1

The School Finance Research Collaborative has completed Michigan’s first comprehensive school adequacy study, providing a roadmap to fixing Michigan’s broken school funding approach and making it fair for all students.
Core message #2

This new school funding approach will ensure every Michigan student has the same opportunity at getting a good education, including special education students and students living in poverty.
Core message #3

By funding Michigan’s schools fairly, we can provide a high-quality education to all students that provides them with competitive skills for good-paying jobs.
Key findings

• The base per-pupil cost to educate a regular education student in Michigan is $9,590

• Charter schools should receive the same funding school districts receive

• It costs $14,155 to educate a preschool student age 3 or 4
Key findings

• An additional percentage of the base per-pupil cost should be provided for:
  - Special education
  - English Language Learners
  - Students living in poverty, and
  - Career and Technical Education
“Funding crisis”

“Our educators deserve our support — not a funding crisis that undermines their work, weakens our schools and hurts our kids. We know that potential is universal, but right now opportunity is not.”

-Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, 2019 State of the State address
Budget message

“Based on the recommendations of a recent report from the Michigan School Finance Research Collaborative, this budget includes a weighted funding system that will recognize the higher costs of educating students in these categories.”

-Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, 2020 budget proposal
Budget message, cont.

Gov. Whitmer’s budget supports the Collaborative’s recommended weighted formula for:

- Special education
- At risk students
- Career and Technical Education
Budget message

• We applaud Gov. Whitmer for using SFRC research in her budget proposal

• Her budget proposal is a significant step forward in helping all kids succeed

• Fairness, fairness, fairness
Website toolkit

- Social media images/infographics
- PowerPoint
- One-page fact sheet
- Resolution of support template
- Template resolution press release
- Q & A
How you can help

• Write an op-ed
• Post on your personal and district social media
• Pass a resolution
• Talk to your constituents
What’s next?

☑️ Continue dialogue with governor’s office, policymakers

☑️ Advocate for the study’s findings

☑️ Continue serving as Michigan’s No. 1 resource on school funding
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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS