



## Summary

# Gov. Rick Snyder's Education Reform Proposals

[Based on LSB draft bills received through December 9, 2011]

December 9, 2011

Gov. Rick Snyder has been developing legislative proposals to implement the concepts he outlined in his 2011 Special Message on Education Reform. The following are highlights of the policy changes and proposals included in the 101-page, 4-bill package.

### **New Public Education Policies:**

The Governor's proposals implement the following policies:

- Within available resources, the parent or legal guardian of each child is entitled to choose among available public or nonpublic schools for some or all of the education necessary to develop the child's intellectual capabilities and vocational skills in a safe and positive environment.
- All public schools are part of the community and should be actively engaged with governments, employers, labor organizations, cultural and community organizations in providing education and growth opportunities for young people.
- Public schools will utilize the power and scalability of technology, including, but not limited to, online courses, to customize education so that a pupil may learn consistent with the pupil's learning style and preferences and at the pupil's pace.
- With parental consent, any pupil in grades 3 to 12 is eligible to enroll "as requested by the pupil" in up to 2 online courses during a term. Require public school to grant credit and count credit for graduation and subject area requirements for successful online course completion.
- Specialized schools and academies will be permitted to establish selective enrollment standards and pre-requirements.
- Out-of-state and international pupils will be permitted to enroll and pay tuition to specialized schools designed to compete globally.
- Permit residential public schools in limited circumstances.

### **Reaching Higher**

Gov. Snyder's proposals ask for a public education system that reaches higher and seeks to compete in the global economy:

- To prepare public school pupils to compete globally in a knowledge-based economy.
- To develop a system of higher expectations for public schools, pupils, and educators.
- Aggressively dealing with academically and financially failing districts and schools through the Education Achievement Authority.

### **Transforming Schools, Governance and Teaching**

- Expand flexibility and adaptability for pupil learning models and styles.
- Create new professional opportunities in a school "designed and managed by teachers at the school site level."
- Allows school districts to also enroll tuition paying "out-of state pupils."
- Permitting alternative forms of public school governance.
- Require public schools to offer online courses on an "open entry and exit method."
- Allow all public schools to provide or contract for online courses.
- Expand available instructors to include certificated teachers, certified adjunct instructors, and faculty member of state university or community college with subject matter teaching experience.
- Public schools, using school aid funds, are required to provide "school-owned internet-connected devices," allow use of pupil's own device, and provide opportunities to complete online coursework "away from school facilities."

### **Buildings**

Taxpayer funded school buildings should be made available for educational purposes by multiple providers through changes to accomplish the following:

- To inventory and make available any unused public school building without additional cost to the public school.
- To renovate, repurpose, and construct public educational buildings or buildings used for public educational services.
- To allow "hoteling," the use of a single public school building by multiple public or nonpublic schools.

### **Online Learning**

The role of technology in public education will continue to grow. Michigan can be in the forefront by adopting policies to:

- Provide high-quality learning options for a pupil regardless of language, residence, family income, or special needs.

- Enable a pupil to acquire knowledge and technology skills necessary to be competitive technologically anywhere in the world.
- Utilize technology to remove the constraints of traditional classroom learning, allowing a pupil to access learning virtually any time and in any place and giving the pupil the flexibility to take advantage of the pupil's peak learning time.
- Provide personalized learning.
- Provide greater access to self-paced programs.
- Allow the Michigan virtual university to act as an educational management organization for a public school academy "that specializes in online learning."
- Public schools, using school aid funds, are required to:
  - (a) Provide "school-owned internet-connected devices."
  - (b) Allow use of pupil's own device on school's wireless internet service.
  - (c) Provide opportunities to complete online coursework "away from school facilities."

### **Choices for Parents and Students**

Throughout the proposals, the Governor encourages more choices among a diverse set of public education opportunities. These goals are reflected in the following:

- To provide parents and pupils with greater public educational choices both within and outside existing school districts.
- To facilitate the extension of technology and online learning.
- To encourage public and private commitment to the innovative, flexible, transparent, safe, efficient, and effective provision of public educational services throughout the state by fostering public-private partnerships.
- To expand the number and types of public entities permitted to operate, manage, authorize, establish, and oversee public schools.
- To provide new forms of public school governance.
- Provide greater choices among public schools.
- Authorize greater cooperation with nonpublic schools.
- Authorize new forms of schools through special designations determined by authorizing bodies.

### **New Forms of Schools**

The Governor's proposal authorizes additional types of public schools and academies to meet the educational needs of pupils of this state, including:

**Globally competitive schools.** A highly selective school for "innovative, specialized learning environment for highly motivated pupils who have a genuine interest in the curriculum of the school." Designed for a performance "at an educational level equal to or exceeding the highest-performing students in the

world.” Special designation must require academic standards “that meet high international testing and ranking standards.” May recruit from anywhere in the world and charge nonresident tuition.

**International cultural school.** Michigan's school code has a unique provision encouraging the study of African cultures:

MCL 380.1164b. A school district or public school academy that teaches world history in a middle school or high school grade is encouraged to focus the content of instruction regarding Africa on at least 1 or more of the following kingdoms: Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Benin, Bornu, Nubia, Axum, Meroe, Monomotapa, or medieval Ethiopia, or on the Swahili coast prior to 1750.

The proposed international cultural school would permit a public school with a curriculum focused on the culture and people of 1 or more areas of the world. Uniquely, the proposal would require agreement between the Michigan superintendent of public instruction and the minister of education of another nation or province. The school would meet all state curriculum requirements and would allow dual enrollment and dual diplomas on successful completion of the required curriculum. No state funds would be permitted for pupils from other nations.

**Employer-sponsored school.** A special designation issued by an authorizing body and designed to retain or encourage employers to locate job-producing facilities. The employer must agree to provide some or all have: capital requirements assistance, continuing financial support, or collocation of some services on employer's site. Not more than 75% of pupils may be children of employer's employees or contractors. Others must be admitted by random selection process. Not more than 1/3 of the board may be affiliated with the employer.

**Single-gender schools.** Single gender school only with specific finding that the “educational mission and teaching strategy of the school justifies limiting enrollment to a single gender.” Voluntary participation required.

**Online academy.** A specialized school intended to “accelerate the state's ability to respond to current and emerging educational demands” by delivering “all or a substantial amount of educational content or instructional services by means of websites, the internet, digital broadcast, satellite network, or other distance learning technology.” Allows enrollment in college level equivalent course by electronic means. Mentors required for each at-risk pupil. Nonpublic and home-schooled pupils can participate. Migrant, homebound and hospitalized pupils may participate. Allow coordination of services with workforce development entities, labor organizations, etc. Allow personalized learning plans.

**University school.** Implements existing university school language in the school aid act. Allows a public school to be closely integrated with a state public university. University issues its own special designation. University school must comply with revised school code and state school aid act. Established as a separate public body corporate. Not consolidated or intermingled with university

financial accounts. University board or president determines governance. Allows enrollment standards and competitive admissions process. Allows matriculation agreements. University school is a public school. Requires tuition for international or non-Michigan pupils.

**Cultural institution-affiliated school.** Affiliated with a §501(c)(3) cultural institution or government instrumentality that provides continuing support and guidance. Not more than 1/3 of school board members can be affiliated with the cultural institution.

**Municipal school.** Based on agreement between an authorizing body and a county, city, village, township, or metropolitan authority to provide “continuing support and guidance.” Enrollment priority allowed for residents of the municipality. Local official serving on municipal school board is not a violation of the incompatible offices act.

**Residential public schools.** 4 categories:

- STEM Residential School. High school for intensive study of science, mathematics, and technology. Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited. Highly competitive admission standards. Required to seek participation in National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science, and Technology.
- Residential school in cooperation with department of human services or an agency approved by the department. Allows waiver to comply with consent decree.
- Military Residential School. Residential school operated by the department of military and veterans affairs, the department of state police or another public safety organization.
- Residential public school operated by a cultural institution in this state.

### **Tuition for out-of-state and international students**

The Michigan Constitution requires:

The legislature shall maintain and support a system of free public elementary and secondary schools as defined by law.

As part of a strategy to create a globally competitive system of schools, Michigan should encourage and welcome international and out-of-state students who are willing to pay full tuition to attend public schools. Under the proposals, however, an out-of-state pupil cannot gain residency in Michigan by becoming a tuition-paying pupil. In addition to tuition, the public school may charge for travel costs, medical tests and other matters not directly related to the provision of the educational program.

### **Adjunct Instructors and Higher Education Faculty in Public Schools**

Michigan law presently allows public school students to be taught by university and community college faculty under dual enrollment programs.

Under the governor's proposals, certain specially designated schools would be permitted to use "adjunct instructors" and higher education teachers in the classroom where they meet certain requirements and have subject matter experience. The proposal would require adjunct instructor to have a valid "adjunct instructor certificate" issued by the superintendent of public instruction by meeting a number of requirements including criminal history checks. An adjunct instructor must be part-time contractor and not employee. The service is not creditable for a teaching certificate.

**Quality, Data, and Assessment**

- Allows authorizing bodies to issue reports, opinions, and data regarding the performance of an educational service provider with governmental immunity protection.
- Improve pupil achievement.
- Stimulate innovative teaching methods.
- Achieve school accountability for pupil performance "at the school site level."
- Provide for new forms of governance.
- Allows achievement authority chancellor (in addition to state superintendent) to designate "specialty school" exempt from some requirements when the school uses "specialized, innovative, and rigorous curriculum."

[NOTE: This outline does not cover necessary changes to the state school aid act.]

This outline is based on the following:

| <u>Subject of Bill</u>          | <u>LSB No.</u> | <u>Draft</u> |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Education Achievement Authority | 03231          | 4            |
| New Forms of Schools            | 03232          | 2            |
| Online Learning                 | 03233          | 2            |
| School Buildings                | 03234          | 4            |

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