

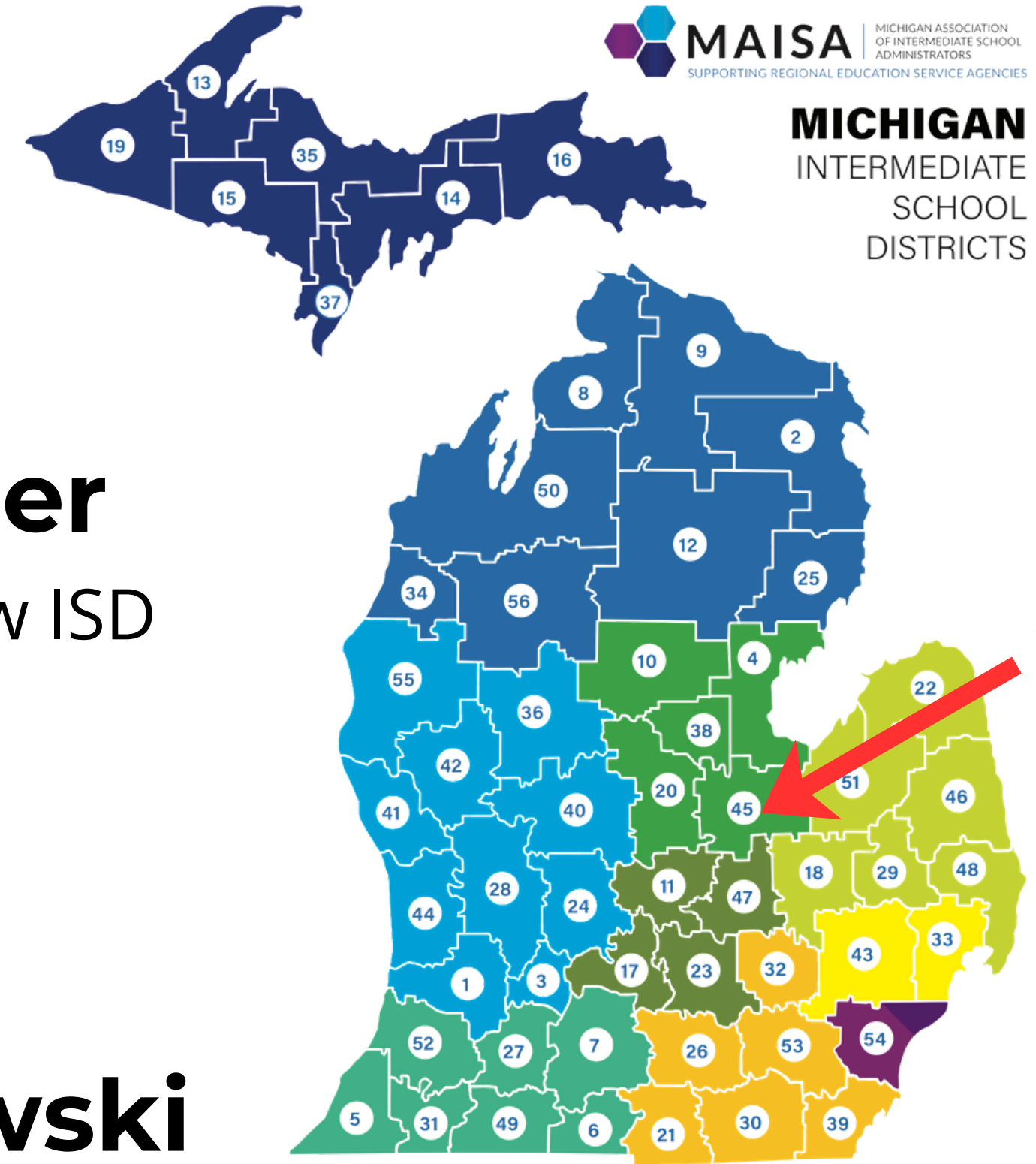
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND STATE BUDGET



WELCOME



MICHIGAN
INTERMEDIATE
SCHOOL
DISTRICTS



Dr. Jeffrey Collier
Superintendent, Saginaw ISD



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Deputy Superintendent, Saginaw ISD

AGENDA

PURPOSE

Learn **why** and **how** to talk to legislators about the state budget and the impact on your business office, families, and services/district.



THE WHY



*Advocacy is not optional; it's part of our **responsibility** to serve students and communities.*

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Impact on Students

- Policy decisions directly shape student access, funding, and services
- Local voices ensure real needs are represented

Funding & Sustainability

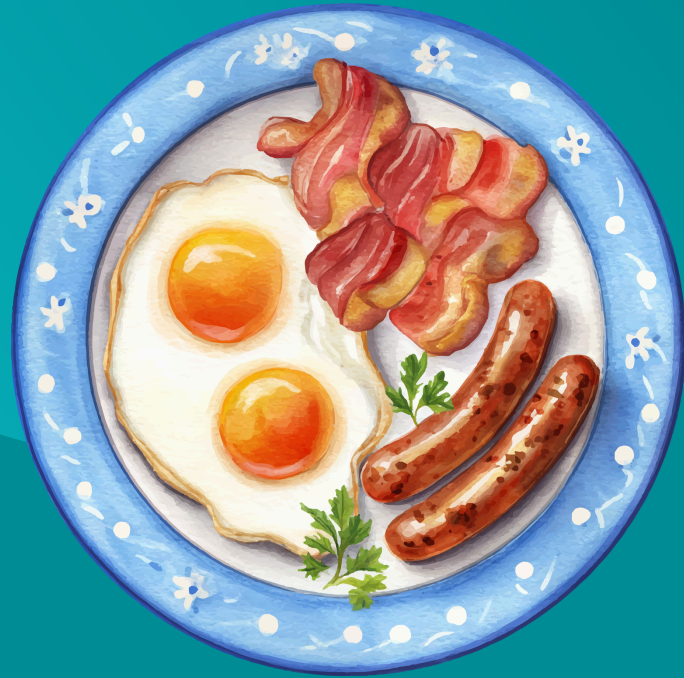
- State and federal decisions drive district operations
- Proactive engagement protects and advances resources

Responsibility as Educational Leaders

- We serve as a bridge between policy and practice
- Advocacy ensures decisions are informed by real-world impact

*If we're not at the table (**or setting the table**), then we are on the table and decisions are made without our voice.*

THE HOW



Bringing policymakers into our work, not just our words.

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFASTS

What They Are

- Hosted gatherings connecting legislators with educators and leaders, once a month
- Structured with an agenda, but conversational format

Our Approach

- Focus on real experiences, not simply data
- All 12 LEAs represented
- Opportunity for two-way dialogue

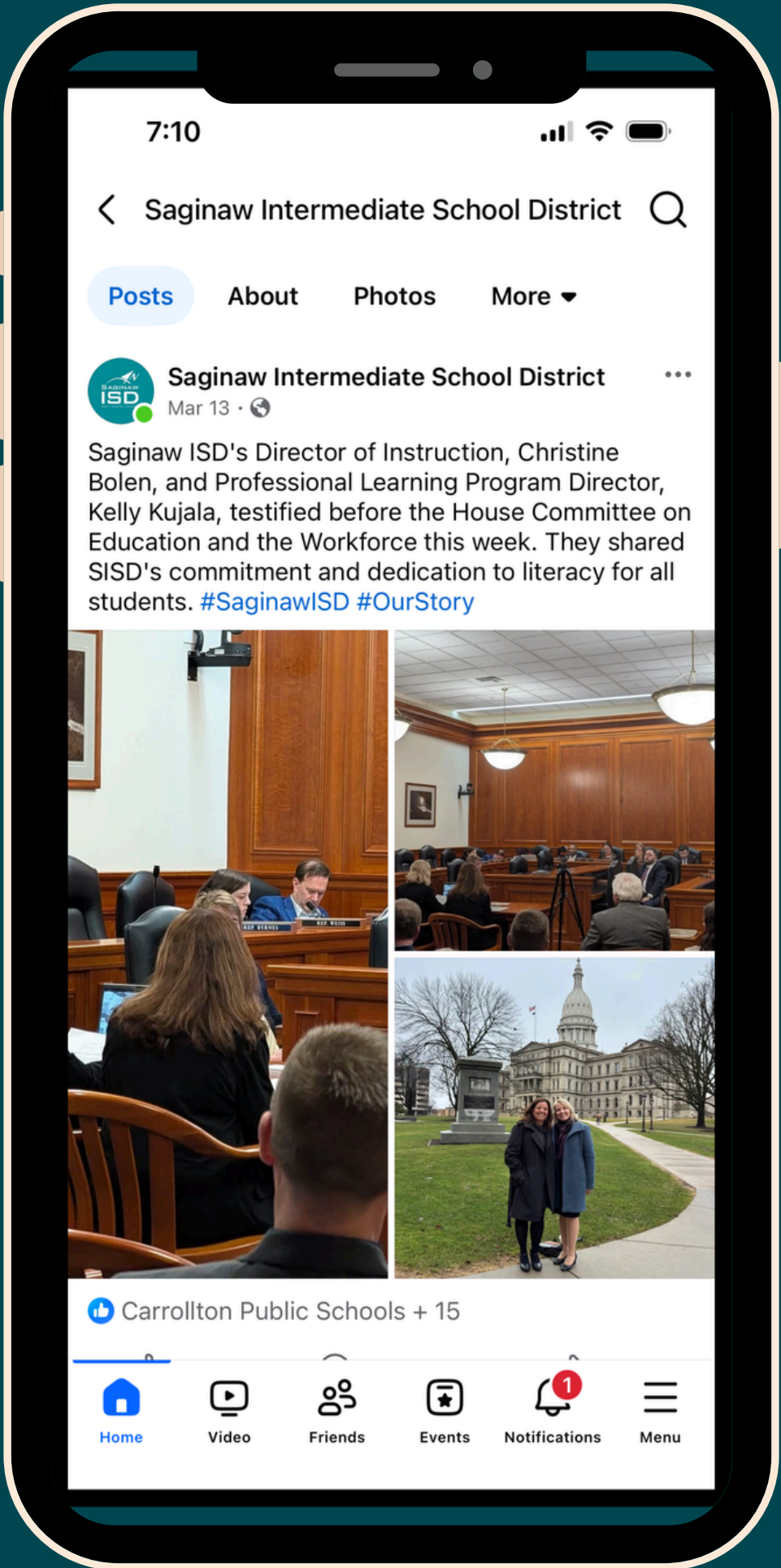
Why They Work

- Builds familiarity and trust (puts a face to the decisions they make)
- Makes complex issues tangible
- Positions ISD as a credible, neutral resource

Building Political Capital with

*Our Story*TM

1. Every staff member receives equitable training and access to post
2. Safety in moderation
3. Encouraged, not mandated



THE HOW



Relationships drive influence.

ENGAGEMENT & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

COMMUNICATION

- Ongoing updates (emails, briefings, event invitations)
- Sharing district impact stories regularly

VISIBILITY

- Participation in regional/statewide conversations
- Engagement in letter orgs/lobbying efforts

PARTNERSHIP

- Positioning districts as a support system, not just an advocate
- Offering expertise and solutions

TRUST BUILDING

- Nonpartisan, student-centered approach
- Reliable, transparent communication over time

THE HOW



You don't need a title to advocate; you need clarity and confidence.



ADVOCACY STARTS WITH ALL OF US

WHY IT MATTERS

- Legislators don't just hear from leadership; they hear from everyone
- Consistent messaging strengthens credibility across the organization

WHERE IT HAPPENS

- Community events
- School visits and programs
- Informal conversations "out in the wild"

SUPPORTING STAFF

- Provide simple, clear talking points
- Share key updates and priorities regularly
- Build confidence and not scripts

WHAT TO EMPHASIZE

- Student impact first
- Real examples over technical language
- Stay aligned to organizational priorities

THE HOW

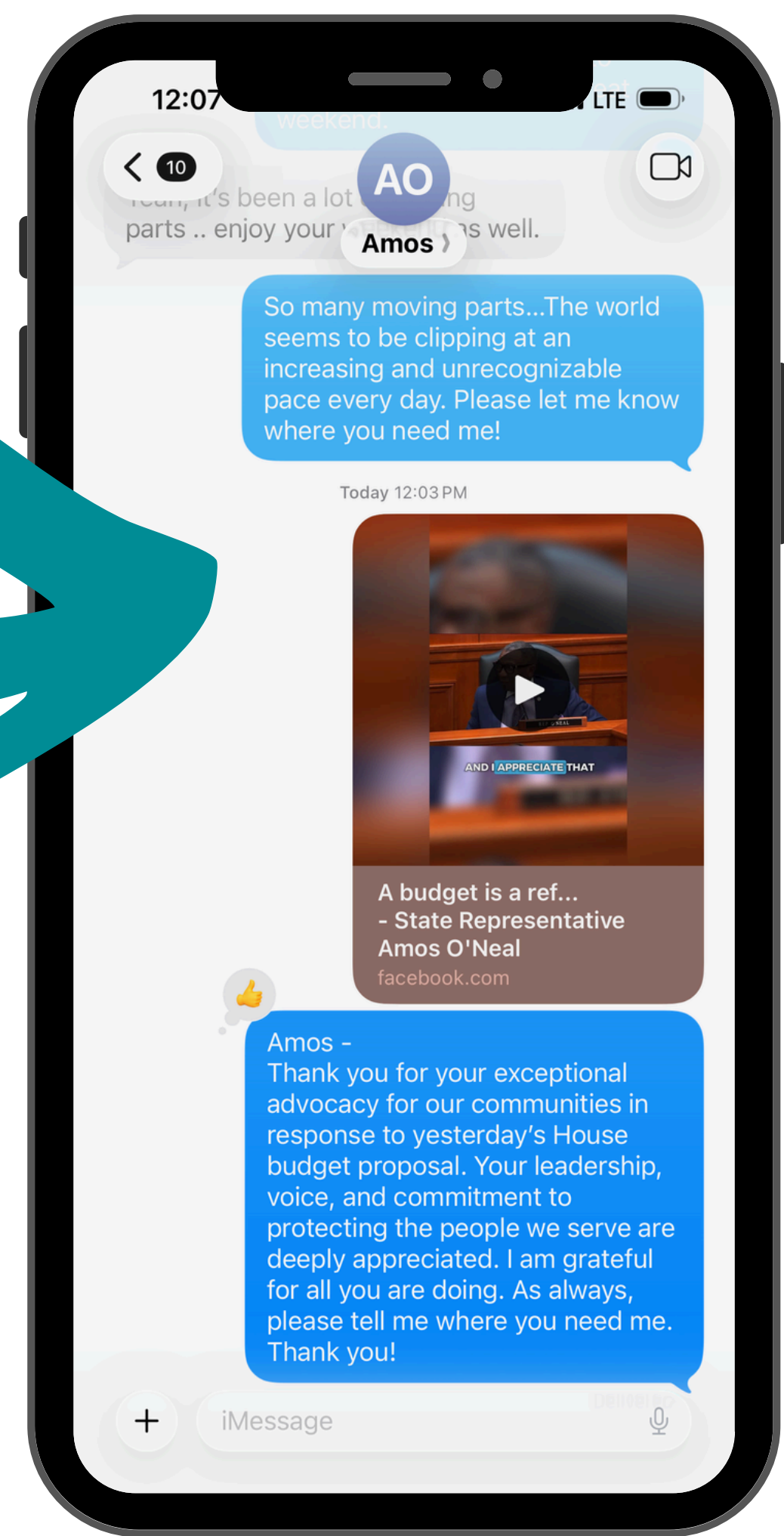


Keep it simple, respectful, and student-centered.



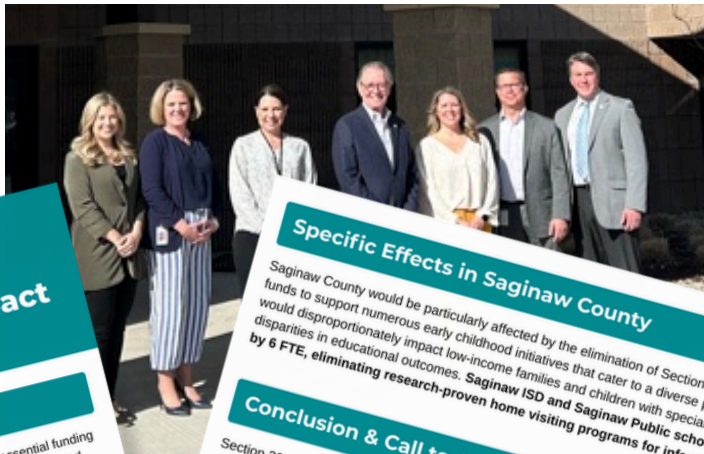
QUICK TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

- **Lead with students** – Start with impact, not policy
- **Keep it concise** – 30–60 seconds is often enough
- **Use real examples** – Stories stick more than statistics
- **Stay nonpartisan** – Focus on solutions, not politics
- **It's okay to agree to disagree** – Maintain respect and professionalism
- **Listen as much as you speak** – Relationships are built both ways
- **Don't guess** – If you don't know, follow up later
- **Be consistent** – Align with district messaging and priorities









SAGINAW ISD
SERVE • INNOVATE • EMPOWER

Section 32p: Early Childhood Impact

MICHIGAN'S INVESTMENT IN OUR CHILDREN

Overview of Section 32p

Section 32p is a critical component of Michigan's Early Childhood Infrastructure, providing essential funding for early childhood education programs. It supports various initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality and accessibility of early learning opportunities for young children across the state. Without it, the quality and availability of care will be reduced.

Local Impact in Saginaw ISD and Partnering Districts

In Saginaw ISD and its partnering districts, Section 32p funds play a vital role in sustaining and expanding early childhood programs. These programs include the Great Start Collaborative, preschool services, early intervention programs, and support for families with young children. The funding enables these districts to offer comprehensive and high-quality early childhood education, setting a strong foundation for children's future success.

Consequences of Eliminating Section 32p

With the Great Start Collaborative gone, we will lose:

- A central hub for coordinating referrals, planning, and collaboration among service providers
- Infrastructure that supports home visiting, early literacy efforts such as Talking is Teaching and Imagination Library, free book distribution, and award-winning Home/Visit program, utilizing and parent engagement initiatives.
- Elimination of the research-proven and award-winning Home/Visit program, utilizing Teachers Home visiting curriculum.
- The Great Start Family Coalition ensures that families have a voice and influence in planning.
- Community events such as the Community Baby Shower, Community Story W local partners, the annual Fatherhood Conference, Math in the Mail, playgroup children birth to 5 years of age, book outreach, and other literacy and math
- Support network for childcare providers, coordination of training, free lent' childcare providers, which increase access to high-quality early learning appreciation events.

Specific Effects in Saginaw County

Saginaw County would be particularly affected by the elimination of Section 32p. The county relies on these funds to support numerous early childhood initiatives that cater to a diverse population. Losing this funding would disproportionately impact low-income families and children with special needs, exacerbating existing disparities in educational outcomes. **Saginaw ISD and Saginaw Public Schools would reduce staffing by 6 FTE, eliminating research-proven home visiting programs for infants and toddlers.**

Conclusion & Call to Action

Section 32p is indispensable for maintaining and improving early childhood education in Michigan, especially in Saginaw County. Eliminating this funding would undermine years of progress and have a profoundly negative impact on the future of countless children.

Therefore, we urge policymakers to prioritize early childhood education and protect Section 32p funding. Your support is crucial for ensuring that all children have access to high-quality early learning opportunities.

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August 28, 2025
Dear Community Members, Families, and Staff:

As we begin the 2025-26 school year, we join together on behalf of all public schools in Saginaw County to bring attention to an important issue. Lawmakers in Lansing are considering proposals that could change how essential education resources are funded.

State law requires lawmakers to approve the School Aid Budget by July 1 each year so districts across Michigan can plan, budget, and operate with stability. That deadline has long since passed without an agreement. Furthermore, without a full state budget in place, there is a considerable risk of a state government shutdown on September 30, delaying the funding that public schools depend on.

At the center of the deadlock is a proposal to redirect dollars from the School Aid Fund. This fund was created with the promise that it would be dedicated to public education. Proposals to shift it toward other priorities, such as road repairs, not only go against the original intent approved by voters in 1994 to provide fair, statewide funding for schools, but are an imminent threat to the Michigan public education system as a whole.

If the Legislature does not pass a budget soon, schools across Michigan may miss their first scheduled state aid payment on October 20, 2025. For our communities, this payment is essential to:

- Compensate teachers, support staff, and specialists who work directly with students
- Maintain class sizes and provide critical student services
- Keep buses running, facilities maintained, and classrooms supplied
- Fund academic programs, the arts, athletics, and other activities that support student learning opportunities

Our schools cannot operate indefinitely without these resources. The solution is clear: lawmakers should approve a School Aid Budget that safeguards School Aid Fund dollars for their intended purpose, educating Michigan's children and students, regardless of ZIP code. We encourage you to join us in urging our elected officials to reach an agreement now and better ensure that education funding remains protected. Our students deserve a stable, fully funded school year. Together, we can help guarantee that learning continues without interruption.

Yours in Education,

Saginaw Intermediate School District
On behalf of our 12 public school districts and four public school academies serving more than 26,000 students across Saginaw County:

*If not **us**, who? If not **now**, when?*

Questions?