

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Wednesday, January 17, 2018

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## **School Finance Research Collaborative announces findings of comprehensive school funding study**

*Michigan businesses, education experts partner to provide historic analysis of school funding data, tools for school funding reform*

**LANSING** — Top business and education experts today revealed the results from a comprehensive statewide study examining school funding in Michigan – an analysis that clearly demonstrates the need to reform Michigan’s school funding system. The **School Finance Research Collaborative** brought together the nation’s two leading school funding research firms to develop the report, which provides the most complete data available on school funding and gives policymakers the building blocks to reform the school funding system in Michigan.

“This comprehensive report reflects the input of nearly 300 educators throughout Michigan, giving policymakers clear direction on how much it costs to educate a child and how best to reform Michigan’s broken school funding system,” said **Bob Moore, School Finance Research Project Director**. “The leaders who came together to create the School Finance Research Collaborative are proud to have supported a comprehensive analysis of what it costs to educate every child, regardless of zip code or circumstance, and we hope policymakers will use it as a roadmap to take action on behalf of Michigan’s students.”

“Regardless of whether a child attends a traditional public or charter school, they deserve the best possible education, and that starts with establishing a school funding program that’s data-driven and works for all students,” said **Mary Kay Shields**, president of **CS Partners**. “The new report released today by the School Finance Research Collaborative is comprehensive in its analysis of funding needs at charter and traditional public schools, and it can be a tremendous resource for policymakers.”

Launched in 2016, the Collaborative brought together business leaders, education experts, leaders from traditional public and charter schools throughout Michigan and top consultants in the education field. Working together, the collaborative oversaw the completion of a new, comprehensive school adequacy study that provides a new framework for funding Michigan’s schools to prepare all students for success in the classroom and beyond.

The full report, commissioned by the School Finance Research Collaborative, is available at [www.fundMIschools.org](http://www.fundMIschools.org) and includes the following key findings:

- The base per-pupil cost to educate a regular education K-12 student in Michigan is \$9,590, which does not include transportation, food service or capital costs, and only includes pension costs at 4.6% of wages.
- Charter and traditional public schools should be funded equally.

- It costs \$14,155 to educate a preschool student age 3 or 4.
- In addition to the base per-pupil cost, a percentage of the base cost should be provided for special education, English Language Learners, students living in poverty and programs to provide Career and Technical Education.
- Transportation costs should be funded at \$973 per rider until further study can be carried out.
- Because Michigan’s school district sizes vary widely and small districts lack economies of scale, district size must be taken into account, with funding increases provided for all districts under 7,500 students.

Collaborative leaders emphasized additional research will also be needed in several areas, including a full capital study to examine the costs of charter and traditional public schools; a review of literate and illiterate poverty, and concentration of poverty by district; and a full transportation costs study.

“Reforming our broken school funding system isn’t a partisan issue, and a comprehensive, data-driven look at how we fund traditional public and charter schools in our state is long overdue,” said **Rick Johnson**, former Michigan House Speaker. “This new study provides a robust and comprehensive look at school funding and gives policymakers real building blocks for a new school funding system. I encourage our policymakers, Republican and Democrat, to use this study to inform the future of Michigan’s school funding system.”

“This report reflects the best available data, research and input on Michigan’s school funding system, and I’m hopeful the results of this comprehensive study will spark action from policymakers,” said **Matt Gillard**, president and CEO of **Michigan’s Children**. “The fact is, our current school funding system is broken. It’s time for reform – and this new report provides clear building blocks for Michigan’s policymakers to get down to work on reform.”

The Collaborative is funded by the **W.K. Kellogg**, **Charles Stewart Mott** and **Skillman** foundations, more than 22 Michigan ISDs and nonprofit organizations statewide.

*For more information about the School Finance Research Collaborative and to see the full report, go to [fundMIschools.org](http://fundMIschools.org).*

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