Phase 1
It’s time to do right by Michigan’s children and teachers.

• There is ample room for improvement in our K–12 outcomes.
  • More than half of MI third-graders are below proficient in reading, a number that increases to 70 percent for those living in poverty.
  • Michigan fourth-graders are ranked 42nd in the nation in terms of math scores.
Our strong agenda for change.

- Unparalleled collaboration through a multi-year, multi-phased approach
- Development of a coherent, connected educational delivery system
- Ensuring all children have access to consistent supports capable of meeting their needs
- Talented, dedicated teachers for every classroom
Michigan’s potential remains untapped.

Michigan has hardworking teachers, principals, counselors, staff and children. Our problems aren’t because of them, but they are on the front lines. It’s time to show our professionals on the ground the respect and appreciation they deserve.
More than 2,500 long-term substitutes leading Michigan classrooms

Educator preparation colleges experiencing a 70% enrollment drop during the past decade
Three core priorities

- Preparing graduates
- Ensuring rapid improvement
- Closing equity gaps
Jonathan
It is all too common in today’s Michigan for teachers to get hired away by competing districts at the start of – or in the middle of – a term. This is what happened in Jonathan’s Iron County class the day before school started and, when combined with a significant shortage of substitute teachers, the district was left with a lack of good solutions to fill his vacant kindergarten class. To fill the gap, two generous long-time retired teachers offered to team-teach, as they were not comfortable with the demands of a full-time kindergarten class.

This small rural school district has 69 percent of its students living in poverty. Roughly 45 percent of its students are able to score proficient on state reading and math assessments.

Gabby
As a 6th grader in Muskegon County, Gabby has rarely had an opportunity to learn from a certified teacher. Between kindergarten and fifth grade, she has had 14 teachers, fewer than five of whom were actually certified.

At Gabby’s school, 50 percent of the building staff turns over each year, often in the middle of a term. Greater than 90 percent of third graders in her school are not proficient on Michigan literacy assessments. A whopping 58 percent of students are chronically absent from school.
Launch Michigan Recommends

- Investment
- Strategic Planning & Capacity Building
- Transparency & Data Empowerment
- Interventions & Supports
Investment

• We support a student-centered, weighted funding formula that drives greater equity into our funding system, and funds children based on their needs, regardless of the governance or geography of the school they attend. This formula should strive to create educational adequacy for all children, in concert with School Finance Research Collaborative findings.

• To generate needed funds, Michigan must use a balanced approach that includes more equitably rethinking existing resources, identifying and eliminating structural inefficiencies, and securing and prioritizing equitable distribution of new revenue.

• Michigan must prioritize equity with a focus on literacy by first targeting elementary school children who live in poverty and in geographic isolation.

• Recognizing our goals include the creation of a more adequate and equitable funding system, our next phase is to build Michigan’s new revenue strategy and support a reliable accountability system by engaging policymakers and voters.
Strategic Planning & Capacity Building

- With the consultation of state and national experts, Michigan must create a mechanism to deploy best practices at scale.
- Michigan must immediately make needed statutory changes to allow educators to be employed at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) without sacrificing their school retirement funds or comparable benefits.
- With money comes accountability. Districts must develop local plans that transparently account for needs, summarize academic goals, and align new spending to research-based best practice areas. This must be the basis of any new equitable spending.
- Michigan must ensure that all kids and educators have access to high-quality books and curricula, and that educators receive ongoing, high-quality professional learning experiences on research-based literacy instruction, including coaching and feedback.
- Michigan must create pathways to coaching and hybrid teacher/coaching positions, and strive to improve engagement with parents around literacy best practices.
Transparency & Data Empowerment

- We urge an expedient reconciliation of Michigan’s Every Student Succeeds Act – approved accountability system and PA 601 under one single statewide accountability and reporting system that: (i) complies with federal law, (ii) helps identify our most challenged schools for needed interventions, and (iii) is clear and concise to educators, parents and community members.

- Michigan must prioritize student growth for all children and will work to advance much-needed improvements in, and access to, essential data systems in support of this aim.

- Launch Michigan will create an annual progress report to hold state and local stakeholders accountable for Michigan’s educational progress, which will reflect the intersection between best practice policy, funding adoption, and field implementation.
Interventions & Supports

- Michigan must support a sustainable, adequately-funded office of accountability with a clear and predictable statutory scope of escalating interventions for chronically-failing schools.
- Accountability must avoid shaming and trigger support. Systems that flag failure but provide no meaningful interventions and supports are ineffective.
- Michigan must respond to schools that are the lowest performing, have negative growth, and/or have unacceptable sub-group performance with a multi-tiered approach to intervention that starts with a fully-resourced partnership model, but also extends beyond it.
- Intervention models must empower all levels of Michigan public education to be invested in and accountable for turning around challenged schools. School buildings, districts, regional entities, the state Department of Education, the Legislature and the Governor must partner to significantly improve outcomes for students.
**A Phased Approach to Change**

**Immediately: Tackling Michigan’s Most Acute Needs**
Create an equity fund with an initial focus on literacy. Within this fund, enact:
- A 0.35 poverty multiplier to every qualifying student’s foundation allowance in grades K-3 at a minimum.
- A 0.04 geographic isolation multiplier to every qualifying student’s foundation allowance in grades K-3 at a minimum.
- Hold all districts harmless so that resources do not fall below current levels.

Create a district-driven strategic planning process to ensure that resources can be directed to where local schools determine they are experiencing the greatest need. This process should include:
- A clear, locally-derived plan that shows how equity fund resources will be used to improve literacy, with clear results and metrics.
- A planning process that involves local, regional, and state entities to ensure that resources are being used on evidence-based best practices and strategies that align with recipient children’s needs.

**Today–2025: Bridging Michigan’s Gaps**
- Determine a revenue strategy and scale investments to provide student-centered funding for all kids by focusing on poverty, geographic isolation, English language learners, special education, and career and technical education multipliers.
- Improve support of early childhood education, focusing on areas of greatest need first while improving quality and alignment with K-20.
- Develop strategies to improve college and career readiness for all post-secondary pathways.
- Study and implement world-class strategies around teacher training, licensure, attraction, and retention, with a focus on providing all Michigan students with great teachers who are adequately resourced and supported.
- Build out multi-tiered turnaround planning through developing local, regional, and state partnership processes.
- Ensure that Michigan has a single, effective, and transparent accountability system.

**Today–2030: The Change Michigan Needs**
- Identify and implement research-based models for addressing the needs of the whole child, including social, emotional and physical needs.
- Research and identify solutions to create equity in transportation, technology and capital needs.
- Tackle structural inefficiencies by scaling best practices, prioritizing build-up of efforts already underway at the local and regional level.
- Ensure that all children have a safe and sound place to attend school.
- Close structural equity gaps in ways that prioritize and expedite growth throughout all levels of Michigan’s Pre-K-20 education system.
Discussion