

2018 MICHIGAN SCHOOL-AID BUDGET

WHAT CHARTER SCHOOLS NEED TO KNOW

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Tips and strategies for your school to speak loud!

MICHIGAN CHARTERS

Why charter school advocates are still fighting to reduce the equity gap in the school aid fund.



MAPSA

Michigan's Charter School Association

MISSION

Our mission is to support charter schools in improving educational outcomes for Michigan's children by advancing quality education through choice and innovation.

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ABOUT US

MAPSA, Michigan's charter school association, represents the collective action of Michigan charter school stakeholders communicating through the media, advocating at the Capitol, and standing up for the 150,000 students enrolled in a charter school who are realizing their bright future.

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DEAR CHARTER SCHOOL ADVOCATE,

At MAPSA we believe that all students deserve equitable funding, no matter what type of innovative school their parents have chosen for them. We need to fund kids and not institutions. Each year as the Michigan legislature begins working on the State budget, MAPSA works tirelessly to ensure that charter school students across the state have equitable funding opportunities.

A child shouldn't be punished because they chose an innovative school, with different cost structures. Funding schools based on cost can impact how innovative they can be and innovation is what leads to greater student achievement. We need to keep our focus on student outcomes and student needs and allow schools the flexibility to achieve those outcomes.

By funding a school based on costs, it assumes a few things:

- Costs are the same at every school, regardless of how they innovate and operate.
- Things have to be done the same at every school.

The reality is that costs vary from school to school. What is valued at one school as an important part of the educational experience may not be valued at another school. Outcomes are what matters, and how to get there should be up to the school and its parents.

This toolkit was created to help charter schools and their stakeholders find ways to engage with their lawmakers throughout the K12 School Aid Budget process to make a meaningful impact as key decisions are made about a student's worth.

MAPSA is not asking you to fight for equitable funding, but fight for your school, your families, and your students. You can't fight this fight alone. Neither can we.

Sincerely,



Daniel L. Quisenberry
MAPSA President

1995 → \$2,300
2017 → \$718

Through our advocacy work, MAPSA has narrowed the per-pupil funding equity gap by \$1,582.

CHARTERS ADVOCATE FOR FUNDING EQUITY

Funding equity simply means that every student in Michigan would be worth the same amount of funding at each of his or her public school. MAPSA has diligently worked hard advocating for funding equity in the state and will continue to do so until lawmakers level the playing field for kids.

4 FACTS ABOUT MICHIGAN SCHOOL FUNDING

1994 PROPOSAL A

Sales tax was increased and directed to the state School Aid Fund to pay schools on a per student basis.

LOTTERY MONEY

It is just a small amount of the School Aid Fund at about \$800 million of the \$12 billion.

MPSERS REFORM

The passage of recent reform will provide more equity for charter schools across Michigan over time.

REGIONAL ENHANCEMENT MILLAGE ACCESS

MAPSA helped win the recent fight to allow charter schools to participate in future millage elections to create more equity.

Why does the inequity exist?

In Michigan, schools are funded at hundreds of different levels. This disparity is a relic of the past where all schools were purely funded with local tax millages prior to the passage of Proposal A. With Proposal A, the idea was to freeze and then supplement the local revenue with money from the increased sales tax. The State also decided then to fund schools on a per-pupil basis with what is called a foundation allowance, allowing the funding to follow the student to any public school they wished to attend. Michigan would eventually raise the lower funded schools to the level of the higher funded schools and every student would be funded equitably across the state, regardless of their zip code.

Funding equity is not only closing the gap between Michigan's highest and lowest foundation allowances but also providing access to the same types of resources for things like facilities. Traditional public schools can still tax their residents for all of the capital infrastructure costs with local bond issue votes. Charter schools must pay for all of their facilities with their foundation allowances. Traditional districts can pass sinking fund millages to cover on-going facilities maintenance, and this was recently expanded to also cover security and technology with a bill now pending to expand it to buses as well.

How can we fix it?

Each year the Governor proposes a school aid budget, and the legislature passes it. The legislature has a long-standing principle called "2x" where the schools that get lower foundation allowances (including all charter schools) would get twice the increase that schools who receive the highest foundation allowance. The charter school sector needs to encourage the legislature to continue to use the 2x formula (or more) to close the funding gap. Imagine what your charter school could do with \$1,000 more per student?



2

x Formula will get to foundation allowance equity!

2018 SCHOOL AID BUDGET TIMELINE

The Michigan legislative process takes place over a few months each year as the school aid budget is discussed, voted on, and signed into law for the coming year.

EARLY FEBRUARY

Governor Budget Presentation
Introduces initial budget and provides a broad overview in various categories

FEBRUARY-MARCH

K12 School Aid Subcommittee Hearings

The chair discusses topics that impact various education expenditures as they consider funding options

- February 20, 2018
- February 27, 2018
- March 6, 2018
- March 13, 2018
- February 21, 2018
- February 28, 2018
- March 7, 2018
- March 14, 2018

MID MARCH

MID MARCH

Senate Passes Budget
Includes the Senate priorities for school aid funding in their version of the budget

House of Representatives Passes Budget
Includes House priorities for school aid funding in their version of the budget

EARLY MAY

END OF MAY

Conference Committees
Budget details are worked out in these committees for final budget process

May Estimating Revenue Conference
Creates budget targets which go to conference committees for school aid budget

EARLY JUNE

MID JUNE

Governor Signs Budget
Final budget is signed into law

Conference Reports
Final passage of conference reports

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

In-person meetings with lawmakers still continue to be the most effective way for constituents to help shape public policy. Meetings will continue to be more impactful than any other form of communication or feedback.

PROVIDE COVER FOR LAWMAKERS

Sometimes a lawmaker may need "cover" if they take a stance on an issue or policy. They need to show they stand with their community who is voicing their concerns. Cover comes in numbers. It is the amount of emails, phone calls and visits a lawmaker can record to provide proof for voting a certain way.

VISIT YOUR LAWMAKER

Personal visits to your lawmaker are the most impactful choice you can make as an advocate. Lawmakers need to hear from the teachers, parents and individuals within a charter school to value students equitably across the state, especially during the legislative budget process as key decisions are being made.

Look up your school's lawmakers using your school address:

- ➔ house.michigan.gov
- ➔ senate.michigan.gov

- ➔ Attend a **K12 Subcommittee Hearing** in February or March to continue to advocate for equitable funding. Bring a few parents or teachers to sit within the meeting and introduce yourself to the committee members so they know you support charter schools. Email mapsa@charterschools.org to schedule your visit today!
- ➔ Attend your **lawmaker's coffee or in-district hours**. Again, be present and introduce yourself so they know you support charter schools and leave behind your talking points handout.
- ➔ Invite your lawmaker to visit your charter school during **March is Reading Month**. Organize a tour to show your lawmaker how amazing your charter school is!
- ➔ Schedule a **visit to Lansing**. Tour the Capitol, schedule a meeting with your lawmaker and show your support for charter schools. Whether it is a field trip for students or an organized meeting, email mapsa@charterschools.org to let us know you will be in town!

EMAIL ACTIVATIONS IMPACT LEGISLATION

Emails are an easy way for your parents and teachers to voice their support for equitable funding. Emails really matter when they come in numbers. MAPSA utilizes technology to send activation emails with an easy-to-use form. This tool creates a quick pre-populated email that is sent directly to your lawmaker's office.

To ensure mass emails are sent to make a huge impact, you can help:

FORWARD EMAIL

When you receive an email activation from MAPSA, forward it to your parents and teachers to encourage them to complete the quick form.

SHARE ON FACEBOOK

Share MAPSA's Facebook posts on your school's Facebook Page encouraging parents, board members, and teachers to complete the quick email activation form.

SEND A TEXT MESSAGE

Send out a message to parents using your school's parent communication system with a link to the activation form encouraging them to advocate for their student to be treated equally.

TAKE 60 SECONDS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

WHAT ARE LAWMAKERS SAYING?

"Charter schools don't have the costs of operating a bus system or special education programs, and aren't held to the same accountability or performance standards."

MICHIGAN STATE SENATOR
CURTIS HERTEL
DISTRICT 23



5 THINGS YOUR CHARTER SCHOOL CAN DO TO HELP MAPSA TODAY!

1

FORWARD EMAIL ACTIVATIONS

Pass on any emails you receive from MAPSA and forward to your parents and teachers to encourage them to email their lawmakers.

2

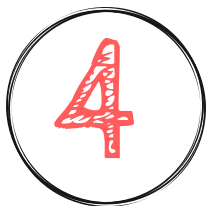
SHARE ON YOUR SCHOOL'S FACEBOOK

Share MAPSA's social media posts about the school aid budget onto your school's page to encourage parents to email their lawmakers.

3

COME TO LANSING

Join MAPSA as we organize attendance at the 8 upcoming K12 Subcommittee meetings throughout February and March. Visit bit.ly/2018equalfunding today to save your seat!

4

DISPLAY THE POSTER IN YOUR SCHOOL

Print page 9 of this toolkit and display the poster in your teacher's lounge or parent conference rooms.

5

HOST A LAWMAKER FOR MARCH IS READING MONTH

Invite your lawmaker to visit your school during March is Reading Month and share page 8 of this toolkit with them.

Visit bit.ly/2018equalfunding today!

FUND EVERY CHILD FAIRLY AND EQUITABLY

Public schools no longer fit in a one-size-fits-all box. Learning can happen anytime, any place, and at any pace. Recognizing the differences in learning environments will allow innovation to truly occur. MAPSA recommends the following items be considered for the school aid budget:

We must preserve and build upon individual student-based funding. To be equitable, we should fund students and not schools.

- We support prioritizing the foundation allowance and reducing categorical spending.
- We propose 90% of the money going to K-12 districts be put into the foundation allowance.

Innovation occurs when schools are given building-level autonomy to meet the needs of the specific student population they serve. We must recognize that there are very good schools, doing very good work. You can walk into any one of these schools and recognize the achievement and innovation occurring every day, in completely different ways. The reality is that no one model works for every population of students, and funding schools to conform to one model, even if a great model, does not work for every student. MAPSA believes the following:

- The state should fund students fairly and equitably. **Any increases in funding should run through the 2x formula** with the goal of closing the funding gap between the Minimum and Basic Foundation Allowances.
- Categoricals seek to create cookie cutter schools that are all hindered by the same regulations and requirements. **The state should benchmark 90% of the funds spent on K-12 education to go into the Foundation Allowance.**
- Through categorical spending, the equity gap continues to grow instead of narrow. Many categoricals go disproportionately to higher funded districts.

ALL STUDENTS DESERVE FAIR AND EQUITABLE FUNDING.



MAPSA

Michigan's Charter School Association

CHARTER STUDENTS DESERVE EQUAL FUNDING!

Students should be treated fairly no matter what school they choose!

CHARTER PUBLIC
SCHOOL STUDENT



\$7,890



TRADITIONAL PUBLIC
SCHOOL STUDENT



\$8,320

MICHIGAN
STUDENTS
ARE NOT
FUNDED
EQUALLY!

Despite less funding, Michigan charter schools are succeeding:

36%

Higher RETURN ON INVESTMENT compared to traditional public schools. That's an average \$2.63 increase per dollar spent.

\$2,782

Or 20% LESS. That's how much, on average, Michigan charter schools receive compared to traditional public schools.

32%

More EFFICIENT. The average charter school is over 30% more efficient than traditional public schools in the same city.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Whether you're advocating on behalf of your child, or for the collective student body in your community, you can and should use your voice to reach your lawmakers.

Charter schools across the state are providing those opportunities for students.

Unfortunately, those innovative schools aren't getting funded fairly for their work.

CONTACT YOUR LAWMAKER



ATTEND COFFEE HOURS



COME TO THE CAPITOL



Visit bit.ly/equalschoolfunding today!





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