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### Summary

This week in Lansing, the big news was from the Senate, where **the K-12 Subcommittee released their initial budget recommendation**. We have all the details you need to know below, but **in summary: it is a missed opportunity**. We are disappointed to see flat funding in several areas, and the slight foundation allowance increase does not begin to make up for the lack of funding in other key areas. **Overall, it appears the Senate is keeping money available in several budgets to justify their tax cut proposals**. This,

combined with the continued use of School Aid Fund dollars to fund non-classroom areas and programs, is a disappointing sign and **we will continue to advocate for all available dollars to go into the classroom where it belongs.**

We expect to see the House's version of the budget soon.

Additionally, we wanted to be sure to **share factual information and details** that districts can use to inform stakeholders **about the intent of the DeVos-backed ballot proposals that threaten public education across Michigan.** MASA continues to work as part of the For MI Kids, For Our Schools coalition and will be in continued contact with you about this effort.

As always, please [contact MASA](#) with any questions or concerns.

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## **Senate Releases K-12 Budget**

On Thursday, the **Senate K-12 Subcommittee released their initial version of the Fiscal Year 22-23 budget** for both K-12 and the department of education. Overall, the Senate proposed a **K-12 budget of \$17.8 billion** for the upcoming fiscal year. **This is nearly 500 million less than the governor's budget recommendation.** While the Subcommittee Chair emphasized that this budget is a "starting point," and that there will be significant changes, nonetheless, **the initial proposal is underwhelming**, representing a clear step backward from the governor's proposal and not taking advantage of the revenue that the state is able to utilize. **The combination of unspent money, presumably for proposed tax cuts, and the increased use of School Aid Fund dollars to fund higher education and other non-classroom purposes means the Senate budget proposal as it stands is a missed opportunity.**

The Senate's recommendation **increases the foundation allowance by \$450, which equates to \$9,150 per pupil.** This is technically an increase compared to the executive recommendation, which included a \$435-\$9,135 per pupil increase. However, **this is very misleading, given that the Senate failed to increase core, important programs in this budget** and kept funding at last fiscal year's level for these items. Most notably, you should be aware that in **the**

**Senate's introduced version of the budget would not include increases in the following areas:**

- Sec. 31a At Risk & Sec. 31a(7) At Risk Hold harmless
- Sec. 31n School Mental Health
- Sec. 61c CTE Equipment Upgrades & Sec. 61d CTE Incentive Payments
- Sec. 81 ISD General Operations
- Sec. 97 School Safety Grants

**The above is not an exhaustive list of every area that did not see an increase. Additionally, nearly every section of special education is flat and could technically be called a decrease in total spending from last year.** Essentially, the additional \$15 per pupil in the foundation allowance in this budget does not compensate for the many vital areas that did not see increases from last year.

The Senate version retained all funding for nonpublic schools' reimbursement at \$1 million. The Senate in their budget boilerplate language specified that cyber schools are not required to track attendance to verify days and hours in order to receive funding – and the Senate would include cybers in the foundation allowance. Meaning that **if this language were included in the final budget, cyber schools would receive the same foundation allowance as traditional brick and mortar, without being subject to the 1,098 hours requirement.**

**New sections (\$585 million):**

- **Sec. 11z School Consolidation (\$500 million)**
  - This is a grant program to allow districts to retire part of their outstanding debt to allow districts to consolidate without raising millage rates on the residents of consolidating districts.
- **Sec. 27a Teacher Incentives (\$25 million)**
  - This would be payments up to \$3,750 per semester and the dollars would flow from the state to the public university with an eligible teacher preparation program. Among the requirements for awardees, they must teach in a public school for at least 2 years for every year they receive a scholarship. There is language to state that if the recipient does not fulfill the grant requirement, the money will shift to being a 0% loan.

- **Sec. 27b Bus driver recruiting, training, and retention (\$5 million)**
  - Funding under this section would be allotted to one eligible vendor for retention incentives and hiring and training costs.
- **Sec. 31aa School Counselors SMART (\$15 million)**
  - Details Below
- **Sec. 31p TRAILS (\$10 million)**
- **Sec. 32u [BookNook](#) (\$2 million)**
  - Funding under this section will flow directly to local and intermediate districts to use BookNook for their pupils and teaching staff.
- **Sec. 67c Developer Academy (\$3 million)**
  - This would provide funding directly to Michigan State University to recruit participants to provide stipends for basic living expenses to participate in a Developer Academy. It is a one-year program for individuals over the age of 18. The academy would be focused on coding, design, entrepreneurship, and essential professional skills.
- **Sec. 97c School Security Assessment Grants (\$15 million)**
  - Grant funding would be available for districts, ISDs, and nonpublic schools but is limited to \$2,000 per school operated. The funding can only be used to contract with a vendor for the completion of a comprehensive safety and security assessment. There are specific requirements for the vendor in the boilerplate
- **Sec. 97d School Security Building Mapping (\$10 million)**
  - This would be a competitive grant for districts to contract with a vendor to implement critical incident mapping. This would be technology that must be compatible with platforms used by local, state, and federal public safety officials. The mapping must include building numbers, floors, room numbers, and other useful information.
- **Sec. 97f School discipline helpline (\$100,000)**
  - This funding would be designated for the [Student Advocacy Center of Michigan](#) for use on its statewide helpline for families in educational crisis.

Notably, the budget kept a number of smaller existing categorical programs including: 10 cents a meal, Michigan Education Corps, DPTV Online

Curriculum, Robotics, Chaldean Community Foundation, and Conductive Learning Center.

The Senate additionally included \$100 placeholders for the following sections that the governor did not include. A \$100 placeholder in a proposed budget indicates that there is a general committee interest in funding the program.

- Sec. 31bb Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD Learning Center
- Sec. 31cc Purple Star Program
- Sec. 31dd Roadmaps UM-SVSU
- Sec. 31ee Kids Kicking Cancer
- Sec. 31ff Voluntary district efficiency improvements
- Sec. 32t Strong Beginnings
- Sec. 67d ProStart/HTM
- Sec. 95b EVAAS
- Sec. 97e Artificial Intelligence Security Monitoring

**Eliminated Sections in the Senate budget:**

- Sec. 11s Educare & Early Childhood Collaborative\*
- Sec. 11y School Infrastructure
- Sec. 22g Inkster Debt
- Sec. 27a Michigan Future Educator Fellowship
- Sec. 27d Educator Onboarding program
- Sec. 31n(11) Specialized Mental Health Needs
- Sec. 31n(12) Universal Mental Health Screenings
- Sec. 31o School Nurses, Counselors
- Sec. 31z Year-Round Schools-One time HVAC funding
- Sec. 32d Federal GRSP
- Sec. 32n Before and After school programs
- Sec. 32s GSRP Home Pilot
- Sec. 99i Women in Technology\*
- Sec. 99s(5) Federal \$ Math/Science Centers\*
- Sec. 99s(12) Comprehensive STEM Initiative (Administration)\*
- Sec. 99w Fitness Foundation\*
- Sec. 99bb YMCA Youth in Government\*

*\*Governor also eliminated*

The Subcommittee also reported out SB 833, the Department of Education Budget. **The budget does *not* include \$3 million funding for the Michigan**

**School for the Blind, \$800,000 to oversee a teacher retention program, \$200,000 for mental health supports, or \$700,000 for Great Start Readiness positions.** Other than these items, the budget is largely the same as Gov. Whitmer's recommendation.

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## **Other Budgets**

Overall, **several areas in the Senate's version of the FY 22-23 budget are significantly less than Gov. Whitmer's proposals. It's likely that Senate leadership has made these cuts a priority as they seek to maneuver to cut taxes this year.**

The MDHHS budget that came from the Senate subcommittee was 10% less than the governor's, and the LEO (\$550 million) and Corrections and Judiciary (\$175 million) budgets also saw significant cuts from the Executive Recommendation.

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## **Senate Health Policy**

The Senate Health Policy Committee heard testimony on a new mental health apprenticeship program. SB 1012 is sponsored by Sen. Curt VanderWall (R-Benzi) and **establishes a student mental health apprenticeship retention and training ("SMART") internship grant program.**

The program would require the Department of Education to administer funding through a grant program to designated recipients, field supervisors, field instructors, and supervisors through agreements that met certain criteria. In the bill's current form, designated recipients include those who are enrolled in, and in good standing at a graduate-level mental health professional program. There is also an evaluation requirement for grant recipients.

The Senate **did include \$15 million for this program in their K-12 budget proposal**. There is an additional version of the bill in the House -- HB 6020 sponsored by Rep. Bronna Kahle (R-Adrian).

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## This Week's Introduced Bills

[SB 1010 \(Theis\)](#) Allows Montessori teachers to receive a teaching certification.

[SB 1011 \(Zorn\)](#) Modifies attendance requirements for military-affiliated children, allows them to be enrolled in a district other than their district of residence if they are in a temporary military housing situation.

[SB 1012 \(VanderWall\)](#) Creates a student mental health apprenticeship retention and training (SMART) internship grant program.

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## For MI Kids, For My Schools

In its continued effort to **provide resources to accurately inform the public about the intent of the DeVos-backed ballot proposals that threaten public education across Michigan**, the *For MI Kids, For Our Schools* coalition, which MASA is a part of, has developed materials and information that districts can use to inform stakeholders. More information can be found below, and additional materials will be provided in coming communications.

### Things to Keep in Mind

When addressing these petitions, it's important to keep in mind:

- **School districts may objectively inform community members of the facts** surrounding the initiatives that are related to the function of a school district.
- All **information disseminated by a school district relating to the initiatives must be factual** without expressly advocating for or against

them if district funds are used. The factual information need not be balanced or present both sides, but information must be supported by facts, not opinions or conjecture.

- A **school board may discuss its opposition to the initiatives at an open meeting as well as adopt a resolution** opposing them and record the resolution in the meeting minutes. However, the use of public resources to distribute or publicize the resolution **beyond the regular provision of factual information regarding actions taken by the board is prohibited.**
- Board members and school employees may **engage in activities that oppose the initiatives on their own time outside of work** as long as district funds are not used.
- A **school district may not use public resources to create and maintain internet links** to websites, organizations, commentary or editorials that expressly oppose the initiatives if the district does so for the purpose of influencing the outcome of them.
- **School buildings may be used for presentations supporting or opposing the initiatives after school hours** pursuant to board policy. Care should be taken to ensure that facilities are equally available to both proponents and opponents of the initiatives and appropriate fees, if required by board policy, are administered consistently.
- **Board members and school employees may use their own materials** to draft letters to the editor to express their opinions on the initiatives.
- The **occasional, incidental use of public resources by superintendents** to communicate their views on the initiatives to constituents or the media **is permissible.**
- A **school official is prohibited from using the school district computer network to send a mass email that expressly advocates** against the initiatives.
- **Unions and associations may communicate with their members about the initiatives by using school mailboxes** if such communications are sent only to the collective bargaining representatives' members.

## **What You Can Do**



[Adopt the Board Resolution](#): drafted by MASB staff on behalf of For MI Kids, For Our Schools, the resolution makes your community aware of where your district stands on these initiatives.

[Decline to Sign](#): Tell your friends, family, coworkers and community: “Do not sign the Let MI Kids Learn ballot initiatives” and share with them the facts about these proposals.

[Spread the Word](#) (on your own time on personal social media accounts): For MI Kids has a resource library, including social media posts, to help you advocate for public schools.

Talk to Your Legislators: Contact your state [representative](#) and [senator](#) and tell them not to support these initiatives.

Educate Your Community: request an informational briefing from For MI Kids.