

March 10, 2015

The Honorable Phil Pavlov
State Senator
State Capitol
P.O.Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator Pavlov:

We are writing to thank you for your sponsorship and express our support for Senate Bill 103, a bill to complete Michigan's teacher and administrator evaluation law. As you are well aware, since the passage of PA 102 of 2011 Michigan's educators have been anticipating passage of legislation to complete the statutory requirements necessary to administer the year-end evaluations required by the law. Last year the legislature passed Senate Bill 817 (PA 257 of 2014) to delay full implementation of the year-end evaluation requirements until the 2014-2015 school year.

We are grateful to the legislature for conducting a thorough and intensive process in crafting last session's teacher and administrative evaluation bills (HBs 5223 and 5224). We support Senate Bill 103 because it achieves full implementation of the evaluations framework in the following ways:

It protects local control and preserves flexibility

While it is appropriate for the state to require that districts utilize high quality and research-based evaluation tools, Senate Bill 103 recognizes that local districts are capable of crafting excellent evaluation tools. Indeed, they are already doing so. Local districts have invested in and are currently operating educator and administrative evaluations in innovate and successful ways across Michigan. The state should encourage these locally derived solutions, not mandating strict adherence to only certain state-dictated models.

It does not require new categorical funding

The previous session's version of the evaluation bills required millions of dollars be set aside to fund evaluation tools and training. The FY 2014-15 School Aid Budget set aside \$14.8 million (\$12.1 from School Aid Fund revenue) in a new categorical to pay for the new evaluation mandates required in the proposed bills. This funding is continued in the Governor's FY 2015-16 Executive Budget Recommendation. We believe these funds are better spent in the per pupil foundation allowance supporting local districts, not in separate and restricted categorical funding.

It recognizes changes to the state assessments

The assessment landscape is changing dramatically. Michigan is planning on using three distinct statewide assessments in three consecutive years. Furthermore, the Federal requirements for student testing are a subject of significant debate in Congress. We believe Senate Bill 103 appropriately recognizes these dynamics by requiring full implementation of the evaluation requirements in the 2018-19 school year.

For these reasons, we the undersigned, again thank you for introducing this legislation and encourage you to move forward with Senate Bill 103.

Sincerely,

South Central Education Policy Consortium
Tri-County Alliance for Public Education
Genesee Intermediate School District
Macomb Intermediate School District
Oakland Schools
Wayne RESA
Calhoun Intermediate School District
Barry Intermediate School District
Branch Intermediate School District

Jackson Intermediate School District
Monroe Intermediate School District
Lenawee Intermediate School District