3/22/18 MI Merit Curriculum Sub Committee

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Our organizations represent a wide array of Michigan job-providers, but we have one thing in common: talent is a top priority for our members. Michigan businesses need world-class talent to compete in a global economy. Our members, small and large, are dedicated to policies that develop a strong and diverse talent system and provide learning opportunities with employer engagement to prepare students to succeed.

There are currently more than 100,000 open positions on the Pure Michigan Talent Connect website and it is estimated that the professional trades will add 15,000 new jobs each year through 2024. This alarming trend is only growing. As the large Baby Boomer generation retires, they take their skills with them, leaving not only empty jobs, but a skill deficit.

To address the talent shortage, we must increase student awareness of rewarding and lucrative career opportunities and allow Michigan students to develop skills at a younger age that can carry them into the workforce and give them a competitive advantage when choosing a career path.

The stakes are extraordinarily high. The future quality of life in Michigan depends on our collective ability to develop, attract and retain top-tier talent. Developing the talent pipeline is the key to our state's success. To achieve that, we need to do a better job of building collaborative relationships between parents, students, teachers and employers to reveal the many rewarding career pathways available to students.

Setting the Stage for Michigan's Economic Future

The talent gap is a clear barrier to growth in Michigan and solutions to these challenges will create opportunities for our next generation to prosper right here in Michigan. To provide students with increased educational options as they position themselves to join the workforce, whether in skilled trade disciplines or jobs requiring undergraduate and graduate degrees, our organizations support policies that will:

- Afford students more opportunities for Career Exploration
- Promote awareness of diverse career opportunities
- Expand and strengthen Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs
- Build collaborative relationships between parents, students, teachers and job-providers
- Improve flexibility in Michigan's Merit Curriculum
- Foster innovative learning methods and hands-on opportunities

We Ask for Swift Passage of Bills to Build Michigan's Talent Pipeline and Impart Students with In-Demand Skills

House Bills 4315-4318: Michigan Merit Curriculum Flexibility

HB 4315 (Rep. Beth Griffin) and HB 4316 (Rep. Curt VanderWall)
This legislation provides students and families greater flexibility to invest in subject areas they choose, which could include the skilled trades, computer science and coding, foreign language and visual, performing or applied arts.

HB 4317 (Rep. Roger Hauck)
To enhance curriculum choices, the bill allows the opportunity for a CTE student to take a 30-hour OSHA-approved safety course to fulfill their health credit requirement.

HB 4318 (Rep. Gary Howell)
Flexibility is key in providing students an opportunity to enroll in courses that will provide them with the skills and training needed to access high-paying jobs. HB 4318 would allow a student to elect to take a statistics class or an Algebra II class to complete their graduation requirements.

House Bills 5139-5142 and 5145: Career Pathways

HB 5139 (Rep. Daire Rendon)
Career discovery is critical to changing student perceptions of in-demand jobs. HB 5139 will create a model program as part of the core instruction that delivers age-appropriate career exploration and engagement with local employers from kindergarten through graduation.

HB 5140 (Rep. Sue Allor)
HB 5140 will allow proprietary schools, skilled trade employers and community colleges to have access to pupil directory information for the purposes of marketing educational and career opportunities. These important pathways to skilled trades will be on the same par as the military and universities in their ability to recruit students.

HB 5141 (Rep. Bronna Kahle) and HB 5142 (Rep. Robert Kosowski)
The availability of trained instructors is a growing barrier to creating and expanding strong Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in communities across the state. HB 5141 and HB 5142 will allow a school to hire a non-certificated non-endorsed instructor for a CTE program if the person has achieved private sector expertise in the subject matter or field of the program.

HB 5145 (Rep. Julie Alexander)
HB 5145 will ensure that educators who spend time learning about private sector practices with local employers will be able to apply that time as credit toward required continuing education and professional development.

Senate Bills 684-685 (Sen. Ken Horn and Sen. Peter MacGregor): Talent Portfolio and Career Exploration

This legislation will require schools to help students document tangible and marketable career skills achieved during education. This "Talent Portfolio" will be developed and revised throughout the implementation of a student's educational development plan.

The bills would also require schools, as part of their school improvement plan, to provide robust career exploration and connection opportunities during grades K to 12.

House Bill 4356 (Rep. Brett Roberts) and Senate Bill 175 (Senator Jim Stamas): CTE Foreign Language Flexibility

This legislation would eliminate the sunset on the provision passed in 2014 that allows CTE students flexibility in achieving their required foreign language credit.