



## AN ISSUES PRIMER FOR MICHIGAN'S 2011 LEADERS

<b>FROM CRADLE TO CAREER: EDUCATION</b>	<b>WORKING TOGETHER: P-20 COUNCILS</b>	<b>ECONOMIC IMPACT: ASTRONOMICAL</b>
---	--	--

### WHERE MICHIGAN STANDS

**A 21st century commitment to education needs to start at birth and extend through adulthood.** Research supports it, and Michigan's economy demands it. Unfortunately, our current policy priorities and revenue structure cannot assure it. Clearly, a new and bold direction is needed to build the educated and skilled workforce that can lead Michigan back down the path of prosperity.

**While reforming the education system itself is critical, alone it is not enough.** Schools must develop relationships with community resources that strengthen curriculum and instruction, increase parent involvement and meet children's ever-changing developmental needs. Families, students, schools and communities often face layers of challenge and will need a coordinated approach that leverages the resources within all sectors of the community.

**There are successful examples of partnerships around the country.** Michigan is one of only twelve states without an official task force or council devoted to aligning programming, funding and expectations from the earliest years of a child's development, through the K-12 system, and into and through postsecondary education and workforce participation. These groups identify, create, incentivize and support interagency, public/private partnerships toward an end goal of educational and workforce success for all young people.

**Michigan has existing partnerships on which to build.** Successful interagency efforts exist for early childhood in the Early Childhood Investment Corporation and statewide through the Great Start system based within Intermediate School Districts; and for youth services in the Michigan After-School Partnership, co-chaired by four different State Departments, and the Shared Youth Vision Partnership, staffed out of the Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth and engaging several other critical State Departments. All of these efforts successfully engage private-sector partners as well.

### CAUSES & CHALLENGES

**Educational success is an outgrowth of successes and failures within many systems that have been built over the course of young people's lives.** For students to successfully navigate school and life, they must be born healthy and remain healthy; they must feel safe and secure; they must feel supported and cared for; they must be challenged and inspired to achieve; and they must be engaged and connected in their learning, in their

#### Key Stats

**38** – Other states have a P-20 task force or council that aligns data, program and funding

**\$17** – Saved in remedial ed., crime, welfare, etc. for every \$1 spent on high quality early care and education for low-income kids

communities, to their future, to extracurricular activities, and at home. To change educational outcomes for young people, resources addressing all of those areas must be coordinated.

**Michigan lacks a cradle-to-career vision and plan for consistent investment.** Without investments in young children, the state’s attempt to improve schools will not succeed. Without investments in these same children once they enter the school doors, the state’s attempts to improve schools and increase educational achievement will fail. And without investments in these same young people who struggle to stay engaged with school or have already become disengaged, the state’s attempts to expand access to higher education and modernize its economy will not work.

## **BUDGET IMPACT**

**The failure to invest from cradle to career has a negative impact on the overall state budget.** Research shows that every \$1 invested in high quality early care and education services for low-income children reaps a return to society of more than \$17—a return on investment that has convinced leading economists of the importance of starting early. A recent study shows that Michigan saved \$1.1 billion in 2009 alone due to investments made in the state’s school readiness efforts over the past 25 years, with savings accruing from reduced costs related to K-12 education, child abuse and neglect, crime, public assistance, and substance abuse.

**Costs of school failure are far-reaching.** The economic, social, and fiscal consequences of dropping out of school—unemployment, poverty, substance abuse, incarceration, and poor health to name a few—are profound and unacceptable. In addition, high school dropouts face a labor market that is increasingly difficult to navigate successfully. Young people without a basic education are less likely to have the maturity and skills needed to parent effectively, or the resources to promote the well-being of the next generation of Michiganders. These consequences translate to communities as forgone tax revenue, and higher social costs.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

**Utilize current momentum for collaboration.** Pushed by changing federal regulations, a small step was taken in 2010 to re-name the CEPI Advisory Council to be Michigan’s P-20 Council and expanded its role to include data integration from higher education. In addition, the State Board of Education also supported the concept of a collaborative council in its recent education reform recommendations and suggested that the State Superintendent facilitate the effort. However, where these efforts have been consistent and longer-term is when they are required by law and not created solely through Administrative action.

**Expand, staff and consistently support the work of a comprehensive P-20 Council.** Michigan needs a birth to adulthood education system that is built on a partnership of resources from a variety of sectors. To make that kind of coordination work, Michigan needs to establish a partnership with the responsibility and authority to develop and maintain it. Michigan’s P-20 Council needs to be bi-partisan and interagency; build from existing efforts; engage diverse stakeholders; identify areas for improvement; and use its authority and membership to improve how systems work for kids.

**Broadly define the role of Michigan’s P-20 Council.** The Council’s role should include support for data systems that work together to best serve children, youths and families; integration of program development and planning across state departments and private-sector interests; and review of public and private resources to maximize leveraging opportunities.

