

Contact: Matt Gillard, President and CEO, Michigan's Children
(517) 485-3500 (office)
(517) 488-9129 (cell)

Immediate Release

News Release

Lenawee Families to Host Candidate Forum for Office-Seekers in the 7th Congressional, 17th State Senate, 57th 65th State House Districts on Oct. 24 at the Lenawee ISD Tech Center

LANSING, Mich. – In a departure from typical election-year forums, Michigan's Children will host a forum for candidates running in the **7th Congressional, 17th State Senate, 57th 65th State House Districts on Wednesday, October 24, 2018** with adult learners posing questions of keen importance to their experiences.

Panelists will be drawn from sponsoring partners, Michigan Works! Southeast and the Michigan Association for Community and Adult Education. The forum is scheduled for **5:30 pm – 7:00 pm** at the **Lenawee Intermediate School District Tech Center, 1372 N. Main St., Adrian**. Candidates will be given equal time to answer questions centered on issues important and relevant to the lives of adult education students, including education, employment opportunities, child care, transportation, and health care.

"This is a great way for candidates to interact with their constituents and for students to be civically engaged," said Patrick Brown, a MACAE spokesperson. The intent of the forum is to help office-seekers develop a deeper understanding of the challenges facing today's families, and after the election, to develop helpful contacts with families and agencies in their districts.

"Working towards my GED, when I first started, I lost a lot of what I had learned in school," said Lucresha Stone, a student at the Michigan Works! program. "The learning materials that this program is providing me are helping me to be more confident in passing the main tests and getting my GED."

"Unfortunately, our state currently fails many of its citizens," said Matt Gillard, President and CEO of Michigan's Children, a Lansing-based public policy and advocacy group. "Data in the annual Kids Count reports shows us that one-third of students in Lenawee County are not graduating ready for college or a career. Students in adult education programs are uniquely suited to speak to the issues faced by people who struggle to earn their diploma or GED."

The Adrian forum is one in a series sponsored by Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy and public policy organization, and 25 other nonprofits and agencies. Other forums in Bay City, Lansing, Rochester, Freemont, Wyoming, Holland, Novi and Kalamazoo will explore issues including the **state's child care system, juvenile justice, family stability** including economic struggles, **childhood trauma and toxic stress, adult and child literacy, improvements in K-12 education, and access to mental health services.**

"Michigan ranks at or near the bottom third of states in a range of child well-being indicators, from low reading and math test scores to rising abuse and neglect rates to the sixth-highest rate of children living in high-poverty neighborhoods in the country," said Gillard. "For this to turn around, we desperately need informed office-seekers to hear from the kids and families they want to serve and to understand there are strong policy solutions in each of these areas."

Michigan's Children is the only statewide, independent voice working to ensure that public policies are made in the best interest of children, from cradle to career, and their families.



MichiganWorks! SouthEast Adult Education assists students with High School Equivalency (GED, HiSet, TASC, etc.), workforce credentialing, Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language through several locations spread across the Jackson-Ann Arbor-Adrian and surrounding area to support these educational endeavors.



The Lenawee Intermediate School District TECH Center is a county-wide, collaborative facility that provides Lenawee County students the opportunity for career and technical education programs. There are over two dozen programs for students to explore careers – each with an eye on growing industries and available jobs. Certified instructors with on-the-job experience teach classes with passion and real-world knowledge. Classes are a combination of academics and hands-on, project-based learning that give students the knowledge and experience they need to take to their first job, college, or their future.



**Michigan Association
of Community and
Adult Education**

For over 30 years, the Michigan Association of Adult & Community Education (MACAE), has represented the administrators, teachers and supporters of Community Education in the State of Michigan. MACAE believes in building resilient communities around strong, adult, alternative and community education programming. We provide professional development resources, networking opportunities and legislative awareness to support practitioners. We ensure that our program participants will be taught, trained and tooled for success in the 21st century!