



May 8, 2020

Dear Rep. Stevens:

Over the past several weeks, we, Michigan's Children, have relayed a wide range of information, policy recommendations and constituent feedback regarding issues impacting Michigan children, youth and families during this difficult time. We greatly appreciate your consideration. We have identified specific issues that reflect your positions, expertise, and communications we've had with your staff, and we would like to further discuss your willingness and ability to champion these priorities on behalf of our state's most vulnerable children, youth and families in future federal COVID response legislation:

### **Support Parent Skill Building and Family Literacy**

Specific resources are necessary for maintenance and expansion of adult education and family literacy programs through WIOA and federal CTE programs. Parents participating in or eligible for adult basic education, GED and other high school completion programs are most adversely affected in the current crisis because they lack key foundational literacy skills and the educational attainment to leverage new resources in these changing times. Any decrease in funding would leave over 25,000 adults and families without the educational skills to succeed and fill high-need, in-demand jobs.

### **Support Technology Investments for Families**

Back initiatives like those being put forth in the Closing the Homework Gap Through Mobile Hotspots Act. These technology investments should help increase short- and longer-term capacity to expand access wherever possible; they must support access for all family members, including adult learners and other home-based service provision; and support local innovations and explore scaling and expansion.

### **Additional Education Investment for Michigan Students Who Need the Most Support**

Some students have to catch up with peers who even before the crisis were better-positioned to take advantage of online learning and learning resources in their homes and communities. Due to the many pressures facing state appropriators and local districts, Michigan will likely not be able to provide high-quality supports to learners most at risk of falling behind without dedicated, additional federal resources for the following:

- Afterschool and summer learning opportunities through 21st Century Community Learning Centers.
- Access to physical and mental health supports and integrated student supports through ESSA Title IV.
- IDEA Part C *Early On* services for infants and toddlers.
- Educational and postsecondary transition services for youth with IEPs or 504 plans through IDEA and WIOA.
- Coordination with other agencies including students experiencing foster care, homelessness, and juvenile justice including through McKinney Vento, other titles, and appropriate JJ sources through Health and Human Services titles.

### **Direct Financial Supports for State and Local Governments**

Michigan, like other states, is facing significant revenue challenges due to this crisis. Critical

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Critical public services, and supports for those services that go to nonprofits and other agencies can't continue without strong state and local governments to support them.

Thank you for your service for the children, youth, and families of Michigan, we look forward to working together.

Regards,

Matt Gillard  
President & CEO