



Public Policy in the Best Interest of Children, Youth and Families

Michigan's Children's FY2021-22 Policy Priorities – Hope for a New Day

Dear Friends,

As we continue to navigate the global pandemic and related economic and emotional struggles that have impacted so many, we begin the 2021-22 legislative session committed to keeping up front the critical needs of our state's children, youth and families. Focused on closing equity gaps and improving the odds for all of our kids and families, we resolve to unite together - engaging policymakers and our advocate partners – to serve the interest of the greater good.

We have a new president and administration in Washington, D.C., new faces in Congress, and a crop of new legislators in Lansing. As we seek solutions for improving policies, making investments and garnering better outcomes, we will push for bipartisan action to create a brighter future for our state. Michigan's children, youth and families don't have highly paid lobbyists or "super PACs" looking out for their best interests in Lansing or in Washington, but they do have us. And you.

To involve you and Michigan's elected officials in this vital work, we've outlined our recommendations in this second iteration of our **Policy Playbook for Michigan's Children**. The enclosed policy priorities have been driven by research and best practice, but more, by the stories told to us at dozens of youth- and family- led candidate forums, KidSpeak and FamilySpeak events, and dozens of other training and outreach opportunities. We need your help sharing more stories and making more aspirational asks of our elected officials in this legislative session.

While these policy priorities are infused by the lived experiences of people across Michigan, they have also been evaluated against our core policy principles (*detailed on the previous page*). They are – and we believe – that the Public Policy in the Best Interest of Children, Youth and Families must be based on: Closing equity gaps, growing healthy minds; listening to youth and families; making government work; supporting professionals who work with kids and families; and building on progress made. To learn more about how we are fighting for children, youth and families this legislative session, please visit our website at www.michiganschildren.org.

Sincerely, Matthew Gillard, President & CEO