



## **Statement from Matt Gillard on the Governor's Announcement of the New MiLEAP Department**

July 12, 2023

Contact: Teri Banas, (517) 256-0174,  
teri@michiganschildren

LANSING – Michigan's Children President & CEO Matt Gillard said the Governor's announced plans to create a new state department, the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential, is a positive step for improving outcomes in core priority areas that Michigan's Children has identified as needing greater attention.

"The announcement recognizes that preparing oneself for an ever-changing future requires lifelong learning. Bravo to the Administration for taking that on," Gillard said. "While early childhood education prepares students for K-12 learning, and post-secondary education propels young adults toward skills necessary for self-sufficiency, lifelong learning and literacy skill development are needed to prepare families and individuals for workplace challenges.

"We all know that there is a continuum of learning that takes place or should take place over a person's lifetime. This new initiative suggests that the state government understands that each stage of a child's and adult's education deserves attention," Gillard added.

"We are hopeful that this recognition – and the resources that should follow – will focus on what all Michigan children and families require for a better future. Far too many people have been left behind in our state

economy because the challenges they face aren't being tended to. We must try new ways to develop the potential of all Michigan learners.

He continued:

“Michigan’s Children stands ready to offer its assistance in making sure that happens because we believe in our people, in our future. We will keep a close eye on how the details of the Governor’s plan evolves, and speak out when appropriate. We’re particularly interested in learning, for example, how related departments, such as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Department of Education, will align and work together with the new department.

“Much effort is needed for people to work together at the department level, and across both sides of the Legislature when it comes time to appropriate funding. For now, we’re excited to see a fresh, new look at reimagining education for all Michigan learners.”