



## Capitol Corner An ECIC Legislative Update June 16, 2008

### **K-12 School Aid Budget Moves from House to Conference Committee**

**House Votes:** On Tuesday, June 10, 2008 the full House voted to pass their version of the K-12 budget ([SB 1107](#)). The vote was 61-48, the split was mainly along party lines, with [Rep. LeBlanc](#) (D-Westland) joining the Republicans in voting “no” and Republican Representatives [Gaffney](#) (R-Grosse Pointe Farms) [Hune](#) (R-Hamburg), [Marleau](#) (R-Lake Orion), [Rocca](#) (R-Sterling Heights) and [Ward](#) (R-Brighton) voting “yes.”

The House version comes in at \$13.4 billion and includes a \$114.8 million increase in foundation allowances to schools. The per pupil foundation grant funding formula will give every district an increase of at least \$55 per pupil to as high as \$110 per pupil. The total increase over the current fiscal year’s K-12 School Aid budget is \$517.6 million. The budget as passed by the House spends \$34.3 million more than expected revenue in the School Aid budget.

**Early Childhood Increases:** The budget contains several increases in funding for early education, including \$5 million for maintenance and expansion of Great Start Collaboratives (Sec. 32b) for a total of \$6.75 million; \$1.5 million for a new program to create innovative programs that can be replicated statewide and focus on improving the quality of early learning settings (Sec. 32h); and increases funding for the Great Start Readiness Program by a total of \$27,457,900 to allow over 7000 more children an opportunity to attend pre-school for a total of \$121,287,000.

The Great Start Readiness Program (currently named the Michigan School Readiness Program) is split between grants to school districts (Sec. 32d) and competitive grants (Sec. 32i) to non-district pre-school programs. The House version increases district grants funding by \$25 million for at total of \$106.2 million to increase the number of four year olds served. This increase would allow 6470 more children to attend pre-school and would raise the per pupil amount from \$3400 to \$3500. The House version also increases funding for the competitive grants by \$2.4 million to approximately \$15.1 million to serve an additional 588 children and increase the per pupil amount form \$3,400 to \$3,500.

The budget contains several other early childhood increases including an additional \$2.5 million in grants for community collaboratives in the 0-3 secondary prevention program. The budget would also appropriate \$2 million for a new foreign language immersion grant program for districts with Great Start Readiness programs to receive \$500 per pupil to start new language immersion programs.

The bill also contains provisions on full-day kindergarten, such that any schools that have not implemented full-day kindergarten by 2009-2010 will not receive full foundation funding allowances.

The budget contains \$32 million for the Governor's proposed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Fund for start-up and facilities grants to districts to establish smaller high schools. It contains \$2 million increased funding for adolescent health centers. The House version increases special education payment funding by \$33.5 million to \$1 billion to reflect estimated costs associated with educating special education students.

**Senate Rejects House Version:** On Wednesday, June 11, 2008, as expected, the Senate voted to send the K-12 budget to conference committee on a 16 to 22 vote on concurrence with the House version. As in the House the final vote was mostly along party lines, with the exception of [Sen. Wayne Kuipers](#) (R-Holland) voting "yes" with the Democrats, and [Sen. Glenn Anderson](#) (D-Westland) and [Sen. Mickey Switalski](#) (D-Roseville) voting "no" with the Republicans to not concur with the House version of SB 1107.

**Conference Committee Named:** On Thursday, June 12, 2008 the Senate and House both named their representatives to the conference committee where the difference in the two versions of the budget will be worked out. The Senate named [Sen. Ron Jelinek](#) (R-Three Oaks), [Sen. Cameron Brown](#) (R-Sturgis), and [Sen. Mickey Switalski](#) (D-Roseville). The House named [Rep. Matt Gillard](#) (D-Alpena), [Rep. George Cushingberry](#) (D-Detroit) and [Rep. Bruce Caswell](#) (R-Hillsdale) to the conference committee. It takes two affirmative votes from each chamber's members to approval a conference committee report.

**Next Step:** The next step in the budget process is the setting of targets for each of the budget bills. This is done by the Governor and Legislative Leaders. Once targets are set, the conference committee chairs will start to draft the final versions of their budgets. Legislative leaders are still aiming to have the budgets completed by the end of June.

### **Michigan In Bottom Half for Children's Well Being**

While life has improved for Michigan's children, the state ranks 27th in the nation for youth well-being according to a recent report by Kids Count. The 2008 Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well-Being showed that Michigan while the state is improving in some areas, it's lacking in others.

According to the report, rates of teen pregnancy, dropouts and teen deaths have

improved. However, the percentage of children living with parents without secure jobs and in poverty has increased. And while the infant mortality rate has improved, the state still ranks 37th nationally in this area. The state ranked 33rd for the “tough on kids” focus of our legal system. We have a higher rate of incarceration for our youth than the national average. In Michigan, every 137 out of 100,000 youth ages 10 to 15 are incarcerated where nationally, the number is 125 per every 100,000.

Particularly concerning is the overrepresentation of minorities in juvenile facilities or prison. There are currently three minority youths incarcerated for every one white youth.