



News Release

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Discussions Begin with 21 New Districts To Build Partnership Agreements *33 Schools Exit Priority School Status*

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LANSING – The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) will be entering into discussions with 21 new school districts to develop Partnership Agreements with the goal of improving achievement levels at these struggling schools in Michigan.

“These will be positive, yet pressing, conversations with the leaders of these districts to get their struggling schools back on track,” Whiston said. “We want to provide as many local and state-level partners as possible to help students in these schools be successful.”

This is the third group of districts to be offered Partnership Agreements, with the goal of improving achievement levels at their struggling schools.

Whiston said that the work being done in the current Partnership Districts has laid the foundation for stronger schools, stronger educators, and greater success by the students – helping Michigan become a Top 10 education state in 10 years.

“It’s been encouraging to watch districts making progress,” Whiston said. “What we’ve seen in the first Partnership Districts exhibits the positive opportunity to work together under the leadership of the local superintendent and the local board of education toward improving student achievement and outcomes.”

As a result of improving academic achievement, MDE is removing 33 schools from the list of identified Priority Schools from previous years. Through the diligent work of the educators and students in those schools, test scores have improved and will be expected to continue on their positive trends.

“Schools are identifying the needs of their teachers and students, developing strategies to address those needs, and showing progress,” Whiston said. “The focus on improvement and plans being implemented through our Top 10 in 10 work are beginning to show positive results. They need more time to build from here.”

The 21 new Partnership Districts were identified for Partnership District discussions based on having Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools identified in their districts. Under the state's plan to implement the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), struggling schools are identified as either Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools; Targeted Support and Improvement Schools (TSI); or Additional Targeted Support (ATS) schools.

Approved by the U.S. Department of Education on November 28, 2017, this is the first time these identifications have been made, using Michigan's ESSA School Accountability system.

State Superintendent Brian Whiston will be arranging initial Partnership District meetings with the following traditional school districts and Public School Academies (PSA):

- Baldwin Community Schools
- Detroit Delta Prep Academy for Social Justice (PSA) – Detroit
- Detroit Leadership Academy (PSA) – Detroit
- Detroit Public Safety Academy (PSA) – Detroit
- Ecorse Public Schools
- El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz Academy (PSA) – Lansing
- Flint School District
- Frederick Douglass International Academy (PSA) – Oak Park
- GEE Edmonson Academy (PSA) – Detroit
- Genesee STEM Academy (PSA) – Flint
- Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Great Lakes Academy (PSA) – Pontiac
- Joy Preparatory Academy (PSA) – Detroit
- Insight School of Michigan (PSA) – Lansing
- Macomb Montessori Academy (PSA) – Warren
- Muskegon Public Schools
- Pathways Academy (PSA) – Detroit
- Saginaw Preparatory Academy (PSA) – Saginaw
- Sarah J. Webber Media Arts Academy (PSA) – Pontiac
- Southwest Detroit Community School (PSA) – Detroit
- William C. Abney Academy Elementary (PSA) – Grand Rapids

Whiston said this is a positive opportunity to work together under the leadership of the local superintendent and the local board of education to improve student achievement and outcomes, with an explicit and detailed understanding between all partners.

Currently, there are 16 Partnership Districts in Michigan. Two of those districts will have additional schools added to their Partnership Agreements, based on the same criteria as the schools in the 21 new districts. Detroit Public Schools Community District will be adding 15 schools to its current Partnership Agreement; and River Rouge School District will be adding one school.

Next Steps

Under a Partnership Agreement, each local district remains in total control of its schools with support from MDE and partners, Whiston said. Each agreement includes 18- and 36-month accountability timelines when they will be evaluated on the progress toward their goals.

“This has been a remarkable experience with the current Partnership Districts, and helping them start implementing their improvement strategies,” Whiston said. “We look forward to working with the 21 new districts to help them build their Partnership Agreements.”

MDE will be providing resources for the districts to utilize in identifying their needs and developing a plan to improve. These include: needs assessment tools, evidence-based practices, draft Partnership Agreement, lists of potential partners and contact information.

Under a Partnership Agreement, the local district remains in total control of its schools with support from MDE and partners. The districts have 90 days to reach an agreement. If no agreement is reached, the next level of accountability would be implemented.

With multiple partners – including local board members, the intermediate school district, education organizations, business, community members, parents, higher education organizations, foundations – committing to be actively engaged, work will ensue to identify a plan of supports and interventions that will improve student outcomes.

Academic outcomes are a primary focus, and other whole child outcomes that can impede improved academics like health, nutrition, behavior, social/emotional issues also will be addressed.

The Michigan Department of Education works intensely with the Partnership Districts, with each district having been assigned a liaison from MDE. This person is responsible for supporting the district in implementation of its agreement; helping resolve problems and breaking down barriers; facilitating discussions and meetings; and ensuring that the Partnership District receives maximum support for success from MDE, as well as from the partners and other state agencies.

This Partnership Model puts a broad spectrum of technical expertise and resources in the hands of the school district and allows local districts to use community and state-level support systems to drive improvement and self-accountability. The ultimate benefit would be to regenerate a struggling school to be one that helps students and teachers achieve at higher levels.

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New Partnership Districts

District Name	Building Name	Identification
Baldwin Community Schools	Baldwin Junior High School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy for Social Justice	Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy for Social Justice	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Detroit Leadership Academy	Detroit Leadership Academy Middle/High	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Detroit Public Safety Academy	Detroit Public Safety Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Ecorse Public Schools	Ecorse Community High School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz Academy	El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Flint, School District of the City of	Accelerated Learning Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Holmes STEM Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Northwestern High School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Potter School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Frederick Douglass International Academy	Frederick Douglass International Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
GEE Edmonson Academy	GEE Edmonson Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Genesee STEM Academy	Genesee STEM Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Grand Rapids Public Schools	Alger Middle School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Great Lakes Academy	Great Lakes Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Insight School of Michigan	Insight School of Michigan	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Joy Preparatory Academy	Joy Preparatory Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Macomb Montessori Academy	Macomb Montessori Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Muskegon, Public Schools of the City of	Muskegon Community Education Center	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Pathways Academy	Pathways Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Saginaw Preparatory Academy	Saginaw Preparatory Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Sarah J. Webber Media Arts Academy	Sarah J. Webber Media Arts Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
Southwest Detroit Community School	Southwest Detroit Community School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
William C. Abney Academy	William C. Abney Academy Elementary	Comprehensive Support and Intervention

Current Partnership Districts Adding Schools

District Name	Building Name	Identification
Detroit Public Schools Community District	A. Philip Randolph Technical High School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Brenda Scott Academy for Theatre Arts	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Brown, Ronald Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Carleton Elementary School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Douglass Academy for Young Men	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Eastside Detroit Lions Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Fisher Magnet Lower Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Gardner Elementary School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Garvey Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Mark Twain Elementary-Middle School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Medicine and Community Health Academy at Cody	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Nichols Elementary-Middle School	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Osborn College Preparatory Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Osborn Evergreen Academy of Design and Alternative Energy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
	Robeson Academy, Malcolm X Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention
River Rouge, School District of the City of	CB Sabbath 6-8 Preparatory Academy	Comprehensive Support and Intervention

Schools Exiting Priority School Status

District Name	Building Name	Cohort
Academy of Warren	Academy of Warren	2015
Battle Creek Public Schools	Verona Elementary School	2012
Beecher Community School District	Beecher High School	2010
Benton Harbor Charter School Academy	Benton Harbor Charter School Academy	2015
Bradford Academy	Bradford Academy	2016
Crescent Academy	Crescent Academy Middle School	2016
Detroit Community Schools	Detroit Community Schools - High School	2016
Detroit Public Schools Community District	Bagley Elementary School	2015
	Carver Elementary-Middle School	2016
	Detroit City West Side Academy for Leadership Development	2011
	Edison Elementary School	2015
Escuela Avancemos	Escuela Avancemos	2016
Flint, School District of the City of	Southwestern Classical Academy	2014
George Washington Carver Academy	George Washington Carver Elementary School	2016
George Washington Carver Academy	George Washington Carver Middle School	2016
Grand Rapids Public Schools	Burton Elementary School	2015
	Ken-O-Sha Park Elementary	2014
Hazel Park, School District of the City of	Invest Roosevelt Alternative High School	2015
L'Anse Creuse Public Schools	DiAnne M. Pellerin Center	2016
Marvin L. Winans Academy of Performing Arts	Marvin L. Winans Academy - Elementary	2014
Multicultural Academy	Multicultural Academy	2015
Muskegon, Public Schools of the City of	Nelson Elementary School	2014
Oak Park, School District of the City of	Oak Park Preparatory Academy	2015
Plymouth Educational Center Charter School	Plymouth Educational Center	2016
Port Huron Area School District	Cleveland Elementary School	2015
Redford Union Schools, District No. 1	Beech Elementary	2014
Saginaw, School District of the City of	Arthur Hill High School	2014
Southgate Community School District	Asher School	2015
Taylor School District	Myers Elementary School	2015
Timbuktu Academy	Timbuktu Academy	2016
Van Dyke Public Schools	Lincoln Elementary School	2014
Westwood Heights Schools	Hamady Middle School	2015
Ypsilanti Community Schools	Ypsilanti Community Middle School	2014