



# THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

## GOV. GRETCHEN WHITMER IS A STAUNCH DEFENDER OF PUBLIC EDUCATION



and treats educators as a true partner in ensuring students have the opportunities they need to succeed. In her first term, she's proved this time and again by:

- Advocating for back-to-back record-breaking budgets that invest in our students, our schools and our profession, including funds to help address student mental health, the educator shortage, retirement funding and special education.
- Vetoing countless partisan attacks on public education, including the DeVos-backed voucher scheme to send public money to private schools.
- Ensuring school employees continued to be paid during the pandemic and prioritizing us to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.



Now, Gov. Whitmer needs our help. In November, we must re-elect her — and elect other friends of public education at all levels of government.



**To win in November,  
we need your help!**

Pro-public education candidates like Gretchen Whitmer need your support to win on Nov. 8.

**Get involved today!**



# IS ON THE NOV. 8 BALLOT

## ELECTION 2022 PRIORITIES

### RE-ELECT THE TOP OF THE TICKET

- Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II
- Attorney General Dana Nessel
- Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson

### ELECT MORE ALLIES TO CONGRESS AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE!

- New, fairer legislative maps provide us a chance to elect pro-public education majorities in Congress, the state Senate and state House.

### KEEP A FRIEND ON THE MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT AND ADD ANOTHER!

- Re-elect Justice Richard Bernstein
- Elect Kyra Harris Bolden for Justice

### ELECT FRIENDS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD!

- Fighting back against divisive attacks at school board meetings means electing allies to the school board who can remain strong and support educators and students.

## JOIN THE FIGHT

MEA  [Votes.org](https://MEAVotes.org)



Visit [MEAVotes.org](https://MEAVotes.org) to donate to MEA-PAC, get information on Voting From Home, and find MEA recommended candidates in your area using our Online Voter Guide.



Go to [GretchenWhitmer.com/take-action](https://GretchenWhitmer.com/take-action) and join the Educators for Whitmer coalition.



Volunteer with the ONE Campaign for Michigan by visiting [mobilize.us/midems](https://mobilize.us/midems).

## Latest on DeVos Voucher Scheme

As of press time, the DeVos-backed “Let MI Kids Learn” voucher scheme had not yet filed their signatures to put forward their citizens’ initiative. The measure would funnel public money to private schools through “scholarships” raised through budget-draining tax credits for wealthy donors like DeVos and her allies.

The campaign missed a June 1 deadline to make the November 2022 ballot — but their intention has never been for voters to have their say on this. Their plan is to have the Legislature approve the measure — without Gov. Whitmer being able to veto the scheme, as she previously did.

MEA and our allies stand ready to fight this deceptive measure every step of the way, especially this fall when the Legislature considers the initiative once signatures are filed. For updates and more information about how you can help stop the latest DeVos voucher scheme, stay tuned to our “For MI Kids, For Our Schools” coalition website at [ForMIKids.com](https://ForMIKids.com).





# RECORD-BREAKING EDUCATION BUDGET FRIENDS OF PUBLIC ED MATTERS

In the early hours of July 1, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and legislative leaders came to an agreement on School Aid and Higher Education budgets for the coming school year that continue to break records for funding opportunities for Michigan students and educators.

With constant advocacy from Gov. Whitmer starting with her February budget proposal, the final budget spends a record \$19.6 billion on PreK-12 schools, \$530 million on community colleges and \$3.5 billion on universities, all without raising taxes.

“MEA praises Gov. Whitmer and legislative leaders for coming together for the sake of our kids, parents and educators and passing this historic investment in public education,” said MEA President Paula Herbart. “This budget agreement is a great step forward in helping to address the challenges facing our schools and giving every child an opportunity to succeed.”

The priorities outlined in the budget show why electing friends of public education like Gov. Whitmer is so critical for students and educators alike.



## TO WIN IN NOVEMBER, WE NEED YOUR HELP! GET INVOLVED TODAY!

# BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS WHY ELECTING

## School Aid Budget

- **Foundation Allowance** — \$450 increase, bringing the per-student funding to \$9,150.
- **Special Education** — \$300 million increase to special education as part of a new formula, under which districts would get reimbursed 28.6 percent of their special education costs as they do now plus additional funding equal to 75 percent of the base per pupil foundation allowance.
- **At Risk** — \$223 million more for economically disadvantaged students.
- **Educator Recruitment** — \$305 million for a Future Educators Fellowship, including \$25 million for this year and \$280 million over future years to provide up to \$10,000 grants for students in teacher prep programs who commit to being teachers in Michigan after graduation.
- **Student Teacher Stipends** — \$50 million to providing up to \$9,600 per semester to help with tuition, living expenses, childcare, or any other cost associated with student teaching.
- **“Grow Your Own” Programs** — \$175 million for districts to recruit and train prospective educators from the ranks of paraprofessionals and other support staff.
- **Retirement Investments** — \$1 billion additional for the Michigan Public Schools Employees Retirement System (MPERS), plus another \$425 million into a MPERS retirement reserve fund, helping to pay down unfunded liabilities and secure the retirement system for current and future retirees.
- **Mental Health** — \$150 million for districts to hire additional staff; implement screening tools; provide school personnel with consultations with behavioral health clinicians; and other mental health services. In addition, dedicated funds for school based health centers, ISD mental health grants, and statewide training and screening programs.
- **School Safety** — \$150 million for districts to fund coordination with law enforcement; training on threat assessment, threat response, crisis communication, and responsible gun ownership; safety infrastructure; professional development for school resource officers; and other school safety services or products. Plus \$25 million for matching funds for districts to hire more school resource officers.

## Higher Education

- **Operations** — Up to a 5% ongoing increase for community college and university operations.
- **Michigan Reconnect** — \$55 million for Gov. Whitmer’s program that provides free tuition to Michiganders 25 or older who have a high school diploma and want to pursue an associate’s or technical degree.
- **Community College Training** — Dedicated funding for community colleges to support summer education programs, boost adult enrollment, and provide short-term skills training and certification programs.
- **Retirement** — \$300 million payment will be made to reduce certain annual retirement liabilities by nearly half, which allows participating universities to redirect these resources for other operational needs.
- **Scholarships** — \$250 million set aside to establish the new Postsecondary Scholarship Fund.

Aside from the record funding — achieved without raising taxes — attempts by Republican lawmakers to include anti-transgender student language in the budget was thwarted by Whitmer and her allies. This reinforces — along with her consistent vetoes of divisive, partisan bills meant to divide our communities — the importance of having a friend of Michigan students and educators in the governor’s office.

As part of the budget agreement, the governor and lawmakers left about \$3.5 billion in school funding on the table to be earmarked later. MEA encouraged the Legislature to continue funding critical priorities with those funds.

“We urge lawmakers to maintain the spirit of bipartisanship and work with the governor to use the remaining funds to tackle the most urgent needs facing local schools,” Herbart said. “We must solve the educator shortage and provide incentives to keep good educators on the job; we must address the mental health crisis facing our students; and we must direct extra support to the students who need it most — and we must do it now.”

**For more budget details,  
visit [mea.org/legislation](http://mea.org/legislation).**

# Beyond the Governor's Race

## Key Statewide Races Highlight Public Ed Allies

Gov. Whitmer isn't the only champion for education on the ballot this November. Results in these other statewide races will be critical for students and educators alike.



### Attorney General Dana Nessel

For the first time in decades, there's an ally of public education in the Michigan Attorney General's office — this fall we need to return **Dana Nessel** for another term.

Nessel's work with MEA and NEA on addressing the school-to-prison pipeline and championing restorative justice practices has been a model for other states, including jointly writing a Detroit Free Press column on racial disparities in school discipline with NEA President Becky Pringle.

She has committed her office to doing everything possible in the wake of the tragic Oxford High School shooting to keep students and educators safe in our schools.

And, without fail, Nessel keeps an open line of communication about the needs of public education between our attorney general and educators. Re-electing Dana Nessel in November will continue all this important work.



### Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson

Defending democracy in our state is essential — and no one has been more at the forefront of that fight than Secretary of State **Jocelyn Benson**.

From successfully administering the 2020 election during a pandemic and then defending it against a litany of unsubstantiated and debunked challenges, Benson has proven that Michigan's elections are both secure and accurate.

She has fought efforts to restrict voting access pushed by Republican lawmakers over the past two years, remaining committed to ensuring everyone in Michigan can easily and securely cast their ballot so their voices are heard in our elections.

Benson is committed to working with educators to help a new generation of Michigan voters learn about and participate in our democracy. We must return her to the Secretary of State's office for a second term this fall.



### Bernstein and Harris Bolden for Supreme Court

From employee rights to gun safety and beyond, many critical issues wind up before the Michigan Supreme Court. It's important that students and educators have their fair day in court. That's why MEA is recommending the re-election of Justice **Richard Bernstein** and the election of **Kyra Harris Bolden** to our state's highest court.

Bernstein has been a fair and impartial voice on the court for eight years, including siding with educators on the 3% case that returned millions of illegally withheld dollars back to MEA members in 2017, as well as ruling that schools can enact their own rules about gun-free zones in their buildings in a 2018 decision.

As both a state representative and a lawyer, Harris Bolden has a long record of supporting public education, educators and students. Electing her as the first Black woman to the bench will be an important step to ensuring the Michigan Supreme Court reflects the diversity of our state.

**THIS NOVEMBER, WE MUST ELECT FRIENDS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.**



## Statewide Education Boards

The State Board of Education has become a key battleground in the divisive partisan fights that attempt to pit parents against educators on issues from public health to curriculum to the freedom to read.

One of the key voices for educators and students has been Board Vice President **Pamela Pugh** — re-electing her this fall is critical, along with electing another passionate voice for educators, music education professor **Mitchell Robinson**.

In addition, statewide elections are happening this fall for MEA recommended candidates for the three statewide university boards: **Renee Knake Jefferson** and **Dennis Denno** for the Michigan State University Board of Trustees; **Michael Behm** and **Kathy White** for the University of Michigan Board of Regents; and **Marilyn Kelly** and **Danielle Atkinson** for the Wayne State University Board of Governors.

# From Congress to School Boards, Pro-Education Candidates Need Our Support

With new legislative maps drawn by Michigan's Independent Citizen's Redistricting Commission, Michigan has a great opportunity to elect pro-public education majorities in Congress, the State Senate and the State House. Fairer maps have led to a broad set of competitive races all over the state.

At the local level, school board races matter now more than ever, with board meetings often serving as the flashpoints for partisan political attacks on educators, districts and board members alike. MEA and our local associations play a key role in supporting candidates who will put our students ahead of partisan politics in local school board discussions.

But MEA can't be successful in electing friends of public education without support from members like you.

Visit [MEAVotes.org](https://meavotes.org) to find local recommended candidates for these races — they need both your vote and your time as a volunteer.

Decisions about which candidates to recommend are made by local MEA members participating in Screening & Recommendation committees. That work will continue throughout August and September.

If you are interested in participating in S&R committees or getting involved in local Congressional, Legislative or School Board races, contact your local MEA UniServ office or MEA Public Affairs at [publicaffairs@mea.org](mailto:publicaffairs@mea.org) or 517-337-5508.



[MEAVotes.org](https://meavotes.org)

