

# CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF JULY 5, 2021



McAlvey Merchant  
& ASSOCIATES

## WHITMER SIGNS \$4.4 BILLION K-12 SUPPLEMENTAL

Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed a supplemental spending bill for Michigan's K-12 schools into law on Wednesday, significantly increasing funding and per-pupil equity for the state's K-12 schools and laying the foundation for the completion of the rest of the state budget.

The funding approved by the Legislature last week includes a 10 percent increase in the per-pupil funding for students from \$8,100 to \$8,700. The per-pupil funding brings all districts to the same basic per-pupil foundation grant, which has been a goal for lawmakers and education groups for decades.

House Bill 4421, signed by Whitmer on Wednesday, releases \$4.4 billion in federal coronavirus relief aid. As Public Act 47 taking effect Wednesday, the bill holds \$3.35 billion from the American Rescue Plan Act, and \$840.1 million from the CARES Act II.

“We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make the type of investment in our schools that will put Michigan students and educators first as they head into the next school year. Our actions today prove that Republicans and Democrats in Lansing can work together to enact budgets that are laser-focused on helping Michigan take full advantage of the unprecedented opportunity we have right now to make transformative investments in our schools that will have positive impacts for generations,” Whitmer said.

## LEGISLATURE SENDS SCHOOL BUDGET TO WHITMER

The Legislature approved a \$17.1 billion K-12 funding plan last week, right before their self-imposed July 1 deadline, with bipartisan support.

Lawmakers called the bill the “largest investment in education” in Michigan’s history.

The proposal garnered support in both houses with the Senate approving funding 33-1 before adjourning until July 15, and the house approving the funding 106-3. The plan included bill 4421 which Gov. Whitmer signed earlier this week, boosting the base per-pupil foundation allowance to \$8,700.

The final Senate-passed plan is close to a proposal backed last week by the House and Gov. Whitmer. With the Senate version including \$240 million for school psychologists, counselors, social workers, and nurses, \$155 million in reading scholarships, and \$168 million for Michigan’s Great Start Readiness Program.

As the July 1 deadline passed without a full budget, Whitmer said she was encouraged by the progress but disappointed the legislature adjourned without a full budget.

The House and Senate have until Oct. 1, when the state fiscal year begins, which means the House and Senate will continue working on the budget after the Senate returns from its summer break, with decisions needing to be made on how to distribute billions of dollars in federal stimulus money.

## **NESSSEL ACCEPTS REPUBLICAN REQUEST TO INVESTIGATE PEOPLE PROFITING FROM ELECTION CONSPIRACIES**

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel's office confirmed Thursday that the department will investigate individuals who gain publicity or profit by spreading misleading and false information about the 2020 election results.

The investigations come after the release of a Republican-led Senate Oversight Committee report that concluded that there was no evidence of fraud in the 2020 presidential election. The report also recommended that the attorney general consider investigating individuals who have used the misinformation "to raise money or publicity for their own ends."

"After reviewing the report in full, the department has accepted Sen. McBroom and the committee's request to investigate. (The Department of State Police) is also assisting in the matter," said Attorney General spokesperson Lynsey Mukomel.

Although the report did not specify individuals to be investigated, it did cite former state Sen. Patrick Colbeck and Portage attorney Matthew DePerno, who was retained by an Antrim County resident for a lawsuit against the county. Colbeck had made claims in testimony about the integrity of election equipment. The report found both individual's claims to be "demonstrably false" and "based on misleading information and illogical conclusions."

In addition, several online fundraisers have collected money by pushing the idea that the presidential election was wrongfully stolen from Donald Trump.

Senate Oversight Committee Chair, Sen. Ed McBroom (R-Vulcan) said the investigation recommendation was made to the Department of Attorney General because the committee had taken the matter as far as it could.

## **SUPREME COURT DENIES REDISTRICTING DEADLINE EXTENSION**

The Michigan Supreme Court today denied a request from the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission for a deadline extension to propose and adopt new political maps for congressional and legislative districts.

The commission had proactively petitioned the court for new deadlines because of a six-month delay in the Census data, which is used to draw the new districts.

The court said it would not grant the request for a deadline extension.

In a concurring statement attached to the court's order, Justice Elizabeth Welch wrote that "through no fault of its own, the commission is in the unenviable position of undertaking its inaugural redistricting cycle without the full benefit of tabulated decennial census data."

Welch also wrote that granting the request would be premature before the redistricting commission actually misses the deadline and before there are any legal challenges brought against the commission. Writing that the court declines the "invitation to clothe the commission or the secretary of state with any lawsuit-proof vest."

The state Constitution requires the 13-member commission to propose new maps by Sept. 17 and requires at least 45 days for public comment on the proposed maps before adopting the maps by Nov. 1.

## **MM&A BRIEFS**

### **SCHUITMAKER NAMED NEW MPLP CO-DIRECTOR**

Former Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker, a Republican Legislator who represented parts of Allegan County from 2005-18, was named co-director of the Michigan Political Leadership Program, succeeding Susy Avery in 2022. Schuitmaker will be co-director with former Rep. Steve Tobocman. The two served together in the House from 2005-8.

### **LONGTIME LEGISLATIVE STAFFER AND LOBBYIST, JODY VANDERVEEN DIES**

Jody Vanderveen, a former staffer for the Michigan Senate and lobbyist who spent almost 40 years working in Lansing passed away on June 24 of pancreatic cancer. Vanderveen is survived by her husband Terry, also a former lobbyist in Michigan. She is also survived by her son, three stepsons, and two brothers.

## **CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS**

- July 11**      **Rep. Kelly Breen (D) - Breen on the Beach**  
Location: 11 a.m., Lakeshore Park, 601 S. Lake Dr., Novi
- July 12**      **U.S. Rep. John Moolenaar (R) for Congress**  
Location: 9 a.m., Bucks Run - 1559 South Chippewa, Mt. Pleasant
- Rep. Joe Tate (D) Leadership PAC**  
Location: 6 p.m., Norma G's, 14628 East Jefferson Ave., Detroit
- July 14**      **Rep. Christine Morse (D) - Summer Soiree**  
Location: 5:30 p.m., Texas Township Farmer's Market Pavilion,  
7110 West Q Ave., Kalamazoo
- July 16**      **Rep. John Cherry (D) Family BBQ**  
Location: 4:30 p.m., UAW Local 659 Pavilion, 4549 Van Slyke Road, Flint

**July 19**

**Rep. John Roth (R) Breakfast Club**

Location: 7:30 a.m., Cambria Hotel Traverse City,  
255 Munson Avenue US 31, Traverse City

**Michigan Republican Party Fundraiser**

Location: Washington, D.C., 6 p.m.

**July 22**

**Rep. John Damoose (R) Golf Outing**

Location: 9 a.m., Birchwood Farms, Golf and Country Club, Harbor Springs