

3/27/23

Dear Catholic School Families,

In my role as superintendent, I have the honor of representing all our Catholic schools on the state level. One of the ways I support our schools is by advocating for appropriate government policy. Last Thursday (March 23), I spent the day in Lansing discussing various policy matters that are relevant to our students, families, staff and faculty. In the morning, I spent time with other non-public school leaders and supporters listening to various speakers and guests, including Dr. Michael Rice, superintendent of public instruction in Michigan. In the afternoon, faith-based school advocates fanned out across the capitol to meet with representatives, senators and members of their staff. I spent the afternoon meeting with staff members from the offices of Representative Timothy Beson (96<sup>th</sup> District, portions of Bay County) and Senator Dayna Polehanki (District 5, parts of Wayne County). Senator Polehanki is the chair of the Education Committee.

During my conversations, I worked to ensure that these two elected officials are aware of the state budget and policy matters that are important for non-public schools, their students and families. A brief summary of some of the topics that were addressed is included below. More detailed information on these and other budget-related topics can be found at: [MANS, State Budget Priorities, FY 2023.pdf](#)

Student Teacher Stipend Program: Governor Gretchen Whitmer's proposed budget includes a student teacher stipend program that provides up to \$9,600 per semester. To earn the stipend, the student must student-teach in a public school. I encouraged the legislators to include future teachers who complete their student teaching in a non-public school in this program.

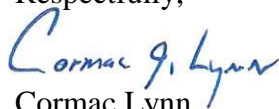
Michigan Future Educator Fellowship Program: This proposal provides up to \$10,000 per year for first-time degree seekers and career changers. The governor has eliminated subsequently teaching at a non-public school as an option for qualifying for the fellowship, which was allowed in the first year of this program. I urged the legislators to reinstate teaching at a non-public school as an option to be eligible for this program.

Universal Pre-K: Governor Whitmer's budget calls for expanding the state's Great Start to Readiness Program (GSRP) under her "Pre-K for All" proposal. This expansion includes funding to recruit, train and retain childcare professionals to offer preschool for all 4-year-olds, free to families. It should be clear that non-public school programs are qualified participants.

If you are interested in advocating for our students and Catholic education, please consider attending "coffee hours" hosted by your representative and/or senator to discuss these and other important topics. Sending a traditional letter and/or attending a future public policy day hosted by the Michigan Association of Non-public Schools (MANS) are also great opportunities to engage with legislators. I appreciate your assistance in ensuring that legislators across Mid-Michigan are aware of these important matters.

Thank you for choosing a Catholic school education for your child.

Respectfully,



Cormac Lynn

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