



PRESS STATEMENT  
JULY 8, 2024

**MICHIGAN'S EDUCATION BUDGET GROWS FOR STUDENTS THAT NEED THE MOST -  
More funds are needed for Michigan schools, instead of corporate giveaways that take  
funding from our youth**

Michigan Education Justice Coalition (MEJC), a fiscally sponsored 501(c)3 nonprofit, spent the last year fighting for increases in Michigan's budget for education. This included doubling dollars for English Language Learners, increasing funding for "at-risk" students and investing \$15 million in the majority black school districts in the state.

Parents, caregivers, youth, community leaders and others that are part of MEJC were thrilled to win the following big things for our communities in the School Aid Fund, the education budget covering pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. This includes:

- \$4 million to invest in Black majority school districts to support Black educator retention, participatory research on racial equity pilot projects focused on culturally relevant school communities and ending the school to prison pipeline.
- 26.2% increase in investment in English Language Learners to include things like more training for teachers.
- "At-risk" student funding increased by 8.7% which funds items such as literacy coaches, behavioral and restorative coaches, early literacy materials, home visits, attendance interventionists and more.

While these are HUGE wins for our community, they came with changes that deeply disappointed our communities including:

- A decrease of \$275 million for mental health and safety grants and a removal of the restriction that 50% must be used for mental health.
- No long term guarantee to districts to reduce their MPERS (education pension plan) payment, which would free up \$400-\$500 per student.

We're grateful to champions like Representative Regina Weiss, Senator Darrin Camilleri and Senator Sarah Anthony for getting these wins across the finish line.

In our dream world we would be spending this year's state budget pouring \$5 billion of new state revenue into our public schools and communities. We would have more money for special education, school facilities and transportation, and mental health.

Our budgets would be overflowing. Our legislators could have introduced and passed sweeping new tax increases for corporations. Our legislators could have diverted corporate income tax to transit and housing. Our legislators could have taxed the wealthiest Michiganders to fully fund our schools.

Instead, we sit here today dismayed that our legislature spent the last days of finalizing the budget fighting over teacher pension funding savings rather than raising new revenue. We're more dismayed that the legislature was also debating \$5 billion worth of corporate tax incentives while finalizing the budget. **We know the best economic policy to help Michigan grow involves fully funding our schools.**

**MEJC and our partners are committed to ensuring a supplemental budget to restore mental health funding for our schools and guarantee districts have a long term reduction in their payments to educator pension plan MPSERS.**

We're also coming back harder with our message "TAX THE RICH, FUND OUR SCHOOLS." We're exploring new bill packages to tax the wealthy for our schools and looking to run new revenue raising campaigns in 2025 and 2026 such as an increase to the income tax for millionaires.

**CONTACT:**

Trina Tocco  
Trina@miedjustice.org  
(269) 873-1000

*The [Michigan Education Justice Coalition](#) is a statewide network committed to advocating for equitable public education policies and funding to create safe and healthy learning environments. We envision a Michigan where public schools get the support they need, strengthening communities and making them better places to live for all of us.*