



# DESSERT

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School priorities match the values  
and needs of students, educators,  
and community members



# 5 LAYER CAKE



## Reviews from Michiganders

*"Emerging bilinguals need...an environment that has more support for them because just throwing them into an environment where English is being taught isn't a way that language is necessarily acquired for that student."*

*"Our district is the most diverse district in the state. And I think there's still a huge gap in meeting the needs of our multilingual learners and families who don't speak English and how we can make them feel like they belong into our community, when they feel removed because they don't understand the language."*

*"We currently have telephones that we use to translate. But that's not helping. It's hard to try to translate something when you're over the phone."*

### CHEF'S TIP

Layering flavors makes a stronger dish—bilingual programs, translation services, and culturally responsive support ensure multilingual students and families feel included and empowered.



## 5 LAYER CAKE:

### AN EMPOWERING SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS FOR LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE LEARNERS AND FAMILIES.

A holistic approach that supports and sustains student learning in their first languages through culturally informed approaches while students learn English. This system provides supports for students and families to engage in all parts of learning and the school community. In this system, students' linguistic backgrounds are seen as an academic strength and families feel they can participate in the school community in their home languages.

## INGREDIENTS

- ▶ All students can access high quality bilingual education programs.
- ▶ Professional development on bilingual learning for educators and staff.
- ▶ Linguistic and cultural diversity is supported across the education system.
- ▶ Special education and multilingual education services are coordinated.
- ▶ Translation services are provided in classroom learning and in communication with families.
- ▶ Multilingual educators and staff receive salary incentives.
- ▶ Multilingual, culturally competent community members are hired as student advocates.

## Cooking Instructions

1. Gather the best bilingual education programs for the local school and district context.
2. Ensure that programs meet linguistic and cultural diversity and cook each separately.
3. Frost each cake layer with coordinated student services providing translation for students and families whenever needed.
4. Fill in the gaps between layers with salary incentives for multilingual educators and staff.
5. Then add a final top layer of community members hired as student advocates to the top.
6. Cut and serve.





# ICE CREAM SUNDAE



## Reviews from Michiganders

"We're not all experts in autism or in emotional impairment; there's not enough support."

"We need better infrastructure and support for the safety of our students with disabilities"

"We need more training so we can provide that quality education to our special education students."

Students' language barriers are not disabilities."

### CHEF'S TIP

The right toppings make all the difference—special education students need individualized support, well-trained staff, and inclusive classrooms to succeed.

## ICE CREAM SUNDAE:

### A STRONG SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION.

Students with disabilities (including neurodivergent students) are fully included in classrooms, schools, districts, and state education opportunities. The system provides necessary accommodations, specialized services, and well-trained and well-paid educators and staff. Students learn in a welcoming environment where their unique needs are met, and they have opportunities to experience academic success, social inclusion, and all aspects of school life.

## INGREDIENTS

- ▶ More and better paid special education teachers and staff.
- ▶ High-quality inclusion classrooms with adequate staffing.
- ▶ Staff training on special education laws and procedures.
- ▶ Special education and multilingual education services are coordinated.
- ▶ Support programs for parents of students with disabilities.
- ▶ Early screening and linguistically informed screening for students.

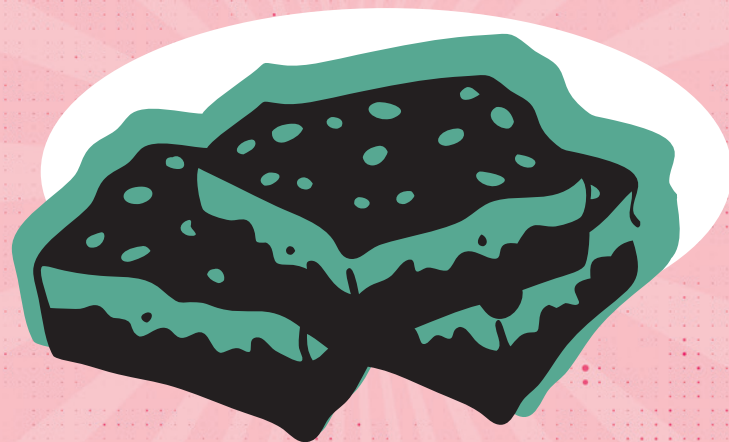
## Cooking Instructions

1. Recruit more and better paid special education teachers and staff.
2. Have teachers and staff put all ice cream sundae ingredients into high quality inclusion classrooms. Provide each student access to laws and procedures and help fill their dishes with resources like coordinated services, parent support, and early screenings.
3. Find a warm place to eat and enjoy.





# MAGIC BARS



A system that provides and coordinates various services that help students and their families overcome barriers to learning. These systems are designed to meet local needs and include services, such as medical, mental health, dental and vision care; tutoring; before and after school learning opportunities; childcare; parent education; and connections to community housing, clothing, nutrition, or job placement services.

## Reviews from Michiganders

*"[We] should have an integrated supports team within every [school]."*

*"We need to think about the academic, the social, emotional, and just kind of the overall wellbeing of the kids."*

*"We need to think about...basic needs and new parents need food for mother and the baby and access to things like affordable and stable housing."*

## MAGIC BARS:

### A STRONG SYSTEM OF INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES.

#### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ School-based medical clinics staffed by nurses and physician's assistants.
- ▶ Each school has a support team of specialists (social worker, psychologist, counselor, family resource coordinator) that reflects the community's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity.
  - ▶ All school specialists are well paid and supported.
  - ▶ School staff are diverse, trained in trauma-informed approaches and responsive to students' diverse cultures and identities.
  - ▶ School staff regularly conducts family-specific needs assessments and home visits.



### Cooking Instructions

1. Start by building and funding medical clinics in each school.
2. Fill each clinic with nurses and physicians' assistants to provide core medical services.
3. Layer on a diverse team of specialists (social worker, psychologist, counselor, family resource coordinator).
4. Generously support with well-paid and well-trained staff to coordinate services.
5. Bake, then proactively serve based on family-specific needs.

A balanced recipe brings out the best flavors—on-site healthcare, mental health services, and after-school programs remove barriers to learning and set students up for success.

**CHEF'S TIP**





# APPLE PIE



## Reviews from Michiganders

"We will start to build trust with families...by showing them that this is a place you want to be and that our school is a hub in our community. And so as their kids get older, families will feel more comfortable coming into schools."

"We need something where even the parents might be able to get tutored. Because a lot of times the parents can't help the kids with their homework because they don't know [how]. We need ways to just take care of the family as a whole."

### CHEF'S TIP

A pie is best when shared—schools that actively involve families in decision-making and provide accessible resources strengthen student learning and community trust.

## APPLE PIE:

### A ROBUST AND MULTIFACETED FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM.

A robust program of regular activities that help parents make decisions about their child's education and participate in important classroom, school, and district decisions. This system fosters open, two-way communication and collaboration, values diverse perspectives, and offers accessible resources. This system builds trust, strengthens home-school connections, and empowers families to support student learning and success.



### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ Family engagement coordinators at every school.
- ▶ Increased funding for family engagement activities and initiatives.
- ▶ Involvement between marginalized parent groups and school boards.
- ▶ Expand adult educational programs.

### Cooking Instructions

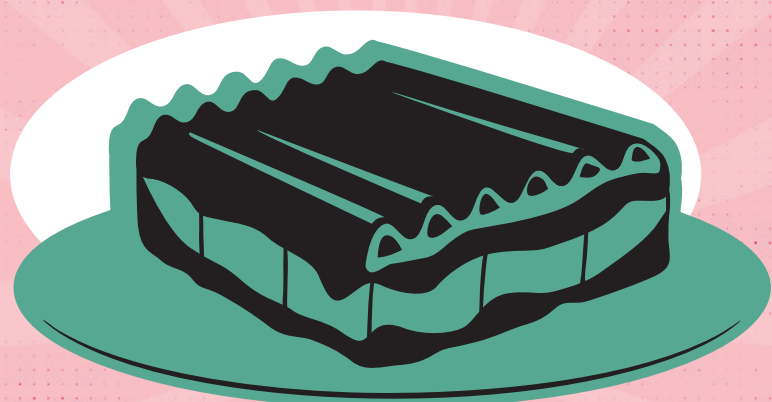
1. Hire a family engagement coordinator for every school.
2. Combine pie filling ingredients – funding, a full program of activities, and adult education – and sprinkle with sugar until evenly coated.
3. Bake by creating space for parent groups and school boards to interact in meaningful ways.
4. Cool for at least 3 hours.
5. Slice & serve with large helpings of trust.





Because Michigan is a geographically diverse state, education systems need to meet the needs of different types of communities. Some geographic areas serve a large number of families living in poverty or families with several different language needs. Rural communities have unique transportation and staffing challenges and sometimes lack the necessary resources and infrastructure available in other parts of the state. Regardless of where Michiganders live, all of our students deserve access to excellent public education systems.

# MICHIGAN BUMPY CAKE



## Reviews from Michiganders

"There's a need for some kind of backyard exchange student program to help students learn simply by having the opportunity to go spend instructional time with people who don't look like the folks that they typically [see]?"

"There just is not a lot of access to the Internet and knowledge of how to use the tools of the Internet. We need that connectivity and let's also make sure they have the knowledge to use it as best they can."

## MICHIGAN BUMPY CAKE:

### CONSIDERATION OF UNIQUE REGIONAL NEEDS

#### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ Safe, reliable, and flexible transportation to schools in rural areas.
- ▶ Exchange programs linking rural and urban students.
- ▶ Expanded broadband access, distance learning, and career development opportunities for students.
- ▶ Expand translation services in classroom learning and communication with families.
- ▶ Local context and areas of concentrated need are considered when providing career and college planning, special education services, multilingual education services, integrated student supports, and internships and apprenticeship opportunities.



### Cooking Instructions

1. Whisk together safe, reliable, and flexible transportation in rural areas.
2. Combine with exchange programs, broadband access, distance learning, and career development.
3. In a second bowl, mix skilled translators and high quality translation services together with families and students.
4. Gradually mix the two bowls together to make a thin batter, pour the batter in the pan and cook for 30 minutes.
5. Fill a piping bag with attention to local context, and pipe 4 thick "bumps" of career and college planning, special education services, multilingual education services, integrated student supports, internships and apprenticeship opportunities down the length of your cake, and then stick the cake in the freezer.
6. Pour adequate funding over your chilled cake, freeze for 15 minutes, slice and serve.

#### CHEF'S TIP

Every region has its own signature flavors—rural and urban schools need tailored solutions, including improved transportation, broadband access, and local career pathways.