

*Premium
Quality*

EDUCATION



Recipes
for Financing
Public Schools
in Michigan

MICHIGAN HEALTHY & HEALING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COOKBOOK

Michigan
Education
Justice
Coalition



MICHIGAN HEALTHY & HEALING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COOKBOOK



Public school funding in Michigan largely comes from state and local sources, but it has not kept pace with what students need to thrive. Too many schools, particularly in under-resourced communities, struggle with outdated buildings, overworked teachers, and limited support services.

This cookbook shares what we need to create a system of healthy and healing community schools across our state. Each recipe is created based on the expert knowledge of Michigan students, parents, teachers, and community members, gathered through a multi-year study in collaboration with the National Education Policy Center (NEPC). Dig in and discover what it takes to build a better future for Michigan's students—one recipe at a time.

For more information see:
www.miedjustice.org/cookbook

The National Education Policy Center (NEPC) at the University of Colorado Boulder collaborated with MEJC on the research project that led to this cookbook. You can learn more about NEPC's school finance research at:
<https://nepc.colorado.edu/initiative/price-opportunity/>

Funding for the collaborative research project, writing, and design was provided by the Kellogg Foundation.

2025 Michigan Education Justice Coalition.
[This work is openly licensed via CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Premium
Quality
EDUCATION



Contents



NECESSARY SUPPLIES: 7

A FULLY FUNDED PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

- **Phenomenal People:** Prepared, supported teachers and administrators in every school and district
- **Phenomenal Spaces:** Fewer students per class and better class schedules
- **Phenomenal Places:** State of the art school buildings, transportation and technology

BREAKFAST: 15

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

- **Pancakes and Bacon:** Students feel welcome and cared for emotionally, physically and academically
- **Cereal and Milk:** Problems and conflict are prevented or resolved

SIDES: 21

A CHALLENGING AND EQUITABLE CURRICULUM THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS AND ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE REAL LEARNING.

- **Michigan Salad:** Relevant, rigorous, antiracist, and inclusive curriculum for all students
- **Grandma's Green Bean Casserole:** Meaningful and reasonable assessment and accountability system.

MAIN COURSE: 27

STUDENTS ARE THE HEART OF MICHIGAN'S EDUCATION SYSTEM.

- **Walking Tacos:** Robust and meaningful system of student engagement in decision making.

DESSERT: 31

SCHOOL PRIORITIES MATCH THE VALUES AND NEEDS OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

- **5 Layer Cake:** Empowering system of supports for linguistically diverse learners and families
- **Ice Cream Sundae:** Strong system of supports for special education
- **Magic Bars:** Strong system of integrated student support services
- **Apple Pie:** Robust and multifaceted family engagement system
- **Michigan Bumpy Cake:** Consideration of unique regional needs

RESEARCH EVIDENCE: 43

How to Read This Cookbook

Each recipe in this book is designed to be clear, engaging, and easy to navigate—just like a real cookbook! Here's what you'll find in every recipe:

Recipe Description:

A quick overview of what this recipe brings to a fully funded, thriving school system.

Cooking Instructions:

How ingredients come together to create the best learning environment.

Reviews from Michiganders:

Real feedback from Michigan students, parents, and educators who know what works.

Chef's Tip:

A helpful insight or strategy to enhance the "recipe."

Ingredients:

The key elements needed to make it happen

Research Evidence:

The data-backed proof behind the ingredients.

Now, let's get cooking!





NECESSARY SUPPLIES

A fully funded public education system

PHENOMENAL PEOPLE



School leaders and teachers need flexible resources and training to succeed. For leaders like principals, this should include leadership development, access to funding, and collaboration with the school community. For teachers, this includes offering on-going training, a supportive working environment, and access to classroom materials and supplies. Competitive pay, benefits, and supportive working conditions are essential to attracting and retaining high-quality teachers and principals.

CHEF'S TIP

A well-stocked kitchen makes all the difference—fully funding public schools ensures every student gets the resources, teachers, and support they need to thrive.

PHENOMENAL PEOPLE:

PREPARED AND SUPPORTED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN EVERY SCHOOL AND DISTRICT.



INGREDIENTS

- Higher salaries for school leaders and teachers.
- Larger and more flexible budgets to use at the school and classroom level.
- More BIPOC principals, teachers and educators.
- Opportunities for principals to learn from each other.
- Salaries for student teachers.
- Mental and physical wellness programs.
- Ongoing training for teachers and principals.
- Technical assistance at the school and classroom level.

Reviews from Michiganders

"Administrators need paid trained support staff on specialized tasks, like a communication liaison, a D.E.I. liaison, a finance liaison. I'd love that—support staff for every administrator."

"We need to hire more teachers of color, especially if you're in an urban school district [where] 90% of your population [of] students are [students] of color. Those students don't get a chance to see anybody that looks like them."

"I think we have to do a lot of work and put money and intention behind [educator] retention programs, training and development. [We should be] creating a sense of well-being for our teachers and understand that there are cultural differences."

"You get a \$30,000 internship if you do a business degree, and you get a \$9,000 internship if you do a teaching degree -- there's very little incentive, plus all the challenges that we face."

PHENOMENAL SPACES



Reducing class sizes and improving school resources allow teachers to provide more individualized attention to each student, leading to improved student outcomes, increased engagement, and the support every student needs to thrive. School schedules can be adjusted to meet students' needs, for example, adding short play breaks for young kids to refocus their energy or creating block classes to allow time for students to conduct experiments or engage in projects or field trips. These strategies help improve student learning, engagement, relationships, and behavior.

PHENOMENAL SPACES:

FEWER STUDENTS PER CLASS AND MORE FLEXIBLE CLASS SCHEDULES.

INGREDIENTS

- ▶ Smaller class sizes in all public schools.
- ▶ Local flexibility in school schedules.
- ▶ School schedules that center students' mental and physical health.
- ▶ Time for engaging and exciting learning opportunities.



Reviews from Michiganders

"In an ideal world... I would lower class sizes for sure, even reducing it a bit would be a big shock because [our classes] have way over 30 [students]."

"In my experience, when teachers work in the balanced calendar schools, there's less burnout and there's more joy in that type of schedule."

"[We should consider] 'Are we doing what's best for students in terms of how many students we have assigned to each person at one time? Are we genuinely meeting the needs of those students?'"

"In terms of weekday scheduling, our fifth day could look like any number of things including going out in the community."

CHEF'S TIP

Too many cooks in the kitchen can ruin a meal—reducing class sizes and creating flexible schedules allows students to receive the attention and engagement they need to succeed.



PHENOMENAL PLACES



Safe and modern school buildings, transportation systems, and technology support teaching and learning. This includes everything from modern classrooms and technology to safe routes to school, to clean water and safe air quality. School systems need plans to create and maintain these places and systems over time.

CHEF'S TIP

It's harder to cook in an outdated kitchen—schools need modern, well-maintained buildings, reliable transportation, and up-to-date technology to provide students with a safe & effective learning environment.

PHENOMENAL PLACES:

STATE OF THE ART SCHOOL BUILDINGS, TRANSPORTATION AND TECH.



Reviews from Michiganders

INGREDIENTS

- ▶ A large one-time investment to update infrastructure.
- ▶ Space for Pre-K classrooms and smaller class sizes.
- ▶ Excellent air quality, including heating and cooling.
- ▶ Infrastructure that is accessible to students and staff with different abilities.
- ▶ Single-use bathrooms in all classrooms.
- ▶ Safe and reliable transportation including optimized bus routes and alternative transportation to meet students' different schedules and locations (especially in rural areas).
- ▶ Higher salaries for bus drivers and transportation staff.
- ▶ Up-to-date technology and reliable Wi-Fi for all students and teachers.
- ▶ Professional development for using technology in teaching, and strong IT support and maintenance at the building-level.

"We're constantly talking about getting a new school – building new schools – and it's a sad thing to me that we've been talking about building new buildings and still haven't built these new buildings yet."

"[We] need safe school facilities to support the learning environment for students."

"We don't have bus drivers because we don't pay them enough... I think schools – people need to prioritize [bus drivers]"

"[We should be] increasing transportation budgets to include transportation for after school programming... Trying to do extended day or additional enrichment, right now it's prohibitive for families."

"If you're asking for kids to do homework and things like that, then we need to provide internet and computers at home."

"The great equalizer to me when it comes to the access of optimal technology, transportation, and facilities, it would be everyone having the access to all of that."



BREAKFAST

Safe and supportive
school communities

PANCAKES AND BACON



In a healthy and healing community school, students feel safe and belong physically, academically, and socially. Students also trust the adults and other students around them.

Reviews from Michiganders

"[We] have to create a healthy village. If we're going to create healthy children, we have to create [a healthy village]"

"All cultures need to feel like they belong [in our schools], no matter if it's the child, the parent, or the staff"

"It's good to come together, let everybody bond, to make us feel like a real team. You got to do those little things"

PANCAKES AND BACON:

STUDENTS FEEL WELCOME AND CARED FOR
EMOTIONALLY, PHYSICALLY AND ACADEMICALLY.



INGREDIENTS

- ▶ Time for students and adults to build strong relationships.
- ▶ Students with disabilities, Students of Color, English language learners, undocumented students, and LGBTQ+ students feel supported and included in the school community.
- ▶ Excellent strategies for preventing and responding to bullying at the school level.
- ▶ New students have extra help settling into their school.
- ▶ Schools have wellness rooms for students and staff to recharge.
- ▶ Health and wellness support staff at every school.
- ▶ Schools have clubs and services that support all kinds of students.

Cooking Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients into a single school system.
2. Melt time in your pan and add one spoonful of specific supports for each student until you have four pancakes cooking.
3. Be sure to top off with strategies to prevent and respond to bullying, hire well-trained support staff, and craft creative clubs and services.
4. Provide students with spaces to recharge and enjoy their meal.
5. Make sure you make enough for every student and teacher to have their fill.



CHEF'S — TIP —

Fluffy pancakes need the right mix—students thrive when schools prioritize emotional, physical, and academic well-being through trusted relationships and inclusive practices.

CEREAL AND MILK:

PROBLEMS AND CONFLICT ARE PREVENTED OR RESOLVED.

INGREDIENTS

- Educate teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and community members on restorative conflict prevention and resolution practices.
- Implement social-emotional learning (SEL) programs for all students, educators, and staff.
- Ensure diverse and sustainable leadership and holistic implementation of these initiatives.
- Remove cultural or gender-based forms of biases from codes of conduct.
- End exclusionary, harsh, and racially disproportionate school discipline.



Cooking Instructions

1. Select a variety of different strategies and engage an educated, committed group of leaders, teachers and staff in meeting the different needs and preferences of your students.
2. Support each student in figuring out the right combination of supports that will help them grow and learn.
3. When students get lost, use positive support strategies to re-engage them in learning and the school community.

CHEF'S TIP

Stirring too fast spills the milk—restorative justice and social-emotional learning help schools address conflict in ways that keep students engaged rather than pushing them out.

Schools should support healthy student development and build strong relationships among and between students, teachers and staff. School staff should aim to build and restore connections between schools, families, and communities.

CEREAL AND MILK



Reviews from Michiganders

"I lean towards restorative practices. I don't know if punishment fixes anything, it's only consequences without any support or structure that doesn't help students grow."

"We need a dedicated decompression space so that kids can remove themselves out of situations that are getting heated and calm down before returning so that issues don't escalate."

"[Disciplinary actions compound inequity] because...[students] don't have the services they need in the first place and then they're punished for not having them at higher rates than their peers."



SIDES

A challenging and equitable curriculum
that is accessible to all students and
assessments that measure real learning

MICHIGAN SALAD



Reviews from Michiganders

"We need to start looking internally to ask what does a curriculum look like that doesn't do racial harm? When we're studying history, are we perpetuating white supremacy and patriarchy in the material that we're teaching?"

"We don't realize how biased our words are, that we can belittle someone's core identity when we say the wrong pronouns. We need someone that provides those trainings [to staff]."

"Every school should have [access to a] social-emotional learning curriculum. And within that curriculum...school districts need to make sure that...communities are explicitly represented."

"Having a Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) is great. Having a separate facilitator for a QSA is great. Having separate bathrooms is great. And we also need to address violence against LGBTQ people."

CHEF'S TIP

A great salad includes fresh, diverse ingredients—students learn best when the curriculum is rigorous, culturally responsive, and prepares them for their future.

MICHIGAN SALAD:

RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, ANTIRACIST, AND INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM FOR ALL STUDENTS.

The learning curriculum — lesson plans, activities, and materials — should actively engage and support learning. Curriculum should be relevant to students and prepare them to succeed in college, careers and civic and community life. Anti-racist curriculum includes an honest history of racism in and beyond the U.S. and directly addresses white supremacy, while also including Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous histories. Curriculum inclusive of gender and sexually diverse students reflects and affirms knowledge, history, and contributions of gender and sexually diverse peoples. The curriculum should align with school policies and programs that support and protect Students of Color, LGBTQ+, and other students and staff from discrimination.



INGREDIENTS

- ▶ Training on and implementation of culturally relevant, anti-racist, and LGBTQ+ inclusive curricula and pedagogies.
- ▶ Hands-on learning and classes that reflect student interests.
- ▶ Social emotional learning, asset-based frameworks and student input are included in the curriculum.
- ▶ Gender and sexual diversity is included in social emotional learning and health curricula.
- ▶ All educators and staff receive training on how to support Black students and other students of color, and anti-racist frameworks are part of teacher evaluations.
- ▶ Recruitment and support for Black teachers and teachers of color.
- ▶ Single-use bathrooms are in every classroom.

Cooking Instructions

1. Fill each salad bowl with lesson plans, activities, and materials.
2. Allow students to top with the toppings of their choice (e.g. hands-on experiences, social emotional learning, student input, inclusive relevant topics) that meet their individual needs.
3. Have well-prepared and educated teachers and staff serve.
4. Enjoy!

Sides
equitable,
accessible
curriculum and
assessments

GRANDMA'S GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE



Reviews from Michiganders

"We're interested in our students developing and growing. What we're really looking at is the success of the students and the communities that the students live in."

"I think we go back to let's trust teachers as professionals. I trust teachers to be able to assess their content areas and assess their students the best."

"Just get rid of [standardized testing]. We know it's biased by race. We know that it isn't supposed to help teachers teach. We rarely see the results, and if we do see them, it's a year later."

CHEF'S TIP

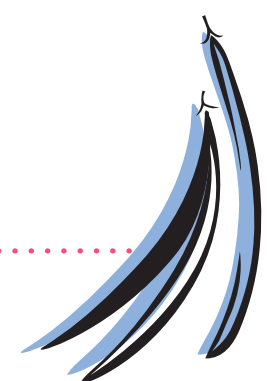
Taste-testing is key—schools should measure learning in multiple ways, ensuring assessments reflect real student progress instead of relying on outdated standardized tests.

GRANDMA'S GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE:



A MEANINGFUL AND REASONABLE ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM.

A dynamic system that measures accountability across many layers. The system should measure student learning in multiple ways, and assessments should be aligned to curriculum and instruction. The system should hold the government accountable for providing funding and learning resources to schools and students. All measures should be easy for parents and community members to understand and use.



INGREDIENTS

- Multiple measures of learning (e.g., real-world, culturally relevant, project-based learning can be used as an alternative to testing).
- High-stakes consequences are not based on a single test.
- Teachers receive training on how to measure learning and are included in developing and using learning measures and assessments.
- Teachers, parents, and students participate in accountability decisions.
- The system should hold government leaders accountable for providing funding and learning resources.



Cooking Instructions

1. Measure constant improvement and fold into an equitable educational system.
2. Add well-aligned curriculum and instruction.
3. Stir in multiple measures of learning and toss with teachers who are trained on learning assessment.
4. Be sure to add a healthy dose of government accountability.
5. Accompany with teacher, parent, and student input for a well-rounded educational experience.



MAIN COURSE

Students are the heart of
Michigan's education system

WALKING TACOS



Students should have a real voice in shaping their education—leading, participating in, and influencing decisions at every level. In this system, adults value young people’s unique knowledge and experience, and work with them as partners in creating education opportunities.

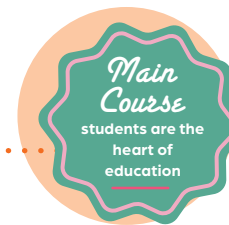
Reviews from Michiganders

“[It] would be really beneficial for... schools to have that type of student government...letting the kids run with the ideas”

“I think students should have a strong hand in decision making, [they] should have a lot of voice and power.”

WALKING TACOS:

A ROBUST AND MEANINGFUL SYSTEM OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN DECISION MAKING.



INGREDIENTS

- Meaningful practices and systems are in place for students to decide how the classroom, school, or district works.
- Students co-develop classroom practice and interest-based lessons with their teachers.
- Adult support and funding are needed to implement the decisions students make.
- School policies reflect a commitment to power-sharing with youth.



Cooking Instructions

1. Gather the practices and systems that are most useful to the local school context from research, community leaders, and students themselves.
2. Engage students in loading their tacos with co-developed practices and lesson plans.
3. Ensure school policies create the context for meaningful student leadership.
4. Provide adult support and funding so that students are successful.
5. Enjoy!

CHEF'S TIP

The best meals are made together—students should have a real voice in shaping their education, from classroom decisions to district policies.



DESSERT

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

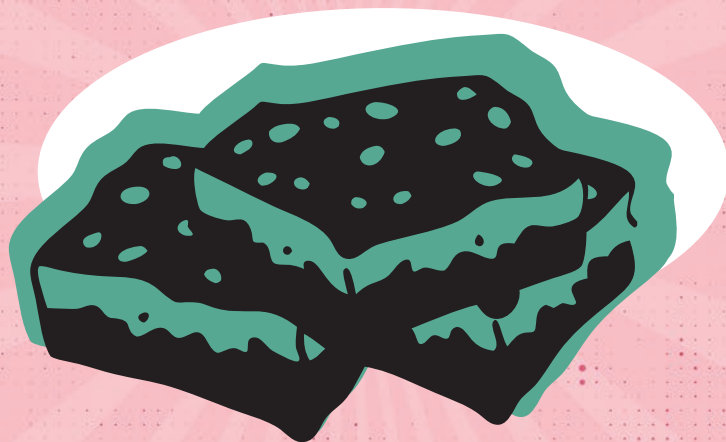
Cooking Instructions

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.



Desserts
school priorities
match values
and needs

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

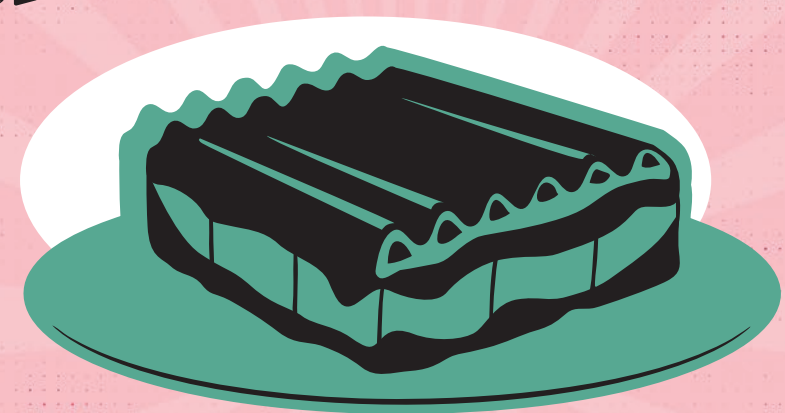
- ▶ Family engagement coordinators at every school.
- ▶ Increased funding for family engagement activities and initiatives.
- ▶ Involvement between marginalized parent groups and school boards.
- ▶ Expand adult educational programs.

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.



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."

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:

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

- Whisk together safe, reliable, and flexible transportation in rural areas.
- Combine with exchange programs, broadband access, distance learning, and career development.
- In a second bowl, mix skilled translators and high quality translation services together with families and students.
- Gradually mix the two bowls together to make a thin batter, pour the batter in the pan and cook for 30 minutes.
- 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.
- 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.



RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The data-backed proof behind
the ingredients.



Research Evidence



NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

PHENOMINAL PEOPLE PAGE 8

- ▶ **Competitive salaries for current teachers and paid internships and residencies for new teachers can help address teaching shortages.**

Kini, T. (2022). Tackling teacher shortages: What can states and districts do? Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/teacher-shortage-what-can-states-and-districts-do>

- ▶ **Principals matter for numerous school outcomes including achievement.**

Grissom, Jason A., Anna J. Egalite, and Constance A. Lindsay. 2021. "How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research." New York: The Wallace Foundation. Available at <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/principalsynthesis>

- ▶ **Advanced preparation and higher teacher pay helps recruit and retain highquality teachers and supports positive student achievement.**

Borman, G. D., & Dowling, N. M. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. Review of Educational Research, 78(3), 367–409. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308321455>

Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. Review of Educational Research, 76(2), 173– 208. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543076002173>

Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W.-Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 033). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>

- ▶ **Hiring and supporting Principals of Color is a key lever for supporting teacher diversity.**

Grissom, Jason A., Anna J. Egalite, and Constance A. Lindsay. 2021. "How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research." New York: The Wallace Foundation. Available at <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/principalsynthesis>

- ▶ **Black teachers and teachers of color benefit all students' academic and social development, help close achievement gaps, and protect Black students and students of color.**

Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/559.310>

Gershenson, S., Hansen, M. J., & Lindsay, C. A. (2021). Teacher diversity and student success: Why racial representation matters in the classroom (Vol. 8). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

- ▶ **Teachers report mental health declines since the COVID-19 pandemic underscoring the importance of providing teachers with mental health resources that add support without adding extra work.**

Marshall, T. R., & Rodick, W. (2023). The search for more complex racial and ethnic representation in grade school books. The Education Trust. <https://edtrust.org/resource/the-search-for-more-complex-racial-and-ethnic-representation-in-grade-school-books/>

PHENOMINAL SPACES PAGE 10

- ▶ **Students benefit from more and better learning time to expand learning in high-quality ways.**

Del Razo, J. L., & Renée, M. (2013). Expanding Equity through More and Better Learning Time. Voices in Urban Education, 36, 23–34.

- ▶ **Equity must remain central to how learning time is developed.**

Del Razo, J. L., & Renée, M. (2013). Expanding Equity through More and Better Learning Time. Voices in Urban Education, 36, 23–34.

- ▶ **Engaging the community in re-organizing learning time strengthens buy-in and engagement in learning.**

Del Razo, J. L., & Renée, M. (2013). Expanding Equity through More and Better Learning Time. Voices in Urban Education, 36, 23–34.

- ▶ **Students in early grades perform better in small classes, particularly those from underserved communities.**

Schanzenbach, D. W. (2014). Does class size matter? Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved from <http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/does-class-size-matter>

Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain, J. F. (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. Econometrica, 73(2), 417–458. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0262.2005.00584.x>

Krueger, A. B. (1999). Experimental estimates of education production functions. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 115(2), 497–532.

PHENOMINAL PLACES PAGE 12

- ▶ **Improving school facilities can lead to gains in students' learning and growth.**

Lafortune, J., & Schonholzer, D. (2018). Do school facilities matter? measuring the effects of capital expenditures on student and neighborhood outcomes. Public Policy Institute of California.

- ▶ **Equity must remain central to how learning time is developed.**

Del Razo, J. L., & Renée, M. (2013). Expanding Equity through More and Better Learning Time. Voices in Urban Education, 36, 23–34.

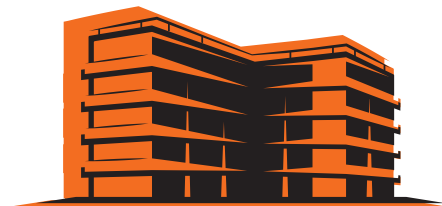


Research Evidence



PHENOMINAL PLACES (CONTINUED)

- **Improving school facilities can lead to gains in students' learning and growth.**
Lafortune, J., & Schonholzer, D. (2018). Do school facilities matter? measuring the effects of capital expenditures on student and neighborhood outcomes. Public Policy Institute of California.
- **Providing more Michigan students with transportation improved attendance, especially for economically disadvantaged students.**
Edwards, D. (2022). Another one rides the bus: The impact of school transportation on student outcomes in Michigan. National Center for Research on Education Access and Choice <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED621826.pdf>
- **Travel to and from school can impact student attendance, timeliness and participation in before and after school activities.**
The Urban Institute (2018). The Road to School. Retrieved from: https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/97151/the_road_to_school_6.pdf
- **Even in our technology-driven era, there exist resource inequities in educational technology (e.g., broadband, computers, and other digital accessories).**
Boninger, F. & Molnar, A. (2020). Issues to Consider Before Adopting a Digital Platform or Learning Program. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center.
- **A "mobility justice" framework can help address transportation inequities.**
Bierbaum, A. H., Karner, A., & Barajas, J. M. (2020). Toward Mobility Justice: Linking Transportation and Education Equity in the Context of School Choice. Journal of the American Planning Association, 87(2), 197–210.



BREAKFAST

PANCAKES AND BACON PAGE 16

- **A positive school climate fosters better student engagement.**
Allensworth, E. M., & Hart, H. (2018). How do principals influence student achievement? University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2018-10/Leadership%20Snapshot-Mar2018-Consortium.pdf>
Konold, T., Cornell, D., Shukla, K., & Huang, F. (2017). Racial/ethnic differences in perceptions of school climate and its association with student engagement and peer aggression. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 46(6), 1289–1303;
- **A positive school climate "improves academic achievement, test scores, grades, and engagement and helps reduce the negative effects of poverty on academic achievement."**
Darling Hammond, L. and J. DiPaoli. 2020. Why school climate matters and what can be done to improve it. State Education Standard. Journal of the National Association of State Boards of Education. Vol.20, No 2. May 2020.
- **Equity gaps in positive school climate exist, underscoring the need to improve school climate opportunities for Black and Latinx students.**
Voight, A., Hanson, T., O'Malley, M., & Adekanye, L. (2015). The racial school climate gap: Within-school disparities in students' experiences of safety, support, and connectedness. American Journal of Community Psychology, 56(3–4), 252–267.

CEREAL PAGE 18

- **Conflict and violence can be reduced in schools by giving students, teachers, and staff the tools to social emotional awareness, creating and maintaining positive relationships, and engaging in joint problem solving.**
Voight, A., & Nation, M. (2016). Practices for improving secondary school climate: A systematic review of the research literature. American journal of community psychology, 58(1–2), 174–191.
- **Exclusionary school discipline decreases educational opportunity and contributes to ongoing racial gaps in academic outcomes.**
Gregory, A., Skiba, R.J., & Noguera, P.A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? Educational Researcher, 39 (1), 59–68.
Welsh, R. O. (2022). School Discipline in the Age of COVID-19: Exploring Patterns, Policy, and Practice Considerations. Peabody Journal of Education, 97(3), 291–308. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2022.2079885>



Research Evidence



CEREAL (CONTINUED)

- **Restorative approaches to discipline can improve student conduct and decrease the use of exclusionary practices like suspension and expulsion.**

Anyon, Y., Gregory, A., Stone, S., Farrar, J., Jenson, J. M., McQueen, J., Downing, B., Greer, E., & Simmons, J. (2016). Restorative Interventions and School Discipline Sanctions in a Large Urban School District. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53(6), 1663–1697. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216675719>

Augustine, Catherine H., John Engberg, Geoffrey E. Grimm, Emma Lee, Elaine Lin Wang, Karen Christianson, and Andrea A. Joseph, Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? An Evaluation of the Impact of Restorative Practices in a Mid-Sized Urban School District. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2840.html

Hashim, A. K., Strunk, K. O., Dhaliwal, T. K., Hashim, A. K., Strunk, K. O., & Justice, T. K. D. (2018). Justice for All? Suspension Bans and Restorative Justice Programs in the Los Angeles Unified School District in the Los Angeles Unified School District. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 93(2), 174–189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2018.1435040>

- **Restorative approaches can improve student connectedness, community and parent engagement, and student academic achievement.**

Fronius, T., Darling-Hammond, S. Perrson, H., Guckenburger, S., Hurley, N., & Petrosino, A. (2019). Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: An Updated Research Review. WestEd. <https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/resource-restorative-justice-in-u-s-schools-an-updated-research-review.pdf>

- **Implementing positive school discipline requires school leaders to adopt a holistic, multipronged approach.**

Wiley, K. E., Anyon, Y., Yang, J. L., Pauline, M. E., Rosch, A., Valladares, G., ... & Pisciotto, L. (2018). Looking back, moving forward: Technical, normative, and political dimensions of school discipline. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(2), 275–302.

Wiley, K., & Garcia, L. (2023). Creating and maintaining a health school climate with attention to diversity and reassessing student discipline policies: The story of Revere High School. In York, A., Welner, K., & Kelley, L.M. (Eds). *Schools of opportunity: 10 research-based models of equity in action*. (pp. 35–48). NY: Teachers College Press.



SIDES

MICHIGAN SALAD PAGE 22

- **Rigorous and relevant lessons intentionally designed for deeper learning allow students to develop important skills.**

Darling-Hammond, L., Alexander, M., & Hernández, L. E. (2024). Redesigning high schools: 10 features for success. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/533.285>

- **Personalized and culturally relevant curriculum improves learning, students' engagement and self-efficacy.**

Aronson, B., & Laughter, J. (2016). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of educational research*, 86(1), 163–206.

Pane, J. F., Steiner, E. D., Baird, M. D., & Hamilton, L. S. (2015). Continued Progress: Promising Evidence on Personalized Learning. RAND Corporation. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt19w73mb>

Marshall, T. R., & Rodick, W. (2023). The search for more complex racial and ethnic representation in grade school books. The Education Trust. <https://edtrust.org/resource/the-search-for-more-complex-racial-and-ethnic-representation-in-grade-school-books/>

- **Anti-racist education positively impacts white participants by generating higher levels of racial awareness.**

Souto-Manning, M. (2011). Playing with power and privilege: Theatre games in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(6), 997–1007.

- **Getting students' input on curriculum increases engagement and active engagement in the classroom enhances learning (Deslauriers et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2021).**

Deslauriers, L., McCarty, L.S., Miller, K., Callaghan, K., & Kestin, G. (2019). Measuring actual learning versus feeling of learning in response to being actively engaged in the classroom. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 116, 19251 – 19257.

Zhu, G., Raman, P., Xing, W., & others. (2021). Curriculum design for social, cognitive, and emotional engagement in knowledge building. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 18(1), 37. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-021-00276-9>

- **Curriculum and professional development are important tools for making schools safer for LGBTQ students (Biegel & Kuehl, 2010; Meyer et al., 2024)**

Biegel, S., & Kuehl, S. (2010). Safe at school: Addressing the school learning environment and LGBT safety through policy and legislation. NEPC and the Williams Institute: https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/Biegel_LGBT.pdf

Meyer, E., Leonardi, B., & Keenan, H. (2024, March 12). What Happened to Nex Benedict Was Tragic. Why Did It Occur and What Can We Do Next? <https://nepc.colorado.edu/libraries/pdf.js/web/viewer.html?file=https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Newsletter%20oklahoma.pdf>



Research Evidence



GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE PAGE 24

- **Recommendations for effective and equitable assessment and accountability include: 1. Align the policy with high-quality curriculum and instruction; 2. Develop reciprocal accountability; 3. Ensure that representative community members play a meaningful role in the system; 4. Measure school resources and learning opportunities alongside learning; 5. Ensure results are clear and useful; 6. Design a system that will evolve and improve."**

Educational accountability 3.0: Beyond ESSA. (2023). Beyond Test Scores Project and National Education Policy Center.

- **Projects and presentations infused with cultural relevance are great alternatives to testing .**

Kaul, M. (2019). Keeping Students at the Center with Culturally Relevant Performance Assessment. Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/keeping-students-center-culturally-relevant-performance-assessments>

MAIN COURSE

WALKING TACO PAGE 28

- **When students' share ideas and changes are made based on those ideas, students can become more engaged in learning, and their grades and attendance can improve.**

Conner, J., Posner, M., & Nsowaa, B. (2022). The Relationship Between Student Voice and Student Engagement in Urban High Schools. The Urban review, 54(5), 755–774. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-022-00637-2>

Baroutsis, A., McGregor, G., & Mills, M. (2016). Pedagogic voice: Student voice in teaching and engagement pedagogies. Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 24(1), 123–140.

Taines, C. (2012). Intervening in alienation: The outcomes for urban youth of participating in school activism. American Educational Research Journal, 49(1), 53–86.

- **The more students feel heard, the more likely they are to believe they are cared for and respected, and the more often they find their schoolwork engaging .**

Conner, J., Posner, M., & Nsowaa, B. (2022). The Relationship Between Student Voice and Student Engagement in Urban High Schools. The Urban review, 54(5), 755–774. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-022-00637-2>

Baroutsis, A., McGregor, G., & Mills, M. (2016). Pedagogic voice: Student voice in teaching and engagement pedagogies. Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 24(1), 123–140.

Taines, C. (2012). Intervening in alienation: The outcomes for urban youth of participating in school activism. American Educational Research Journal, 49(1), 53–86.

- **Initiatives that promote student voice can improve student agency, belonging, sense of connection and competence.**

Mitra, D.L. (2007). Student voice in school reform: From listening to leadership. International handbook of student experience in elementary and secondary school, 727–744

Mitra, D. L. (2004). The significance of students: Can increasing "student voice" in schools lead to gains in youth development?. Teachers college record, 106(4), 651–688.

DESSERT

FIVE LAYER CAKE PAGE 32

- **Bilingual education programs are consistently more effective than all-English approaches in promoting learning.**

Rolstad, K., Mahoney, K., & Glass, G. V. (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. Educational policy, 19(4), 572–594.

- **Unlike English only programs, high-quality, long-term bilingual programs close learning gaps over time.**

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2017). Validating the power of bilingual schooling: Thirty-two years of large-scale, longitudinal research. Annual review of applied linguistics, 37, 203–217.

- **Family engagement should be implemented through practices that are culturally and linguistically relevant.**

Tarasawa, B., & Waggoner, J. (2015). Increasing parental involvement of English language learner families: What the research says. Journal of Children and Poverty, 21(2), 129–134.

ICE CREAM SUNDAE PAGE 34

- **Including students with disabilities in general education classes provides them the full benefits of citizenship.**

Giangreco, M. F., CARTER, E. W., & DOYLE, M. B. (2010). Supporting students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms: Personnel and peers. In Confronting Obstacles to Inclusion (pp. 265–282). Routledge.

- **Individualized education plans should be crafted in ethnically, culturally, and linguistically considerate ways by members of the child's ethnic and cultural community.**

Blanchett, W. J., Klingner, J. K., & Harry, B. (2009). The intersection of race, culture, language, and disability: Implications for urban education. Urban Education, 44(4), 389–409.



Research Evidence



ICE CREAM SUNDAE (CONTINUED)

- Teachers and special educators benefit from a strong foundation of special education and general education coursework to tackle the over-identification of students of color and language learners.

Blanchett, W. J., Klingner, J. K., & Harry, B. (2009). The intersection of race, culture, language, and disability: Implications for urban education. *Urban Education*, 44(4), 389–409.

- Statewide systems can help identify, prepare, and provide support for special educators in hard-to-reach areas.

Rude, H., & Miller, K. J. (2018). Policy challenges and opportunities for rural special education. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 37(1), 21–29.

MAGIC BARS PAGE 36

- Holistic student success includes considerations of integrated support services.

Yu, R., Haddock, A., & Womack, T. (2022). Integrating supports for students with wraparound. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 26(2), 155–163

- Community partnerships with integrated services can help address out of school barriers to school learning.

Maier, A, Daniel, J., & Oakes, J. (2017). Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence (research brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/136/download?inline&file=Community_Schools_Effective_BRIEF.pdf

- Every dollar spent on school-based services yields \$15 in social and economic benefits.

Maier, A, Daniel, J., & Oakes, J. (2017). Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence (research brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/136/download?inline&file=Community_Schools_Effective_BRIEF.pdf

- Integrated supports are associated with improvements in attendance, behavior, social functioning, and academic achievement.

Maier, A, Daniel, J., & Oakes, J. (2017). Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence (research brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/136/download?inline&file=Community_Schools_Effective_BRIEF.pdf

APPLE PIE PAGE 38

- Family engagement brings cultural knowledge into school communities.

Arias, M. B., & Morillo–Campbell, M. (2008). Promoting ELL Parental Involvement: Challenges in Contested Times. Online Submission.

- Increasing family engagement can support students’ mental health.

Office of the Surgeon General. (2021). Protecting youth mental health: The US surgeon general’s advisory [Internet].

- Family engagement helps align policymaking with community needs.

Ishimaru, A. M., & Chappelle, D. (2023). Like a Family. Schools of Opportunity: 10 Research–Based Models of Equity in Action, 176.

- The needs of underrepresented students are better met when families are integrated into the leadership structures of schools.

Ishimaru, A. M., & Chappelle, D. (2023). Like a Family. Schools of Opportunity: 10 Research–Based Models of Equity in Action, 176.

MICHIGAN BUMPY CAKE PAGE 40

- State and regional pathways can help create bridges from high school and college to students’ career opportunities.

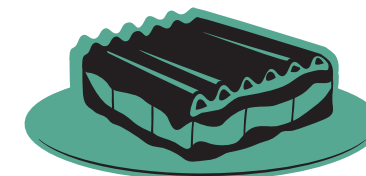
Jobs for the Future. (2024). Rural pathways report. Jobs for the Future. Retrieved February 20, 2025, from https://www.jff.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/240312_EdP_RuralPathwaysReport_March2024Version.pdf

- Increasing broadband in rural communities supports positive outcomes for students and staff.

Campbell, R. C. (2024). Need for speed: Fiber and student achievement. *Telecommunications Policy*, 48(6), 102767.

- To increase employment among rural teachers, rural areas can support teacher pipelines by recruiting their own graduates back to teach and by establishing pathway programs.

Rural Schools Collaborative. (n.d.). Exploring early rural teacher pathways. Rural Schools Collaborative. Retrieved February 20, 2025, from <https://ruralschoolscollaborative.org/stories/exploring-early-rural-teacher-pathways>





.....

Premium
Quality

EDUCATION

MICHIGAN HEALTHY & HEALING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COOKBOOK



Public school funding in Michigan largely comes from state and local sources, but it has not kept pace with what students need to thrive. Too many schools, particularly in under-resourced communities, struggle with outdated buildings, overworked teachers, and limited support services.

This cookbook shares what we need to create a system of healthy and healing community schools across our state. Each recipe is created based on the expert knowledge of Michigan students, parents, teachers, and community members, gathered through a multi-year study in collaboration with the National Education Policy Center (NEPC). Dig in and discover what it takes to build a better future for Michigan's students—one recipe at a time.

Michigan
Education
Justice
Coalition

