



STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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**Joint Statement by State Board of Education and
State Superintendent Mike Flanagan on HB 5111 and HB 5112**

The State Board of Education (SBE) and Michigan Department of Education (MDE) share the Legislature's interest in a clear effective, and non-duplicative school accountability system that accurately gauges school performance and guides improvement efforts. To those ends, the SBE and MDE have integrated school accreditation requirements defined in state law; federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements; and now, an approved NCLB federal waiver into a unified accountability system.

The SBE welcomes legislative interest in improving Michigan's public school system by shining a spotlight on important topics, such as third grade reading proficiency. We further welcome working with legislators regarding important elements of any system, including simplicity and clarity; the use of letter grades versus color-coding; and ensuring the system includes key factors like student growth measures and multiple measures of student performance.

The SBE, however, cautions against placing prescriptive methodologies and metrics in state law. For this reason, we oppose HB 5111 and 5112 as currently written. While we all agree that reading comprehension is of vital importance, House Bill 5111 focuses on mandatory student retention without specifying the need for school practices that reduce failure rates and provide intervention for retained students. In addition, the SBE is concerned that House Bill 5112 mandates an inflexible accountability system that may not meet future federal requirements and reduces the flexibility needed to develop long-term improvements.

The SBE believes that specificity regarding the state's school accountability system and metrics should continue to reside with the Michigan Department of Education. The Department works to continuously revise and improve its methodology, using experts, stakeholders and public comment to ensure the system is fair and useful for Michigan students, families and educators.

Michigan's current accountability system has been in place for just one year. It allows the flexibility needed for improvement. Replacing this new system instead of making thoughtful adjustments to it would only add confusion and frustration for schools in a time of significant K-12 educational change. The SBE welcomes the opportunity to work with the Legislature and all stakeholders on ideas for improving Michigan's current accountability system. Replacing it will only add confusion and frustration to an already stressed system.

This statement is individually agreed-to by all eight members of the State Board of Education and State Superintendent Mike Flanagan.

November 5, 2013

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