

January 11, 2010

Mike Flanagan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Michigan Department of Education
608 W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Superintendent Flanagan:

The Network of Michigan Educators supports the Michigan application for the federal Race to the Top funds, as well as being fully committed, as engaged stakeholders, in the implementation of the plans in the Michigan application. In a recent "Ask the Network" Survey network members indicated the following:

83 % of the Network strongly agree or agree (7% Neutral, 17% disagree) that the Michigan Race to the Top application represents a critical opportunity for our state to engage in the innovations and fundamental reforms that that will lead to increased student achievement and career readiness. Many of those who disagree believe we are already on the path of high expectations and increased achievement.

85 % of the Network strongly agree or agree (14% Neutral, 1% disagree) that our identity as "...the most important grass roots organization providing input for the Michigan Department of Education" (Superintendent, Mike Flanagan, 12/1/09) gives the NME a unique opportunity to provide primary stakeholder engagement in RTTT implementation at both the state and local level.

71 % of the Network strongly agree or agree (8% Neutral, 21% disagree) with the statement "I support the RTTT application." Most disagreements were based on feeling rushed into the Race or discomfort with a perceived lack of details and information or frustration with school funding in general.

91 % of the Network strongly agree or agree (8% Neutral, 1% disagree) with the statement "I will be engaged in the opportunity to shape the future of education in Michigan at the local and/or the state level."

Our members understand that the state seeks a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to challenge and dramatically improve K-12 education by:

- 1) Adopting internationally-benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;
- 2) Turning around our lowest-performing schools;
- 3) Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and,
- 4) Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices.

In summary, the Network, both collectively and individually as educational leaders, is in very significant support of the Michigan Race to the Top application and 99% will be actively engaged in its implementation. The full results of the NME "Ask the Network" survey along with member comments can be found on our website at www.nme-educators.org by clicking on "Ask the Network" and then on "RTTT Survey"

Sincerely,

Dave Borth, Chair, The Network of Michigan Educators

The Network represents over 500 educators from these recognition programs:

- ◆ Michigan Teacher of the Year
- ◆ Milken National Educator Award
- ◆ Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching
- ◆ National Board Certification
 - ◆ Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Program
 - ◆ Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowships
 - ◆ Michigan Elementary-Middle Principal of the Year
 - ◆ National Distinguished Principal
 - ◆ Michigan Secondary Principal of the Year
- ◆ Michigan Superintendent of the Year

www.nme-educators.org

Network Collaborative Partners:

- ◆ Michigan State Board of Education
- ◆ Michigan Department of Education
- ◆ Michigan Institute for Educational Management
- ◆ Michigan Virtual University
- ◆ National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine Teacher Advisory Council

