

I. FY 2018 Executive Recommendation

The Governor's 2017-18 education budget was released last month and there are a few topics that impact non-public schools. MANS staff, partnering with the Michigan Catholic Conference, is advocating with legislators on the following three topics:

1. The FY 2017 School Aid Budget included \$2.5 million for the purpose of reimbursement to non-public schools for complying with the State of Michigan health, safety, and welfare regulations. Unlike public schools that are compensated for these important safety regulations through foundation grants, nonpublic schools have no such compensation. In the FY 2018 Executive Recommendation, this \$2.5 million is not included. MANS and MCC is recommending the reinstatement of \$2.5 million for this purpose which was included in the FY 2017 School Aid Budget.
2. The State has been encouraging expanded opportunities for all students in science education skills by assisting school districts to participate in events and competitions in FIRST Robotics and Science Olympiad. Grant funds have been available to provide financial support for coaching, materials, and travels expenses related to these programs. The source of both these grants comes from the School Aid Fund, which eliminates non-public schools from participating. MANS and MCC is advocating that these are skills in which all students in Michigan should be encouraged to excel. Also, since the programs are typically extracurricular activities and not part of core curriculum, non-public schools should be allowed to apply for the grants.
3. The Governor's 2017-18 education budget proposes a cap of \$60,000,000 on shared time courses. This almost 50% cap is affecting both non-public and public schools. Shared time programs benefit public and nonpublic schools, and create collaboration in the education of all Michigan school children. The close to 50% percent cut in funding proposed in the executive recommendation, and a possible reduction in expected FTE reimbursement after October 1st will make it next to impossible for schools to enter into shared time contracts in the spring of 2017 in preparation for the 2017-18 school year. This budget uncertainty will likely result in the elimination of shared time programs. The rationale in the Executive Budget recommendation that instruction in these elective classes "does not improve student academic outcomes in core subject areas" is flawed, as this is not the purpose of shared time courses either in statute, or as required by the Michigan Supreme Court. This logic is not applied to the remainder of the \$15 billion school aid budget where there is no similar dis-investment in non-essential, elective courses for traditional public school students. **MANS urges elimination of the cap on shared time instruction reimbursements contained in the executive budget recommendation in Section 23F.**

Please refer to the Legislative Newsletter for the link to the shared time talking points.