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Superintendents Legislative Update **Week of November 9-13, 2009**

School Aid - Despite the large presence at the **SOS event** in Lansing on Tuesday, no legislative action occurred this week on the School Aid budget. The 30-day timeline for the Legislature to act on the pending proration ends on November 21; however, it is possible that if the Legislature acts to restore the funds prior to December 10, no proration would occur in the December payment.

Service Consolidation Guidelines – MDE released the attached memo and guidelines for service consolidation plans yesterday.

Tax Restructuring – A letter signed by more than 2,000 Michigan job providers and state and local business organizations was delivered to all members of the Legislature this week commending them for passing a balanced budget **with cuts and without increasing taxes**. They further indicate they will not support “tax restructuring” to increase revenue so the status quo may be maintained. Per the request of several superintendents, the letter and list of businesses are attached for your review.

Race to the Top application – The US Dept. of Education released further guidelines and the application for Race to the Top funds this week. The application deadline for states is mid-January. Thus, the Chairs of both the House and Senate Education Committees indicated Thursday that Michigan needs to pass legislation prior to the end of the calendar year to be part of the State’s application for these funds. Bills currently before the Senate Education Committee include: SBs 981-983 – Failing Schools, SB 965 – Alternative Certification, and SBs 925-926 – Schools of Excellence (ie, high quality charter schools). Additionally, the House Ed Chair indicated he will hold two committee meetings per week on these issues and is requesting input from the school community in support of these measures. The five areas expected to be part of Michigan’s application include high quality charters / expansion of charter cap, failing schools, alternative certification, principal and superintendent certification, and teacher / principal evaluation tied to student performance.

Recently Introduced Legislation

SB 981 Failing Schools, sponsored by Sen. Kuipers, would provide certain measures to identify and restructure failing schools (amends Revised School Code)

SB 982 Failing Schools, sponsored by Sen. Kuipers, would provide changes in collective bargaining act to allow more flexibility in failing schools (amends PERA)

SB 983 Failing Schools, sponsored by Sen. Kuipers, would ensure that all per pupil funds attributable to the pupils enrolled at a turnaround school are available to that school (amends State School Aid Act)

HJR 00 Term Limits, sponsored by Rep. Bledsoe, would revise term limits (constitutional amendment) to provide for a combination of 14 years total legislative service.

HB 5594 Noninstructional Services, sponsored by Rep. Agema, would require contracting and competitive bidding for certain noninstructional services.

HB 5596 Teacher Certification, sponsored by Rep. Pavlov, would provide for an alternative program for teacher certification.