



Ionia County Intermediate School District
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Partners in building full potential

COLLABORATION INTEGRITY INNOVATION SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY DATA-DRIVEN

Board Report — August 13, 2026

- **ICISD Special Education Millage:** I would like to thank voters for their overwhelming approval of the renewal and restoration of the Ionia County Special Education Millage on August 4, 2026. This was an important victory for not only county students who directly receive the support of these specialized services and programs but all students in every district as this renewal and restoration helps keep general education funding in the classrooms. Our local school districts greatly appreciate the overwhelming community support as it demonstrates a strong understanding for the additional support some students require in addition to showing once again how much the community values their local school districts.
- **201 E. Main St:** Restoration work from water damage has been completed at 201 E. Main St. in Ionia, the home we own for providing services for one of our three Transitions programs. We are seeking approval to list for sale the real property located at 201 East Main Street, Ionia, MI, which has been determined to no longer be the best location to meet the needs and purposes of these Transition students that utilize this space. This next step will gauge potential interest and value in the property to help guide our future decisions. We are also seeking the approval to authorize the Superintendent to execute all necessary documents for any and all transactions regarding the property.
- **Fire System Upgrade:** As part of the ongoing and upcoming renovation and remodeling work at the Administration Building, the existing fire alarm system was planned for replacement. Although part of the overall building project scope we have been planning for, advance approval of this specific component is necessary in order for planning to continue and stay on the overall project schedule. This upgrade is necessary regardless of the other possible renovations and therefore has been budgeted previously for replacement.
- **Legislative Update:** Below are some legislative areas to be aware of and keep an eye on as shared by our partners at the School Equity Caucus.

Literacy implementation: Funding is appropriated and the training mandates are law —now come the details that statutes never specify: who pays for training time in districts that can't find substitutes, whether coaching reaches the buildings with the highest turnover, and whether compliance gets measured by paperwork or practice. The states that have moved their reading achievement outcomes did it with years of sustained coaching and support, not mandates alone. We need to watch the difference between policies that fund capacity and policies that assume it.

Predictable Funding: This year's House budget proposal included provisions that would have withheld up to 20 percent of a district's state funding based on certain local spending and policy decisions. Those provisions came out in conference, but similar ideas are likely to return as standalone bills or in next year's budget talks. Our position should remain the same: the foundation allowance exists to educate students, and it only works when districts can depend on it. Dollars should follow students, and funding certainty is what makes every local decision possible.

State Gubernatorial Election: Governor Whitmer is term-limited, and the candidates to succeed her spent late July debating school policy. Wherever you sit politically, one question matters for everything above: will the next administration's first budget fund the weighted formula on the schedule now in statute?

MSPERS: More than a fifth of a typical district's payroll services is MSPERS pension debt before a single current teacher is paid. Any relief effort — rate caps, state assumption, surplus paydown — deserves scrutiny on one principle: relief structured as a percentage of payroll flows most to the largest payrolls, which is not the same as the greatest need. Design does matter.

Federal Education Policy: The federal administration's FY27 proposal would eliminate dedicated afterschool funding (21st CCLC) and fold it into a smaller block grant. House appropriators rejected that approach in June, but the process runs for months, and Title I consolidation ideas travel in the same convoy. Michigan just committed significant state dollars to out-of-school time — a federal retreat would force the next Legislature to choose between backfilling and letting programs close, concentrated in the communities least able to absorb it. Federal appropriations are Michigan school finance by other means and we must consider them that way.