



INVESTING IN MICHIGAN'S STUDENTS, TEACHERS, & SCHOOLS

Nominations Open for Michigan Teacher of the Year

Each year, the Michigan Dept. of Education's Teacher of the Year program honors and recognizes teachers from across Michigan. Teacher of the Year awardees have an opportunity to learn more about educational initiatives and policies at the state level and provide input on how to better serve Michigan students.

People wishing to nominate a teacher for this program are asked to use the online form by Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. To be eligible, a nominee must have a valid Michigan teaching certificate and at least five years of certificated teaching experience in Michigan, and they must be in good standing with their school or district. Nominations are open to the public, and anyone can submit a nomination. More information and the submission form can be found at michigan.gov/mde.

MI Senate Awards Students \$1 Million in Ticket to Tuition FAFSA Sweepstakes

As part of the 2025 state budget, Michigan Senate Democrats secured funding to encourage students across the state to complete the Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA). The Ticket to Tuition sweepstakes is designed to encourage FAFSA completion and connect students to resources that make college or skills training more affordable and accessible. By completing the FAFSA, students are also gaining access to valuable federal and state programs.

In its first year, the Ticket to Tuition sweepstakes awarded forty \$10,000 prizes and ten \$50,000 prizes. More than 17,000 Michigan students entered for a chance to win in the contest's first year. Senate Democrats continue to encourage all students to complete their FAFSA and are working to continue incentives for participating families.



State Senator
Sue Shink
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Prepared by the Michigan Legislature

Dear Neighbor,

Where has summer gone? Kids are our future, and regardless of their interests, they all deserve our best efforts to set them up for success.

I am committed to the well-being and success of the kids and parents in our community. I am working hard for your family.

As always, if you have any feedback on legislation, ideas you want to share, or need any assistance navigating state departments, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Sue Shink

Sue Shink
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Get the Latest from Our Team

Sign up for my e-newsletter or learn more about upcoming events by scanning the QR code with your phone or visiting SenatorShink.com.



SUPPORTING BRIGHT FUTURES

BACK-TO-SCHOOL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



State Senator Sue Shink

PROUDLY SERVING MICHIGAN'S 14TH DISTRICT

2025 BUDGET WINS FOR KIDS

Lowering Costs and Investing in Students

My Senate colleagues and I passed a bold state budget last year, securing transformative investments for students, schools, and staff all across Michigan and right here in District 14. **The education budgets included:**

Expanded Free Breakfast and Lunch to All Students

Ensured that all Michigan public school students, including the nearly 64,000 students in Washtenaw and Jackson counties for the '24-'25 school year, could receive free breakfast and lunch so they could focus on their learning.

Prepared More Kids for Kindergarten

Increased eligibility to 400% of poverty for the Great Start Readiness Pre-K Program, meaning families making \$120,000 or less can receive free Pre-K that opens more opportunities for children to gain early math, reading, and thinking skills.

Strengthened Higher Education Opportunities

Expanded access to free community college for all students in every part of the state with the Community College Guarantee, including right here at colleges such as Washtenaw Community College and Jackson College.

Supported Youth to Meet Proficiency Standards

Equipped districts with the tools to ensure all students are proficient in English language arts and mathematics and are prepared to succeed in high school and beyond.

- **\$150 million** for the MI Kids Back on Track program, which includes tutoring and literacy support.
- **\$23 million** for literacy coaches and extended instructional time, aligned with the science of reading and dyslexia support.
- **\$10 million** for early literacy grants to support evidence-based reading instruction.

& POLICY WINS FOR FAMILIES

- I. **Expanded** use of funds for at-risk schools to decrease K-3 teacher-to-student ratios and support the recruitment and retention of teachers. *Public Act 120 of 2024*
- II. **Secured** greater resources to support Michigan students and teachers. *Public Act 127 of 2024*
- III. **Provided** support to improve literacy rates and help students with dyslexia. *Public Acts 146 & 147 of 2024*
- IV. **Increased** funding for mental health support and improved school safety. *Public Act 148 of 2024*
- V. **Expanded** Michigan Reconnect to include people 21-24 who want a higher education degree free of charge at their in-district community college. *Public Act 119 of 2023*
- VI. **Proposed** investing \$170 million in Career and Technical Education in the 2026 Senate budget for K-12 districts and ISDs in Michigan.

Giving Parents the Building Blocks They Need to Thrive

As the cost of everything from groceries and gas to health care and housing continues to rise under the Trump administration and its chaotic policies, the cost of raising a child is no exception. To provide much-needed financial relief to working families, Michigan Senate Democrats have introduced bold, transformative legislation to provide the "Building Blocks" Michigan needs to make raising kids more affordable for families in every corner of the state and give young kids the best start possible.

The Building Blocks package takes a multi-angled approach to cutting the cost of parenting by:

- Providing a significant **income boost to working families** through a targeted Working Parents Tax Cut;
- Expanding Rx Kids statewide, a first-of-its-kind program that provides **cash payments to new mothers** and their babies;
- **Tackling the childcare crisis** from both the demand and supply side;



Read more about our proposal to lower the cost of parenting by scanning the QR code with your phone or visiting SenateDems.com/Building-Blocks

KEEPING KIDS SAFE

Senate Passes Slate of Gun Safety Legislation to Keep Kids Safe

With gun violence serving as the leading cause of death for kids in Michigan and around the country, we need to keep working to strengthen our laws and keep our families safe. In recent years, Michigan Democrats ushered a slate of gun safety policies into law to address this crisis, including requiring safe storage to keep guns out of the hands of children, strengthening background checks, establishing a Red Flag law, disarming domestic abusers, and investing in community violence intervention programs. Building on these efforts, the Senate recently advanced three additional policies to keep Michiganders safe from senseless violence. **Among the commonsense gun safety measures passed were bills to:**

- **Prohibit bump stocks**, a device that can convert semi-automatic firearms into machine guns in a matter of minutes;
- **Address ghost guns**, which are fully functioning, untraceable firearms and the fastest-growing gun safety problem facing our country.

SAFE STORAGE SAVES LIVES

How You Can Help Build Safer Communities

While my colleagues and I in the Legislature work to advance gun-sense policies — we all have a part to play in building safer communities. Under our state's new Secure Storage Law, Michigan gun owners are legally responsible for ensuring their firearms are stored in a safe manner.

Safe storage can reduce the risk of both intentional and unintentional injuries and deaths, as well as lower the rates of firearm theft. Next time you store your firearm, ensure it is unloaded, locked, and kept separate from ammunition. If you don't have a gun lock but need one, free locks can be obtained through Project ChildSafe police partners across the state. Find one near you at ProjectChildSafe.org.

Stopping for School Buses

With students back to school, we'll be sharing the road with school buses again. Here's a reminder on what to do when a school bus stops on different road types.

TWO-LANE ROADWAY

When a school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



MULTI-LANE ROADWAY WITH A CENTER TURNING LANE

When a school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



FOUR-LANE ROADWAY WITHOUT A MEDIAN SEPARATION

When a school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



DIVIDED HIGHWAY OF FOUR LANES OR MORE WITH A MEDIAN SEPARATION

When a school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop.

