

**School Aid and Department of Education
Subcommittee of the House Standing Committee on Appropriations**

April 10, 2019

Good afternoon members of the Committee. I am Brian Broderick, Executive Director of the Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools.

MANS represents over 400 pre-K through 12 schools (371 of which are K-12) from the seven Catholic Dioceses in the state, Christian Schools International and the schools in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. In total MANS membership accounts for nearly 85% of the nonpublic school students in the state of Michigan.

Thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to come before the Committee today to address several items that are included, and some that are not included in the Administration's 2020 fiscal year budget.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANDATES: The State of Michigan has placed numerous health, safety, and welfare regulations upon all schools in Michigan. These include criminal background checks, conducting safety drills, disposal of hazardous chemicals such as mercury, and maintain immunizations records, to name a few. Unlike public schools which are compensated for these important safety regulations through the per pupil foundation allowance, nonpublic schools have no such compensation. The 2017 and 2018 School Aid Budgets included \$2.5 million to reimburse nonpublic schools for these requirements. In 2019 the amount appropriated was \$250,000. None of this money has been spent due to litigation, although schools have applied for reimbursement. This year's Executive Budget recommendation does not include a similar appropriation. MANS asks that you support reinstatement of \$250,000.00 of general fund dollars in the 2020 School Aid budget for the purpose of reimbursing non-public schools that keep Michigan students safe. This amount, combined with unexpended funds from prior years, would cover the expenses incurred by nonpublic schools in the 2019-2020 school year. We see this as a matter of fairness, in that all kids in state recognized schools are entitled to be safe.

ROBOTICS AND SCIENCE OLYMPIAD: The State encourages expanded opportunities for all students in science education skills by assisting school districts and nonpublic schools to participate in FIRST Robotics and Science Olympiad events and competitions. Grant funds have been available to provide financial support for coaching, materials, and travels expenses related to these programs. In FY18 and FY19, \$300,000 was appropriated each year for nonpublic schools to participate in a competitive grant program. The Governor's FY20 budget does not include this funding. These are skills in which all students in Michigan should be encouraged to excel. These are typically extracurricular activities and not part of core curriculum. Indeed, there are examples where public school students actually participate on the nonpublic school team. MANS requests support reinstatement of the \$300,000 appropriation for nonpublic schools to compete for grants in the FIRST Robotics and Science Olympiad programs.

HYDRATION STATIONS: The Governor has made a supplemental budget request of \$60 million to install hydration stations in public school buildings across the state. Governor Whitmer has said, "Clean water is a fundamental human right. Let's make sure every community has safe, clean drinking water." We could not agree more. We believe that all students in the state should have access to clean drinking water no matter what school they attend. In fact several years ago funds were provided to both public and nonpublic schools for water testing. Please support the inclusion of nonpublic schools in any appropriation made for hydration stations in school buildings.

Finally, a number of policy and budget issues touch the operation and vitality of nonpublic schools. From school safety and security to shared time funding and teacher certification, Michigan's nonpublic schools feel the impact of decisions made by the legislature. We urge you to consider the impact of policy and budget decision on Michigan's nonpublic schools and their 100,000 students, making decisions with the best of interests of all of Michigan's students in mind, no matter where they attend school.

I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.