

ATTRACT

PREPARE

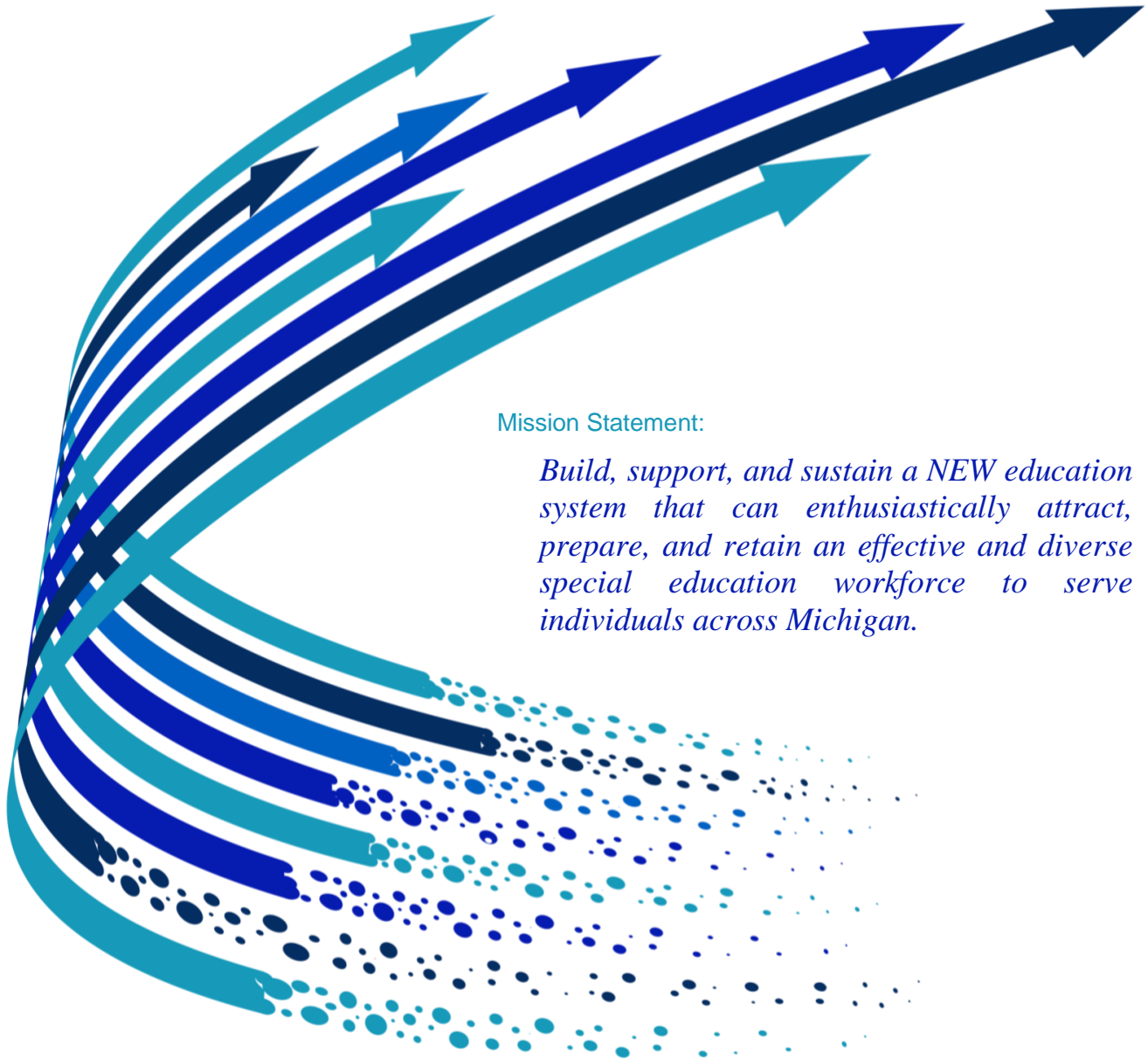
RETAIN



# OPTIMISE

OPENING THE PIPELINE OF TALENT  
INTO MICHIGAN'S SPECIAL EDUCATION

ENERGY INTO ACTION



Mission Statement:

*Build, support, and sustain a NEW education system that can enthusiastically attract, prepare, and retain an effective and diverse special education workforce to serve individuals across Michigan.*

## Summary of Work *January 2023*

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## SUMMARY OF WORK TO DATE

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### LISTENING SESSIONS:

#### ORGANIZATIONS/INSTITUTIONS\*:

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- Autism Alliance
- Disability Rights of Michigan
- General Education Leadership Network (GELN)
- Launch Michigan
- Mental Health Workgroup
- Michigan Alliance for Families
- Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)
- Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP)
- Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)
- Michigan Association of School Social Workers (MASSW)
- Michigan Department of Education, Office of Educator Excellence
- Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education
- Michigan Education Association (MEA)
- Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA)
- Michigan Speech-Language Hearing Association (MSHA)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Special Education Instructional Leadership Network (SEILN)
- *Early On, Start Early and a director of the Early On Michigan Foundation Board of Directors.*
- *American Federation of Teachers- Michigan*
- *Michigan Council for Exceptional Children*

#### SUMMARY OF LISTENING SESSIONS

##### **Identified Barriers:**

- Public perception
- Staff perception
- Out of state transfers
- Certification/approvals/endorsements
- Lack of respect, voice, support
- Working conditions
- Workload
- Pay and benefits
- Retirement security
- Restrictions on bargaining, placement
- Evaluation system
- Decline in enrollment in teacher prep
- Disconnect between current preparation programs and the need at the school level

- Size of some university programs
- Lack of MTSS

**Additional Input:**

- All shared a willingness to help and support the work of the task force
- Role of ISD's
- Positive about the design of the task force including task force leads not affiliated directly with any Michigan organization, MDE or school district
- Substitute teacher crisis
- Diversity of workforce

**EDUCATOR PREPARATION INSTITUTIONS - HIGHER EDUCATION**

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A total of forty invitations were sent to participate in three virtual sessions to gather input and feedback regarding the special educator shortage. The sessions had a total of twenty-one participants from the following colleges and universities:

- Alma
- Calvin
- Central Michigan University
- Cornerstone
- Eastern Michigan University
- Ferris State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Madonna
- Michigan State University
- Northern Michigan University
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Siena Heights
- University of Michigan - Flint
- Wayne State University
- Western Michigan University

SUMMARY OF LISTENING SESSIONS WITH COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

- Barriers:
  - Credentialing/MARSE rules
  - Childcare
  - MTTC
  - Funding for teacher prep programs
  - Length of SE prep programs
  - Tuition costs
  - Teacher wages
  - Induction
  - Hiring of student teachers, not prepared, lack of support
  - Lack of supervising teachers
  - Travel distance to college/university
  - Negative perceptions of teachers
  - Staffing at university to offer so many categoricals

- Difficulty accessing funding that is available to students
- Other:
  - Incentives for declarations and completers
  - Recruit from the field
  - Build relationships with locals/ISDs
  - Regional support
  - Grow Your Own
  - Online universities—fewer credits (out of state?)
  - Lack of diversity of applicants
  - Scholarships needed for key positions
  - EO personnel standards

## GOVERNMENTAL BRIEFINGS

- Senate Republican Caucus Education advisor-Anne Blankenhorn
- House Republican Caucus Education advisor-Eva Cline
- Education Advisor to the Governor-Stephanie O'Dea
- *Meeting in February with Chief of Staff for Senator Polehanki, chair of the Senate Education Committee*

## SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS:

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- Current focus is on the budget
- Interest in Grow Your Own, student teacher support
- Teacher recruitment
- Want feedback/language suggestions
- Submission of a set of Task Force Recommendations to the Governor's Education Advisor

## SPECIAL EDUCATION CREDENTIALING WORKGROUP

- Meeting held with Rebecca and Gina to identify policies and rules
- Action Team Member identification-June 9 with Core Team
- 20 members selected to represent stakeholder groups
- Meetings held in June, July, August and September
- Recommendations for B-5 and K-12 went to go to Core Team Oct. 13
- Core Team discussions completed
- Meeting with Dr. Rice to share initial recommendations re: Credentialing
- Meeting set up with OSE/MDE to determine next steps regarding concepts for change
- *Meeting in February to plan the standards setting work needing to be done regarding the credentialing recommendation*

## BRANDING

- Branding Completed – OPTIMISE

## SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Connection with the Governor's office and the Indiana Department of Education on this data collection in Indiana and need in Michigan

Task Force approved recommendation to request funding for a supply and demand system for Michigan. *The recommendation has been shared with the governor's office.*

## IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES

- Large Stakeholder group meetings to assist in prioritizing future work-Convening for virtual work beginning October 18.
- Core Team meets Nov. 28 to finalize recommendations for work priorities.
  - To be shared with the OPTIMISE Task Force on Dec. 2, 2022
- *January-have begun to set up action teams around Early On, School Psychologists, Credentialing/Standards, Paraeducators, and Principal Support*

## PARTICIPATION IN GELN/SEILN VIRTUAL MEETINGS TO ASSIST WITH COORDINATION OF WORK

- Monthly coordination by Cheryl-Marie Manson, VanBuren ISD
- Presentation to SEILN by Laurie

## ELEVATING THE PROFESSION CAMPAIGN

- Meeting with Gerri Allen (MSPRA) to begin to outline components of a campaign
- Development of rfp underway
- Discussion underway with a PR firm regarding components of a campaign to elevate the profession
- *CR Marketing is developing our website and beginning the work around the campaign*
- *Video storytelling will be done at the MCEC conference in March*

## TASK FORCE

- Document completed to outline task force, core team and action teams' role and composition
- Share with core team via email
- Invitations sent to most Task Force member organizations; in process of securing parent and student names.
- First virtual meeting held on December 2. Updates provided and approval given of several recommendations regarding funding for activities.

## SURVEY REGARDING VACANCIES

- Survey questions developed in conjunction with MAASE
- Working with MAASE, MAISA and SEILN to finalize development and deploy the survey
- Survey deployed; preliminary results anticipated at the end of November; follow-up likely to occur in early December

- Survey completed; preliminary results determined outlining several areas of very high need. Preliminary results shared with MAASE and the core team.
- Further analysis under way of survey results

## BRIEFINGS WITH GOVERNOR'S EDUCATION ADVISOR AND LEGISLATIVE ADVISORS

- Held on October 29, November 1, 2022 and *January 18, 2023*

## SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

- Development in process for GYO, Induction and Mentoring, Supply and Demand system, recruitment efforts
- Task Force has approved; shared with governor's office.

## COMMUNICATION

- Website development-have begun discussion about a website to communicate with ALL stakeholders; funding request made to engage marketing firm to assist with landing page; domain name purchased
- All day presentation to MAASE on Dec. 6- OPTIMIZE activities to date and in the future
- Updates given to E-CAN
- Discussion with Talent Together around GYO work
- *Website development is underway*
- *Meeting held with Disability Rights of Michigan to give them an update*

## FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Follow up workgroup to be convened to continue future work related to the credentialing recommendations
- Core Team to make recommendations to the task force regarding prioritized barriers-completed
- RFP for campaign to change the perception of being a special educator
- New Action Team planning underway

## TASK FORCE

- Document completed to outline task force, core team and action teams' role and composition
- Shared with core team
- Invitations sent to Task Force member organizations and other required members
- To date, 20 Task Force members confirmed
- First meeting held Dec. 2 from 9-11; update provided on our work. Approval given of budget recommendations around GYO, Induction and Mentoring, Supply and Demand system, PR campaign around elevating the profession

## TASK FORCE MEMBERS\*

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**Shailee Patel** - LEA  
**Earl Wiman** - MEA/MFT  
**Tina Kerr** - MASA  
**Abby Cypher** - Executive Director - MAASE  
**John Severson** - MAISA  
**Colin Ripmaster** - MASSP  
**Kanika Littleton** - Michigan Alliance for Families  
**Teri Pettit** - SEAC  
**Rachel Toloday** - Student  
**Joe Lubig** - IHE  
**Rebecca McIntyre** – MDE  
**Stephanie O’Dea** – Governor’s Office  
**Alexa Kramer** – Small Business Association  
**Adam Zemke** - Launch Michigan  
**Jennifer Gard** – Parent  
**Sarah Robinson** - Parent  
**Lauren Mangus** - MASP  
**Kathy Weaver** – MASSW  
**Anthony Strevett** - MSHA  
**Cheryl Levine** - S. E. Mediation Svcs.

\* Additional members pending

## CORE TEAM MEMBERS

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**Abby Cypher**  
Executive Director/MAASE

**Rachel Fuerer**  
Director of Special Education/Eastern UP ISD and Director SEILN

**Gina Garner**  
Educator Preparation and Accreditation, Michigan Department of Education

**Scott Koenigsknecht**



Deputy Superintendent, Michigan Department of Education

**Paula Lancaster**

Dean, College of Education and Human Services, Central Michigan University

**Kanika Littleton**

Director, Michigan Alliance for Families

**Cheryl-Marie Manson**

Director of Instructional Services, Van Buren ISD

**Dave Manson**

Superintendent/Van Buren ISD

**Teri Rink**

Director, Office of Special Education, Michigan Department of Education

**Kathy Fortino**

Project Manager

**Laurie VanderPloeg**

Consultant