



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

October 25, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors with Schools Identified as Focus

FROM: Linda Forward, Director *Linda Forward*
Office of Education Improvement and Innovation

CC: Principal/PSA Administrator
ISD Superintendent

SUBJECT: Title I Focus Schools Parent Identification and Notification Letters and
the Choice/Transfer Option Letters

Earlier this summer, districts with **Title I Focus schools** were advised of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* and the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver requirements, including:

- ◆ **Letter of Identification and Notification** – A letter must be sent to parents of students enrolled in a Focus school named this summer to the 2013 cohort of Focus schools. The letter must be sent to parents of those students enrolled in the 2012-2013 school year and those anticipated by the district to enroll in a Focus school for the 2013-2014 school year. To be included in the letter are the reasons for its identification and the school's and district's plans to close the achievement gap. The MDE has determined this letter must be sent so that it will be received by parents before the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

The MDE will monitor district and school compliance with the requirement that letters were sent through district submission of copies of the signed original letters for each Title I Focus school in the district via upload of the letters in the Michigan Electronic Grants System Plus (MEGS+). Districts should be prepared to begin submitting copies of the letters to the MDE in mid-December 2013. Specific directions about submission of the documents in MEGS+ will be provided to districts and schools later in the fall.

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Districts were also advised that if the district elected to offer parents the Choice/Transfer and transportation option to transfer students to another school that is not identified as a 2012 or 2013 cohort Priority school, or a 2013 cohort Focus school, parents should be provided notice that includes specific details regarding the parents' right to transfer their student to another public school, including:

- ◆ Notice that transportation will be provided subject to certain cost limitations
- ◆ Notice that if the district receives more applications than can be accommodated, priority will be given to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families.
- ◆ A list of Choice/Transfer option schools made available by the district to parents and students. The option schools must not be identified by the MDE as a Priority school in the 2012 or 2013 cohort, or identified as a Focus school for the 2013 school year (recommend that parents be provided a list of eligible schools)
- ◆ Other information to help parents decide which school(s) would be best for their student(s)
- ◆ Parents should be provided at least 14 days to respond to the school or district to indicate the request.

The MDE will monitor district and school compliance with the requirement that if the district elected to offer the Choice/Transfer option to parents, letters were sent to parents through the district's submission of copies of the signed original letters for each Title I Focus school in the district via upload of the letters in the Michigan Electronic Grants System Plus (MEGS+). Districts should be prepared to begin submitting copies of the letters to the MDE in mid-December 2013. Also to be submitted via MEGS+ are the district policy and procedures for implementation of the district's Choice/Transfer option elected for the 2013-2014 school year. Specific directions about submission of the documents in MEGS+ will be provided to districts and schools later in the fall.

Please contact Greg Olszta, Consultant, if you have any questions olsztag@michigan.gov or 517.241.4715.

cc: Principal/PSA Administrator
ISD Superintendent