

## “Parent Empowerment Education Reform Package”

### OVERVIEW:

Michigan Catholic Conference advocates for **expanded choice in education** so that parents, who are the primary educators of their child, are able to choose the best setting for their child’s education. Current policy places limits on where children are educated. By expanding existing educational options through the policies detailed below, **parents will have greater opportunity to choose** where and how their child is educated. Education reform that benefits all students in public schools, along with equal treatment under the law for non-public schools, must be recognized and pursued.

### LEGISLATIVE DETAILS

In mid-September legislation was introduced in the State Senate that would reform education policies in the State of Michigan. Highlights of the “Parent Empowerment Education Reform Package” are:

- **Senate Bill 618:** Eliminates the cap on the number of public school academies (charter schools) that are allowed in Michigan, which currently stands at 150. The bill would also allow an authorizing body to operate a charter school at more than one location.
- **Senate Bill 619:** Deletes the limit on the number of contracts that may be issued for schools of excellence that are cyber schools.
- **Senate Bill 620:** Allows a school to convert from a traditional public school to a charter school with the support of at least 51% of teachers or 51% of parents or guardians of students at a school.
- **Senate Bill 621:** Broadens geographical boundaries to the Intermediate School District (ISD) or contiguous ISD if the local public school district or contiguous district is unable to provide shared time services to the requesting nonpublic school student.
- **Senate Bills 622 and 623:** Removes the mandate for nonpublic students to first enroll in a local public school district class before enrolling in the student’s desired post-secondary course.
- **Senate Bill 624:** Removes geographical boundaries for schools of choice; allows a student to enroll in any public school district in the state provided the student is a resident of Michigan and the participating school has capacity.

### MCC ADVOCACY

Michigan Catholic Conference **will work with members and their staff** to garner support for this package of bills. Senate Bills 618-620 and SB 624 expand educational opportunities for parents and their children by breaking down traditional policies and boundaries. The proposed legislation allows families to select from a widening range of options of how their child is educated, where that education takes place, and who provides the instruction. Senate Bill 621 expands shared time boundaries, which benefits public schools by allowing the participating public school to receive a pro-rated foundation allowance, and nonpublic schools, which can provide students with access to a wider selection of noncore classes not offered at the nonpublic school. SBs 622-623 eliminate the unnecessary burden/requirement for nonpublic school students to first enroll in a public high school course in order to take a class at a post-secondary institution.