

**The Arc Michigan Education Committee
Meeting Minutes**

October 7, 2020

Meeting came to order at 3:30pm via Zoom.

Present: Maggie Kolk, Kenya Harper-Black, Michelle Driscoll, Deb Moffat, Darlene Heard-Thomas

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been no education committee meetings since March 2020. Due to Count Day, there was no SEAC meeting today. SEAC's October meeting will be on 10/8/2020.

The Arc Michigan Board approved the education committee's Position Statement on Universal Design for Learning in March 2020.

Committee members discussed the new bill package which focuses on identifying and intervening to help Michigan students with dyslexia.

Summary of bill package-

A bipartisan group of state senators introduced legislation aimed at improving child literacy in Michigan.

Four bills, introduced by Sens. Jeff Irwin, Dayna Polehanki, Jim Runestad and Lana Theis, address factors that currently impact literacy performance for many Michigan children.

The legislation will specifically focus on identifying and intervening to help students with dyslexia. The bills will help ensure that educators are adequately trained to understand dyslexia, to identify students early on who are struggling with learning the code and to teach the students to break the code.

"Despite the importance of literacy and the prevalence of dyslexia, Michigan has no statewide strategy to screen and treat the most common language-based learning disability in existence: dyslexia," Irwin said in a press release.

The bill package includes:

- [Senate Bill 1172](#), that would establish a five-member advisory committee tasked with developing a dyslexia resource guide.
- [Senate Bill 1173](#), that would require school districts to screen children during Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade and 3rd grade for reading difficulties using a universal screening assessment. If the assessment indicates that a child is experiencing difficulty learning to decode, the school district shall ensure that a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is provided.

- [Senate Bill 1174](#), that would require teacher preparation institutions to offer instruction on the characteristics of dyslexia, the consequences of dyslexia, evidence-based interventions and accommodations for children with dyslexia, and methods to develop a classroom infrastructure that meets the needs of students with an MTSS in place.
- [Senate Bill 1175](#), that would only allow new teaching certificates to be issued to individuals who have received instruction on the five areas outlined in SB 1174.

The education committee members in attendance agree that the bill package is necessary (and overdue) to address the current literacy issues with many students. Maggie will advise Sherri that the education committee does not have any objections to the bills.

We discussed the current education guidance related to COVID-19 coming out from MDE-OSE and Maggie suggested inviting an Arc US representative to talk with our committee about education and COVID-19 to get a national perspective on education issues arising during the pandemic. Maggie will reach out to Arc US to see if someone is available to speak with us at a future meeting.

The education committee will continue to meet via the Zoom platform until further notice. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 from 3:30-4:30.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Driscoll