

# BACKtoSCHOOL

2018



STATE SENATOR

**DALE W. ZORN**

SENATE DISTRICT 17

**TOLL FREE** 855.347.8017

**E-MAIL** [sendzorn@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sendzorn@senate.michigan.gov)

**VISIT** [www.SenatorDaleZorn.com](http://www.SenatorDaleZorn.com)



## DEAR NEIGHBOR:

As summer winds down, students and their families are busy making plans for the start of school. After all, there's old friends to see, new teachers to meet and so much to learn!

Investing in education is one of my top priorities. It's important that our schools have the resources to prepare our students for the opportunities and challenges ahead. It's also vital to ensure our kids have a safe place to learn.

I am pleased to share this Back to School report with you. From information on record school funding to school safety and more, I hope this newsletter is informative and useful to you.

Best wishes to all for a successful school year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale W. Zorn".

*Success in school starts with reading. I look forward to visiting elementary classrooms during March is Reading Month as a guest reader. It's a great way to talk with students about the importance of reading.*



## ZORN: K-12 EDUCATION BUDGET GETS AN "A"

The Legislature again increased support for our schools, investing \$14.8 billion in education – *the most in state history!*

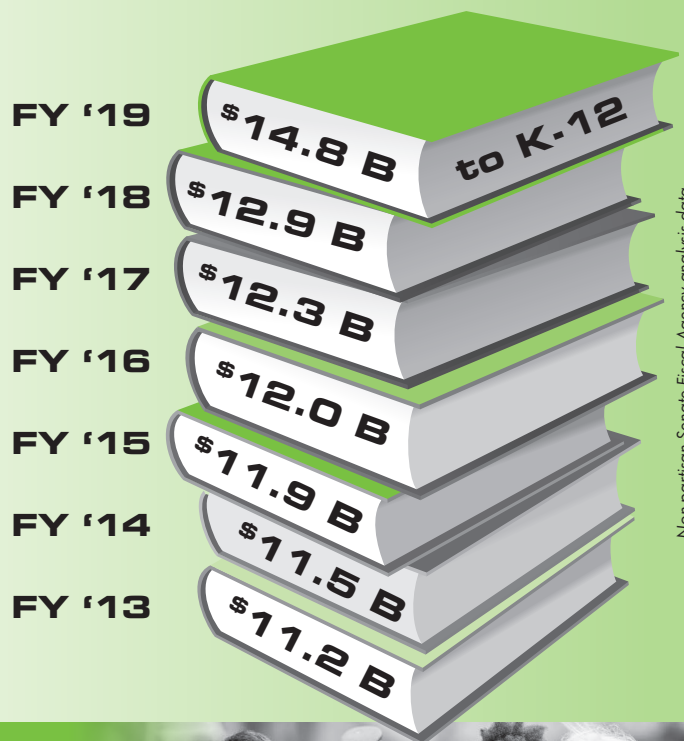
Schools will see a \$120 to \$240 per-pupil increase in the foundation allowance. This is the largest per-student increase in over 10 years. We also invested in preschool and early literacy programs, career and technical education and a new special education program for Early On services. In addition, \$30 million will be set aside for a school mental health and support services fund.

We directed \$1.3 billion to help pay down schools' retirement costs so more dollars can be focused on the classroom.

Funding for community colleges and higher education also received a boost. Together, nearly 46 cents of every state tax dollar goes to education!

(HB 5579; PA 265 of 2018)

## K-12 EDUCATION FUNDING STATE FUNDING FROM STATE RESOURCES



## EARLY LITERACY INVESTMENT

Since 2017, the Legislature has invested more than \$60 million to help young students read at grade level by third grade. That's when students take the step from learning to read to reading to learn. The funding is designated for early literacy coaches, student tutoring, specialized teacher training, read-at-home plans to involve parents and summer reading programs. The extra support for K-3 students who struggle to read is in addition to regular classroom reading instruction.



## ZORN OBTAINS GRANT TO EASE REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION

Community colleges are an important part of higher education. One of the issues many colleges encounter has to do with incoming high school graduates needing remedial education to take introductory level college courses. These courses are not eligible for student financial aid, have a low success rate and distract from the mission of providing college level courses.

Last year, a group of local education leaders and my office studied ways to improve partnerships between area schools, Jackson College and Monroe Community College to reduce the need for remedial education. The workgroup selected the Dana Center at the University of Texas Austin to help local colleges, ISDs and K-12 schools work together on this issue.

I worked to secure a \$25,000 grant in the 2019 School Aid budget to continue this worthwhile project. Everyone wins when students find the best path to academic success.



# ZORN BACKS SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

Every parent wants to know their child is safe at school. My priority is to ensure schools have the resources to protect our students and teachers. The Senate recently passed a plan to strengthen safety in our schools. Our measure would:

- Create the Office of School Safety within the State Police to offer staff training and update school safety practices;
- Develop training standards for active violence situations;
- Ensure schools work with law enforcement to conduct regular safety assessments;
- Require schools to consult with law enforcement on school upgrades;
- Require schools to report threats of violence;
- Permanently extend the OK2SAY tip program; and
- Ensure schools provide emergency information to the State Police.

I also supported \$58 million in the state budget for school safety initiatives such as mental health programs and safety improvement grants.



## ROBOTICS PROGRAM ENCOURAGES STEM SKILLS

At 508 teams strong, Michigan has the most high school robotics teams in the nation! The mentor-based FIRST robotics programs help students develop science, technology and engineering skills through designing and building robots for competition.

Michigan claimed two of the four winning teams in the high school division of the 2018 FIRST Robotics World Championship.

The competition attracted hundreds of teams from all over the U.S. and more than 40 countries.

Students participating in FIRST programs learn problem-solving and in-demand skills that will help prepare them for jobs today and tomorrow. Michigan has supported FIRST robotics with more than \$12 million since 2014.



Stop the Silence. Help End the Violence.

8-555-OK2SAY (855-565-2729) • Text: 652729 (OK2SAY)  
Web: [www.michigan.gov/ok2say](http://www.michigan.gov/ok2say) • E-mail: [OK2SAY@mi.gov](mailto:OK2SAY@mi.gov)

STATE SENATOR  
**DALE W. ZORN**

Michigan's OK2SAY program enables students, teachers and others to confidentially report anything they feel threatens their safety or the safety of others. Tips can be submitted by e-mail at [OK2SAY@mi.gov](mailto:OK2SAY@mi.gov), telephone at 855-565-2729 (8-555-OK2SAY), text message at 652729 (OK2SAY) or online at [OK2SAY.com](http://OK2SAY.com). A mobile app is available for iPhone and Android.

**More than 14,500 tips have been received since the program launched in 2014. Most tips reported bullying, self-harm, suicide threats and drugs.**

## HELPING STUDENTS PREPARE FOR CAREERS

Michigan will have more than 800,000 career openings to fill through 2024 in fields that are facing a talent shortage, such as information technology, health care, manufacturing and the professional trades. Senate legislation – now law – will help close this talent gap and better prepare our high school students for these career opportunities, college or both.

Called the "Marshall Plan for Talent," the goal is to help students develop the skills they need to find a high-paying, in-demand technology job. The new law will invest \$100 million in scholarships, education programs, workforce development and teacher support through partnerships with schools and businesses.

Other Senate bills recently signed into law include a measure to add a STEM endorsement to the high school diploma of students who take additional STEM courses and a requirement to provide students with the most recent career outlook for in-demand jobs in the area.