



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 27, 2021

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Michael F. Rice, Ph.D., State Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Pivot to a New, Better Normal - MEMO #COVID-19-155

Last week, I had the opportunity to speak with six groups to share and gather reflections on a theme: that the coming school year should be a pivot to a new, better normal, not simply a return to a pre-pandemic normal. In addition to these meetings, I addressed the MASA Mid-Winter Conference last week with the same message, one that I had fleshed out the preceding week with the State Board of Education and then the general public in a Bridge Michigan commentary piece found [here](#).

Over the next several months, MDE will be convening a group of local and ISD superintendents to develop the specifics of a return to a new, better normal, in areas including but not limited to: time, social and emotional learning/children's mental health, literacy, funding, home technology, partnerships, and meeting the needs of individual school children. We will also be meeting with groups of teachers, principals, and others to gather their input and thoughts. Additionally, we will be convening the directors of the state education associations for their reflections and input on this important effort. Ultimately, it is the expectation that these meetings will inform our collective work to improve public education for our children as we come out of this profoundly difficult school year.

Thank you for your continued leadership and partnership in this challenging time.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • 833-633-5788