



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 14, 2021

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

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

**SUBJECT:** AASA Report – An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools  
- MEMO #COVID-19-188

This memorandum is to share a recently released report, Learning 2025: National Commission on Student-Centered, Equity-Focused Education, [An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools](#), from AASA, the School Superintendents Association.

The AASA report outlines the commission’s vision for a focus on holistic systemic redesign around three core components: culture; social, emotional, and cognitive growth model; and resources to support the work.

### **Culture**

Systemic redesign must happen within an intentional, relationships-based culture that is:

- Whole learner focused: The entire system must attend to the social, emotional, cognitive, mental health and trauma-based needs of all learners.
- No learner marginalized: All children, families and staff must be embraced, valued equally and served with equity—regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, socioeconomic circumstance or disability.
- Future driven: Schools must routinely anticipate forthcoming changes in the career landscape to inform all decisions today.

### **Social, Emotional, Cognitive Growth Model**

Learning must entirely be re-oriented around the learner.

- To meet all learners’ social, emotional and cognitive needs, instruction and learning must happen on a growth model continuum where data analytics, planning, learning and evidence of learning operate in a feedback loop to personalize learning.

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## **Resources**

Panels of leaders from schools, associations, states, and federal government must convene to determine how to unlock resources to meet all children's whole learner needs in the following categories:

- Learning accelerators: Broadband must be deemed a public utility so that all learners have access to the technologies necessary to access and accelerate learning.
- Aligned community resources: To meet whole learner needs, educators, learners and learners' families must have access to a robust, multi-tiered system of supports.
- High-quality early learning for all children: All children must engage in high-impact early learning to prepare them to function as co-authors of learning in their K-12 journey.
- Diverse educator pipeline: Educators and staff must represent the learners, families and communities they serve so that true culturally responsive learning is possible.

In its call to action, AASA cites the opportunity created by the COVID-19 pandemic to reshape schools to meet whole learner needs for maximized achievement. Recommendations and planned next steps include articulating the vision through development of "portrait of" profiles for learners, educators, educational leaders, and educational systems. AASA plans to partner with other national organizations to identify demonstration sites in which the plan will be put into practice and results will be monitored and shared.

The AASA report is among a number of informational resources that the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has shared and will share with districts to support recovery efforts. As we've noted previously, in our local control state, we know that there is no single plan or direction appropriate for all of Michigan's 829 local school districts. In the coming months, MDE will continue to provide resources and information that may be of interest to you and your team as you strategize how best to serve children and develop your plans for your district for a new, better normal next year.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance  
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors