March 7, 2022

Dear Pastors, Directors of Parish Life, and Principals,

The Let Michigan Kids Learn (LMKL) petition drive campaign is nearing launch. This is an exciting and hard-earned opportunity to provide greater educational access and funding for both public and non-public education. While we anticipated distribution of petitions and support documentation to become available near the end of January, supply chain issues have complicated printing and distribution of the necessary petitions.

We now anticipate the delivery of petitions to begin sometime next week by the Let MI Kids Learn campaign. The diocese is working with MCC and LMKL to have petition packets on-site for the priests and directors of parish life meeting schedule for Tuesday, March 15, at the Center for Ministry. To ensure materials can be available for your parish, please register for the March 15 event no later than 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, March 10th. If you do not register before the deadline, LMKL will be working to deliver materials to you at another time.

MCC has provided additional print and electronic resources, including bulletin language. Please see the attachment for a letter from MCC policy advocate, Paul Stankewitz, as well as other related information and resources. Schools will also receive additional support information from the Michigan Association of Non Public Schools (MANS).

Parishes and schools are welcome to begin collecting signatures at any time after receiving the petition forms. I recognize and respect that Lent is an incredibly busy season for our parish leaders and staff. To that end, MCC has worked with LMKL to expand the submission deadline to allow time for parishes to hold petition drives after Lent and the celebration of Easter Sunday. The extensions will allow parishes, if desired, to hold petition drives as late as the weekends of April 30 and May 1, as well as May 6 and 7.

We appreciate your efforts as this critical legislation can change the educational opportunities afforded to all children in the state of Michigan. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Cormac Lynn
Superintendent of Schools
989-860-6567
clynn@dioceseofsaginaw.org
Dear Friends:

With the support of the Catholic Bishops of Michigan, Michigan Catholic Conference is supporting the Let MI Kids Learn petition drive to promote educational justice legislation. Michigan children from low-income families would qualify for “Student Opportunity Scholarships” toward their out-of-pocket educational costs at public or nonpublic schools for tutoring, school supplies, computers, and tuition among other expenses. Donors to scholarship organizations would receive a state tax credit. Low-income parishioners and members of your community would benefit from this initiated legislation, regardless of where they send their children to school. The petitions would place for proposed scholarship plan and tax credit before the legislature, and, if approved, would not require the governor’s signature to become law.

**Petition forms will be delivered to your parish in the next week or two, along with two clipboards that will assist the petition gathering.** Forms are also being sent to Catholic schools.

Attached to this email are instructions for petition circulators, instructions for your parish plan, bulletin insert, and bulletin notice.

In addition to the attached resources, the following links may be helpful:

- [Learn about the proposal](#) video
- [Learn how to fill out the petition form](#) video
- [Proposal background](#) resources

Please contact me with any questions or to request more petitions. Thank you for your partnership and cooperation. May God grant you a meaningful Lent.

Paul

**Paul Stankewitz**  
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LET MI KIDS LEARN
PETITION CIRCULATION AND SIGNATURE COLLECTION
INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARISHES

Let MI Kids Learn needs to collect signatures from a minimum of 340,000 registered Michigan voters to place their proposal before the legislature. The goal is to collect as many as 500,000 signatures to signal strong support for the proposal. Your parish will soon be mailed petition forms and instructions. A training video is also available at https://www.letmikidslearn.com/how-to-circulate. This should be viewed by each person gathering signatures.

It is important to note that since the proposal changes two parts of state law, there are two petition forms which must be signed by each registered voter.

There are numerous ways to obtain the necessary signatures to put the Let MI Kids Learn initiative before the legislature. Outlined below are methods which should be most effective.

You may have alternative means of acquiring signatures, so feel free to use these suggestions as you see fit within the structure and capacity of your parish. As the petition drive is currently underway, prompt attention to this matter is critical.

1. **Appoint a Parish Point Person**: This individual should be someone you trust and who can handle this task. They would oversee all parish activities regarding the collection of signatures and would coordinate their submittal to the Let MI Kids Learn campaign. **Please notify MCC of your point person and their contact information.** Completed forms may be mailed to Let MI Kids Learn or collected from your parish if necessary.

2. **Gathering Signatures after Mass**: Signatures may be gathered at the church. It would be best to have tables set up in the gathering space or in the back of church so that individuals might sign the petitions as they leave. If promoted during the homily and/or announcements, this will be the single best opportunity to reach your parishioners and achieve your parish target.

   Since all signatures must be witnessed by the circulator, **do not** have them at the end of the pews to be signed and handed in at the collection.

3. **Canvass Parish Events**: Signatures can be gathered at parish fairs, bingo, sports events, fundraising dinners, Lenten Fish Frys, or any other activity your parish hosts where large numbers of registered voters will be present.

4. **Door to Door**: Signatures can be gathered by parishioners going door to door within their neighborhoods or by going to the homes of fellow parishioners.

**Petitions must be submitted to Let MI Kids Learn organization no later than May 11, 2022.**

Your active participation is crucial to the success of this initiative. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Stankewitz of the Michigan Catholic Conference at 517.316.3585 or Let MI Kids Learn at info@letmikidslearn.com.
Thanks for supporting the needs of Michigan students! You’re the key to winning the battle, and to make every single signature count, it’s important for you to follow the following instructions.

1. Check the volunteer box.

2. As the circulator, you must write in the COUNTY NAME at the top of each petition form. All of the signers of this petition sheet must be registered voters of that county. You can circulate petitions for any county, but each county must be on a different sheet.

3. The signer must sign their full name as they are registered to vote, and then write it in neatly in the next box.

4. The signer must write in the house number and street name, or rural route, where they live. No PO Boxes, please.

5. The signer must write in the City or Township where they are registered to vote. Villages and unincorporated areas are always within townships.

6. The signer next writes in their zip code.

7. Finally, the signer must write in the date they signed the petition, not their birth date.

8. After the circulator has gathered signatures, they must complete the Circulator section in the lower right of each petition form. No signatures can be added to the petition form after this portion has been completed and dated.

To wrap up the petition:

- Make certain that all sections have been completed.
- Ditto marks are not acceptable.
- Petition forms are acceptable with at least one, but no more than 9 signatures.
- Yes, you can both sign and circulate a petition form.
Let MI Kids Learn Petition Drive

Bulletin Notice:

The Let MI Kids Learn petition drive is underway to promote educational justice legislation. Michigan children from low-income families would qualify for “Student Opportunity Scholarships” toward their out-of-pocket educational costs at public or nonpublic schools for tutoring, school supplies, computers, and tuition among other expenses. Donors to scholarship organizations would receive a state tax credit. Low-income parishioners and members of our community would benefit from this initiated legislation, regardless of where they send their children to school. The petitions would place this proposal before the legislature, and, if approved, would not require the governor’s signature to become law. As this is a nonpartisan effort, Catholic parishes and schools are allowed to circulate petitions. The Catholic Bishops of Michigan support this effort. Please prayerfully consider signing the two required petitions to create the scholarship program and tax credits to improve the education of Michigan’s school children.
Now is the time to support Michigan’s low-income students (in both public and nonpublic schools), to give parents more control, and to provide additional educational opportunities. The Michigan Catholic Conference, on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Michigan, supports this nonpartisan effort, which is why we can circulate the petitions in Catholic churches and schools.

What The Proposal Does

- Creates “student opportunity scholarships” to low-income families for their out-of-pocket educational expenses. Scholarship Organizations would provide funds to qualifying public and nonpublic school students for tutoring, school supplies, computers, and tuition among other expenses.
- Creates a state tax credit for donations to scholarship organizations, including existing Catholic school foundations.

With 340,000 signatures, the Legislature can pass these two measures without requiring the signature of the governor, who unfortunately vetoed similar bills last fall.

What Can I do?

- Volunteer to help with the Signature Drive.
- Prayerfully consider signing the two petitions to create the scholarship program and the tax credit.
- Take 5 minutes and sign!

https://www.letmikidslearn.com/about