



Catholic Diocese of Saginaw

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cormac Lynn".

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
Policy Advocate
Michigan Catholic Conference

Pstankewitz@micatholic.org

Office: 517.372.9310

Mobile: 517.614.8225

FAX: 517.372.3940



MICHIGAN
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

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.letmikiidslearn.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@letmikiidslearn.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.

The circulator of this petition is (check one): A paid signature gatherer A volunteer signature gatherer

If the petition circulator does not comply with all of the requirements of the Michigan election law for petition circulators, any signature obtained by that petition circulator on that petition is invalid and will not be counted.

INITIATION OF LEGISLATION
 Initiation of legislation to create the Student Opportunity Scholarship Act, an act to require the Department of Treasury to establish a Student Opportunity Scholarship (SOS) program; require a uniform process to determine the amount of funds to be allocated to each eligible student's SOS account; specify the qualifying education expenses for which SOS funds could be used; specify that funds allocated to an SOS account for qualifying education expenses would not be considered taxable income to the parent or SOS student; and to provide appropriations for the implementation of this act.

We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the county of _____, State of Michigan, respectfully petition the initiation of legislation.

WARNING - A person who knowingly signs this petition more than once, signs a name other than his or her own, signs when not a qualified and registered elector, or sets opposite his or her signature on a petition, a date other than the actual date the signature was affixed, is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP	DATE (OR SIGNATURE)	YEAR

CLERK SEAL OF CIRCULATION
 The undersigned circulator of the above petition certifies that he or she is a person 18 years of age or older and a United States citizen, that such a signature on the petition was signed in this or the precinct in which he or she has resided, based on his or her personal knowledge of the person signing, and that he or she has no knowledge of any person signing the petition more than once, and that, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, each signatory is the genuine signature of the person intending to sign the petition. The person signing for another is not the act of signing, a request to sign, or the act of obtaining a signature for another person. The circulator is not a member of Michigan, the circulator will provide a true and correct copy of the petition to the clerk of the circuit court in the county where the signature is to be placed, and the circulator will not be counted by a voting official. By making a circle or check mark in the box provided the undersigned circulator declares that he or she is not a member of Michigan and agrees to accept the jurisdiction of this State for the purpose of any legal proceeding or hearing that concerns a person listed on this petition, and agrees that legal process served on the Secretary of State or a designated agent of the Secretary of State has the same effect as if personally served on the circulator.

WARNING - A circulator knowingly making a false statement in the above certificate, a person not a circulator who signs as a circulator, or a person who signs a name other than his or her own as circulator is guilty of a misdemeanor.

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

(Print Name of Circulator) _____ (Date) _____

(Print Name of Circulator) _____

Complete This Petition Affidavit (Other than Michigan) (Do Not Enter a PAID OFFER BOX)

(Print or Stenciled Name, Last, First, Middle) _____

(County of Registration, if Register will Vote, of a Circulator who is not a Resident of Michigan)





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.

LET MI KIDS LEARN Petition Drive



**LET KIDS LEARN.
EVERY STUDENT.
EVERY BACKGROUND.
EVERY COMMUNITY.**

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!**

