



Growing Together • Learning Together

NORTHMEN FOREVER

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF PETOSKEY

March 8, 2025

Dear Members of the Legislature,

We are writing in strong support of continued and increased funding for Michigan educators to make courses through the Institute of Multi-Sensory Education (IMSE) available to all. IMSE training is centered on applying and implementing the science of reading through evidence-based practices that are both practical and immediately usable by teachers. Based on the belief that all students can learn to read, IMSE's Orton-Gillingham approach equips teachers with the tools needed to differentiate instruction and reach all learners through direct, multisensory instruction.

First, we would like to thank you for your continued support of LETRS training throughout the state. LETRS teaches educators the science of reading, or how the brain learns to read and why we need to teach reading in a way that supports this process. Research is clear that there is a set progression of skills one must acquire to become a successful reader. For example, students must first understand that letters represent sounds, then learn how letters can be combined to form words, and how those words build into sentences, before they can comprehend the meaning of a text. Our twenty years of classroom experience have proven this to be true. While this knowledge should be taught at the college level, preservice teachers often do not enter the profession with a comprehensive understanding of the reading process. However, after completing LETRS training, their understanding is significantly enhanced.

While LETRS training is incredibly valuable, it is not enough on its own. IMSE's Orton-Gillingham+, Phonological Awareness, and Morphology courses provide educators with the necessary scope, sequence, routines, structure, and materials to teach each step of the reading process. The strategies learned in IMSE integrate multiple components of learning to read (oral, visual, and kinesthetic/tactile), allowing students to engage actively in learning tasks and succeed. In other words, IMSE provides teachers with the strategies, lessons, and materials they need for effective daily reading instruction that is aligned with the science of reading. IMSE's online courses offer teachers extended practice opportunities to master skills and gain confidence while making connections with other educators.

In our district, many general and special education teachers have completed the IMSE Orton-Gillingham course and are eager to take additional courses. They are seeing the value of their training and materials as students make steady gains in reading achievement in classrooms where teachers have been trained. The emphasis on building a strong foundation in phonemic awareness and phonics has not only improved students' reading skills but also boosted their overall academic performance. Many

students who once struggled with literacy are now excelling in other subjects, as they gain confidence in their abilities. As a result, they are showing significant improvement in reading fluency and comprehension. Teachers are confident that their students will continue to grow as they encounter future educators with consistent training and materials. It is critical that we continue to support teachers with IMSE training and resources.

Please continue to support IMSE training for Michigan teachers. All educators should have access. As demonstrated in our district, this training has had a profound impact on both teachers and students. We look forward to seeing all students in Michigan make significant reading gains as a direct result of quality teacher training and the support provided by IMSE.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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