

**Michigan Elementary and Middle  
School Principals Association**

**PLATFORM**

**December 2016**

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## **ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFICATION**

MEMSPA believes that all administrators who deal directly with the educational delivery systems (pre-primary through grade 12) should have both teacher and administrator certification.

Administrator certification should be based on standards for administrative practice such as those developed by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) or Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, and should be supported by the State Board of Education, after consultation with state professional organizations. Certification should be available to aspiring administrators through traditional, as well as non-traditional preparation programs.

MEMSPA, recognizing the expanding role of the principal and the high level of skills needed, encourages currently practicing principals to strengthen their knowledge and expertise by participating in MEMSPA's Leadership Matters specialty endorsement program, Leverage Leadership Cohort, and the MEMSPA Principal Mentoring Program.

72/92/94/02/05/10/16

## **ADMINISTRATOR SENIORITY AS A TEACHER**

MEMSPA recognizes the need for school districts to operate in a financially sound manner, and;

MEMSPA further recognizes that schools should be closed when through consolidation the same level of educational services can be maintained.

However, MEMSPA believes that the administrator's rights to return to a teaching assignment should be protected when job reassignment is being considered, and the administrator's seniority status should be based on total years of service, teaching and administrative, within the district.

Therefore, MEMSPA urges Boards of Education to protect administrator's seniority rights.

79

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

MEMSPA supports the development of local plans for implementation of affirmative action as suggested within guidelines established by state and federal legislation. These plans must contain equal opportunity for the employment and training of all individuals, e.g., minorities, women, handicapped, in all categories of school district employment.

75/05

## **ARTS IN EDUCATION**

MEMSPA views the Arts, which include the study of music, dance, theater, and visual arts, as essential to quality of life, a sense of personal expression, esthetic awareness and for individual growth.

Therefore, MEMSPA views the Arts as an integral part of the total education process and believes that the Arts should be addressed as a core curricular area in all elementary and middle schools.

78/95

## **ASPIRING PRINCIPALS**

MEMSPA believes it is the professional responsibility of every principal to identify, encourage, recruit, and nurture educators with outstanding talent, leadership, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to consider the principalship as a career.

04

## **ASSESSMENT**

### **I. Educational Assessment**

MEMSPA believes that assessment in the basic skill areas of education is a vital link in the move to improve our educational delivery systems within the State of Michigan.

The Association supports efforts that are designed to separate assessment and accountability models in the minds of the Legislature, the public and educators.

The Association supports an ongoing appraisal of test items in the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP): this appraisal should include both the validity and the appropriateness of each test item; however, MEMSPA does not support the use of M-STEP scores/assessment as a means to rank or compare schools and/or districts.

85/95/01/16

## **II. Student Assessment**

MEMSPA recognizes that student assessment takes a variety of forms. Assessment must be based on developmentally appropriate practices that are aligned with the curriculum and that reflect established outcomes.

MEMSPA endorses assessment that assists in developing individual student learning and is useful for long-term planning.

MEMSPA supports state-wide benchmark testing at grades three, four, and six with state-side criterion reference testing at grades five and seven.

Further, MEMSPA believes that assessment instruments and processes should be evaluated for their effectiveness.

93/95/16

## **III. Assessment Practices**

MEMSPA believes that educators have a responsibility to prepare students for assessments using appropriate and responsible practices.

Assessment should be aligned with curriculum including the Michigan Academic Standards. Assessment should be used as evidence of proficiency and as a means to develop appropriate curriculum remediation.

Keeping with our professional integrity, we believe appropriate practices would not include the use of any official test materials with students. However, appropriate practices may include:

- A. Use of parallel test.
- B. Practicing similar formats and language constructions.
- C. Use of commercially published, written materials and computer software.
- D. Other practices that would enhance a child's ability to learn the objectives covered by the assessment.

Student preparation is an ongoing and continuous process.

96/07/16

## **ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT LEARNING**

MEMSPA believes that all assessment, whether generated locally or statewide, should be tied to student learning. A variety of assessments should be used to determine student progress, to inform instruction, to report to parents, and ultimately lead to improvements in educational delivery.

MEMSPA opposes the “snapshot” use of single assessment scores for accreditation purposes, as well as the ranking or rating of schools/districts based on student test scores.

MEMSPA also believes that retaining a student in a particular grade until s/he achieves competence on a single assessment is counterproductive to student learning and personal development.

Quality assessments should reflect the Michigan curricula frameworks and local district core curricula, and address a variety of learning styles. For assessment to be valid, students must have had experience with content being assessed.

02/10

## **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA supports the concept of public charter schools as a means of exploring effective alternative forms of education. MEMSPA believes charter schools should be subject to at least the same accountability criteria as all other public schools.

95/01/07/16

## **CHILD CARE**

MEMSPA recognizes parents/guardians as the primary caregivers for their children. MEMSPA also recognizes the increasing need for quality childcare services outside the home.

MEMSPA urges all local, state, and federal agencies to support the enactment of legislation that will make funding available for the establishment of quality childcare services. These services should reflect the standards established in the NAESP's document Standards For Quality School Age Child Care And Early Childhood Education.

04

## **CLASS SIZE**

The assumption is often made that a reduction in class size will result in increased student achievement. However, moderate reductions in class size will not significantly change student achievement unless other factors are considered. Some such factors are: Time on task, staff development, support staff, technology, parent education, effective teaching strategies, exposure to appropriate curriculum, high expectations for students and staff, the correlates of an effective school, which promote equity and excellence, also contribute to increased student achievement which are; safe and orderly environment, climate of high expectations for success, clear and focused mission, instructional leadership, opportunity to learn and student time on task, frequent monitoring of student progress and home-school relations; length of school day and/or year and appropriate instructional space.

Many dynamics exist in the classroom. MEMSPA recommends class sizes of twenty or less in primary grades (K-2) and twenty-five or less for Intermediate and Middle School grades. Smaller class sizes allow increased opportunity for teachers to provide guidance and personal attention for students with diverse emotional, academic and social and physical needs. Smaller class sizes may also improve staff and community morale.

89/01

## **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

MEMSPA believes that building principals have an inherent right to a voice in the determination of their professional destiny. MEMSPA recommends the use of formal bargaining procedures to the degree necessary for building principals to achieve and maintain a significant role in matters vitally important to them, including determination of wages, hours, and working conditions.

Adequate protection for principals, including due process procedures, is necessary and should be viewed as strengthening the principal's role.

76/96/01

## **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: IMPASSE**

MEMSPA strongly believes that the education of children is of paramount importance.

MEMSPA further believes that strikes by public school employees should be prohibited.

Therefore, in the collective bargaining process when Boards of Education and employee groups reach an impasse, they should be required to go through a binding arbitration process where the arbitrator's power is limited to choosing the last best offer.

79

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

MEMSPA believes all children should be protected from communicable diseases. MEMSPA encourages school officials to work with health agencies responsible for development and enforcement of uniform immunization requirements.

MEMSPA strongly urges compliance to such regulations, as they remain the responsibility of county health agencies.

MEMSPA recommends that school districts establish and implement comprehensive communicable disease information programs including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) appropriate to the children's level of understanding. MEMSPA believes that the dignity and well being of the individual child be maintained at all times. Further, MEMSPA believes the educational placement of a child having a communicable disease be made on a case by case basis by a team composed of school officials, the child's parent or guardian, the child's physician and other qualified health officials.

MEMSPA supports schools following the standard of universal precautions regarding blood-borne pathogens as recommended by the Michigan Department of Public Health.

88/93/00/07

## **CONTRACTED ADMINISTRATORS**

Recognizing that a critical shortage of administrators exists in the state of Michigan, MEMSPA supports the contracting of administrators as a tool to help districts hire experienced administrators when financial circumstances exist that demand fiscal prudence.

08

## **CORE CURRICULUM**

MEMSPA supports the concept of a core curriculum (Michigan Curriculum Standards). Every student must have an adequate base of knowledge to build competencies as a life-long learner. Every student shall be given a thorough preparation in all the essential skill areas.

MEMSPA believes that a good core curriculum will provide for the unique developmental rate of each student without compromising the quality of elementary and middle level education.

The State Board of Education has provided a structure for the core curriculum. Content standards containing a description of what students should know and be able to do were developed by the State in each subject area. Expectations have been developed for each content standard as indicators of student expectations at various developmental levels.

Since curriculum should include experiences that provide children with basic skills necessary to function effectively in our society and enable them to grow in knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of themselves and others, MEMSPA recommends Michigan's Academic Standards.

89/95/05/16

## **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

MEMSPA believes that continuous curriculum study and development is one aspect of insuring quality education.

Therefore, MEMSPA recommends that local school districts allocate an appropriate percentage of total school revenue for the purpose of providing opportunities and resources for curriculum development programs and that local districts support their elementary and middle school principals in MEMSPA professional development opportunities.

Further, MEMSPA recommends that school districts allocate 3% of Title II funds for the purpose of principal professional development.

78/99/16

## **DISCIPLINE**

MEMSPA recognizes that discipline in the schools is a shared responsibility of students, parents/guardians, educators, and the community. MEMSPA urges school principals to become involved in the design of discipline policies that are developmentally and educationally appropriate, are consistently applied, and follow due process.

MEMSPA believes schools should implement and strengthen all programs that create safe and nurturing learning environments.

04

## **DIVERSITY**

MEMSPA urges school districts adopt a curriculum that teaches about the history and contributions of all Americans, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or ability. It supports staff development in understanding and supporting diversity in education.

To implement this curriculum, staff development programs must be instituted for all school employees.

85/95/99/01/05/07

## **DROPOUT PREVENTION**

MEMSPA, recognizing the requirement that all students stay in school until age 18, as well as the importance of obtaining a diploma, urges all districts to develop and implement policies and procedures to address dropout prevention.

MEMSPA also recognizes that dropout prevention is not just a secondary level concern, and therefore encourages school districts to ensure that students receive education intervention at the earliest possible time in a child's life in order to be most effective.

10

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

MEMSPA, recognizing that prior knowledge, based on rich and varied experiences, is a contributing component of a child's success in school, recommends that:

1. All children be provided a quality educational experience based on quality research and evidence based practice.
2. The early childhood curriculum should reflect and accommodate the unique needs of early learners.
3. Funding be provided for pre-primary education.
4. The Michigan Department of Education should have the responsibility for the organization, direction, supervision, and coordination of public sector pre-primary programs.
5. Early Childhood teachers have a (ZA) endorsement to ensure a good understanding of young children and their needs.

90/05/16

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

MEMSPA believes in a full range of early intervention programs. These programs should be rich in experience, literacy, and motor development. Interventions should occur before patterns of failure are established. Additions to existing or new programs must be accompanied by new sources of revenue to ensure that existing funds are not eroded from the basic foundation grant through the school aid fund.

03

## **EDUCATION FUNDING AND REFORM**

MEMSPA has long maintained that local, state, and federal governments must share financial support for public education. MEMSPA expects that all programs and courses of instruction mandated by

State and/or Federal law also be funded adequately. MEMSPA also urges an increase in the amount of support and greater flexibility in the allocation and use of funds.

MEMSPA expects that any financial reform will guarantee adequate funds for all levels of general public education. To that end, MEMSPA supports a legislatively funded school funding study that would clearly identify the cost of providing a high quality education to all students in Michigan.

Further, MEMSPA believes that any state-imposed tax reform should hold harmless the school aid fund from any reductions in revenues it may see from such reform.

Further, MEMSPA opposes any efforts to divert school aid fund dollars for any purpose other than pre-k -12 education costs.

80/86/98/05/07/09/10

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

MEMSPA recognizes the right of every child to an equal educational opportunity regardless of socio-economic status, race, color, religion, national origin, creed or ancestry, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

73/05

## **EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)**

While MEMSPA recognizes the admirable goals of ESSA we are concerned about such issues as funding, instrumentation (tests), supply and demand of qualified personnel, and the implementation of this legislation through regulations.

MEMSPA strongly urges the legislature to consult with principals, MEMSPA, and NAESP as revisions are considered.

MEMSPA also urges the legislature to renew the ESSA on a regular and timely basis; deferring any sanctions when reauthorization is overdue.

MEMSPA also believes that any new requirements added to the ESSA must be fully funded.

04/10/16

## **EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**

MEMSPA supports the concept of developing Employability Skills and "Career Awareness" through appropriate programs. MEMSPA encourages partnerships with business and School-to-Work in order to increase students' college and career readiness.

The Association believes that it is vital to the development of students to have learning experiences that meet their unique abilities, interests, needs and skills.

77/90/95/99/16

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS**

MEMSPA believes that every child and adult has a right to an environmentally safe and healthy learning environment. School facilities and property should be free of pollutants such as dust, mold, asbestos, lead, and other environmental hazards.

MEMSPA encourages schools and school districts to develop policies and procedures to eliminate conditions that are potentially harmful to the school environment.

04

## **ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS**

MEMSPA believes that there is constant pressure to provide a balance between meeting human needs and protecting the environment.

MEMSPA encourages its members and local school districts to provide appropriate educational opportunities for students to become environmentally concerned.

Therefore, the Association believes focus should be on recycling, reducing, and reusing resources with emphasis on preserving and protecting the environment for future generations.

89/99

## **EQUITY IN FUNDING**

MEMSPA strongly supports adequate funding for all school districts. Annually, the state should dedicate sufficient state revenues to adequately fund the basic foundation program and categoricals, over and above increases to the MPSERS rate charge to districts.

MEMSPA also supports annual catch-up provisions within the foundation allowance calculations as needed to reach equity between school districts. This is necessary to adequately meet the educational needs of every child and guarantee the funds necessary to meet the demands of new quality initiatives and/or state mandates. A catch-up provision, however, should not reduce revenue in a single school district or category of districts in order to increase revenue in other districts.

Furth MEMSPA recommends full funding of Section 31A (At-Risk) for high poverty schools.

07/16

## **FAILING SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA recognizes and supports the need to improve low-performing schools.

MEMSPA believes effective turn around models include the support needed to build capacity and successfully lead high-need schools.

MEMSPA opposes any model of school improvement that requires automatic dismissal of the principal. Such action should only be considered after a fair evaluation with regard for school circumstances such as: staff hiring and assignment control, staff training and expertise, and sufficient time afforded in the school building to implement existing school reform efforts. (2010)

## **FEDERAL FUNDING**

MEMSPA believes that substantial appropriations of federal funds for support of public education should be made available on a per-pupil basis. Distribution of such funds should be made on the basis of an objective formula administered by the US Department of Education.

MEMSPA opposes efforts to shift from current formula based funding methods to a competitive based structure. All funds should be allocated to school districts by needs-based formulas as determined by the program.

MEMSPA also believes that any distribution of funds should insure that state and local control are not impaired and that existing state and local efforts to finance public education are not diminished.

74/80/10

## **FINANCIAL AID TO NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA believes that public monies must go for support of public education and MEMSPA will oppose any legislation or constitutional amendment seeking to provide public monies for non-public schools.

MEMSPA believes that the separation of church and state is an essential characteristic of this nation and must not be threatened directly or indirectly by any legislation or constitutional amendment seeking to blur this distinction.

MEMSPA opposes education voucher plans that divert public monies to private institutions and education voucher programs that foster inequity in financial support among schools.

78/98/07

## **FUNDRAISING**

MEMSPA recognizes that programs in elementary and middle schools are not fully funded. In order to support the implementation and enhancement of educational programs and facilities, student and parent groups often assist in raising funds. These funds are not intended to replace needed education appropriations.

MEMSPA believes instructional time should be protected during fundraising initiatives. Furthermore, MEMSPA strongly believes the safety of students should not be compromised when they participate in fundraising events.

04

## **FULL TIME PRINCIPALSHIP**

MEMSPA maintains that the role of the principal as instructional leader is vital to the development of sound educational programs in all elementary and middle schools.

MEMSPA believes that to ensure quality education, each building should have a full-time principal who is provided adequate time and resources to plan, coordinate and implement exemplary instructional programs.

Further, MEMSPA endorses the standard of providing additional administrative assistance to principals when student enrollment reaches 400.

MEMSPA cannot support the practice of using teaching principals, combining duties of the superintendency and principalship, or assigning principals to more than one school.

74/93/05/08

## **GENDER HARRASSMENT**

MEMSPA believes that the education environment must be free of harassment based on gender, race, ethnicity, age or any other personal characteristic. Such behavior is demeaning and undermines the integrity of relationships and sense of security necessary for learning.

99/01

## **GENDER NEUTRAL DIVERSITY**

MEMSPA believes that educational materials and processes should accurately portray the contributions of women both in the past and in the present.

MEMSPA recognizes that some instructional materials used in schools today portray women and men in gender-stereotyped roles. MEMSPA urges principals to restrict the use of such sexist material and to use only instructional materials that portray various careers and personal roles as acceptable and attainable for all persons.

MEMSPA endorses the use of gender-neutral language by all school personnel and the elimination of gender discrimination from the curriculum.

81/05/07

## **GIFTED AND ACADEMICALLY TALENTED STUDENTS**

MEMSPA supports the State Board of Education, Local School Districts and Institutions of Higher Learning in the development, implementation, and continuous evaluation of educational programs, which identify and enhance the learning potential of academically talented students and provide for the special needs of the gifted and academically talented students.

MEMSPA believes the academically talented student requires an educational program that is both academically challenging and emotionally sound.

Therefore, MEMSPA encourages local school districts and the Michigan Department of Education to continue to establish and provide funded programs to meet the needs of the gifted and academically talented.

Additionally, MEMSPA acknowledges the need for the State Board of Education, Institutions of Higher Learning and School Districts to provide training for all teachers to enable them to meet the instructional challenge of the academically talented student.

80/85/89/92/00

## **HOME SCHOOLING & NON-APPROVED SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA is concerned with the increasing number of individuals and groups who are avoiding public education in favor of at-home schooling/non-approved schools. When alternative options such as home schooling/non-approved schools have been authorized by state legislation, resources and authority should be provided to make certain that those who exercise these options are held strictly accountable for the academic achievement and social/emotional growth of children.

When home schooling/non-approved schools options are exercised, MEMSPA strongly recommends that the Michigan department of education establish safeguards to ensure each child:

1. Participates in appropriate social experiences;
2. Interacts with students from other social/racial/ethnic groups;
3. Receives the full range of curricular experiences and materials aligned with state standards;
4. Is guaranteed instruction by certified and highly qualified persons;
5. Is required to participate in state and federally-mandated assessments;
6. Learns in a healthy and safe environment.

MEMSPA recommends that the local ISD and/or RESA be responsible for the monitoring of all home school programs.

MEMSPA strongly urges the state of Michigan to require home schools to comply with state and federal laws addressing children with special needs.

MEMSPA also strongly urges the state board of education to require home schools and other non-approved schools meet the same minimum standards as public schools or be closed.

04/09

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

MEMSPA encourages all Michigan school districts, through cooperative efforts by teachers, administrators, parents and students to develop and implement positive programs that will strengthen mutual understanding among people and provide a sound educational environment.

84/00

## **INTEGRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DIVERSE POPULATION GROUPS**

MEMSPA believes that the greatness of the state of Michigan is a result of the many contributions and sacrifices of diverse population groups. Helping children understand these significant contributions is best developed through many varied experiences embedded within the curriculum that fosters these concepts.

To this end, MEMSPA encourages principals to exert leadership in the development of instructional programs that:

1. Include the contributions and sacrifices of various racial, ethnic, and cultural populations;
2. Utilize instructional materials that effectively portray these diversities.
3. Provide professional development opportunities that create awareness and appreciation for the contributions and sacrifices of all segments of the population; and

4. Foster an environment that honors and respects diversity.

04

## **KINDERGARTEN**

It is the position of MEMSPA that kindergarten is an essential part of a child's educational development. The state should ensure that every child attends kindergarten.

MEMSPA supports the concept of all-day every day kindergarten and encourages schools to take steps toward making all-day every day kindergarten available for all students.

08/16

## **LATCHKEY/CHILD SUPERVISION**

MEMSPA recognizes the need to provide before- and after-school supervision for students of working parents and/or guardians.

Therefore, MEMSPA encourages the local school district, community and the Michigan Department of Education to establish licensed programs in conjunction with support from the community to meet this need. Programs need to establish quality standards such as those recommended in the NAESP publication called School Age Childcare.

85/91/00

## **MIDDLE LEVEL PRINCIPAL**

MEMSPA is aware of the increasing number of school districts that are incorporating Middle Level Schools in the organizational design of their schools. Middle Level Schools should reflect the child-centered philosophy, and school districts should consider educators who will place a greater focus on the child than on subject matter for the principalship of the Middle Level School.

78/90/99

## **ONLINE LEARNING**

MEMSPA recognizes that education options are expanding through the use of online resources, and believes that integrating high quality options into effective educational practices can be beneficial.

MEMSPA supports incorporating the use of online learning resources into the instructional program with the following criteria: certified principals and instructors that support and guide the learning process; educator-developed curricula is based on current research and practice, the curriculum is aligned with the state core content standards; and assessments are valid, reliable, and appropriate to the curricula.

10

## **PARA-PROFESSIONALS**

MEMSPA supports the utilization of para-professionals as supportive staff in appropriate roles for the enhancement of children's learning experiences, teacher effectiveness, supervisory services, and community support.

MEMSPA recommends that local boards of education establish policies that cover general qualifications, selection guidelines and evaluation procedures for para-professionals. The policy should address itself to the role relationship between the principal, teacher and para-professional. The professional must retain the responsibilities for diagnosing children's needs, prescribing appropriate instructional materials and approaches, and evaluating the progress of students. The para-professional role is totally supportive.

MEMSPA further recognizes the need for teachers to receive training in how to best utilize para-professionals and recommends that local boards of education provide their teachers with this type of

inservice. Para-professionals also benefit from training that includes ways to support children and teachers, as well as information about child development.

78/80/00

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

MEMSPA believes there are many forms of parental involvement. The first and most important is the responsibility of ensuring the well being of the child, proper nutrition, regular attendance, adequate sleep, personal hygiene, completion of school assignments, and recognition of school as a most important priority.

It is essential that parents communicate with the school and the teachers. Parents also need to communicate with their children, celebrating their successes and listening to their concerns. Effective ways to maintain the lines of communication include open house, curriculum nights, and attendance at conferences, e-mail, websites, and reading school publications.

MEMSPA urges parents and guardians to be active participants in the education of their children. Parents and school personnel should work cooperatively in fostering a deep respect for achievement and learning.

MEMSPA supports professional development designed to include and educate parents in the educational process at school and at home. (2004)

## **PHYSICAL FITNESS**

MEMSPA recognizes that physical fitness is a fundamental component of a healthy lifestyle. It is a life-long process of educated decision-making regarding nutrition, exercise and the care and maintenance of our bodies.

Therefore, MEMSPA urges school communities to foster and support physical fitness as part of a healthy lifestyle.

92/05

## **PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER**

MEMSPA believes that the principal is the instructional leader of the school who, in partnership with teaching staff, support staff, parents, board of education, and community, can help to improve student achievement in all areas of the curriculum.

78/00

## **PRINCIPAL EVALUATION**

MEMSPA believes that all principals should receive a formal performance appraisal on a regular, consistent basis, annually.

MEMSPA believes that principals should assume major responsibility in the development of systems for the evaluation of their professional performance. The system should be based on pre-determined expectations and criteria, such as those published in What Principals Should Know And Be Able To Do (NAESP, 2001) & Professional Standards for Educational Leaders.

The goal of the adopted evaluation process should be to assess performance as well as provide for the improvement of the administrator and promote professional growth.

MEMSPA encourages the use of evaluation processes that are based on district vision and expectations and that guarantee due process in every facet. The appraisal process should include administrative input as well as input from other stakeholders.

MEMSPA firmly believes that no principal should be removed from his/her position based solely on student assessment results and/or accreditation results.

02/16

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES**

MEMSPA believes it is important that building principals are able to participate in local, state and regional activities with professional and financial support from superintendents and local boards of education.

Therefore, MEMSPA urges superintendents and boards of education to allow and encourage their principals to participate in MEMSPA and other professional association activities.

84/98/99

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

MEMSPA supports the concept of professional development for public school employees in Michigan. MEMSPA believes that it is incumbent upon elementary and middle level principals in Michigan:

1. To maintain unified professional membership and participate actively in their local, regional, state and national principal organizations.
2. To plan and implement local in-service education programs to improve the skills of principals and teachers and support staff.
3. To attend professional growth conferences and workshops planned and sponsored by their region, state and national associations for the purpose of improving their knowledge and skills as practicing elementary and middle school principals.

72/98/00

## **PTA**

MEMSPA believes the Michigan PTA is a unique and effective feature of Michigan education. It has a long and successful history of working with MEMSPA as an advocate for children. The association commends the Michigan PTA for its continued cooperation in areas of mutual concern.

MEMSPA is committed to strengthening the relationship at the state level and encourages its members to do so at the local level. MEMSPA supports the National Standards For Parent/Family Involvement as outlined by the National PTA.

88/02

## **RECESS**

MEMSPA recognizes recess as an important component in a child's physical and social development. Research supports the inclusion of recess and other free play activities in a child's daily schedule. MEMSPA encourages principals to promote the development and maintenance of appropriately supervised free play for children during the school day.

To encourage the inclusion of recess in the elementary day MEMSPA urges the legislature and the Michigan Department of Education to revise legislation and regulations to include a reasonable limit of recess as instructional time in the elementary school day.

04

## **REDUCTION IN FORCE**

MEMSPA believes that one of its primary responsibilities is to provide to its members guidance and counsel on job security. The Association urges its members to negotiate contract criteria and procedures to be used in a reduction in force. Criteria should include seniority, non-discrimination, objectivity, uniformity of application, affirmative action, and reassignment and recall procedures in accordance with state and federal laws.

81/07

## **RESTRUCTURING**

MEMSPA believes the process of educating children occurs in a dynamic and radically changing society.

MEMSPA believes the advances in research and technology demand that the principal examines the structure of schools.

MEMSPA believes the principal, as the primary instructional leader, must be a catalyst in the restructuring process for the coming decades.

MEMSPA believes it is incumbent upon the principal to involve all segments of the school community in the continual evaluation of school structure and practices and their impact on student outcomes.

MEMSPA believes the paradigms of the past have not adequately prepared students for the present, and cannot be expected to prepare them for the future.

MEMSPA therefore believes that as the view of schools and education changes the principal must be a major change agent.

91/99

## **RETENTION**

MEMSPA encourages districts to develop their own retention policies based on current research and the learning environment of their own districts and not be mandated through state and federal legislation.

98/00/05

## **RETIRED PRINCIPALS**

MEMSPA recognizes the significant contributions that retired elementary and middle level principals have made to the Association and the cause of education. The Association also recognizes the expertise they have to offer.

Therefore, the Association has established a Retired Principals Committee as a Standing Committee.

Furthermore, the Association urges its members to assist in identifying and encouraging retired principals to remain active.

77/78/80/97

## **RETIREMENT**

MEMSPA believes that a financially solvent retirement system is essential for all school employees; past, present and future.

MEMSPA believes regular analysis of the current system is necessary and supports conversations that include both decision makers and stakeholder groups.

MEMSPA believes the present defined benefit retirement system should remain in effect for all present employees to insure the security of public school employees and their dependents. Any proposed changes to the system for current employees should only be made to keep the system actuarially sound, and only to future accumulation of benefits.

MEMSPA also believes any changes necessary to the present system, for new employees, should be both cost effective and actuarially sound.

78/88/95/99/07/10

## **SAFE SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA believes that every school has the responsibility to provide an environment that is physically, emotionally, and socially safe and conducive to learning for students and adults.

MEMSPA also urges each school to comply with state and federal mandates in developing its emergency situation procedures.

99/00/05/10/16

### **SCECHs**

MEMSPA recognizes the importance of Administrative Certification and supports the concept of State Continuing Education Clock Hours (SCECHs). MEMSPA will continue a system to provide and monitor SCECHs for approved MEMSPA activities.

76/79/88/90/98/16

### **SCHOOL ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION**

MEMSPA believes that accreditation aids in attaining and maintaining quality education programs.

MEMSPA acknowledges that accreditation and appraisal stimulates schools toward continued improvement in the development of quality programs.

MEMSPA supports accreditation as a means to ensure that elementary and middle schools share fully in the resources made available to maintain educational excellence.

MEMSPA believes that attainment of accreditation is a responsibility that is shared by the principal, school staff, central office, school board and community. If accreditation is not achieved the principal should not be held totally responsible.

Therefore, MEMSPA believes that accreditation should be based on multiple factors including achievement, climate, and goal attainment.

78/84/90/95/07

### **SCHOOL COUNSELOR/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

MEMSPA believes that family structure and society have changed dramatically over the years. Increasing numbers of children are exposed to forces that have a negative or counterproductive impact on their social and emotional development and disrupt the learning process. We further recognize that classroom teachers and parents are in the most advantageous position to guide children toward maximum growth. To assist teachers, parents, and principals in meeting the needs of children, specialized guidance and counseling services should be available in every school district.

Therefore, MEMSPA believes that each school needs a fulltime counselor/social worker (1 per 400) to provide support to students and families. MEMSPA further recommends that school counselors/social workers have specific training in age-appropriate guidance and counseling as well as classroom teaching experience at the elementary or middle level.

92/00/01/02/05

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION**

MEMSPA supports school district reorganization where it will accomplish more effective education, a more comprehensive program, and more efficient administrative services that in turn will lead toward a higher quality of educational opportunity for all students.

The Association believes that principals in the local school district can serve as competent advisors and consultants on reorganization issues involving school programs and policies and their involvement will assist in the development of comprehensive educational programs for students.

77

## **SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES**

MEMSPA believes that all children must have access to quality health care services. MEMSPA urges all governmental entities to support and fully fund collaborative efforts requiring and providing appropriate health care services for all children.

MEMSPA strongly recommends that school districts ensure proper health care, including the dispensing of medication, for all children by providing every school with a school nurse based on need.

MEMSPA believes that school health services provided by a qualified school nurse are essential to the education of children. The school nurse is trained to recognize the complexity of physical, social, and psychological factors that interact in the total growth of children. Also, the school nurse is trained to work with parents, school personnel, and community agencies to assess student health needs and initiate appropriate action to meet those needs.

04

## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

MEMSPA recognizes the value of the collaborative process of school improvement to identify needs and develop goals to improve achievement for all students.

MEMSPA believes improvement in education is best achieved when developed at the local school building level, with support from central office administrators and a district-wide school improvement committee.

MEMSPA also believes that all who are part of the school should be involved in the development of the plan and activities to implement the plan.

Therefore, MEMSPA endorses the school improvement process whereby each school, under the leadership of the principal, in collaboration with staff and community, develops a school improvement plan, which is reviewed annually.

88/90/01

## **SCHOOLS OF CHOICE**

MEMSPA supports schools of choice within the local public school district. Further, MEMSPA believes educational opportunity should be equitable within a district.

95

## **SCHOOL READINESS AND PROGRAMS**

MEMSPA believes that the age of five is appropriate for kindergarten entrance. Entry-level screening should not be used for exclusion from the kindergarten program and children should be admitted into kindergarten solely on the basis of whether they meet state entrance age requirements.

MEMSPA believes that all agencies and parents should be encouraged to work together for a seamless transition from early childhood programs into kindergarten, providing education and learning opportunities to increase a child's literacy from birth.

MEMSPA believes that all-day every-day programs provide a learning environment that supports all areas of children's development and learning. Such programs should resist the inclination to increase academic pressures.

03

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

MEMSPA supports the intent of federal and state laws that mandate the provision of Special Education services to those who are identified in the appropriate manner as qualifying for such services.

MEMSPA believes that sufficient instructional support must be provided for all special education students included in regular school programs.

MEMSPA is committed to the laws which provide quality educational programs for all citizens of our state.

However, MEMSPA does not support additional monies or personnel for expansion of Special Education services at the expense of General Education.

78/95/00

## **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (SBOE) AND THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (MDE)**

MEMSPA will pursue and maintain a positive working relationship with the State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education.

MEMSPA believes the supervision of public elementary, middle, secondary and adult education should be shared among local school districts, intermediate school districts, and the State Board of Education.

Therefore, MEMSPA will work together with the Michigan Department of Education in the development and implementation of policies and procedures.

75/80/10

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

MEMSPA believes regular school attendance is vital for student success. School districts are urged to establish policies and procedures to address student absence.

To assist the principal, a person should be designated at the district and/or intermediate level to be responsible for attendance matters. When excessive absences occur due to illness, vacation, or parental indifference, MEMSPA recommends that the identified procedures are implemented and the designated person makes a parental contact.

Appropriate steps, including filing a petition in Probate Court, should be taken to ensure that students are in regular attendance.

87/05

## **STUDENT PLACEMENT**

All placements are made based upon the best information available at the time of enrollment. MEMSPA supports the individual district's right to develop and implement its own parent request system. Parents need to be informed that placements are tentative and that adjustments may be necessary. Parents are also to be informed that placement is the responsibility, and within the authority of the superintendent or his/her designee. If adjustments are necessary, they will be based upon one or more of the following: student records, teacher observation, professional judgment and diagnostic assessment.

87/98/00

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

MEMSPA recognizes the number of children in school whose diminished abilities to function successfully are the direct results of substance abuse by themselves or others.

MEMSPA strongly urges that school personnel and community agencies mobilize to respond appropriately to the unique needs of these students and their families.

74/91/05

## **TEACHER PREPARATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

MEMSPA supports the constitutional provision of the State Board of Education to provide certification of educators in the State of Michigan and its efforts to improve teacher education. In addition to certified teacher education, MEMSPA also recognizes and supports student teacher development.

MEMSPA believes that the establishment of Standards of Quality is a vital part of this redesign. MEMSPA believes that a MEMSPA representative should have input relative to concerns that relate to teacher certification and licensure.

MEMSPA, recognizing the changing and expanding role of the teacher and the high level of skills needed believes that practicing educators must continue to strengthen their knowledge and expertise through ongoing education. Components of such ongoing requirements should be determined by the state board of education, with input from local district administration as well as related professional organizations, and should include options offered from multiple sources.

84/88/92/98/05/12

## **TECHNOLOGY**

MEMSPA supports the need for a technologically literate staff and student body.

It is our belief that each district should provide technological resources and training to enhance integrated life-long learning.

Further, MEMSPA believes the use of technology is a means to an end, not an end in itself, and increases the ability of the school community to manage data, prepare communications, and access global information.

94/05

## **TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

In recognition of the need for principals to be educational models and leaders in educational technology, MEMSPA embraces the National Education Technology Standards For School Administrator (NETSA), as adopted by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). MEMSPA endorses the components of this initiative, which include leadership and vision; learning and teaching; productivity and professional practice; support, management, and operations; assessment and evaluation; and social, legal and ethical issues, and encourages members to strive to meet these standards. Website: <http://cnets.iste.org/tssa/>

02

## **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING**

MEMSPA supports the concept of full state funding for transportation costs, including bus inspections.

84/95/98/05

## **VANDALISM IN THE SCHOOLS**

MEMSPA believes education can take place only in an environment conducive to learning and any school can be disrupted as a result of vandalism from forces both within and outside the school.

MEMSPA further recognizes that significant public expenditures are needed to implement and maintain security and make needed repairs or replacements due to vandalism.

MEMSPA urges all persons, agencies, and legislators to work together to secure schools and eliminate vandalism.

04

## **VARYING ENROLLMENT PATTERNS**

MEMSPA recognizes that fluctuating enrollment patterns have a critical impact on the delivery of educational programs and the ability of schools to meet state and federal standards.

MEMSPA urges that principals be involved in careful planning with boards of education, staff, parents, and members of the community to meet the challenges of changing enrollments and the resulting budget implications. Principals should exercise a leadership role in devising alternative ways of utilizing staff and maintaining local school programs to meet the needs of students.

04

## **VIOLENCE**

MEMSPA believes that the portrayal of aggressive, violent, and criminal behavior in media and technology has a negative impact on the education and social development of children.

Therefore, the Association will provide members with professional development opportunities so that they can inform/educate teachers, students, parents and community members of safeguards for families and communities, positive uses of the media and technology, and ways for adults to support children, families, and communities when violent acts occur.

88/99/05

## **VOUCHERS**

Vouchers hurt public schools because they divert important funds to private, parochial, and for-profit schools. These private schools can select students based on their own criteria, rejecting students who are the most difficult and expensive to educate. Such schools are not accountable to the taxpayers. Public schools are committed to educate all students, regardless of the challenge, while being held accountable to the public. Therefore, it is the position of MEMSPA to oppose any plan to divert tax dollars to non-public schools.

03