

ABOUT US

Michigan's nonpartisan Office of Foundation Liaison (OFL) was created in 2003 at the suggestion of Michigan philanthropic leaders and is supported by the government. The Office — **the first of its kind in the nation** — is housed in the executive branch of state government and has been funded by more than 20 foundations. The OFL works to foster partnerships between state government agencies and philanthropic organizations that are likely to result in policy and programmatic reforms to improve the lives of children and families in Michigan. Since its inception, the OFL **has brokered more than \$150 million in foundation investments** for initiatives to increase Michigan's economic competitiveness through reforms in prenatal to postsecondary education, economic and workforce development, health, and land use.

OUR MISSION

To develop strategic partnerships between philanthropy and the executive branch of state government in order to create better outcomes for all Michigan citizens.

GOALS

The OFL seeks to accomplish its mission through the following goals:

PROMOTE mutual understanding and collaboration between state government and foundations, and to identify strategic opportunities for partnering.

SERVE as a trusted source of data, information and dialogue about programs, policy impacts, and policy and implementation options.

FACILITATE strategic joint investments that will improve outcomes for Michigan and its residents.

The Governor's Office of FOUNDATION LIAISON

A partnership between the State of Michigan and the Council of Michigan Foundations

The OFL focuses their efforts on three key issue areas as identified by the governor and aligned with foundation priorities: P-20 Education, Workforce Development, and Health. The OFL has played a key role in:

Strengthening & Advancing Early Childhood Efforts in Michigan

- **Collaborating with diverse stakeholders** to create a strong foundation for the Office of Great Start to help it effectively support Michigan's families and children
- **Communicating regularly with philanthropic funders** about state issues to facilitate the growth of public-private partnerships
- **Convening public and private partners** to support projects and initiatives to strengthen Michigan's early childhood efforts
- **Facilitating strategic discussions and mediating tough decisions** to build consensus among cross-sector partners and hold them accountable

Addressing Chronic Absence in Michigan's Schools

- **Recognizing the potential** for public-private partnerships to help strengthen Michigan's education system
- **Gathering important information** about the issues grounding school absenteeism (such as poverty) to better educate both state and philanthropic partners
- **Convening education partners from across the state and nation** to launch Michigan's first school attendance summit
- **Keeping a finger on the pulse of work** in both private and public sectors around school attendance improvement initiatives in Michigan

Improving Benefits Access for Michigan's Families

- **Connecting public and private partners** to education opportunities
- **Bridging public and private sectors** to tackle a complicated state system
- **Keeping** government and philanthropic **partners connected, accountable,** and on mission
- **Educating and inspiring funding partners** about opportunities to leverage resources with the state

GOVERNANCE

The OFL is governed by an advisory committee of contributing funders; the Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF), its fiscal agent; the Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA); and a member of the Governor's executive staff. Current committee members are:

Kyle Caldwell

Council of Michigan Foundations

Melanca Clark

Hudson-Webber Foundation

David Egner

Ralph C Wilson Jr. Foundation

Neal Hegarty, Chair

C.S. Mott Foundation

Emily Laidlaw

Office of the Governor

Kate Levin Markel

McGregor Fund

Wendy Lewis Jackson

Kresge Foundation

David McGhee

The Skillman Foundation

Donna Murray-Brown

Michigan Nonprofit Association

Faye Nelson

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Julie Ridenour

Steelcase Foundation

Virginia Romano

Dresner Foundation

Cynthia Rowell

Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

Diana Sieger

Grand Rapids Community Foundation

Supporting Improvements to Michigan's Child Care System

- **Engaging in strategic networking** to connect funding partners to opportunities with state agencies
- **Clarifying important budget vs. policy issues** to ensure government and philanthropic partners are on the same page
- **Facilitating collaboration** between private and public partners to cultivate knowledge-sharing between sectors and inspire coordinated cross-sector action

Bringing Flint's Breakfast in the Classroom Program to Life

- **Identifying support gaps** in operating a district-wide school breakfast program and understanding where private partners can step in to help
- **Connecting the right public and private partners** at the right time that would work together to implement an ambitious and successful district-wide school breakfast program in Flint

Facilitating the Expansion of Double Up Food Bucks

- **Gathering important information** about food access issues for funder education opportunities
- **Facilitating conversations** with government and philanthropic partners through OFL's special position between the public and private sectors
- **Connecting public and private partners** to help Fair Food Network serve a greater number of Michigan's low-income families

Bringing Mental Health Resources to Flint Residents

- **Engaging in strategic collaboration** to identify important public and private partners in providing vital crisis relief resources to Flint residents
- **Bringing public and private sectors together** to deliver, restore, and launch the operation of a mobile mental health unit in Flint in the wake of the Water Crisis

Helping Flint Seniors Access Clean Water

- **Coordinating efforts** with partners to find creative clean water access solutions for Flint's seniors
- **Expertly facilitating connections** between the public and private sectors to ramp up food and water delivery to senior homes

CONTACT US

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