



Michigan Association of Non-public Schools

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Michigan NonPublic Schools Celebrate One Year of Successful Learning During COVID**

**Lansing** – As we approach the one-year anniversary of the first detected case of COVID-19 in Michigan, the Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools congratulates its member schools for recognizing that the foundation of education is rooted in the deep and personal connections that students make with their faith, their educators and their curriculum.

Since March 2020 schools have looked very different across the state. Many schools remain remote, while others have adopted a hybrid model. Nonpublic schools in Michigan, on the other hand, have shown that in-person learning is possible with dedicated teachers, administrators, students and families all pulling together to make sure that proper precautions were taken to ensure in person learning.

On April 2, 2020, Governor Whitmer closed schools for the rest of the academic year to slow the spread of COVID-19. Nonpublic schools began remote learning immediately, losing few instructional days during the transition. Nonpublic schools ended the school year differently than normal, but without significant academic interruption. “I am proud of our teachers, administrators, parents, and students for their resilience at the end of the 2019-20 academic year,” stated Travis Grolke, Superintendent of Schools for the Michigan District, Lutheran Church Missouri-Synod. “They worked as a community to make sure students were able to complete the school year under very trying circumstances.”

Over the summer, nonpublic school administrators worked closely with their peers to develop robust COVID-19 plans using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and the MI Safe Schools Roadmap with the goal of ensuring students and staff could safely return to their building. Schools sought input from parents, doctors, and other community members, upgraded ventilation systems, made drastic changes to student pick-up and drop-off, modified classrooms, instituted testing, and put into place virtual systems should illness data require it. They worked hard to ensure students had the opportunity to return to the classroom in the fall, which they did.

Almost all MANS member schools have been face-to-face for the 2020-21 academic year. Schools have been flexible and switched to remote learning when health conditions warranted

temporary closure. Innovation and creativity have been hallmarks in their teaching approach. “I am amazed at the creativity and ingenuity of our nonpublic schools. They have successfully made sure students, staff and faculty are safe while being face-to-face,” said Cormac Lynn, Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw. “Our teachers and administrators made in-person learning a priority and went to great lengths to make it successful.”

It has not been a typical year since March 13, 2020. Since then, our world has drastically changed; however, Michigan nonpublic schools have proven that students can still learn together in a classroom safely. Nonpublic school administrators and teachers have been welcoming students into the building, from a distance, of course, this entire academic year. MANS applauds their successful efforts.

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