



For Release
January 23, 2017

Contact: Gary Naeyaert
517-281-2690

GLEP calls for closure of 38 chronically-failing schools ***Putting students first – and state law – requires closure or restructuring for schools on the “Bottom 5%” list for three consecutive years***

Lansing, MI – The Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP) today called for closure of [38 chronically-failing public schools in the state](#), each of which has been in the lowest performing 5% of all public schools for 2014, 2015 and 2016. The state’s [“Top to Bottom” ranking for 2016](#) was released by the Michigan Department of Education on Friday.

This list includes 25 schools in Detroit (16 DPS, 8 EAA and 1 charter) and 13 outstate schools (12 traditional public and 1 charter). 12 of the 38 schools have been on the lowest-performing 5% list each year since it was created in 2010.

“Enough is enough, and we call on Natasha Baker and the State Reform Office to close these ‘worst of the worst’ schools. The simple fact is these schools are failing our kids and their families deserve better. Allowing schools to fail our kids cannot continue. If the SRO exercises the ‘unreasonable hardship’ exemption to avoid closing any of these schools, we expect them to implement dramatic restructuring to give these students a chance at a successful future,” said Gary Naeyaert, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP).

Each school identified on the Bottom 5% list has been implementing a self-directed improvement plan under the supervision of the State Reform Office. To date, the state hasn’t closed a SINGLE traditional public school for academic failure, nor has a single failing school been put in the State Reform District for enhanced intervention. At the same time, over 100 charter schools have been closed for poor performance. However, under the very clear and unambiguous language in the GLEP-supported DPS rescue law (PA 192), the SRO is required to close any Detroit school that appears on this list for three consecutive years, and the SRO has committed to use the same criteria to intervene in chronically-failing schools outside of Detroit.

As part of adopting a new statewide school accountability plan that complies with ESSA and revising that state’s failing school law (MCL 380.1280c), GLEP supports an annual A-F letter grading system for school accountability; with the vast majority of weight given to proficiency and student growth; that includes clear consequences for chronic failure. MDE is expecting to submit a proposed accountability plan to the USED in April.

“Given the report released Friday that USED has wasted [\\$7 billion in the past few years on failed school turnaround efforts](#), we urge the Michigan legislature to focus on the kind of enhanced interventions that actually help students with better results,” Naeyaert continued.

###

The Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP) is a non-profit advocacy organization supporting quality choices in public education for all Michigan children. For more information, please visit www.glep.org

Supporting quality choices in public education.