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GLEP: Incoming Superintendent Michael Rice Should Refuse, Return Gold-Plated Benefits Package

State Board Offers Rice 66 Paid Days Off in 2019, More than 5 Times Number Given Most Public School Teachers

LANSING—Great Lakes Education Project Executive Director Beth DeShone today demanded incoming state Superintendent Michael Rice refuse a gold-plated benefits package offered by the state Board of Education that is set to give him more than 5 times the amount of paid vacation time and sick leave as the average public school teacher, and 6 times the pay, all before he has worked a single day on the job.

Rice's contract, offered by State Board of Education Chair Casandra Ulbrich, immediately gives him 36 days of sick leave and 30 days of vacation time. Rice's contract details were first reported by MIRS.¹

Under the contract, Rice could work as few as 2 days per week between August 1st – his first day on the job – and the end of the year.

According to an analysis by the Thomas Fordham Institute, teachers get on average about 12 combined sick and personal days per year², less than one-fifth the amount given Rice before he spends a single hour on the job.

Rice will also be paid \$216,000 per year, more than any other state Department Director, and 6 times as much as the average first-year public school teacher in the state.

“Michael Rice's gold-plated pay and benefits package is a slap in the face to public school teachers and students across the state, and he should give it back,” said Beth DeShone, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Education Project. “The state could hire 6 new teachers, complete with benefits for what the Board of Education is spending to butter up the next Superintendent. The Board is unprepared and ill-equipped to do the right thing, but Michael Rice still has that opportunity. Rice can prove to teachers they really matter to him by refusing the Board's plan to make him rich on the backs of Michigan students.”

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¹ <https://mirsnews.com/capsule.php?gid=5625#58157>

² https://www.mlive.com/news/2017/09/teacher_absenteeism_higher_for.html