



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

May 3, 2023

Dear Flint Community Schools Board of Education:

We are very concerned that, in the last six weeks, three senior FCS staff members—your chief financial officer, your human resources director, and your assistant superintendent—have tendered their resignations. Flint Community Schools board meeting minutes from the [April 12, 2023](#) meeting and Flint Beat articles from [April 17, 2023](#) and [May 2, 2023](#) indicate that all three have expressed reservations associated with the board's involvement in their work and their inability to perform their roles in support of Flint's scholars and staff as a result. The impact on the district and district operations cannot be overstated.

At the request of Superintendent Jones, the Genesee ISD is currently providing support to Flint Community Schools in financial management and has offered support in human resources management and grants management. The Michigan Department of Education has helped FCS with a \$3 million, five-year literacy grant as well as support in leadership development, strategic plan review, and partnership district support, among others. That said, the GISD does not have sufficient capacity to fulfill all of these roles on a long-term basis, and FCS certainly doesn't want this level of support to continue indefinitely.

It is critical that the board and superintendent—as a team of eight—engage collectively in board-superintendent governance training, not one-and-done training, but periodic training to establish and maintain proper roles and responsibilities between board and superintendent in support of Flint scholars. The value of such governance training was already recognized by the district and board in your recently approved Partnership Agreement.

The need for this training has become more apparent with the swift departure or pending departure of key leadership team members at a time that the district can ill afford a lack of continuity in its operations. In the last 10 years, FCS has lost more than 5,400 scholars, approximately two-thirds of its enrollment. The constant turnover in the FCS superintendency and in FCS administration undermines the long-term ability of the district to attract and retain educators and to continue to serve Flint scholars.

The intent of this communication is to reiterate our very strong interest in supporting FCS and the urgency with which we believe support is needed. Together, we are committed to supporting FCS in the continuance of critical services in the short term, to the extent that the superintendent requests. Moreover, we look forward to working with you to get the board and superintendent joint periodic

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training on roles and responsibilities, to begin immediately and to continue over the next year, to strengthen the support of FCS scholars and staff as a result.

Thank you for your attention to this important communication.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
State Superintendent



Steven Tunnicliff, Ph.D.
Genesee ISD Superintendent

C: Mr. Kevelin Jones, Superintendent, Flint Community Schools
Dr. Sue C. Carnell, Chief Deputy Superintendent, Michigan Department of Education
Dr. William Pearson, Director of the Office of Partnership Districts