

## Key Talking Points Regarding Section 107 Changes (May 2008)

### Why we want to remove the Language in Section 107 of the State Aid Act.

Page 234 line 19 & 236 line 3. This language states "The program tests individuals for eligibility under subdivision (a) before enrollment and tests participants to determine *initial progress after 40 hours of attendance, and then tests participants to determine additional* progress after every 90 hours of attendance."

- We pre-test upon entry, and we are required to test students after 90 hours of instruction. If a participant has to drop the program, we will attempt to test before they leave.
- We are required through the federal government to pre and post-test students. We use the data to help us improve our instruction.
- In many districts, 40 hours is roughly 13 to 16 class periods. It does not give enough time to show progress or allow for teacher/student instructional time. Therefore, testing students at 40 hours will not make a difference.
- The cost of extra testing materials, time and staff would increase.
- Students absent on test day create a hindrance on the teacher and classroom structure. Testing takes a minimum of 1 to 2 class periods to complete. There would need to be a tester available to test students that were absent on the 40-hour test date. Catching the absent students could take on average of 3 class periods. When this is accomplished, the student will be attending 10 to 13 class periods and then be tested again.
- Students at the ABE level are very intimidated by schools and testing.
- The adult education programs in the State have shown through the Michigan Adult Education Reporting System (MAERS) that testing numbers have met or exceed the federal requirement numbers for pre and post-testing.

### Why we oppose the transfer of \$700,000 from Sec. 107 and to State Corrections.

**RATIONALE:** We currently spend more than the \$24 million appropriated in Sec. 107.

The new language in Sub-section 14 is once again cutting an already under-funded program that has people on wait lists for services and shifts limited funds to prisoners.

From the 2000 Census: 1.28 million adults Michigan residents do not have a high school diploma. 320,000 persons have less than a ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade education. We served over 40,000 residents last year in adult education programs.

### Why we want to keep the language in Section 107 of the State Aid Act. Page 238, line 7-9.

"Ten percent for completion of the adult basic education objectives by achieving an increase of at least 1 grade level *educational functioning level* of proficiency in reading or mathematics.

- An Adult Basic Education level is low, it is very difficult for students who are reading at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level or lower to make a gain in a possible 90 to 120 hour setting.
- One grade level is not equal to an EFL. An EFL can be two grade levels, not the best way to reflect their schoolwork.
- Testing can show that a student is equivalent to a grade level and can realistically improve a grade level. Educational Functioning Levels are numbers that are not equivalent. For example, a student can pre-test and be 2 points from the next educational functioning level, thus, making it easier to "gain" an EFL. Whereas, some students can test low in the functioning level and be many points away to the next level and show tremendous gains in points, but not necessarily go up an EFL. It depends on where you fall on the EFL continuum when you pre-test.