

MSH UPDATES FROM THE CAPITAL

February 7-20, 2026

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, February 25th, 2026

Governor's State of the State

PROGRAM ADDRESSING CARDIAC EMERGENCIES IN SCHOOLS STILL AWAITING FUNDING

In 2024, two bills passed by the Michigan Legislature requiring schools to adopt cardiac emergency response plans were signed into law (Public Acts 36 and 37). However, the bills were contingent on the Legislature appropriating sufficient funding to implement the response plans. As of now, the current \$321 million school safety budget lacks dedicated funding for the cardiac response plans. A Senate proposal to allocate \$25 million for safety measures, including AED devices, was also not included in the final FY 25-26 budget.

In the absence of a sufficient appropriation, the law cannot be enforced and school districts cannot be not required to comply. With approximately 5,000 public and nonpublic schools statewide, adoption varies based on local capacity and resources. Currently, just under 1,000 schools hold the state's [MI HEARTSafe](#) designation, a title earned by schools with cardiac response plans, annual cardiac emergency drills, and enough employees trained to respond to a cardiac emergency.

Governor Whitmer's \$88 billion budget proposed in her recent executive recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year also omitted specified funding for cardiac emergency response plans.

CELLPHONES NOW BANNED IN MICHIGAN CLASSROOMS

Recently, Governor Whitmer signed SB 495 (Polehanki, D-Livonia) and HB 4141 (Tisdell, R-Rochester Hills) into law with immediate effect. Representative Tisdell's bill, now Public Act 1 of 2026, bans the use of cellphones by students during instructional periods in all Michigan schools. The bill championed by Senator Polehanki, now Public Act 2 of 2026, requires schools to develop protocols for when and how students may use their cellphones during an emergency. The legislation passed both chambers with broad bipartisan support.

The previous law allowed districts to create their own policies regarding cellphones. Whitmer called for the ban during her State of the State address last year. The Governor hopes the ban will help students with overall ability to learn, reduce behavioral issues, support higher test scores, and improve students' mental health. The law applies only to instructional time, and future changes could be considered based on feedback from school leaders.

STATE SEEKS \$23.7M REPAYMENT AS GOTION CHALLENGES DEFAULT DETERMINATION

Gotion, Inc., the developer of the proposed \$2.36 billion electric vehicle battery plant near Big Rapids that was approved in 2022, is disputing The Michigan Strategic Funds' efforts to recover \$23.7 million in previously given grant money. The Michigan Strategic Fund issued a notice of default in September 2025, citing a lack of activity at the project site for three months. Recently, the Department of Attorney General weighed in and called for all Site Strategic Readiness Plan grant dollars given to the company to be repaid immediately.

In a letter to the state (first reported by Crain's Detroit Business), Gotion asserted it is not in default under the grant agreement and instead said that project delays have occurred due to local opposition and legal challenges. The company claims that much of the funding has already been spent on buying land for the project and early construction. The only resolutions offered by Gotion included the township buying back the land for same amount that Gotion previously paid, or transferring the land to the state instead of repaying the grant funds.

GOVERNOR WHITMER MAKES APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Some of the Governor's recent executive appointments include:

Advisory Council on Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing

- Theresa Miracle, of Swartz Creek - reappointed
- Christopher Samp, of Troy - appointed, succeeds Karlee Wascher

Board of Occupational Therapy

- Karen Tibbs, of Southfield - appointed, succeeds Valerie Palmer
- Board of Optometry
- Sulman Hans, of Troy - reappointed

Board of Pharmacy

- Keith Binion, of Harper Woods - reappointed

Board of Psychology

- John Randle Sr., of Farmington Hills - reappointed

Certificate of Need Commission

- Tatiana Grant, of Farmington Hills - reappointed

Health Information Technology Commission

- Kaitlynn Lamie, of East Lansing - appointed, succeeds Janée Tyus
- Mardonn Chua, of Farmington Hills - reappointed

Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Developmental Disabilities

- Jennifer Jovanis, of Bloomfield Township - reappointed
- Salina Mann, of Taylor - reappointed
- Cara Sutcliffe, of Grand Rapids - reappointed
- Charron Williams, of Detroit - appointed, succeeds Stephanie Hirschert-Walton

Mental Health Diversion Council

- Dr. Lesly Hendershot, of Clinton Township - appointed, succeeds Carlynn Nichols
- Ronald Stoneman, of Pentwater - appointed, succeeds Johanna Clark

Public Health Advisory Council

- Emily Martin, of Ann Arbor - appointed, succeeds Ashley Rapp
- Herbert Smitherman, of Detroit - reappointed