

Implementing Virtual Learning: Letters to Stakeholders - Samples

[Date]

Dear **Parent/Guardian**,

In 2013, the Michigan Legislature expanded student access to digital learning options through Section 21f of the State School Aid Act. As a result, students enrolled in a public local district or public school academy in grades 6-12 are eligible to enroll in up to two online courses during an academic term – or more if parents, students, and school leadership agree that more than two are in the best interest of the student. Michigan is the seventh state in the U.S. to enable statewide choice at the course level through online learning options.

Online learning is an instructional approach that expands and customizes learning opportunities for students. However, it is substantially different from face-to-face instruction and works best when thoughtful planning supports individual enrollment decisions. I encourage you to talk with your child to examine if online learning is a good fit for them.

To help you make a decision about whether your student has the characteristics to be successful learning online, we recommend you review the [Parent Guide to Online Learning](#). The guide examines how online learning supports next generation learning models, poses practical planning questions, provides a preparation checklist, offers advice for parents/guardians, and includes an online learner readiness rubric.

Students may select online courses from our local district catalog [website address], or from [Michigan's Online Course Catalog](#). We have guidelines and procedures to accommodate student/parent requests to take online courses.

Please contact [Name] at [email] or [phone] who can answer questions, explain the process, and enroll your student in online learning. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Name], [Title]
[School Name]

[Date]

Dear **Staff**,

In 2013, the Michigan Legislature expanded student access to digital learning options through Section 21f of the State School Aid Act. As a result, students enrolled in a public local district or public school academy in grades 6-12 are eligible to enroll in up to two online courses during an academic term – or more if parents, students, and school leadership agree that more than two are in the best interest of the student. Michigan is the seventh state in the U.S. to enable statewide choice at the course level through online learning options.

Students may select online courses from our local district catalog [website address], or from [Michigan's Online Course Catalog](#). We have guidelines and procedures to accommodate student/parent requests to take online courses.

To prepare for advising students who may be considering online options and determine if they have the characteristics to be successful learning online, we recommend you review the [Parent Guide to Online Learning](#). In the guide you will find a checklist for what to do before a student enrolls, advice about the necessary support to help ensure student success, and an online learner readiness rubric.

With guidance from school counselors and building administrators, students will be able to enroll in courses that both fit their interests and meet graduation requirements. Please direct your questions to [Name] at [email] or [phone] who can explain the process and enroll our students in online learning. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Date]

Dear **School Board Member**,

In 2013, the Michigan Legislature expanded student access to digital learning options through Section 21f of the State School Aid Act. As a result, students enrolled in a public local district or public school academy in grades 6-12 are eligible to enroll in up to two online courses during an academic term – or more if parents, students, and school leadership agree that more than two are in the best interest of the student. Michigan is the seventh state in the U.S. to enable statewide choice at the course level through online learning options.

Online learning is an instructional approach that expands and customizes learning opportunities for students. However, it is substantially different from face-to-face instruction and works best when thoughtful planning supports individual enrollment decisions. We have developed policies to accommodate online learning for our students.

Students may select online courses from our local district catalog [website address], or from [Michigan's Online Course Catalog](#). We have guidelines and procedures to accommodate student/parent requests to take online courses.

We may deny student requests to take online courses for a number of reasons outlined in the legislation. If we deny a student's request for an online course, we must provide written documentation about why the request has been denied. Parents/Guardians and students may appeal the decision to deny enrollment in a course by sending a letter to the ISD superintendent explaining why the student should be allowed to take the course. The superintendent's office must issue a response within 5 days of receiving the appeal letter.

Under Section 21f, school districts are required to use their foundation allowance or per pupil funds to "pay for expenses associated with the online course or courses" and to cover the "cost of the online course." Section 21f also identifies a payment schedule for online courses that reflects an 80% payment based on enrollment in the online course and 20% based on completion as determined by the enrolling district, not the district offering the online course.

I plan to recommend board approval of a policy for online learning [when]. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions about expanding online learning options for our students.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]