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Legislature and Governor Approve Enhancements to the Michigan Transfer Network to Improve Student Transfer in Higher Education

Lansing, MI— Governor Rick Snyder signed the Fiscal Year 2017-18 state education budget into law last week, which includes \$1 million to support transfer students in Michigan. The funds will be utilized to replace and upgrade the Michigan Transfer Network, a valuable tool to help students plan their transfer pathway, and also to support the development of statewide associate to bachelor's degree transfer pathways in the most popular majors.

Too few students who transfer from a community college to a baccalaureate-granting institution earn a bachelor's degree. Michigan colleges and universities want to change that. A degree pathway can provide help by voluntarily aligning certain academic programs at participating institutions so that credits transfer seamlessly.

According to Dr. Erica Orians, Executive Director of the Michigan Community College Association's (MCCA) Center for Student Success, "Data suggests that approximately 80 percent of community college students indicate they are interested in earning a bachelor's degree, so this work is critically important." To bridge this gap and build support for an enhanced Michigan Transfer Network, the MCCA and the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) have been working closely with the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO). The existing Michigan Transfer Network is hosted by Michigan State University and is nine years old, demanding a full rewrite. MCCA and MASU made a joint budget request to the state for this one-time appropriation last fall.

"We're very thankful that the state has committed its resources to this important project. Michigan's public universities and community colleges understand that transfer and collaboration are a priority for the state and students, and we look forward to continuing an ambitious agenda to advance transfer student success in Michigan," said Dr. Daniel Hurley, the CEO of MASU.

Preliminary planning work has already begun among representatives from the state's community colleges, public universities, and independent colleges. Funds will not be available until after October 1, the start of the state's fiscal year. Work is expected to last about three years.

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The Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) provides leadership and advocacy on issues affecting the 28 member community colleges. Since 1914, community colleges have striven to provide affordable and quality higher education to Michigan residents. The community college mission is one of access and success to both traditional and nontraditional students. Furthermore, community colleges also play an integral role in the preparation and development of the state's workforce.

The Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) serves as the coordinating board for Michigan's 15 public universities, providing advocacy and fostering policy to maximize the collective value these institutions provide in serving the public interest and the State of Michigan. Learn more at www.masu.org.