

February 7, 2018

State Superintendent Brian Whiston
Deputy Superintendent Vanessa Keesler
Michigan Department of Education
608 W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Mr. Eric Scorsone
Mr. Paul Connors
Michigan Department of Treasury
Lansing, MI 48922

Dear Superintendent Whiston, Deputy Superintendent Kessler, Mr. Eric Scorsone, and Mr. Paul Connors:

Upon learning that Dr. Shelly Walker has been placed on paid administrative leave, as a group our district's staff and teachers hastened to send this letter of support to Michigan Department of Education and the Department of Treasury on behalf of our superintendent, Dr. Walker.

Dr. Walker has been like no other superintendent in our history. It's more than that she's constantly in the buildings, always respectful, available to anyone including staff, parents, students... what many would say is expected of a superintendent...but she's made it a point to fully understand the district's situation and has begun to implement with our help the wide sweeping changes necessary to improve our district's educational system for our students. The magnitude of the changes, as you know, is significant, but her belief and faith that a better system is more than possible, that it is actually achievable with the right supports and systems is more than "catching on" in the district, it's taking "hold", her spirit and belief is contagious. We know we have long road ahead and at many times it's been difficult and will be difficult, but with her at the helm with her leadership and knowledge, the district's transformation can be accomplished. She's small in stature, but her presence and knowledge is large.

We know her leadership is not in question, but we felt compelled to share the kind of leader we have in Dr. Walker to help the "powers to be" understand that she is right person for Benton Harbor Area Schools district and its staff, our community, and more importantly for our students.

We humbly ask for your support and help and return our superintendent to our district and students.

Signed by BHAS Staff