|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CONTACTS:**  [Sara Wurfel](mailto:wurfels@michigan.gov) or [Dave Murray](mailto:murrayd1@michigan.gov), Governor’s Office  517-335-6397 | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  Wednesday, June 10, 2015 |

**Lt. Gov. Brian Calley: Statewide input needed before reforming Michigan’s special education system***Calley urges parents to share experiences through online survey*

Lansing, Mich. – Lt. Gov. Brian Calley is seeking statewide input from parents on their experiences within Michigan’s special education system.

Calley in December testified in opposition to proposed special education changes, saying there needs to be more statewide community input. Since then, Calley has been visiting communities across the state to listen to parents and teachers in town hall meetings discuss their experiences and the obstacles within the system, in hopes of building proposals to improve special education.

“It’s important that parents are able to share their opinions before changes are made to our special education system,” Calley said. “To ensure that the voices of our special education families are heard, I am meeting with parents and students and seeking input from others across Michigan on this important topic.”

To reach more parents, Calley launched an online survey to ensure all families can share their experiences within the state’s special education system. The eight-question survey, which has already received more than 1,200 responses, gives respondents the opportunity to comment on the special education system including their experiences related to Individualized Education Plans and communication with schools and the state. The survey also seeks to gain a better understanding of the prevalence of the use of restraint and seclusion practices in schools.

Calley intends to leave the survey open through the end of August and hopes to receive input from the thousands of parents and children affected by the system. Results from the survey will be shared with school districts and the Michigan Department of Education and will also be used to develop proposals to improve outcomes for some of Michigan's most vulnerable residents.

Those interested in taking the survey can find it at [www.michigan.gov/calley](http://www.michigan.gov/calley).

#####