

CONSTITUTIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

ELECTED OFFICERS

(Terms Expire January 1, 2023)

Governor

GRETCHEN WHITMER, East Lansing

Lieutenant Governor

GARLIN GILCHRIST II, Detroit

Secretary of State

JOCELYN BENSON, Detroit

Attorney General

DANA NESSEL, Plymouth Township

APPOINTED OFFICERS

State Treasurer

RACHAEL EUBANKS, East Lansing

Superintendent of Public Instruction

MICHAEL F. RICE, Kalamazoo



GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

Gretchen Whitmer was sworn in as the 49th governor of Michigan on January 1, 2019.

A lifelong Michigander, Governor Whitmer grew up in Grand Rapids and East Lansing. Her parents instilled in her and her siblings a strong work ethic and the deep belief that everyone is important. She started her first job at age 15 at Burlingame Lumber, and later worked the line at the Royal Fork Buffet and stocked shelves at Target.

Governor Whitmer is a proud product of Michigan's public school system and a graduate of Michigan State University and the Michigan State University College of Law, where she graduated *magna cum laude*.

Governor Whitmer served in the Michigan Legislature, elected to the House of Representatives in 2000, 2002, and 2004, and to the State Senate in a special election in March of 2006. She was reelected in November 2006 and 2010, and served as the Senate Democratic Leader in the State Senate.

During her time in the Michigan Legislature, Governor Whitmer negotiated an increase in the minimum wage with a cost-of-living adjustment, and because of that bipartisan work, the minimum wage went up for the fourth time in 2018. As Senate Democratic Leader, she brought workers, labor unions, and businesses together to fight anti-worker legislation.

In addition to her service to the state, Governor Whitmer taught at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, and in 2016 she stepped up to serve as Ingham County Prosecutor, restoring faith in the office after it had been hit by scandal. In that role, she established a new Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit to go after abusers, sped up the rehabilitation of non-violent first-time offenders, and asked the Michigan State Police to investigate the integrity of the county's evidence room.

Governor Whitmer is committed to expanding access to affordable healthcare, improving education and skills training, respecting working families, cleaning up Michigan's drinking water, and of course, fixing the roads.

Governor Whitmer has two daughters, Sherry and Sydney, and her husband Marc Mallory has three sons, Alex, Mason and Winston. The family has two dogs, Kevin and Doug, the First Dogs of Michigan.



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR GARLIN GILCHRIST II

Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist has dedicated his career to solving problems. An engineer by training, he uses thoughtful innovation, progressive reform, and efficient modernization of policies and programs to make the work better for hardworking families. From spearheading campaigns for equality and justice to harnessing technology to solve real problems, his focus has consistently remained on serving the public and getting things done.

He brings a lifetime of experience to the task, receiving his first computer at age five and setting up a computer lab in a Detroit community recreation center using computers that he built himself at age 16. Lt. Governor Gilchrist studied computer engineering and computer science at the University of Michigan, graduating with honors, and later had a successful career as a software engineer at Microsoft, helping to build SharePoint into the fastest growing product in the company's history.

Lt. Governor Gilchrist spent the next several years of his career as a social entrepreneur and community organizer who helped people in communities across America realize their full economic and political potential. Upon returning home to Detroit, Lt. Governor Gilchrist worked in local government to make sure build systems that made the government more responsive, transparent, and accountable to city residents. This experience prepared him for a key priority: to bring Michigan's state government fully into the 21st century on every level.

As part of the Whitmer Administration, Lt. Governor Gilchrist has sought to address injustice and inequity across our state at every level. From cochairing the Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration to helming the Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities, these task forces have taken actions that saved lives and protect our most vulnerable populations. Lt. Governor Gilchrist's approach to addressing these disparities is deeply rooted in fact-based practices, science, and connecting with individuals across Michigan.

Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist and his wife, Ellen, reside in Detroit where they are raising their twins, Emily and Garlin III, and daughter, Ruby.



SECRETARY OF STATE JOCELYN BENSON

Jocelyn Benson was sworn in as Michigan's 43rd secretary of state January 1, 2019, after being elected November 6, 2018, to a 4-year term.

A national leader in election law, Ms. Benson is the author of *State Secretaries of State: Guardians of the Democratic Process*. It is the first major book on the role of the secretary of state in enforcing election and campaign finance laws.

An expert on civil rights law, education law, and election law, Ms. Benson served as dean of Wayne State University Law School in Detroit. When she was appointed dean at age 36, she became the youngest woman in U.S. history to lead a top-100, accredited law school. She continues to serve as vice chair of the advisory board for the Levin Center at Wayne Law, which she founded with former U.S. Senator Carl Levin. She served as director of the center from fall 2016 until August 2017. Previously, Ms. Benson was an associate professor and associate director of the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights at Wayne State University Law School.

Prior to her election, she served as CEO of the Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality (RISE), a national nonprofit organization using the unifying power of sports to improve race relations. She continues to serve on the RISE Board of Directors and as cochair of the RISE to Vote initiative, a nonpartisan effort to register professional and college athletes to vote and encourage them to lead their fans in becoming informed and engaged citizens.

Ms. Benson is the founder of the nonpartisan Michigan Center for Election Law, which hosts projects that support transparency and integrity in elections, and cofounder and former president of Military Spouses of Michigan, a network dedicated to providing support and services to military spouses and their children.

In 2015, Ms. Benson became one of the youngest women in history to be inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

She earned a bachelor of arts from Wellesley College, master of philosophy from Oxford University, and a law degree from Harvard Law School. Ms. Benson and her husband Ryan reside in Detroit.



**ATTORNEY GENERAL
DANA NESSEL**

Dana Nessel, Michigan's 54th Attorney General, began her legal career as an Assistant Prosecutor in the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. For more than a decade, she was assigned to a number of elite units within the office and handled some of Wayne County's most difficult cases in the Child and Family Abuse Bureau, Police Conduct Review Team, and Auto Theft Unit. Nessel was specially assigned to try homicide, arson, criminal sexual conduct and gang-related conspiracy cases, among many others.

In 2005, Nessel left the Prosecutor's Office to open her own legal firm. In her criminal practice, she vigorously defended the rights of indigent defendants on hundreds of criminal cases, from petty theft to first degree murder. She also handled civil rights actions for plaintiffs against police departments and government agencies that have committed transgressions against community residents. Nessel has petitioned courts across Michigan on behalf of dozens of victims of domestic violence who sought Personal Protection Orders against their abusers. She has also handled a myriad of other disciplines, ranging from family law, probate matters, and driver license restoration cases.

Dana Nessel is also recognized as a premier litigator of LGBTQ issues in Michigan. In 2010, she brought the matter of *Harmon v. Davis*, in which a Michigan court, for the first time, held that a non-biological parent in a same-sex couple could establish custodial rights to the couple's children. Nessel also successfully petitioned for the first second-parent adoptions for same-sex couples in Oakland and Wayne Counties. She has defended and acquired exonerations for scores of defendants wrongly targeted for prosecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity and have represented various clients terminated from employment based upon those classifications.

In 2012, Nessel spearheaded the precedent-setting case, *DeBoer v. Snyder*, which challenged the bans on adoption and marriage for same-sex couples in Michigan. DeBoer was later consolidated with its affiliated U.S. Sixth Circuit cases into *Obergefell v. Hodges* in the United States Supreme Court. This landmark case legalized same-sex marriage nationwide.

Nessel is the founder and first president of the Fair Michigan Foundation. In 2016, she and Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy created the Fair Michigan Justice Project, a first of its kind task force which investigates and prosecutes hate crimes committed against the LGBTQ community. In the first few years of existence, the Justice Project had charged more than 20 capital offenses including homicides, sexual assaults, armed robberies, child abuse, attempted murder, and car-jackings. The Fair Michigan Justice Project has a 100% conviction rate.

Nessel has received numerous awards for her civil rights initiatives, including the "Champion of Justice" award from the Michigan State Bar Association, "Woman of the Year" from *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* and the "Treasure of Detroit" award from Wayne State University Law school, where she earned her juris doctor. Nessel lives in southeast Michigan with her wife, Alanna Maguire, and their twin sons, Alex and Zach, along with various cats.



**STATE TREASURER
RACHAEL EUBANKS**

Rachael Eubanks was appointed as Michigan's 47th State Treasurer by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in January of 2019.

In 2016, she was appointed by Governor Rick Snyder, and reappointed in 2017 to serve on the Michigan Public Service Commission as a utility regulatory commissioner. In that capacity she reviewed and voted on hundreds of orders that helped shape Michigan's energy future. In particular, the Commission had regulatory oversight over the implementation of two comprehensive energy law changes during her tenure. She served on several national organizations, including as Vice President to the Organization of PJM States, Inc., and was on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, where she was chair of the Supplier and Workforce Development Subcommittee.

Prior to that role, Ms. Eubanks structured more than \$25 billion in bond financings for public entities—primarily the state of Michigan, State Building Authority, Michigan Finance Authority and the Michigan Strategic Fund. Treasurer Eubanks also served as point of contact for credit rating agencies on state credit matters for ten years.

Ms. Eubanks serves on the National Association of State Treasurers' State Debt Management Network and Legislative Committees. She was on the Board of Michigan Women in Finance from 2008 to 2013 and was elected treasurer and president.

She obtained her bachelor's in economics from the University of Michigan.

Ms. Eubanks is a resident of East Lansing.



**SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
DR. MICHAEL F. RICE**

Dr. Michael F. Rice was appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction in May 2019 by Michigan's State Board of Education.

He served as the superintendent of the Kalamazoo Public Schools from 2007 to 2019, where he supported full-day pre-kindergarten; improved student achievement in reading, writing, and math; and encouraged student participation in Advanced Placement courses.

Prior to serving as Kalamazoo's superintendent, Dr. Rice served five years as superintendent of the Clifton Public Schools in Clifton, New Jersey.

Dr. Rice began his career in the Washington, D.C. Public Schools, where he taught high school French, and founded and coached an award-winning speech and debate program. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology with honors from Yale University and a master's degree and doctorate in public administration with honors from New York University.

He was president of the Middle Cities Education Association, 2013 to 2014 and received the Michigan Superintendent of the Year Award from the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators in 2016.

His most personally rewarding work is his steady mentoring and teaching of, and informal discussions with, school children—which he continues to do as Michigan's State Superintendent.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



CASANDRA E. ULBRICH



PAMELA PUGH



ELLEN COGEN LIPTON



TOM MCMILLIN



JUDITH PRITCHETT



NIKKI SNYDER



JASON STRAYHORN



TIFFANY TILLEY

Members

	<i>Term expires</i>
CASANDRA E. ULBRICH, <i>President</i> , Dearborn	Jan. 1, 2023
PAMELA PUGH, <i>Vice President</i> , Saginaw.	Jan. 1, 2023
ELLEN COGEN LIPTON, Huntington Woods	Jan. 1, 2029
TOM MCMILLIN, <i>Treasurer</i> , Oakland Township	Jan. 1, 2025
JUDITH PRITCHETT, <i>NASBE Delegate</i> , Washington Township	Jan. 1, 2027
NIKKI SNYDER, Dexter	Jan. 1, 2025
JASON STRAYHORN, Novi	Jan. 1, 2029
TIFFANY TILLEY, Southfield	Jan. 1, 2027

ex officio

GRETCHEN WHITMER, Governor
MICHAEL F. RICE, Superintendent of Public Instruction

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Members

The eight voting members of the **Michigan State Board of Education** are elected at-large on the partisan statewide ballot for 8-year terms. Two are elected every two years in the general election. In addition, there are two nonvoting, ex officio members—the governor and the state superintendent of public instruction, who is the chair of the board. Any vacancies on the board which occur between elections are filled through appointment by the governor for the remainder of the term.

The state board elects its own officers for 2-year terms. It also selects and appoints the state superintendent of public instruction, who administers the Michigan Department of Education.

The state board of education is at the core of an unusual state education system which seeks to carry out Michigan's long tradition of local control balanced against the overall needs of the people statewide.

Historical Background

The Northwest Ordinance in 1787 encouraged schools and the means of education.

In 1809, nearly three decades before statehood, Michigan territorial law directed each judicial district to start schools and collect a tax for them. The **territorial council** made it mandatory in 1829 to divide the townships into school districts and gave the state the right to inspect and supervise schools and to set the length of time each would be open.

Michigan's first constitution, in 1835, created the office of superintendent of public instruction. **John D. Pierce**, a New England clergyman who had come to Michigan as a frontier missionary, was named the first superintendent, becoming the first independent administrator of education under a state constitution in the United States.

Michigan became a state in 1837 and adopted a new constitution in 1850 which formalized the state board of education as a constitutional body. The state board of education was created by the Michigan Legislature in 1849 to administer what is now Eastern Michigan University. Many duties were extended to the board over the years, but the current responsibilities were established in the 1963 state constitution.

Constitutional Powers

The state board of education exercises its constitutional **duties** of leadership and general supervision over all public education, including adult education and instructional programs in state institutions, except for institutions of higher education granting baccalaureate degrees. It serves as the general planning and coordinating body for all public education and advises the legislature as to the financial requirements for public education.

Among their several duties, the state board of education and Department of Education distribute state funds to local school districts; reimburse schools for certain programs such as school lunches, bus transportation, and remedial and special education; administer federal aid programs; and provide student financial aid. In addition, the state board appoints advisory councils and committees from the education community and general public to investigate, review, or make recommendations.