

Breakfast with Governor Whitmer

Did you ever wonder why Gretchen Whitmer said she was going to fix the “damn” roads while campaigning last year? Well, 600 West Michigan companies had breakfast with the Governor in mid-February to hear her speak. She used that phrasing because that is how the people of Michigan refer to the roads. One of her top priorities is to fix the roads long term, not just continue to patch them up. Find a long-term solution. The average Michigan resident pays \$562 a year to fix their cars due to our road conditions. This is essentially a road tax with no benefit. She seeks to put the investment in our roads to help our travelers and businesses who rely on them daily. Now the debate happens on how to fund them which won't be an easy battle.

Education is also a priority for her. Michigan third graders are in the bottom 10 in the country for reading. We are at the lowest K-12 spending in our history. She is passionate to build the skills that lead to a better workforce, and the infrastructure that also helps to keep us safe. She wants to fix the problems that keep Michigan from its full potential.

She has created two new programs since starting office in January 2019. Benchmarking Tennessee's successful program, she created Michigan Reconnect. This is an opportunity to “skill up” or move into higher paying jobs. In addition, she created the Michigan Opportunity Scholarship to help bring down the cost of the 4-year degree or certification programs. The governor used the analogy of a rock-climbing wall to describe one's career path as there are many ways you can find your own path up.

Other topics discussed that she was passionate about were increasing the MEDC toolbox to help Michigan companies, clean water, continuing MPART, giving underprivileged communities chances for government contracts, and the rights of the LGBT community. She wants to protect who you love, and how you live.

Finally, Governor Whitmer is passionate about working across the isles. She sees the humanity in other people. She wants to see each person as a person, not as an advisory.