

STATE SENATOR • GRETCHEN WHITMER • 23RD DISTRICT

# Whitmer Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-1734 • Fax: 517-373-5397  
E-mail: [gwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:gwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov) • [www.senate.mi.gov/whitmer](http://www.senate.mi.gov/whitmer)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Jul 10, 2008

Contact: Alex Rossman  
Phone: (517) 373-1734

## **Sen. Whitmer to “Leap for Learning,” Skydive to Help Raise \$8,000 for Students with Special Needs in East Lansing**

*Proceeds will help build therapeutic sensory rooms for schools*

LANSING, Mich. — State Senator Gretchen Whitmer (D-East Lansing) will join East Lansing residents, school supporters and downright daredevils on Sunday, July 20th to skydive in an effort to raise \$8,000 for East Lansing Public Schools to build sensory rooms for students. These rooms are built to help children with special needs learn easier and more effectively by engaging their surroundings.

“Nothing is more important than ensuring our children with special needs have the tools they need to maximize their education,” said Sen. Whitmer. “Skydiving is a unique opportunity to help raise funds for students and their educational needs. I’d like to thank everyone who has sponsored me so far, not only for supporting this wonderful cause, but also for believing I’ll actually make it out of the airplane!”

Sensory rooms are used for children who have difficulty processing information from all five senses at once. These children generally suffer from a variety of disorders such as autism, anxiety and hyperactivity. Sensory rooms have proven effective in school settings to help reduce students’ confusion and regulate their behaviors. From these therapeutic “sensory diets,” children have an easier time focusing and are able to maximize their learning opportunities as well as their true potential as students.

“We are extremely grateful for these funds to help build sensory rooms in our schools,” said Colette Evangelista, the parent of a Pinecrest Elementary student who is spearheading this event. “By building these rooms, we are truly investing in education to make sure students can function productively and focus on learning. I’m confident students like my son Everett will benefit tremendously from this sensory equipment, and I appreciate Sen. Whitmer and the others who are joining with me to help make this possible.”

Interested individuals can support this important cause by sponsoring the “leap for learning” as Whitmer and Evangelista use their senses (or lack thereof) to teach East Lansing children that there will be no limitations on their learning. Checks can be made payable to East Lansing Public Schools. There are still spots on the plane available as well if individuals are interested in joining in the jump on July 20th. Contact Colette Evangelista with any questions at [cdevan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cdevan@sbcglobal.net) or 517-337-9086.

###