PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Dan McCormick, Chief Executive Officer, Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice, 517-655-4400

The launch of a “regional” Education Think Tank in Lansing, Michigan

September 27, 2000 will mark the launch of a “new” education think tank in Michigan. The Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization of education stakeholders with a common goal: the qualitative improvement and healthy growth of all public schools in the entire Great Lakes region. The organization represents a unique partnership between Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and other Great Lakes states.

“The center aims to become a source that the media, public and legislators can turn to for trusted opinions, supported by university-based research,” said Paula Gangopadhyay, executive director of the center.

To mark the occasion, the center will host a series of inaugural activities aimed at illuminating several key aspects of education-related public policy issues.

The event will kick-off with a press conference at 11 a.m. at the Lansing Center. Lu Battaglieri, chairman of the center will share the center’s mission, vision, goals and projects.

The program includes release of the center’s first research paper, “Let the Buyer Beware”, an analysis of the educational studies published by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. The research will be released by noted scholar, Peter Cookson, Jr., Ph.D. from Columbia University, New York, NY.

Highlight of the program will be a panel discussion on the timely education topic: The Impact of Privatizing Teaching and Learning. The panel will be chaired by Alex Molnar, Ph.D., from Arizona State University. Noted panelists from across the nation will present for and against opinion on the issue of privatization in education. “We wanted to offer a balanced forum on this topic,” said Gangopadhyay. Blanche E. Fraser, Senior Vice President of Development will represent Edison Schools Inc., the nation’s leading for-profit school management company. Other panelists are Walter Farrell from University of North Carolina, Doug Harris, Ph.D. from Economic Policy Institute, Washington D.C and Gary Miron, Ph.D., and Christopher Nelson, Ph.D., from Western Michigan University, Michigan. The inauguration event is by invitation only and includes a complimentary luncheon.