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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.

DATE: August 2, 2002

SUBJECT: Report on Activities to Implement Education YES! - A Yardstick for Excellent Schools Including Information on Alternate Assessment

Department staff began activities to implement *Education YES!* immediately after it was approved by the State Board of Education in March, 2002. We have had great success in putting into place the elements needed to make *Education YES!* a reality. We have had setbacks along with our success. Not every intermediate deadline will be met. However, we remain committed to the December timeline for public reporting for *Education YES!* The following is intended to provide an update on *Education YES!* activities and a preview of the issues that will come before the State Board in the weeks and months ahead.

Accreditation Advisory Committee

The Accreditation Advisory Committee has held three meetings since it met with the State Board of Education at the May meeting. The Committee has met June 10 and 11, July 15 and 16, and August 1 and 2. The Committee plans to make a complete report to the State Board of Education at the Board's September meeting.

In addition to its work directly on *Education YES!*, the Accreditation Advisory Committee reviewed the MI-Access alternate assessment system, and the system for setting standards or "cut scores". MI-Access is the alternate assessment tool used in Michigan to provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to be included in the assessment system. The Committee reviewed the standard setting process and the make-up of the Technical Advisory Committee that advised the project. They noted no "red flags" that should delay the standard setting process. In addition, the Advisory Committee notes that Michigan must integrate MI-Access into the state accountability system.

Achievement Indicators and Cut Scores

The Advisory Committee began its work on the achievement indicators with a discussion of the statistic and metric to be used to report achievement status and change. The Committee has requested simulations of the impact of using these statistics. The Committee will review

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simulations and finalize its recommendations at their meeting on August 1-2, 2002. The Committee is also preparing to provide the State Board of Education with a specific recommendation on the growth indicator included in *Education YES!* The Committee is investigating how best to report the growth indicator in a way that honors the integrity of the data that is available and provides the best information to the public and to schools.

Linkage With Federal Legislation

The Advisory Committee has had several discussions about possible linkages between *Education YES!* and the Adequate Yearly Progress measure required under the No Child Left Behind Act. This issue will be addressed in the Committee's report to the State Board in September.

School Improvement Indicators

Education YES! calls for eleven school performance indicators to be part of the "multiple measures." The indicators were not completely specified by the Board in *Education YES!* New data will need to be collected for most of the indicators. The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (ISD Superintendents) is partnering with the Department in the development of specifications for the indicators and in the development of data collection questions. Kent Intermediate School District is serving as the lead partner and fiscal agent. Superintendents and principals from across the state were invited to serve on development teams for each indicator. The project involves eleven one-day development sessions, one session for each indicator. The Education Policy Center at Michigan State University has developed brief summaries of current research and best practice for each indicator. The research summary is used as a starting point for each development team. The team facilitators and a "finishing team" will come together to address issues of consistency across the indicators. This process is creating a great deal of ownership and buy-in across the state.

The data collection questions will be field tested by principals to make sure that the data demands are realistic. Every effort will be made to use existing data, and to avoid duplicate data collection. The Department is working closely with the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI) on this issue. The Department is also working with the North Central Association – Michigan Office because North Central requires its' member schools to submit an annual data report. North Central has agreed to provide this data directly to the Department, saving these schools some data entry burden.

The Accreditation Advisory Committee has been briefed on the development of the indicators and has provided input into the process. The Advisory Committee will review the indicators and the data collection package at their September meeting.

Communications and Dissemination

A "Frequently Asked Questions" document about *Education YES!* has been developed and is available along with the *Education YES!* document on the Department's web site on the Internet. In addition, a standard PowerPoint presentation has been developed and has been used to provide an overview of *Education YES!* for numerous groups.

The Department is planning activities to get the word out about *Education YES!* Special efforts will be made to prepare schools and communities to react to the public reporting under *Education YES!*

Assisting Underperforming Schools

At the May meeting of the State Board of Education, Department staff reported on services to underperforming schools. Staff has been meeting regularly to coordinate services under Partnership for Success, Comprehensive School Reform, and Title I Intensive Assistance. These programs were described at the May meeting. The programs are in place to assist underperforming schools this fall. While there are not enough resources to assist all underperforming schools that need help, these programs are targeting the most needy schools. Particular attention is being paid to those schools that were previously identified as unaccredited under the old system. There are four schools that had been identified as unaccredited that still have not had a qualifying score under the old accreditation system. All four of these schools are receiving services from Partnership for Success or Title I Intensive Assistance.