



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**To:** State Board of Education

**From:** Tom Watkins

**Date:** October 25, 2004

**Subject:** Approval of Grade Levels for Michigan Educational Assessment Program  
Assessments of Science and Social Studies

When the State Board of Education earlier this year approved shifting the grades 3-8 MEAP Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments to the Fall, starting in 2005-2006, a final decision on at what grades Science and Social Studies would be tested in the Fall was deferred. Several steps have been taken to help resolve this matter.

First, the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) Advisory Committee has discussed this issue. They voted 20 to 0 in May to recommend to the State Board of Education the assessment of Science in the Fall of grades 5 and 8, while Social Studies would be assessed in the Fall of grades 6 and 9 (the latter occurring when the high school re-takes occur during the last week of October and first week of November). The Advisory Committee recommended these grades since it best matched the current assessments. The second-place recommendation from the Advisory Committee, supported on a 13 to 7 margin, would be to assess Science in the Fall of grades 4 and 8, while Social Studies would be assessed in the Fall of grades 5 and 8, thereby placing four tests (Mathematics, ELA, Science, and Social Studies) at this grade level.

Second, Dr. Jeremy Hughes, Chief Academic Officer, sent a memorandum to the local and intermediate district superintendents dated July 20, 2004 in which he invited comments relative to assessing Science in grades 5 and 8 and Social Studies in grades 6 and 9. A copy of this memorandum is shown in Attachment A. This note has been forwarded to all educational organizations and was also sent to the OEAA Advisory Committee. The memorandum requested comments be sent via e-mail to Betty Underwood by August 31, 2004. By the due date, comments were received from a number of local educators.

Third, staff asked the OEAA Advisory Committee at its September 30 meeting if they still supported assessing Social Studies in grades 6 and 9. They once again overwhelmingly indicated their support for the change.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the administration of the MEAP Science tests in grades 5 and 8, and the MEAP Social Studies tests in grades 6 and 9, effective Fall, 2005 as described in the Superintendent's memorandum dated October 25, 2004.

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**TO:** LEA and ISD Superintendents, Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers

**FROM:** Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D.  
Chief Academic Officer/Deputy Superintendent

**DATE:** July 20, 2004

**SUBJ: SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE MEAP TESTING**

The State Board of Education, at its June 8, 2004 meeting, approved the proposal to move elementary and middle school MEAP testing from winter to fall, beginning with the 2005-06 school year. At that time, the English Language Arts and Mathematics MEAP tests will have been revised to become the tests required by No Child Left Behind, testing students at every grade, 3 through 8.

The State Board's action was accompanied by concerns expressed from educators and professional associations regarding:

1. The number of tests that would be given at certain grade levels. Grades 5 and 8, for instance, would be tested with ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
2. The local school or district curriculum changes that might be required by the winter-to-fall shift, especially in Science and Social Studies.

After considerable discussion, we are proposing the following testing design:

**Science Grades 5, 8, 11. (No change)**

**Social Studies Grade 6, 9, 11.**

Testing would be in the fall. As with ELA and Math, the tests would essentially assess the benchmarks taught in the previous grade levels, up to the time of fall testing.

Because of the importance of this issue, we would like to invite comment on this proposal. Comments will be accepted up until August 31 and should be emailed to Betty Underwood, Assistant Director, Curriculum and Instruction, Office of School Improvement at: [underwoodb@michigan.gov](mailto:underwoodb@michigan.gov).

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