

GRADE LEVEL CONTENT EXPECTATIONS

Q&A

Q: Define exactly what Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) are, how they connect to the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks, what they replace, supplant.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* called upon states to implement grade level assessments based on "rigorous academic standards" by the 2005-2006 school year. The GLCE are Michigan's response to this mandate. They do not represent the entire richness of a curriculum, but do highlight that which is essential for all students to be able to know and do.

The GLCE documents are the third tier of Michigan's Curriculum Frameworks (1995) and will directly correlate to items on the grade level MEAP Assessments. While content standards and benchmarks define the broader curriculum expected to be taught and learned in Michigan schools, GLCE are specific and clarify what it is that students are expected to know and do on grade level assessments. At the local level, teacher-created Instructional Design will drive instruction. To assist in this, MDE is currently sponsoring a process by which working groups of Mathematics and English Language Arts educators are aligning the benchmarks with the GLCE. It is expected that this work will be completed by June of 2004 to assist districts in the development of appropriate Professional Development activities.

While the GLCE are incorporated in most if not all of the grade-span (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) benchmarks, they do, however, "stretch" us in many ways, setting expectations that may go beyond what is currently expected of students at each grade level.

Q: What happens to the content standards and benchmarks in the Michigan Curriculum Framework?

The Michigan Curriculum Frameworks (1995) provides a framework for designing, delivering and assessing instruction at the local level—with parameters for a broader scope and sequence of content learning. This will remain the model for local districts to use as a guide toward the alignment of a standards-based curriculum, instruction aligned to benchmarks, assessment aligned to content expectations, and professional development to support teaching and learning.

Q: What was the rationale for the development of the GLCE? Who was involved?

Our current Michigan Curriculum Framework standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts were approved in 1995. The *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001* required states to develop grade level assessments based on “high, rigorous academic standards.” Since Michigan’s benchmarks were designed by “grade span” sequence, it required the development of “grade specific” content expectations in order to drive the mandated grade level tests. Throughout the two years of their development, many professionals contributed to the GLCE. Classroom teachers, curriculum specialists from local and intermediate school districts, academicians, and MDE staff have given countless hours to the process of identifying a set of learning expectations at each grade level.

The plan for developing Michigan’s GLCE has six stages:

June, 2002-March, 2003

Michigan Educator Development Teams review current grade span benchmarks and create grade level expectations and identify core essential learnings in the Michigan Curriculum Framework for each grade level 3-8. Grade level expectations submitted for a scholarly review (Joan Ferrini-Mundy, William Schmidt and Michael Pressley).

July & September, 2003

Achieve, Inc., an organization formed by the National Governor’s Association to review each state’s standards for alignment with NCLB requirements, reviews Michigan’s Grade Level Content Expectations and recognized them as among the best in the nation.

November, 2003

State Board of Education approves Grade Level Content Expectations as reviewed by Achieve, Inc.

January-March, 2004

Content Advisory Groups and Peer Review/Editing Teams convene for a final review and edit of the Grade Level Content Expectations’ documents.

March-August, 2004

GLCE disseminated to educators across Michigan. The next steps for Grade Level Content Expectations include the development of several companion documents:

- *Alignment between grade-span benchmarks and grade specific expectations*
- *Alignment between GLCE and texts and materials*
- *Instructional modules that can be used to “flesh out” the expectations*
- *Promising practices that are research-based to support the GLCE*
- *Development of on-line material so that teachers can connect to resources through web-links*
- *Alignment of assessment items and tests with GLCE*

GLCE Q&As

Q: How do the GLCE fit or connect with the following initiatives?

Reading First – www.michigan.gov/mde to “K-12 Curriculum” to “English Language Arts”

Reading First is a process, assessments and instructional programs that relate to instructional practices in literacy. Grade Level Content Expectations in English Language Arts can help teachers identify key assessment elements at each grade level from which they can develop comprehensive instructional modules.

MI-Plan – www.michigan.gov/miplan

MI-Plan is a web-based School Improvement process that incorporates student assessment data as evidence of student achievement. Content expectations can be used to assist schools in developing strategies for vertical articulation and instructional alignment.

MI-Climb – www.miclimb.net

MI-Climb is a resource of best instructional practices that support the Curriculum Frameworks from which the Grade Level Content Expectations are derived.

Q: What are the key instructional materials for ELA and Math?

Instructional materials are identified by each local district for all content areas.

Q: How do the GLCE align with primary instructional materials (textbooks)?

The selection of instructional materials and textbooks is the responsibility of each local school district and should support the GLCE.

Q: Where does the high school fit? How do we involve the high school to help develop K-12 articulated curriculum in ELA and Math?

The K-8 GLCE have been written and developed to drive the formulation of 3-8 grade level tests; however, the high schools will still address the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks (1995).

Q: What is the plan for developing Grade Level Content Expectations in Science and Social Studies?

Currently, NCLB requires that we focus our efforts on Mathematics and English Language Arts. However, this may change in the future.

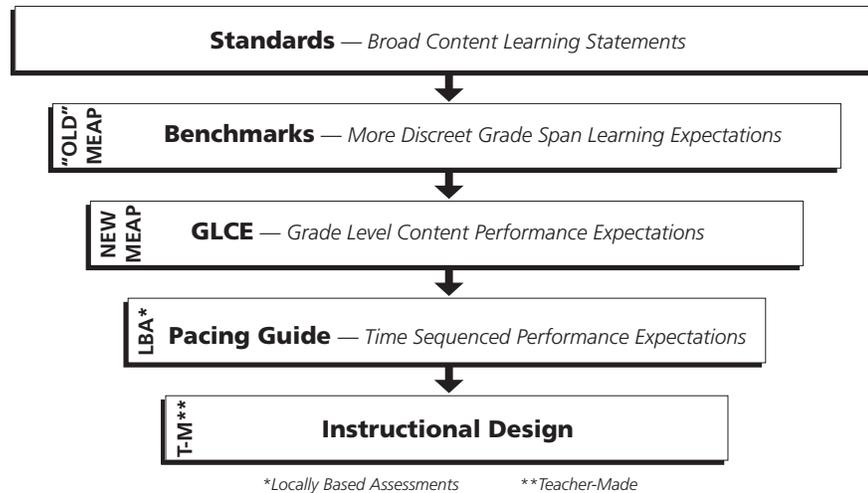
Q: What are the promising practices?

Later throughout the course of this school year, MDE will spearhead an effort to collect promising practices and develop instructional support strategies and materials to disseminate to schools throughout the state.

Q: What does this mean to our local curriculum processes?

The Michigan Curriculum Frameworks (1995) remains the basis for curriculum development at the local level. The GLCE provides educators and administrators with a detailed set of expectations at each grade level. Many districts have already developed Pacing Guides where benchmarks were designated for specific grade levels and expectations identified for the purpose of developing locally-based assessments. Each local district will need to review its current designation of either grade span or grade specific benchmarks to find the alignment with the GLCE. Over the next few years, districts will have an opportunity to incorporate the GLCE into their own set of learning expectations as the GLCE are folded into the MEAP test item development process. The following diagram provides an illustration of the structure of curriculum.

The Structure of Curriculum



**Q: What is assessable and when and who decides?
How will this impact Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?**

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, states are required to submit their grade level assessments to a national review and approval process. If the grade level content expectations from which grade level assessments are developed do not meet the NCLB criteria of “high, rigorous, academic standards”, neither will the grade level assessments. In order to ensure that grade level assessments are approved by the United States Department of Education, it was essential to have the Grade Level Content Expectations reviewed by Achieve, Inc.

The MEAP Office is currently designing an assessment system where tests would be developed to measure all of the new grade level expectations with a gradual inclusion of the new grade level expectations. The following chart explains the proposed structure for the future MEAP tests:

With the help of local educators, advisory and review committees both “core” and “matrix” portions of the test will be determined. “Core” assessment items are the intersection of the current benchmarks and the GLCE’s. The “matrix” portion will identify content expectations that students may not yet be ready to meet.

For the next three to five years, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and accreditation grades will be based only on the “core” questions of the tests. During these interim years, schools will receive a second report, indicating how students are performing on the “matrix” portion of the test. In a future year (three to five years), when educators advise that curriculum and instruction has now prepared students to be ready, we will begin to base AYP and accreditation grades on the whole test, both core and matrix.

This proposed system will give schools time to prepare for aligning their curriculum and instruction, and provide necessary professional development.

GLCE Q&As

Q: Will the testing dates be changed?

Changing the testing dates is under discussion. The assessment office welcomes your input. Please e-mail Mike Radke at radkem@michigan.gov.

Proposed Structure for Future Michigan Educational Assessment Program Tests (as of 3-24-04)			
	Core Items	Field Test Items	Future Core Matrix Items
Define these items	Successfully field tested items developed to measure current standards and benchmarks	New items being field tested prior to being used as Core or Matrix items	Items developed to assess new or changed standards and benchmarks, such as those found in the GLCEs
Number of items	As defined in subject specific test design	0-10 multiple choice items, 0-2 constructed response, extended response items	To be determined, taking into account test length, item type, and other issues
Will these items be used to calculate student scores and MERIT awards?	Yes	No, these do not affect student scores until they are successfully field tested and used as Core items	No, these do not affect student scores until they become part of the Core test items (4-5 years)
Will they be used to calculate NCLB, AYP and Ed YES! scores for schools?	Yes	No, these do not affect school scores until they are successfully field tested and used as Core items	No, these do not affect school scores until they become part of the Core test items (4-5 years)
Will the school receive reports on these items to guide instruction and learning?	Yes	No	Yes. Reports on these items will be provided to help schools see how they are progressing with instruction on these expectations
Will these items be released to guide instruction?	Yes, as soon as there are sufficient items available beginning in about 2 years	No	Yes, as soon as there are sufficient items available beginning in about 2 years

State Wide Dissemination Plan (*proposed*)

The GLCE roll out involves 3 Tiers of professional development:

Tier 1 – General Overview: State Wide Initiative

Staff from MDE and Peer Review Committees will provide a general overview session to Curriculum Directors, Content Specialists from the 57 Intermediate School Districts (Tentative dates: April 30th in Lansing and May 3rd in Traverse City) and in the 10 Sustained Learning Regions – May through June, 2004

Sessions will include:

- Video clips from the March 30th Conference where GLCE were unveiled
- Content specific information in English Language Arts and Mathematics
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment information in ELA and Mathematics
- Strategies for Next Steps and Identification of Resources

Tier 2 – Curriculum Alignment: Regional Initiative

Staff from the 57 Intermediate School Districts, local practitioners, faculty from institutions of higher education, and educational organizations will provide sessions focused on district-wide efforts to align Grade Level Expectations to current district curriculum and instructional practices: June – December, 2004

- Review of district curricular pacing and assessment practices
- Strategies for instructional support and professional development for teachers
- Developing ways to communicate to parents about GLCE
- Designing a “promising practices” format for continued discussions
- Strategies for Next Steps and Identification of Resources

Tier 3 – Instructional Alignment and Practices: Local Initiative

Staff from local school districts, intermediate school districts, faculty from institutions of higher education, and educational organizations will provide sessions focused on classroom specific instructional strategies that support the GLCE: Throughout 2004-05

- Review of district curricular pacing and assessment practices
- Strategies for instructional design and delivery
- Increasing knowledge of specific content
- Designing a “promising practices” format for continued discussions
- Alignment of GLCE to current support materials
- Strategies for Next Steps and Identification of Resources

GLCE Q&As

Initial dates for disseminating information about the GLCE

- March 30, 2004** **Michigan State University K-12 Conference**
(Initial distribution of Mathematics and English Language Arts GLCE)
GLCE will be posted on the MDE Web site (www.michigan.gov/mde).
- March 31, 2004** GLCE will be posted on the MVU Learnport Web site
(www.michiganlearnport.org).
- April 19, 2004** Repeat of the March 30th conference.

Statewide Dissemination Plan - Companion Documents

For English Language Arts a Collaborative Committee from:

Michigan Council of Teachers of English
Michigan Reading Association
Intermediate School District Language Arts Network
Regional Literacy Training Centers

Will prepare an alignment document that will divide the 1995 Content Standards and Benchmarks (12CS in English Language Arts) and align them with:

- Grade Level Content Expectations
- Michigan Literacy Progress Profile
- Reading First components
- MI CLIMB

For Mathematics **The Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics**
has been asked to prepare:

- Alignment between the GLCE and the 1995 benchmarks
- Listing of supportive instructional resources and texts to the GLCE

On the Web

www.michiganlearnport.org

- The GLCE documents
- Companion documents
- Instructional Modules
- Blackboard for posting promising practices (proposed)

Comments and Suggestions

Your comments and concerns are appreciated. As we begin the process of disseminating the new grade level content expectations, we hope you will become involved in the many processes that will be established to engage local educators in helping us make these new grade level content expectations a regular part of Michigan's educational conversations.

In its final review of our grade level content expectations, Achieve, Inc. has described them as among the best in the nation. That is indeed what we know Michigan education to be, and what we want our students to become. The State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education believe that we can only continue to build on the quality of public education for all of our children with the engagement and support of all of our great teachers. We pledge to continue to work with you to lift up our schools, our teachers and most importantly, our children.

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