

Please see **2 IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS** below regarding: 1) 'First Contact Survey' Announcement for MI-Access Coordinators, 2) State Offices Closed – Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23, 2012

1) 'First Contact Survey' Announcement for MI-Access Coordinators

The Michigan Department of Education has partnered with the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas on a U.S. Department of Education project to create a new alternate assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities called the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment. A key component that will help guide the development of the upcoming DLM alternate assessment is the 'First Contact Survey.' This survey is designed to collect information on the students that currently participate in alternate assessments and the technology and supports that are currently being used to meet the needs of these students.

We ask that each local district's MI-Access Coordinator distribute the 'First Contact Survey District to Teachers' letter (link provided below) to all special educators and classroom teachers that serve as the primary teacher for students who will participate in any of the MI-Access alternate assessments (Functional Independence, Supported Independence, or Participation) during the 2012-13 school year.

This notice has also been sent by the Office of Special Education to all LEA special education contacts as listed in the Registry of Educational Personnel but we also would appreciate your assistance in making sure teachers receive the letter attached to this message. Below is a summary of the information provided in the teacher letter:

What is the First Contact Survey?

- An online survey tool designed to inform the assessment system about students who participate in alternate assessments (MI-Access).
- It will help test developers and the DLM assessment team develop and present the appropriate items to each individual student.
- It collects information on the student characteristics and the educational and communication needs of students participating in alternate assessments (MI-Access). One survey must be completed for each student participating in the alternate assessment.

Please let teachers know that the survey:

- Should take less than 15 minutes to complete for each student.
- Is online, easy to access, and can be completed at the teacher's convenience – it is available 24/7.
- Asks questions about the student that educators either know from their experience with the student or have the information easily accessible within their classroom. Educators will have an opportunity to review, verify, and include additional information prior to administration of the DLM alternate assessment when available.

Where do teachers get the link?

- The link is embedded in the letter which you can access at:
http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/From_District_to_Teachers_MI_edition_403735_7.pdf

How long do we have to complete the survey?

- All surveys must be completed prior to **January 31, 2013**.

Thank you in advance for your district's participation in this very important component of our next generation assessment system. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Joanne Winkelman, winkelmanj@michigan.gov or 517-335-0457.

1) State Offices Closed – Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23, 2012

On Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23, 2012, all State of Michigan offices will be closed in observance of Thanksgiving.

Questions?

Please email us at baa@michigan.gov or call 877-560-8378 and select the appropriate menu option.