



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

October 1, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Presentation on the National Consortium on Health Sciences Education (NCHSE) National Healthcare Foundation Skills Assessment for Career and Technical Education Health Science Students and the Use of the National Cut Scores

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 requires that technical skill assessments be given to students who have completed a career and technical education (CTE) program. The development and/or selection of skills assessments will be a multi-year process involving input from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary educators, and assessment experts.

In February 2009, the Board approved the National Career Clusters as the content standards for CTE programs in Michigan. The standards for Health Science were developed by the NCHSE, which was appointed by the U.S. Department of Education as the lead for the standards. The Consortium also developed a corresponding foundation skills assessment for students. The assessment aligns to the Career Cluster standards for Health and is available at a reasonable cost (\$12 per student). Students completing CTE programs in Biotechnology Medical Sciences, Therapeutic Services, Diagnostic Services, and Health Informatics will take this assessment.

The NCHSE assessments have national cut scores. These scores were set by a group of employers based on their judgment of necessary knowledge and skills for entry-level health care workers. Students who pass the assessment, as defined using the cut score established by the consortium, receive a National Certificate issued by the NCHSE. CTE programs in Health Science have been using the Career Cluster Standards for several years.

The Board will be asked to approve the assessment and the use of national cut scores at its November meeting.

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Perkins IV Assessment and Accountability Advisory Group

In order to ensure that the assessments developed or selected meet required reliability and validity criteria, the Office of Career and Technical Education formed an Assessment and Accountability Advisory Group consisting of representatives from local and intermediate school districts, including expertise in measurement, assessment and accountability to review, advise, and provide input on the assessment program as it develops.

Advisory group members meet at least quarterly to review and comment on proposed assessments, selection protocols, development protocols, and the overall assessment program as it develops, which is planned to take place through 2013.

Assessment and Accountability Advisory Group Members

Trina Anderson (Center for Educational Performance and Information)
Mary Kaye Aukee (Oakland Schools)
Claire Brisson (Chippewa Valley School District)
Rhonda Burke (DELEG, Office of Postsecondary Services)
Patty Cantú (MDE, OCTE)
Saundra Carter (MDE, OCTE)
Kelli Cross (MDE, OCTE)
Tony Ebli (Marquette-Alger RESA)
Toni Glascoe (Lansing Community College)
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Shawn Kolbus (Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD)
Jill Kroll (MDE, OCTE)
Monika Leasure (Macomb ISD)
David MacQuarrie (Calhoun ISD—Research and Evaluation)
Joanne Mahony (MDE, OCTE)
Katherine Manley (Ferris State University)
Joseph Martineau (MDE, OEAA)
Joyce McCoy (Alpena Public Schools)
Andrew Middlestead, (MDE, OEAA)
Deb Miller (Kalamazoo RESA)
Linda Nordstrand/Jarrad Grandy (Kent ISD)
Mark Pogliano (Plymouth-Canton Community Schools)
Brian Pyles (Shiawasee RESA)
Ed Roeber (Michigan State University/Michigan Assessment Consortium)
Ed Stanton (Macomb Community College)
Dave Treder (Genesee ISD—Research and Evaluation)
Glenna Zollinger-Russell (MDE, OCTE)

National Consortium on Health Science Education

The National Consortium on Health Science and Technology Education is a national partnership of individuals and organizations with a vested interest in health science education. The consortium was organized in 1991 to stimulate creative and innovative leadership for ensuring a well prepared healthcare workforce. In April 2009, the name of the consortium was officially changed to the National Consortium for Health Science Education (NCHSE).

Formation of the consortium followed numerous discussions among health careers educators from several key states. The group recognized the critical need to reduce duplication and fragmentation of healthcare educational efforts and to position the educational system to meet the human resource demands of the healthcare industry. At the initial charter meeting, the mission, purpose, and goals were formulated. These statements of intent formed the basis for futuristic planning necessary for maintaining programs that are consistent with the human resource needs of the healthcare industry, responding to changing demographics of the nation, and providing for global recognition of the highest quality healthcare available.

Charter consortium members include representatives of six state departments of education (California, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina, and Tennessee), the American Hospital Association, and Kaiser Permanente. Future plans called for expansion of consortium membership to any agency, association, or individual interested in promoting and implementing the consortium's goals and programs. The National Consortium for Health Science Education is an incorporated, non-profit organization and has a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service.

NCHSE serves as the national advisory group for the health science career cluster. The Career Clusters initiative was established to provide a tool for seamless transition from education to career in this era of changing workplace demands. Career Clusters help states as they connect career technical education (CTE) to education, workforce preparation, and economic development. NCHSE's role as the cluster lead is to serve as a clearinghouse for health science research, products, services and technical assistance for the implementation of the health science framework. Utilizing more than ten years of research and observation, NCHSE has identified the essential components for successful and sustainable implementation of the cluster. The consortium develops new products and promotes information-sharing, techniques, and methods to aid in the development and implementation of the health science career cluster.

National Healthcare Foundation Skills Assessment

The National Healthcare Foundation Skills Assessment is a certificate program offered by the National Consortium for Health Science Education (NCHSE) that measures student mastery of basic skills and knowledge that workers in all aspects of the health industry need to know. The assessment satisfies the technical skills assessment requirement in federal legislation.

Established by the NCHSE, the National Healthcare Foundation Skills Certificate program provides a way to identify, demonstrate, measure, and ultimately recognize student achievement in health science education programs.

The National Healthcare Foundation Skills and Accountability Criteria are the heart of the certificate program. These standards identify the basic knowledge and skills that all entry-level healthcare workers need to be successful, regardless of the pathway or occupation they select.

Students scoring 70% or higher on the National Healthcare Foundation Skills Assessment receive a certificate recognizing their accomplishment. At the end of the academic year, the CareerTech Testing Center processes the assessment data and generates analyses for these groups: national, state, school, instructor, gender and ethnicity. These reports are typically distributed no later than September 1. Local reports are compiled and mailed to each instructor individually. Data files and reports are provided to the state to be used for documenting compliance with state and national regulations and initiatives. National data files will be provided to the NCHSE and summary reports published to the healthsciencetest.com website.