
ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST



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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2013–2014 school year, after which time an SEA may request an extension of this flexibility.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the principles described in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which are designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d) (1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2013–2014 school year. An SEA will be permitted to request an extension of the initial period of this flexibility prior to the start of the 2014–2015 school year unless this flexibility is superseded by reauthorization of the ESEA. The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA’s reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

High-Quality Request: A high-quality request for this flexibility is one that is comprehensive and coherent in its approach, and that clearly indicates how this flexibility will help an SEA and its LEAs improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students.

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. In each such case, an SEA’s plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. Key milestones and activities: Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA’s plan to meet a given principle.
2. Detailed timeline: A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.
3. Party or parties responsible: Identification of the SEA staff (*e.g.*, position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.
4. Evidence: Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA’s progress in implementing the plan. This *ESEA Flexibility Request* indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.
5. Resources: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.
6. Significant obstacles: Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.*, State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

Included on page 19 of this document is an example of a format for a table that an SEA may use to submit a plan that is required for any principle of this flexibility that the SEA has not already met. An SEA that elects to use this format may also supplement the table with text that provides an overview of the plan.

An SEA should keep in mind the required timelines for meeting each principle and develop credible plans that allow for completion of the activities necessary to meet each principle. Although the plan for each principle will reflect that particular principle, as discussed above, an SEA should look across all plans to make sure that it puts forward a comprehensive and coherent request for this flexibility.

Preparing the Request: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to all of the provided resources, including the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which includes the principles, definitions, and timelines; the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, which includes the criteria that will be used by the peer reviewers to determine if the request meets the principles of this flexibility; and the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions*, which provides additional guidance for SEAs in preparing their requests.

As used in this request form, the following terms have the definitions set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*: (1) college- and career-ready standards, (2) focus school, (3) high-quality assessment, (4) priority school, (5) reward school, (6) standards that are common to a significant number of States, (7) State network of institutions of higher education, (8) student growth, and (9) turnaround principles.

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-5), and assurances (p. 5-6).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 8).
- An overview of the SEA's request for the ESEA flexibility (p. 8). This overview is a synopsis of the SEA's vision of a comprehensive and coherent system to improve student achievement and the quality of instruction and will orient the peer reviewers to the SEA's request. The overview should be about 500 words.
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 9-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address: ESEAFlexibility@ed.gov.

Paper Submission: In the alternative, an SEA may submit the original and two copies of its request for the flexibility to the following address:

Patricia McKee, Acting Director
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in processing mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

SEAs will be provided multiple opportunities to submit requests for the flexibility. The submission dates are November 14, 2011, a date to be announced in mid-February 2012, and an additional opportunity following the conclusion of the 2011–2012 school year.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR SEAS

To assist SEAs in preparing a request and to respond to questions, the Department will host a series of Technical Assistance Meetings via webinars in September and October 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAFlexibility@ed.gov.

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Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA’s flexibility request.

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For each attachment included in the *ESEA Flexibility Request*, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA’s request, indicate “N/A” instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	PAGE
1	Notice to LEAs	
2	Comments on request received from LEAs (if applicable)	
3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	
4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State’s standards adoption process	
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State’s standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level (if applicable)	
6	State’s Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (if applicable)	
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	
8	A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups (if applicable).	
9	Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools	
10	A copy of any guidelines that the SEA has already developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable).	
11	Evidence that the SEA has adopted one or more guidelines of local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	
12	Proposed Sequence of AMOs	

COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: Michael P. Flanagan Superintendent of Public Instruction	Requester's Mailing Address: Michigan Department of Education PO Box 30008 Lansing, MI 48909
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. Position and Office: Chief Academic Officer/Deputy Superintendent, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Contact's Mailing Address: Michigan Department of Education PO Box 30008 Lansing, MI 48909 Telephone: 517.335.0011 Fax: 517.335.4565 Email address: vaughns1@michigan.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Michael P. Flanagan	Telephone:
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X_____	Date:
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

- 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State’s proficient level of academic achievement on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
- 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
- 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
- 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
- 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a schoolwide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.
- 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its

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LEAs in order to serve any of the State’s priority and focus schools.

- 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State’s reward schools.
- 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.
- 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.
- 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State’s priority schools.

Optional Flexibility:

An SEA should check the box below only if it chooses to request a waiver of the following requirements:

- The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.
- The requirements for replacing the principal in schools selecting the Turnaround or Transformation Model (NEW)

ASSURANCES

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

- 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- 2. It will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)
- 3. It will develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii). (Principle 1)
- 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- 7. It will report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools. (Principle 2)
- 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

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- 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)
- 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its request.
- 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs (Attachment 2).
- 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice (Attachment 3).
- 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.

If the SEA selects Option A or B in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:

- 14. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. (Principle 3)

CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.
2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

The Michigan Department of Education has had active stakeholder engagement on an ongoing basis, especially during the last several years of intensive education reform efforts. State officials work closely with organizations of teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, student advocacy groups, and others whose input continuously shapes and strengthens educational policy and practice. Throughout the waiver request, examples are provided of stakeholder input and support. At the time the waiver opportunity was announced, MDE contacted the leaders of the state’s education stakeholder organizations with critical details and timelines for providing input. Engagement and input are outlined below by Principle. Examples are given, in this section and elsewhere, where stakeholder input changed the waiver request.

A complete list of organizations that provided input can be found in Attachment 2 along with a summary of the input received. Beginning in October, regular phone conversations and meetings were held with education organizations and others to ensure that all constituencies were involved to consider strategies and responses.

During our stakeholder engagement, we have considered the feedback of our education “customers” as well as that of our teachers and practitioners. We reached out to seek the advice of parents, students, community members, and business leaders, taking care to pay special attention to traditionally under-represented communities such as minority groups and persons with disabilities.

Michigan also collected and reviewed comments from the general public, which came through a specialized email account established for this purpose (www.ESEAFlexibility@michigan.gov).

From November to January, we solidified and documented all input into Michigan’s proposal. Initial drafts and concepts were shared and discussed in a large group facilitated by the American Institutes for Research, and through individual consultation with associations, institutions of higher education and others. Our staff met repeatedly with the Committee of Practitioners, as well as special education, data, and student advisory groups.

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Principle 1: Career- and College-Ready Standards for all Students

MDE was engaged in analysis, alignment and implementation of Career- and College- Ready Standards prior to the announcement of the flexibility waiver request option. This was a collaborative endeavor among MDE, regional service agencies, teacher organizations, and others. Implementation activities are detailed in Section I.B. The high level of participation leads us to expect success in statewide adoption of the standards.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Because of the high-stakes nature of accountability systems and the need for intensive support for Priority schools, Principle 2 gathered the greatest level of input. The exercise MDE took in response to input on Principle 2 is most similar to the development of a zero-based budget: we took everything off the table, then added back statutory requirements, tradition of local control, and the universe of school interventions that is available. Our past interventions were of high quality, but they were not the only tools and resources that might work to turn around school performance at the local level. Numerous private consultants, technology providers, and networks exist to offer “on-the-ground” improvement alternatives. We believe it is important to ensure collaboration, rather than competition, with these types of solutions.

Teacher and school administrator groups argued for simplicity and flexibility in light of the differentiated needs of schools in unique settings across the state. When stakeholder groups were given a series of written, face-to-face, and virtual opportunities for facilitated discussion, the following concerns were raised:

- Timely, accurate, useful information must be made available to all stakeholders
- Local communities must be engaged and activated to build school improvement
- Make it impossible for schools to mask subgroup performance
- Accommodate unique community needs and demands – all schools are different
- Make sure data are reported in ways that are easy to understand at the local level
- Early interventions are needed to support subgroups
- Improved teacher preparation is needed to ensure the needs of various subgroup populations are fully understood
- Educational dollars should be spent in ways that are targeted and maximize value

As a result of this detailed input MDE revised and refined the methods for identifying Priority, Reward, and Focus schools and the interventions that will be provided. The depth of discussion and the high level of participation of stakeholders have resulted in support for the methods detailed in Section 2.

This differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system provides the structure that weaves all three waiver Principles together.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Finally, educators have had the opportunity to give testimony before the Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness, a statutory panel working to support the statewide development and implementation of teacher evaluation systems. The dean of the University of Michigan’s College of Education, Dr. Deborah Lowenberg Ball, leads the Council, which consists of two school principals, data analysts from Michigan State University, a charter school management company, and MDE. The Council is currently conducting hearings and developing new systems in accordance with Michigan’s teacher evaluation law.

Teacher and principal evaluations have always been the purview of the local district. The establishment of statewide requirements will lead to a more standardized approach. The engagement of numerous constituencies gives MDE confidence that measures will be established, supports will be provided and all students will have access to excellent instruction to prepare them for career and college.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

OVERVIEW OF SEA’S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA’s request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA’s comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA’s strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and
2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA’s and its LEAs’ ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

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Our Theory of Action

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- * Consistent implementation of Career- and College-Ready Standards
- * Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
- * Reduction in the achievement gap
- * Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
- * Improvements to the instructional core
- * Better understanding/utilization of data
- * Improved graduation and attendance rates
- * Building of/support for effective teaching
- * Building of/support for school leadership capacity
- * Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership, including school boards

Core Principles

Excellence and equity are the twin underpinnings of all we do to improve student achievement in Michigan. We hold ourselves deeply accountable for providing rigorous, effective learning opportunities to all children, from infancy to adulthood. Student learning is the center and aim of all we do.

We believe:

- * All means all. Every child has an innate capacity for learning, and we must meet the needs of each and every Michigan student with high-quality systems, tools and resources. Our expectations for all students must be consistently high.
- * We must ensure our children are career- and college-ready. We define this as student preparation that is adequate to allow a student to pass first-year college courses without remediation. Our state is preparing students not just for the opportunities we know about today, but also for the economic and intellectual challenges of the future.
- * Our teachers and administrators are professionals whose talents are equal to the task before them. We must ensure our systems support their work effectively and allow them to innovate to meet the needs of their students.
- * Our school-level interventions must similarly emphasize careful diagnosis and intervention, to maximize all available resources and effectively address the needs of all students.

Recent Changes

In recent years, our advancements relative to educational policy, practice and accountability have reflected the above-listed principles. Some highlights:

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- * We led the nation in adopting career- and college-ready standards to challenge our students, and we now are preparing to extend this work through adoption of the Common Core.
- * We administer rigorous student assessments in grades 3-9, culminating with college entrance examinations (the ACT) in grade 11. This year, we have undertaken the difficult step of raising the cut scores for these tests, to better reflect how well schools are preparing their students to be on track for each step of their journey toward careers and/or college.
- * Our teachers and staff are supported through a strong, coherent school improvement framework. In the coming year, we will revamp our state-level supports for priority and focus schools, to eliminate achievement gaps and ensure high-quality opportunities for all Michigan children.

Taken together, we believe these changes—all of which will be carried out in partnership with teachers, policymakers and other stakeholders—will allow for a tighter, more coherent system of accountability and performance for all Michigan schools and the students they serve.

We view this waiver request as an opportunity to leverage our work in these and other areas. Our proposed activities include:

- Aligning our assessment system that with new career-and-college-ready standards
- An accountability system that holds schools responsible for student learning of the standards, and that sharpens our collective focus on closing the achievement gap;
- Achievable but rigorous objectives that move students rapidly toward proficiency in the standards;
- Supports, incentives, and monitoring that help keep all schools on track to increased student learning and the closure of achievement gaps; and
- A teacher and administrator evaluation system that uses the assessment data to keep the focus on student learning.

We are confident full implementation of the items specified in this waiver request will enhance our ability to continue building toward excellence and equity for all Michigan learners.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1A ADOPT COLLEGE-AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
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1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE-AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

The state will work with its education partners to ensure that career- and college-ready standards form the basis of teaching and learning for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. As one of the governing states in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, Michigan will provide leadership to ensure robust, rigorous measurement of performance for all learners.

Our Theory of Action → Principle One

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- * Consistent implementation of Career- and College-Ready Standards
- * Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
- * Reduction in the achievement gap
- * Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
- * Improvements to the instructional core
- * Better understanding/utilization of data
- * Improved graduation and attendance rates
- * Building of/support for effective teaching
- * Building of/support for school leadership capacity
- * Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership, including school boards

How Michigan Supports Effective Teaching and Learning

Our state took a major leap forward in 2004, with the release of new [grade level content expectations](#) in K-8 English Language Arts and mathematics. At the time of their release these expectations were considered some of the [most rigorous in the nation](#). Two years later, we adopted rigorous new set of [statewide graduation requirements](#) designed to ensure that all students graduate from high school career- and college-ready. No longer is it acceptable to graduate high school with credit based on seat-time. Instead, all Michigan students are required to demonstrate proficiency in required academic standards in order to receive a diploma. By the end of 2008, Michigan had K-12 content expectations in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies as well the visual and performing arts.

Taken together, these changes encouraged Michigan educators to shift their instructional practice. Michigan has successfully moved the conversation from "what content to teach" to "how to teach the content," so that all students leave high school career- and college-ready. This past year, in a speech to the Michigan Legislature, Governor Snyder proposed a new public school learning model: students should be able to learn "[Any Time, Any Place, Any Way, Any Pace](#)." These shifts have put a spotlight

on the need for teaching rigorous content with multiple access points and opportunities for success.

Subsequent adoption in June 2010 of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and ELA served to validate Michigan's already rigorous standards in these content areas, as evidenced by key [crosswalk documents](#). Although in some cases content shifted grades, essentially the content required by the Common Core was already represented in Michigan's content expectations. Our challenge now is to support schools with the deeper content now required as part of the Common Core.

Michigan schools have had ample access to detailed information and support with the implementation of the Common Core. MDE and its partner organizations have contributed:

- Regional meetings with practitioners and professional organizations
- School improvement conferences
- Electronic communication/Listservs

Moreover, the MDE statewide system of support has provided struggling schools with a detailed [Survey of Enacted Curriculum \(SEC\)](#), offering a clearer picture of each building's curricular and instructional alignment to the Common Core and building a data-based roadmap for change.

In alignment with this work, the state is working with stakeholders to develop model academic goals that schools can use as they develop their annual school improvement plans. The idea is to take advantage of the work schools already are required to do in writing their improvement plans by providing examples of instructional strategies necessary for the successful implementation of the Common Core. The MDE is planning a series of regional workshops for teachers, administrators and school improvement teams based on these models, tentatively titled "Connecting the Dots – Preparing All Students to be Career- and College-Ready."

In addition, the Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL), and Michigan Virtual University (MVU) are using Title IID funds for the [STEM MI Champions Project](#), a statewide project designed to provide Michigan's middle school teachers with the instructional strategies and resources they need to ensure that all students develop the 21st Century skills necessary for career and college. STEM MI Champions Project teams learn how to work across disciplines to build project-based learning units that focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The state has also worked collaboratively to provide online professional development opportunities for Michigan's teachers and educators. With support from Title II Improving Teacher Quality funds, MVU and MDE have created a statewide communication and professional development portal for use by Michigan's educators and members of the K-12 community. These efforts continue to significantly expand the capacity of Michigan's educational community by delivering high-quality, online professional development services to Michigan teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals on an

“anytime/anywhere” basis.

Consistent with our goal of supporting success for all students, the MDE has [recently developed guidance](#) to districts for implementing tiered interventions (commonly referred to as Response to Intervention systems or RtI). This guidance includes information on the essential elements of an effective RtI system and an annotated list of resources to support implementation. Furthermore, the State Board of Education recently approved the revised [Professional Learning Policy and the Standards for Professional Learning](#). This guidance will be incorporated into the “Connecting the Dots” work described above, in an effort to help educators and districts understand the importance of good “Tier 1” instruction in the implementation of an integrated system that supports all students leaving high school ready for career or college.

MDE is using statewide data (Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, as well as student assessment results) to identify areas of weakness in content alignment and student achievement. These areas will be the focus for the development of model academic goals designed to help schools write effective, “tier 1” instructional practices into their school improvement plans to support implementation of the Common Core. MDE is planning to provide professional development around these model academic goals and in doing so will take advantage of the resources developed here in the state, but will also incorporate resources from out-of-state initiatives such as the [Illustrative Mathematics Project](#) and [ELA Publishers Criteria](#).

State dollars are also currently being used to fund the Science and Mathematics Misconceptions Management, a statewide project designed and delivered by the Math/Science Center Network. The project provides sustained, job-embedded professional development for teams of teachers from high-priority and persistently low achieving schools to support the implementation of math and science standards required of all students.

In addition, Michigan has implemented a statewide [Algebra for All](#) project. This important initiative was designed to support the state’s mathematics standards. The effort was started with Title IID funds and, following significant expansion, was recently awarded Title IIB funds for another two years. Title IIA Improving Teacher Quality fund projects that provide professional development for special education/ELL teachers with priority given to English language arts and mathematics projects that are focused on the Common Core.

Federal Striving Reader funds were used to develop the [Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Literacy Plan \(MiLit Plan\)](#), which provides a platform for educators to coordinate efforts with community members for the increased and sustained literacy achievement of all Michigan students. The MiLit Network was created as a website that regional teams can use for collaboration.

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Matching Content with Effective Assessment Tools

The Common Core will be completely in place in Michigan schools by the fall of 2014. Our corollary professional development and school improvement activities are on track to meet those deadlines and support student achievement. The next major order of business in our state will then be the adoption of the [SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium](#) summative assessments, which are scheduled to replace the state’s current reading and mathematics state tests in the spring of 2015. Through these assessments, Michigan will ensure robust measurement of Common Core implementation statewide. As the new assessment is being developed, MDE is [modifying current state summative assessments \(Michigan Educational Assessment Program and Michigan Merit Examination\)](#) to support and ramp up the transition to the Common Core. We are marching toward getting our system ready to meet the needs of the students it will serve.

New, More Rigorous Performance Expectations

In Spring of 2011, the Michigan State Board of Education authorized MDE to conduct a study linking proficiency cut scores on its high school assessment (the Michigan Merit Examination) to readiness for college or technical job training at two- and four-year colleges, and linking proficiency cut scores on its elementary/middle school assessment (the Michigan Educational Assessment Program) to being on track to career- and college-readiness in high school. That study was conducted over the summer of 2011 and the new career and college ready cut scores were adopted by the State Board of Education in the fall of 2011.

This was a bold and courageous move on the part of the Michigan State Board of Education and Michigan Department of Education in that the proficiency cut scores increased dramatically in rigor, resulting in substantially lower percentages of students being considered proficient. The seriousness of the impact and the level of commitment to career and college readiness in Michigan can be seen in the impact data shown below. The impact data describe in each grade level and content area the percentage of students who were considered proficient based on the previous cut scores and the percentage of students who would have been considered proficient had the new cut scores been in place in the 2010-2011 school year. Figure 1 shows the impact for Mathematics, Figure 2 for Reading, Figure 3 for Science, and Figure 4 for Social Studies.

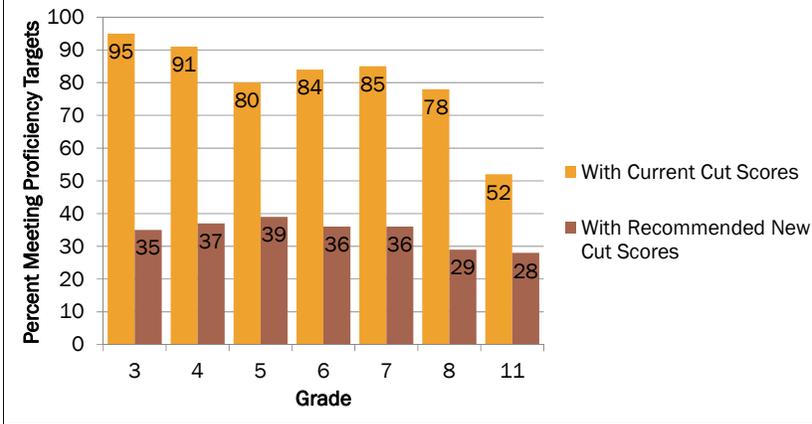


Figure 1. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in mathematics.

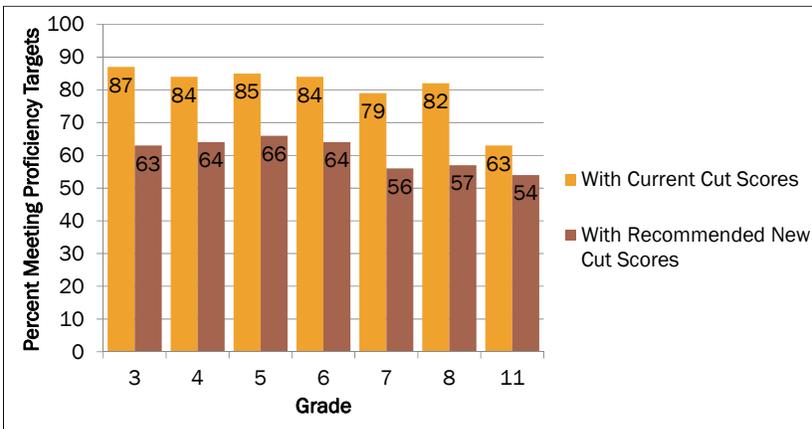


Figure 2. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in reading.

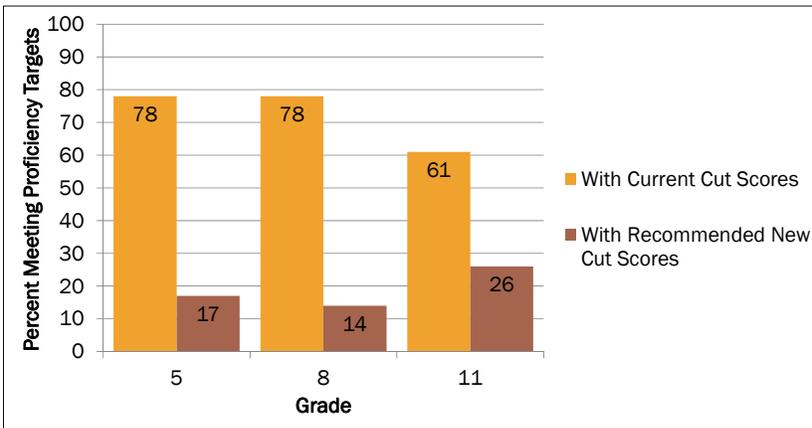


Figure 3. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in science.

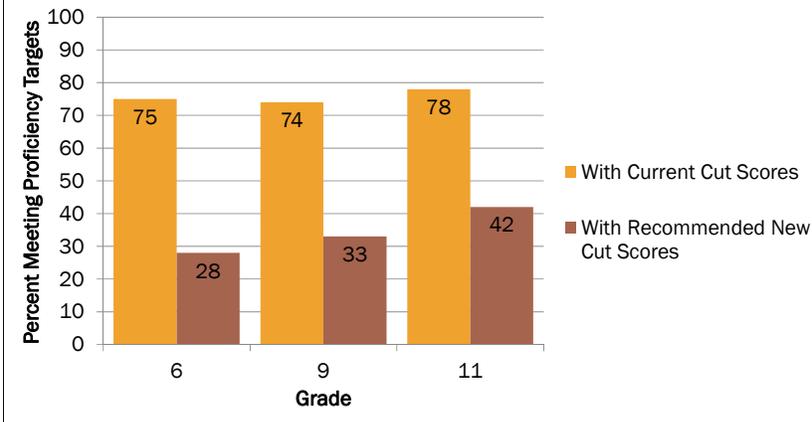


Figure 4. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in social studies.

As can be seen from Figures 1 through 4, the rigor of performance expectations on Michigan’s standardized assessments has increased dramatically.

Through the implementation of the Common Core and the adoption of challenging assessment measures, Michigan is able to deliver — with rigor— on its promise of excellence and equity for most of its young learners. However, we are cognizant there are special populations in our midst that require additional achievement support: English language learners and students with disabilities. How we’ll deliver on our commitment to these students in particular is a significant part of our story, and is told in greater detail in Principle Two.

Students With Disabilities

Michigan is a governing member of the Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium, which is developing common core essential elements and a new alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The essential elements are in final draft. As soon as they become available, MDE will provide crosswalk documents and professional development to assist schools in transitioning to their use.

Michigan’s strong agency/stakeholder collaboration ensures that all educators understand there is only one curriculum in our state, and that all students are expected to meet the Common Core State Standards/Common Core Essential Elements with supports and services as needed.

Through a number of initiatives, the state will continue to guide school districts in the analysis of student data in order to provide appropriate levels of student assistance and ensure timely acquisition in meeting the standards. [Michigan’s Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative \(MiBLSi\)](#), a mandated activities project in MDE’s Office of Special Education, coaches school district personnel on the collection and analysis of academic and behavioral data, and implements a school-wide tiered intervention system. Additionally, an MDE multi-office team has provided materials and

trainings on tiered intervention to districts not involved in MiBLSi. The core elements of a tiered intervention system have been integrated into the school improvement process to ensure that any student who is not progressing toward the standards will receive additional assistance.

Another mandated activities project from the Office of Special Education, [Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners](#), strives to ensure positive outcomes for all learners by exploring effective secondary school practices and their impact on all students. The initiative is designed to reduce the risk of dropout. Teams support students during their high school experience and foster a culture of high expectations for all students in the school. The teams share data, observations, and ideas with each other and their staff as each team works to create positive outcomes for students by addressing school improvement practices.

Moreover, the Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP) facilitates the development of effective systems that support students with disabilities to achieve postsecondary outcomes. The project supports the implementation of effective transition practices to ensure all students with disabilities are prepared for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. MI-TOP provides mandatory professional development to transition coordinators around the state on an ongoing basis.

Federal IDEA funds are being used to complete the Michigan Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS) — an online, interactive, user-driven program available to all Michigan educators who want high-quality professional learning options that not only support their mission to deliver content and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards, but also offer ways to engage students who struggle with key concepts in ELA and mathematics. A resource section is offered in both content areas so that educators can extend their understanding of key concepts and methodologies. These resources have been carefully reviewed and selected so that they align to the Common Core. The instructional examples provided through MOPLS were created to provide teachers alternate ways to teach the core content to students who are struggling, specifically students with disabilities.

Two additional MOPLS modules have also been available to Michigan's educators since 2011. The Assessment Selection Guidelines module, also funded from the same OSEP grant, aids educator teams and assessment coordinators in the correct identification of students with the proper statewide assessment, guiding instructional teams in their assessment decisions with an interactive flowchart. This module acts as a primer for the assessments under the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS), providing users with detailed understanding of Michigan's assessments, the laws and policies that govern them, and sample assessment items. Finally, the Using and Interpreting ELPA Reports program is also available to teachers of English language learners (ELLs) who administer the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA). This module, supported with state funds, provides teachers with a complete overview of the assessment reports for the ELPA, starting at the most basic explanations of language domains and score calculation and progressing to a walkthrough of the Student Data File. A second part to this program presents videos made with the cooperation of five

different Michigan ISDs and districts, showing how districts and schools use scores for student placement, program evaluation, and communicating with parents about goals for their students as they grow in the English language.

Both programs, which have been designed and programmed by the Michigan Department of Education, build in special supports for teachers of students with disabilities, most notably students who frequently encounter misconceptions or obstacles when accessing key content area knowledge. This feature of the MOPLS programs arose out of research done from assessment data from the Michigan's MEAP-Access assessment, our state's alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards. These programs are being made available to Michigan's educators and administrators at no cost and on an immediate basis through a special partnership of the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Virtual University (MVU).

English Language Learners

While the state had adopted English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and assessments to support English Language Learners (ELLs) as they achieve the state's existing graduation requirements, it was generally felt that these materials were in need of refinement. The adoption of the Common Core, coupled with the ESEA flexibility waiver opportunity, provides the state with a timely point of departure to engage in this important work.

The state has started an ongoing conversation with the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) team about the possibility of joining their consortium. WIDA has already established research-based ELP standards, many professional development tools, and a technical assistance plan. MDE has involved its ELL Advisory Committee (comprised of parents, teachers, and other key stakeholders) in the process, and the Committee highly recommended pursuing the option of joining WIDA.

The current WIDA ELP assessments have already been aligned to the Common Core standards and include assessments for ELL students with disabilities. WIDA has over 24 member states and has received the federal Enhanced Assessment Grant whose purpose is to develop on-line ELP assessments for English learners and improve overall measurement of the CCSS. MDE's team is meeting with the WIDA representatives on January 30 (this will need to be changed before we submit) to review a possible memorandum of understanding between the two entities and other detailed processes and procedures to better inform the MDE team about WIDA. The MDE hopes to reach a decision about its next steps in February 2012, and will establish a clear action plan for implementation at that time. At the time that Michigan adopts new ELP standards and assessments, MDE will revisit our Annual Measurable Achievement Outcomes (AMAOs), the required accountability metrics under Title III. AMAOs hold districts accountable for the proficiency and progress of their English Language Learners, as well as the adequate yearly progress (AYP) of those students. Michigan recently revamped our AMAO process and targets to provide more precision and rigor, and to

increasingly hold districts accountable for identifying all students who are eligible for Limited English Proficient services, and to *continue* to identify and serve those students until they reach proficiency with English. We commit to revisiting these AMAO targets to be reflective of increased standards and assessments after those have been adopted and implemented.

Regardless of whether the state joins the WIDA consortium or continues to administer its unique English Language Proficiency Assessment, all Michigan schools are required to disaggregate multiple achievement measures of English language learners when developing and implementing their school improvement plans. They identify achievement gaps, state the reasons for those gaps, and submit specific academic goals, objectives, strategies and activities that would close the achievement gaps between ELLs and their non-ELL counterparts.

MDE also conducts technical assistance to all schools based on annual achievement results of English language learners, as well as analysis of the Title III Self-Assessment Checklist submitted by schools. The Checklist correlates with the Title III required programmatic components and delineates relevant procedures and activities.

MDE provides statewide professional development Train the Trainer model to a cohort of educators in sheltered instruction in an effort to build local capacity in best practices. This professional development is designed to prepare teachers as instructional coaches to fellow educators in Sheltered Instruction Observation protocol. Each trainer provides a four-day regional workshop in the summer to about 40-60 educators in order to better prepare them for teaching scientifically-based best practices in second language acquisition. After completing their training and practical application, each coach works closely with fellow teachers at their districts and provides ongoing job-embedded professional development with model lessons, debriefing and collegial visits.

It is anticipated that through this waiver opportunity, concrete efforts will be made to roll out training on both the CCSS and aligned ELP standards through collaborative efforts between general education and EL specialists. The state will use its current strategic process to conduct comprehensive training to local EL educators, through:

- Statewide Sheltered Instruction: 60 trainers who are proactive in building local capacity in local school districts will be trained in the new ELP and common core standards in order for teachers to infuse them in their daily best practice and delivery to English learners. Teachers statewide will continue to be trained to teach content standards as they teach ELP standards to ensure students' accelerate in both and meet the same state standards expected of all students.
- State agencies (MDE, regional educational service agencies) will deliver regional workshops to educators working with ELs, which are focused on the infusion of both ELP and career and college readiness standards along with strategies (text complexity, academic language, building background, connecting text to self, real world and to other text, etc) to ensure ELs

have access to rigorous career- and college-ready standards.

Accelerated Learning Opportunities

In recent years, the MDE has sought to pioneer new approaches to accelerated and innovative learning. Not only has Michigan initiated the concept of credit-based on proficiency with the Michigan Merit Curriculum (moving away from the Carnegie Unit and driving toward growth), but it also has implemented [seat time waivers](#), which allow schools to provide instruction at any time and at any location, with individual attention to students working at their own pace. These opportunities are provided through online education programs and/or work based experience integrating the content standards. Districts can still collect full state aid for these students.

Michigan has also piloted the early/middle college concept with a great deal of success. The number of early/middle colleges and students enrolled in early/middle colleges has dramatically increased over the past 3 years. The state is considering strategies for boosting the number of early/middle college programs working in the state. Currently, early/middle colleges must undergo a fairly rigorous review process before enrolling pupils and commencing operation. This process is based solely on past practice rather than any statutory foundation; state leaders are considering ways to reduce or eliminate the burden of this process in a way that incentivizes growth in the number of Michigan's early/middle colleges.

Nearly 13,500 — or more than 7 percent of eligible Michigan students — are participating in dual enrollment opportunities, a number that we estimate to increase as the state legislature works to loosen student eligibility requirements. Pending statutory amendments would help eliminate grade level and test score requirements that serve as barriers to dual enrollment, and allow non-public and home-schooled students to participate in dual enrollment.

Michigan also has nearly 64,500 students participating in advanced and accelerated learning opportunities, including more than 770 International Baccalaureate program students.

Ongoing Stakeholder Communication & Professional Development

Michigan is already using its network of partner agencies and organizations to provide specific support to principals. In addition to the development opportunities provided by the state's regional educational service agencies, Math/Science and Regional Literacy Centers, and other organizations described above, Michigan principals have access to other quality tools and information through the following resources:

- Michigan has ongoing relationships with their colleges and universities, professional associations such as the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, the Michigan

Association of Public School Academies, and other membership and/or advisory organizations that allow for direct interaction, dialogue and learning opportunities for Michigan principals. Administrators can attend endorsement programs to earn specialty and enhanced endorsements that are added to their school administrator certification. These specialization and enhancement areas include, but are not limited to curriculum, instruction, as well as principal and superintendent enhancement. MDE works closely with the administrator preparation institutions, associations, and organizations to disseminate effective practices and provide training presentations at conferences and other events.

- Michigan State University, through a partnership with the Office of K-12 Outreach, has provided principal support the past six years for the Statewide System of Support. Moving into a refocusing of principal support from the district level, Michigan State University will partner with MDE to develop training for District Improvement Facilitators who can provide tools and processes to improve the quality of leadership at both the district and building levels.
- In order to build the capacity of principals to lead systematic instructional improvements in high priority schools, the Michigan Coaches Institute is preparing a cadre of experienced educators highly skilled in facilitating professional learning that leads to demonstrable results in student achievement. Coaches are the key mechanism for providing on-site support to principals.

As stated earlier, curriculum and instruction decisions are the responsibility of the districts. That being said, the MDE provides the districts with guidance in making these decisions. The state provides resources and guidance to promote the use of appropriate technology and curriculum. These include:

- [Michigan Online Resources for Educators \(MORE\)](#) portal: a collection of standards-based free curricular resources for districts and regional educational service agencies to use to help deliver innovative instruction.
- [The Teaching for Learning Framework \(TFL\)](#): created to support effective instruction in challenging content across all grade levels and content areas. The Framework outlines 77 research-based Essential Skills (organized into 14 Fundamental Processes and 3 Core Elements) that can be learned, practiced, and utilized by classroom teachers to efficiently and effectively deliver instruction. The instructional guidance contained in this website are meant to complement the curricular resources in the MORE portal by helping educators to effectively match the Essential Skills to the content and learning objectives to which they are teaching in order to maximize student learning.

Currently, MDE content consultants are advising the development of the [Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators Collaborative Career and College Readiness Standards project](#). The goal of the project is to design model curricular units in mathematics and ELA (based on the

Common Core) that will serve as a basis for curriculum development at the local level. These units also will serve as a professional development tool for teachers, to help them better understand the instructional implications of the Common Core.

Aligning Teacher Preparation with Common Core State Standards

For some time, the state has been studying potential gaps between content knowledge of incoming teachers related to the content expectations in P-12 education. With the adoption of the Common Core in 2010, the state is continuing to address potential gaps by realigning or drafting new standards for the preparation of teachers.

MDE revises Teacher Preparation endorsement standards on an ongoing basis in response to initiatives and recommendations from the field and national/professional organizations. MDE is currently working in conjunction with content experts throughout the state to examine and revise teacher preparation endorsement standards in English Language Arts to better align with the Common Core State Standards. We will continue to examine the need for revising standards as P-12 content evolves, in an effort to ensure Michigan’s teachers are prepared to exceed the depth in content knowledge of the P-12 curriculum.

In addition to developing and revising content standards, MDE worked with its stakeholders to prepare the Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers (PSMT), adopted by the State Board of Education in 2008. The PSMT guides teacher preparation institutions in developing programs that address the following elements:

- Creating effective learning environments for all students
- Teaching that uses innovative technology, including online and virtual learning environments
- Depth in content knowledge and content specific pedagogy
- Instructional design and assessment
- Responsibility and relationships to the student, the school, the district, and the greater community.

MDE authorizes teacher preparation at Michigan’s colleges and universities after those institutions demonstrate program alignment to the PSMT.

We are also revising the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) program to align with the Common Core. Currently, the basic skills mathematics and the basic skills writing subtests are aligned to the Common Core in mathematics and in English language arts. Michigan’s K-12 teachers and college/university educators are participating in content advisory committees that approve test framework and items for the Common Core-aligned basic skills subtests. By actively participating in this process, K-12 teachers and college/university teacher educators experience and contribute to the direct application of the Common Core to the approval for licensure of Michigan’s teachers for

the 21st century.

All special education teachers in Michigan are required to obtain a general education teaching certificate first before a special education endorsement is added. Therefore, all teachers, including special education teachers, are expected to know and understand the Common Core. The institutions who prepare special education teachers will have professional training on the essential elements to the common core to ensure that teachers of students with severe cognitive disabilities graduate with an understanding of the Common Core Essential Elements. MDE will provide this training through the Special Education IHE committee in the spring of 2012.

Michigan views the adoption of the Common Core State Standards as an integral part in meeting the needs of a 21st century learner by serving as a catalyst for systematic change. We not only plan to utilize the Common Core to transform the approach to P-12 instruction and curriculum development, but also to create innovative and collaborative opportunities between P-12 and teacher preparation institutions. The MDE will collaborate with representatives of teacher preparation institutions and key P-12 stakeholders to ensure that we as a state are moving forward and exceeding increased expectations — and achievement — for all students.

Our Partners

Michigan is able to implement its Career and College readiness agenda because of the MDE's partnership with organizations unique to Michigan and whose goals are to support an equitable and academically rigorous public education system in the state. They are essential in increasing awareness of the Common Core State Standards and in preparing students to be career- and college-ready.

These partners include:

- Our state's **regional educational service agencies**, a network of 57 regional resource centers for local LEAs, that have helped deliver regional presentations on its standards and assessments. These organizations were vital in the work to unpack and crosswalk the Common Core with Michigan's existing academic standards. In providing regional technical assistance and professional learning opportunities, these organizations continue as partners in moving forward with curricular and instructional resources for Michigan educators. This includes partnering with the [Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators \(MAISA\)](#) in the development and dissemination of model lessons based on the Common Core.
- The **Education Alliance of Michigan**, an independent, non-profit organization made up of the executive directors of the statewide teacher unions, and administrator, parent, postsecondary and school business officials associations. This alliance has established working relationships across stakeholder groups that enable it to exchange ideas and develop education policy recommendations that improve the design and delivery of education at all

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levels from infancy through adulthood.

- A system of 33 [Math/Science Center Networks \(MSCN\)](#), which bring together STEM professionals from Michigan’s institutions of higher education (IHEs), talented faculty members, and other state and regional supports to transmit effective practices;
- The [Michigan Assessment Consortium \(MAC\)](#) consists of individuals and organizations that work together to promote the use of balanced assessment systems in Michigan schools, so that students learn, grow and flourish. MAC is the only statewide organization helping educators, and their organizations improve student learning and achievement through aligning systems of coherent curriculum, balanced assessment and effective instruction.
- The [Michigan STEM Partnership](#) is a statewide collaboration elevating STEM literacy and competencies in a way that increases Michigan’s economic strength to retain and attract desirable jobs. This includes the goal to increase the number of students who graduate from high school career or college-ready without remediation. Members of this partnership include business industry, nonprofits, PK-20 education, students, parents, local and state community organizations and government.
- [Michigan Virtual University \(MVU\)](#) provides online learning opportunities and collaborative tools for students and K-12 educators.
- **Regional Literacy Training Centers (RLTC)** have worked to support the development of online and other resources to support ELA achievement;

State affiliates of national organizations committed to supporting the dissemination of the career- and college-ready agenda include:

- The Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (MASCD)
- Teacher unions including the Michigan Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers-Michigan
- The Michigan Parent/Teacher Association (PTA)
- Other professional organizations comprised of school leaders, board members, and school support staff.

The adoption of the Common Core has allowed Michigan to be a part of various multi-state conversations about implementation and assessment of a common set of standards, including the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Implementing the Common Core Standards meetings and the Association of State Supervisors of Mathematics (ASSM) monthly web-meetings. Leveraging these networking opportunities, along with Michigan’s focus on preparing all students to be career- and college-ready, has spurred the our state’s education agencies and partners to find ways to break

down silos created by funding sources and task demands. As a result, an MDE “Career- and College-Ready Core Team” has been developed with the purpose of developing common messages, complimentary and parallel activities, and the sharing of expertise.

This work will be done through six workgroups:

- **EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTIONS:** Provide resources and guidance, for the implementation of effective, relevant instruction for all students based on rigorous academic standards
- **BALANCED ASSESSMENT:** Develop a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments based on rigorous common content standards
- **SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS:** Support multiple pathways to educator licensure and provide assistance to districts in ensuring that all students receive instruction from an effective teacher
- **ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY:** Ensure that student achievement and progress are appropriately measured, reported, and used for continuous school improvement
- **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Provide support, guidance, and statutory reform to help build the foundation for effective data systems, foundation, and technology support
- **P-20 TRANSITIONS:** Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction

Workgroups will initially be used to organize work across MDE offices, but eventually other stakeholders will be added to groups as the work evolves. Table 1 organizes the implementation timeline by workgroup topic.

Putting It All Together

All the strategies and teams described in this section are working together with one singular aim in mind: effective student preparation and achievement. Every child attending a Michigan school will experience the best we have to offer in the way of curriculum, instruction, assessment and results. To this end, we hold ourselves and our partners accountable for delivering high-quality systems and support that is continuously improving for the benefit of all.

But it does not stop there. We are also reaching beyond K-12 to ensure our state addresses the needs of all learners, even those who are not yet old enough to attend school.

In 2011, the Governor established an Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education. The new office combines the Department of Human Service’s Office of Child Development and Care and the Head Start State Collaboration with the Department of Education’s Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services. By housing the office in the Michigan Department of Education, the state sends a strong signal about the importance of early care and education: it’s not

about baby-sitting, it's about learning and development in ways that allow for adequate stimulation, brain development, and preparation for school.

The Michigan Office of Great Start will manage a coherent system of early learning and development that aligns, integrates and coordinates Michigan's investments in critical early learning and development programs.

We are reaching beyond K-12 in our approach, and taking bold steps to boost readiness and achievement in our schools.

1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA’s plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)</p>
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Michigan is actively participating in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia that is funded under the Race to the Top Assessment (RTTA) competition. We have attached language developed by the consortium describing the expected outcomes and Michigan’s involvement and the Memorandum of Understanding submitted under the competition.

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- 2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

Michigan is taking the opportunity offered by the ESEA Flexibility waiver to develop a truly unified and differentiated system of both accountability and supports. The proposed accountability system combines: (i) ranking approaches, which allow us to identify those schools most in need of intervention and supports to increase achievement and close achievement gaps, with (ii) a proficiency-based approach that requires all schools to reach ambitious and attainable proficiency goals and systematically close achievement gaps. This accountability system uses an easily accessible “scorecard” and intuitive color-coding in order to continue to leverage the importance of light-of-day reporting and increased information to stakeholders within the system and to parents and community members. The accountability system informs the differentiated system of recognition and supports, allowing resources and targeted interventions to be accurately deployed to districts. In all of this, Michigan reaffirms our singular focus on increasing student achievement through the targeted use of strategic interventions and best practices that are informed by data and accountability.

Our Theory of Action → Principle Two

If a school’s challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- * **Consistent implementation of Career- and College-Ready Standards**
- * **Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)**
- * **Reduction in the achievement gap**
- * **Reduction in systemic issues at the district level**
- * **Improvements to the instructional core**
- * **Better understanding/utilization of data**
- * **Improved graduation and attendance rates**
- * **Building of/support for effective teaching**

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- * **Building of/support for school leadership capacity**
- * **Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership, including school boards**

Our work on this principle will breathe life into all components of Michigan’s Theory of Action, and allow us to support teaching and learning in customized, diagnostic ways. Our plans build on available knowledge and resources — standards, instruction and assessment — to make real our twin pillars of excellence and equity for all Michigan learners.

Here’s how it will work:

- MDE will rank its schools, developing a “Top to Bottom” List of buildings and their performance. The ranking will be based on *student achievement, student growth over time, school improvement over time, and achievement gaps* across all five tested subjects (mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing). This list and the methodology used in compiling this list are incorporated throughout the accountability system.¹
- MDE will also generate a scorecard for every school, showing their performance on proficiency targets and improvement targets for all students and for all subgroups. This scorecard will provide schools with green, yellow or red ratings that allow them to assess at a glance where their areas of strengths and weakness lie. This is discussed in greater detail in Principle 2B.
- One of the key innovations allowing us to focus relentlessly on closing achievement gaps is the creation of the “bottom 30%” subgroup that will be used in addition to the nine traditional subgroups. This subgroup consists of the lowest-performing 30% of students in every school. Schools will be held accountable for increasing the achievement levels of their lowest performing students. This also ensures that all schools have a subgroup, regardless of the demographic composition of their school. By improving the achievement of the bottom 30% subgroup, a school improves its overall achievement, improves the achievement of low-performing students in each of the demographic subgroups, and closes their achievement gaps.
- Schools at the bottom 5% of the Top to Bottom list will be identified as Priority Schools (or persistently low achieving schools). Within the Priority School category, four sub classifications will be used to facilitate triage and ensure appropriate supports are delivered.

¹ We would like to note that the top to bottom methodology is a modification of the federally prescribed ranking rules for school improvement grants to persistently lowest achieving schools. Over the course of the 2010-2011 school year, MDE took the original methodology for persistently lowest achieving schools, and engaged in multiple and repeated conversations with stakeholders regarding the methodology, and make significant revisions based on that stakeholder feedback. Revisions included adding the achievement gap to the rankings, standardizing scale scores to better compare students and schools, adding graduation rate, and a variety of other improvements. Appendix XX contains a chart comparing the two methodologies, and more detail on the changes made through this iterative process with our stakeholders. Although that stakeholder feedback was generated prior to the ESEA Flexibility opportunity, we would like to acknowledge that the year-long process on the top to bottom ranking was an important component in helping to position us to submit this flexibility application.

The categories and interventions are summarized in the Figure 2.A.i.1, below.

Level of Need	Indicator	Intervention(s)
Category 1: Targeted Needs	3 rd – 5 th percentile on Michigan’s “Top to Bottom” list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I set-asides required • School Support Team • MDE desk audit supports SST
Category 2: Serious Needs	2 nd – 3 rd percentile on Michigan’s “Top to Bottom” list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I set-asides required • Intervention • Ongoing monitoring and assistance
Category 3: Critical Needs	1 st – 2 nd percentile on Michigan’s “Top to Bottom” list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I set-asides required • District Intervention • Task force writes school improvement plan • Ongoing monitoring and assistance from built-out School Support Team
Category 4: Intensive Needs	1 st percentile or below on Michigan’s “Top to Bottom” list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Reform Office • EAS

Figure 2.A.i.1. Intervention Strategies for Priority Schools.

- The 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state will be categorized and treated for improvement as Focus Schools.
- A list of schools Beating the Odds will be developed. A school will be considered as “beating the odds” when they outperform their predicted top to bottom percentile ranking as predicted by schools’ demographic makeup, or based on outperforming the 30 most demographically similar schools in the State.
- A list of schools making and not making Adequate Yearly Progress. AYP will now be presented in a scorecard approach, and incorporates proficiency targets on career- and college-ready cut scores.
- A list of Reward Schools will be identified. Identification will result from the following:
 - Making Adequate Yearly Progress and one of the following:
 - Being in the top 5% of the top to bottom ranking
 - Being in the top 5% of schools on the improvement measures in the top to bottom ranking
 - Being a school identified as beating the odds
 - Being a school showing continuous improvement beyond the 2022 proficiency targets
- All Schools in Michigan – whether they are Title I or not – will be subject to state-level requirements and eligible for additional supports.

Figure 2.A.i.2 below demonstrates how the components of the accountability system work together to hold all schools accountable. If a school is a priority school, they cannot be a focus school, reward school, and are “red” on the scorecard. Focus schools are also “red” on the scorecard. Reward schools are drawn from those schools who are not priority, focus, or “red” on the scorecard, and are identified as high-achieving, high-improvement, or beating the odds.

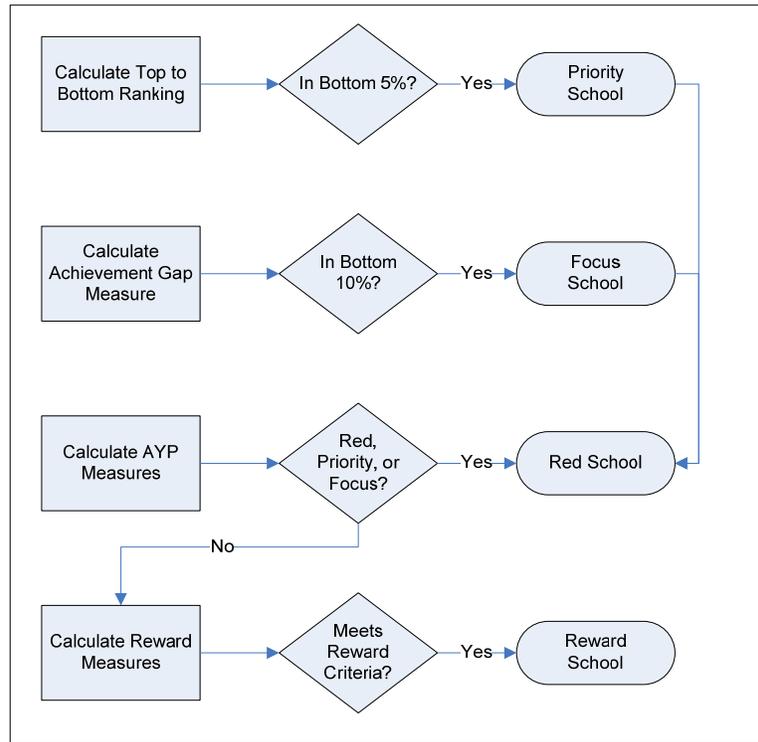


Figure 2.A.i.2. Michigan’s Accountability System as a Coherent Whole.

The way that all schools are accounted for in Michigan’s accountability system as a whole is presented in Figure 2.A.i.3 below. As can be seen below, all priority and focus schools are red in the red/yellow/green color scheme, with reward schools spanning the green/yellow boundary. All schools are included in the green, yellow, and red buckets—the color-coded Accountability Scorecard ensures that all schools receive a meaningful accountability status. For example, a low-achieving school—for example, one that is ranked at the 10th percentile—with a small achievement gap would not be designated a Priority school or a Focus school. However, they would still receive a “red” rating, which indicates to the school and their stakeholders that there are areas of concern at that school.

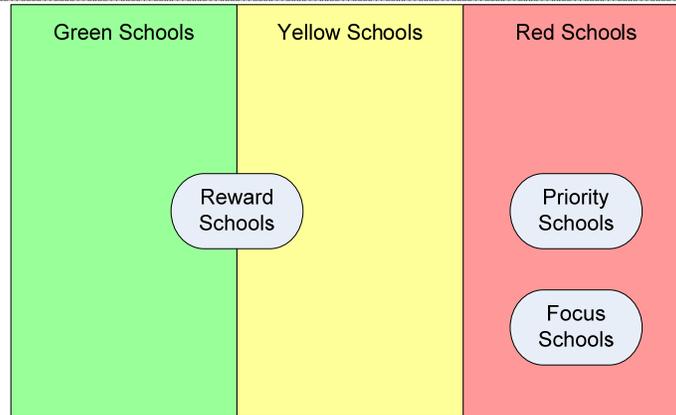


Figure 2.A.i.3. Venn Diagram of Schools in Michigan's Accountability System

All Schools

All Michigan schools are required to carry out the following action steps each year:

- Complete a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)
- Develop or revisit a School Improvement Plan
- Provide an Annual Education Report
- Submit other academic, financial and compliance data as required

Michigan's proposed accountability program, submitted pursuant to this ESEA waiver opportunity, would not change the basic activities and submission requirements for schools. Rather, the new system will build on these basic elements to support rapid improvement and change for schools that are most in need of support.

Priority Schools

Before we describe our Priority School interventions, it is important to know that these schools are all going to look very different from one another. Based on our analysis, we can see the bottom 5% of the state's Top to Bottom list is made up of both urban, rural and suburban schools, small and large schools, charter and traditional schools, schools with all types of grade configurations, and schools with radically different approaches to teaching and learning. Some schools will have been "on the list" for some time, while others may be experiencing only temporary troubles.

Thus, there will not be a "one size fits all" approach to solving the problems in these buildings, because there are many different reasons why these problems exist in the first place.

Michigan is therefore going to allow for customized interventions and supports to be developed at the local level, with support from an array of experts. This is why subcategories of performance exist, as depicted in Figure 1. The state will need to understand and accommodate many different types of concerns within each of its Priority Schools in order to ensure a targeted, effective remedy.

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To begin, however, all Priority schools will be required to undertake the following, to ensure turnaround and success:

- Participate in the Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge by identifying 10-15 students in all elementary, middle and high schools who are nearing or in a transition year with multiple dropout risk factors and provide research-based supports and interventions. MDE has data that indicates higher performance in participating schools compared to non-participating schools in both graduation rate and dropout rate.
- Take part in professional learning to build understanding of:
 - Effective ways to address root causes that are identified as part of the school’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment (which consists of the School Process Profile/Analysis, School Data Profile/Analysis and the Goals Management Sections related to their AYP areas from the school improvement plan).
 - Components of the four reform/redesign models
 - Data utilization
- Provide Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) to all core content teachers to analyze the degree of alignment between current instruction and state standards and assessments.
- Work with Content Coaches and Intervention Specialist as needed.
- Take part in Culture/Climate Interventions as needed.

All districts with Title I Priority schools will be required to set aside an amount equal to up to 20% of the LEA Title I allocation for the following purposes:

- Transportation for students taking advantage of Public School Choice as outlined in Title I, Part A, Section 1116(b)(1)(D) - (required), and one of the following options:
 - Option 1: Support Extended Learning Time (required in Transformation and Turnaround Reform/Redesign models)
 - Option 2: Provide a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for ELL and SWD students if the school does not currently implement one, OR if such a system is being implemented, the option below
 - Option 3: Offer professional learning for staff aligned to the building’s needs assessment paying particular attention to the needs of ELL and SWD students if appropriate.

At the building level, a 10% Title I set-aside will be required to compensate an Intervention Specialist for schools with serious or critical needs. Schools with Targeted Needs (Category 1) may choose between an Intervention Specialist and aligned professional learning.

Priority schools will complete the same documents (CNA, etc) as all schools. However, they will benefit from additional supports depending on their category of need. Please note that all Priority schools fall

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under supervision of the Michigan School Reform Officer, who provides direction, accountability and support as needed.

Category 1: Targeted Needs. Priority schools with targeted needs will develop or implement their own reform/redesign and improvement plans with monitoring by the School Support Team. If requested, MDE or regional educational service agency staff can provide a desk audit and/or data support to highlight root causes and areas of opportunity.

In addition, a Title I set-aside will be required. The building may choose from two options:

Option 1: Support the hiring of an Intervention Specialist. This individual will be accountable to the school board and state for ensuring that all aspects of the school improvement plan are carried out with fidelity.

Option 2: Provide professional learning aligned with the needs of students and staff.

Each school receiving assistance in Michigan currently works with a School Support Team (SST) to ensure improvement. Under our revised plan, the SST in Category 1 schools would include a minimum of 2 members (at least one district representative, and one representative from the regional educational service agency) who will work with the Intervention Specialist, if appropriate, to ensure the provisions of the school's improvement plan are carried out.

The SST will:

- Collaborate with the Intervention Specialist, if appropriate, and the School Improvement Team to write or implement the chosen Reform/Redesign Plan in the planning year
- Incorporate this plan into the school improvement plan in all years
- Monitor school improvement plan implementation
- Monitor student achievement at the classroom level
- Provide ongoing training and support as they implement school improvement plans

Category 2: Serious Needs. Priority schools with serious needs will develop their reform/redesign and school improvement plans with additional help and support from the School Support Team and an assigned Intervention Specialist. Root cause analysis and feedback will be provided in order to revise the improvement plan or continue implementation if student achievement is improving.

The Intervention Team will consist of a cohort of intervention specialists whose services can support Priority Schools. They will be selected, trained and contracted by MDE and/or its designee.

In addition, a Title I set-aside will be required to support the hiring of an Intervention Specialist. This individual will be accountable to the school board and state for ensuring that all aspects of the school/district improvement plans are carried out with fidelity. Through the Statewide System of

Support, trained coaches, regional educational service agency staff, aligned professional learning, and/or culture/climate interventions based on the school's needs may be put into place through the Regional Assistance Grant to monitor and assist with results.

Each school receiving assistance in Michigan currently works with a School Support Team (SST) to ensure improvement. Under our revised plan, the SST in Category 2 schools would include a minimum of 2 members (at least one district representative, and one representative from the regional educational service agency) who will work with the Intervention Specialist to ensure the provisions of the building's school improvement plan (which incorporates the Reform/Redesign Plan) are carried out.

The SST will:

- Collaborate with the Intervention Specialist and the School Improvement Team to write or implement the chosen Reform/Redesign Plan in the planning year
- Incorporate this plan into the School Improvement Plan (SIP) in all years
- Monitor implementation of the SIP
- Monitor student achievement at the classroom level
- Provide ongoing training and support as they implement school improvement plans

Category 3: Critical Needs. Newly identified schools in this category will receive strong support from a state-appointed intervention team charged with developing a comprehensive reform/redesign/improvement plan on behalf of the school and/or district. This is not a takeover of the school or district; rather, it is an effort to bring in experts to diagnose root causes and identify appropriate interventions in cases where the school and/or district has struggled to do so for some time. The intervention team will draft the school/district improvement plan to be approved by the school board.

The intervention team will consist of a specialized cohort of intervention specialists whose services can support Priority Schools. They will be selected, trained and contracted by MDE and/or its designee, and will represent:

- IHE faculty/experts
- Qualified school leaders & staff (esp. from successful peers)
- Business leaders
- Attorneys
- Accountants
- Management Consultants

In addition, a building level Title I set-aside will be required to support an Intervention Specialist. This individual will be accountable to the school board and state for ensuring that all aspects of the school/district improvement plan are carried out with fidelity. Through the Statewide System of Support, trained coaches, regional educational service agency staff, aligned professional learning, and/or culture/climate interventions based on the school's needs may be put into place through the

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Regional Assistance Grant to monitor and assist with results.

Each school receiving assistance in Michigan currently works with a School Support Team (SST) to ensure improvement. As described in our Category 1 and Category 2 schools, the SST consists of a regional educational service agency consultant and a district representative. Under our proposed plan, this SST model would be “built out” for Priority schools in this category, and would include a minimum of 5 members who will work with the District Improvement Liaison to ensure the provisions of the district’s improvement plan are carried out.

A built-out SST may consist of:

- MDE Field Services Staff
- Regional educational service agency representatives/consultants/coaches
- School peers
- Community leaders

The SST will:

- Collaborate with the School Improvement Team to write the chosen Reform/Redesign Plan in the planning year
- Incorporate this plan into the School Improvement Plan (SIP) in all years
- Monitor implementation of the SIP
- Monitor student achievement at the classroom level
- Provide ongoing training and support as they implement building improvement plans

Category 4: Intensive Needs. Some Michigan schools are chronically underperforming and need extensive, system-wide support. Recall that these schools are all under the purview of the Michigan School Reform/Redesign Office, which works to achieve the following:

- Identification of Priority schools (also considered Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools per Michigan legislation)
- Notification of school boards/public school academy authorizers with Priority schools
- Review of redesign plans
- Notification to school boards/PSA authorizers of Plan Approval/Disapproval
- Monitoring the implementation of redesign plans
- Establishment of the Reform/Redesign District comprised of schools whose plans were disapproved, and those schools not making significant growth toward student achievement.

In addition to general oversight, the School Reform/Redesign Office will provide technical assistance and professional learning support to address the fidelity of implementation of the reform plans. Monitors working with the schools will not only address the general compliance with the plan, but will support a range of implementation considerations through coaching and a professional learning program. The School Reform/Redesign Office will provide strategic support through the following efforts:

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- Coordination of reform efforts provided through the various offices or programs of the Michigan Department of Education to ensure thorough integration of activities and monitoring of Priority schools.
- Review and analyze state policies and legislation that might cause barriers to rapid turnaround in schools.
- Develop policies and strategies to support effective school leaders in Priority schools
- Strengthen teacher effectiveness in Priority schools through a combined program of “just-in-time” technical assistance along with a program of professional learning that is job-embedded and uses best practices from the new Learning Forward standards, and is linked to Michigan’s Teaching and Learning Framework and the Common Core standards.
- Identify and develop tools and resources to ensure schools implement redesign plans using outcome-based practices that are designed specifically for rapid turnaround.

Based on all of these efforts, the School Reform/Redesign Office will develop a district intervention model for rapid turnaround that will be used to sustain school level inventions at the district level. The goal of this model is to not only address the components of reform, as are outlined throughout this proposal, but also to address the systems that schools need in place to develop capacity to implement reform with fidelity. The School Reform/Redesign Office is the last opportunity for Priority schools to address persistently low achievement with some limited options while staying under the governance of the local school district. Schools have the option to adopt one of the four federal reform models (1003g School Improvement Grant) while under the supervision of the School Reform/Redesign Office. Schools in these groups engage in a year of reform planning, and continue with up to three years of monitoring and support during implementation before decisions about entry into the EAS or return to full control of the school district are made.

If, however, the School Reform Office finds that the school is not making sufficient progress to continue without additional help, the school may be moved into the *Education Achievement System* (EAS), a new statewide school district that will operate the lowest performing 5 percent of schools in Michigan that have not achieved satisfactory results or not followed through on reform plans under the oversight of the School Reform/Redesign Office. The EAS is a “last step” intervention that is responsible for managing schools that have otherwise shown no ability to turn around persistent failure under all other reform and redesign efforts, or those schools that are selected by districts under the oversight of an Emergency Manager. It is designed to provide a new, stable, financially responsible set of public schools that create the conditions, supports, tools and resources under which teachers can help students make significant academic gains. It will do this by creating new systems and types of schools that are non-traditional and better able to scale and sustain dramatic improvement in student performance. It will first apply to underperforming schools in Detroit in the 2012–2013 school year and then be expanded to cover other low performing priority schools referred from anywhere in the entire state by an EM or the School Reform Office.

A school that enters the EAS remains there for a minimum of five years. After five years, an evaluation will be made of the school's progress, with input from the Parent Advisory Council. If the school is deemed healthy and performing at the end of that period, the school can choose to remain in the system, transfer its governance back to the original school district or PSA, or seek a charter to run independently. If the school has improved to the point it can transfer its governance, the Parent Advisory Council, in collaboration with the school principal, will play a decision-making role regarding what organization the school chooses to be a part of at the end of a successful improvement period.

Additional Waiver Request: Waive the Requirements for Replacing the Principal in Schools Selecting the Turnaround or Transformation Model

Michigan believes that the automatic replacement of the principal is not necessarily the answer to the achievement issues at the Priority school. In fact, we have noted some instances where achievement actually drops after a principal is replaced. Michigan believes —and research supports — that leadership stability is a key component in effective turnaround efforts.

To that end, Michigan proposes that principal replacement not be required in the following instances:

- The LEA has presented evidence that the principal has begun to make progress towards raising student achievement outcomes. The LEA must also present evidence that the principal has the background, skills, and competencies necessary to significantly turn the school around. These criteria are:

Background

- Prior experience (successful experience leading a school)
- Preparation (e.g., traditional v. alt routes)
- Degrees / certification (administrator certificate)

Skills and Knowledge

- Instructional knowledge and leadership
- Operational leadership
- School improvement planning and implementation
- Resource management

Competencies

- Driving for results
- Influencing for results
- Problem solving
- Showing confidence to lead

Critical Beliefs

There are a number of critical beliefs that underlie a principal's effectiveness in leading the process of improving student achievement. The principal must believe in, value, and be committed to:

- Student learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling

The proposition that all students can achieve high standards of learning
Collaborative problem solving with staff and stakeholders
Ongoing collection and analysis of data
Data-driven decision making
Lifelong learning for self and others
Focus and alignment to achieve goals
Doing the work required for high levels of personal and organization performance

Year One Criteria

The school must have made a gain of at least 5% on the State’s assessments. The school must have implemented, with fidelity, its school improvement plan and all of the elements of the selected reform model. MDE will monitor the school to ensure the school improvement plan and the reform model is implemented with fidelity. MDE will also monitor the leading indicators of success that have been previously mentioned.

Year Two Criteria

The school must have made a gain of at least 10% on the state’s assessments. The school must continue to implement, with fidelity, its school improvement plan and all of the elements of the selected reform model. MDE will monitor the school to ensure the school improvement plan and the reform model is implemented with fidelity. MDE will also monitor the leading indicators of success that have been previously mentioned. The school must increase student outcomes as measured by the leading outcomes.

As outlined above, the school would have a period of no more than two years from the time of appearing on the persistently lowest achieving list to demonstrate that the school is substantially improving student achievement outcomes.

Michigan believes this waiver request is necessary for two reasons:

- **Several schools have hired a principal who has begun to turn the school around but the hire date of the principal falls outside of the flexibility already given under the SIG turnaround and transformation models.** Michigan has several schools that have hired principals that are improving outcomes for students in a significant way. A change in leadership could change that momentum.
- **Further, schools have shared with the MDE that the pool of principals who possess the experience and skills needed to successfully implement a transformation or turnaround model, especially in some areas of our state, is limited.** Providing this additional flexibility allows principals who are improving student learning to continue on the path of turning the school around while continuing to receive intensive training, coaching and guidance.

Consequently, Michigan proposes that principal replacement may be delayed for up to two years from the time the school is identified as a Priority school. Because MDE’s criteria to allow this flexibility are rigorous, it is anticipated that only a small number of schools would be approved. During the proposed two-year time frame, the school would be closely monitored for progress and evidence that achievement has increased under the principal’s continued leadership. In this scenario, the school may make a request to the state to keep the principal, providing significant progress has been made at the school. In the event significant progress is not made, the principal would be replaced in accordance with the current requirements.

The intended consequences are to provide a small number of schools with additional flexibility to significantly increase student achievement. The state will closely monitor the progress of the schools that take advantage of the additional flexibility. This additional flexibility is not intended to protect the job of any principal. It is intended to allow the school to continue on its path of turning around a low-achieving school.

Funding for the Priority School: 20% District Level Obligation

Michigan intends to replace the current 20% obligation for Public School Choice and Supplemental Education Services for Schools in Improvement with the following requirement:

The school, in consultation with the state, will reserve a portion of the 20% obligation to pay for transportation for students whose parents choose to transfer students in accordance with Title I, Part A, Section 1116(b)(1)(E). The amount to be reserved will be negotiated with the state, but must be sufficient to support all reasonable and approvable transfer requests. The remaining amount from the 20% obligation will be used for at least one of the following two options:

Option 1:

Increase learning time in each Priority School in accordance with the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant guidance that states: *“Increased learning time means using a longer school day, week or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for:*

- *Instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography;*
- *Instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and*
- *Teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional learning within and across grades and subjects.”*

All Priority schools that choose the Transformation or Turnaround option as their Reform and Redesign

Plan will be required to include increased learning time as one of their interventions.

Option 2:

Implement a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for ELL and SWD students if the school does not currently have such a system in place. Provide professional learning for staff that is aligned with the needs identified in the needs assessment. This may include training in how to implement a multi-tiered system of support.

Funding for the Priority School: Building Level 10% Obligation

Michigan intends to replace the current requirement for buildings identified for improvement to “obligate 10% of their building level Title I allocation to pay for professional learning related to the reason(s) why the school did not make Adequate Yearly Progress.” Instead, we will require districts with Priority Schools with serious or critical needs to set aside an amount no greater than 10% of their building Title I allocation for each Priority School to provide an Intervention Specialist to ensure that this Reform/Redesign Plan is incorporated into the building level School Improvement Plan and implemented by all staff. This Specialist will work with the LEA Central Office Administrators and School Board to ensure that monitoring of the plan is ongoing. The LEA may hire its own MDE-trained specialist or contract with an MDE-appointed liaison. Priority Schools with targeted needs may choose to hire an Intervention Specialist or to implement aligned professional learning.

State Accountability

Michigan will monitor all Title I Priority Schools and their districts to ensure:

- Monitoring and evaluation reports are submitted according to the timeline
- The selection of the Reform and Redesign Plan aligns with the school’s Needs Assessment
- The selection of the SSoS component aligns with the school’s Needs Assessment
- The implementation of career- and college-ready standards in support of the Reform and Redesign Plan
- Priority Schools’ School Improvement Plans are aligned with needs assessment and implementation of career- and college-ready standards
- That all districts have a Intervention Specialist working with the Priority School, central office and the School Board
- Surveys of Enacted Curriculum are administered in Year One of planning and Year Two of implementation for those schools in which the number of staff teaching core content will yield optimal analysis of results

All Priority Schools are under the supervision of Michigan’s School Reform Officer. Those schools that do not move out of this category or make substantial increases in student achievement after three years of implementation of their Reform and Redesign Plan may be moved to Category 4 and placed in the Education Achievement Authority. This process is explained in [Section 380.1280c of Michigan’s Revised School Code](#).

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A Word About Our Partners

Agency support will be needed to train/develop team members and ensure access to high-quality tools/resources as they work. We cannot carry out these processes in isolation.

We have been working with the following key groups to ensure support for our proposed model and ensure their willingness to help us implement:

- Stakeholder associations
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Regional Educational Service Agencies
- Successful/Reward schools

The input from these groups, especially the regional educational service agencies that administer Regional Assistance Grants, has informed the ongoing development of the supports to Priority schools. Specifically, the focus on interventions at the district level, the inclusion of a multi-tiered system of supports and the inclusion of a culture/climate intervention option came directly from the regional educational service agencies' input. We very much look forward to moving forward collectively to make strong changes in our Priority schools.

Focus Schools

MDE will provide an initial overview of achievement data associated with each building in the district to show where gaps exist.

All districts with Focus Schools will complete the following action steps:

- Collaborate with an MDE appointed District Improvement Facilitator
- A Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) which includes the District Process Profile/Analysis, the District Data Profile/Analysis and the LEA Planning Cycle, which is deep and diagnostic in nature, will be completed under the direction of the District Improvement Facilitator. Root causes will be identified to support the development of meaningful, rapid strategies for change.
- The district will conduct stakeholder meetings with affected populations.
- Benchmarks for performance among affected subgroups will be established and monitored by the District Improvement Facilitator.
- A tiered system of supports for student groups identified as having the greatest gaps will be set in place and implemented.
- The school improvement plan must address root causes and provide for specific interventions to address the achievement gaps and student populations suffering achievement gaps. The school's regional educational service agency must review and approve these plans before they are submitted to the state.
- The district must hire a District Improvement Facilitator, trained by MDE, to ensure the plan is being implemented with fidelity.

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Depending on the extent and severity of the gap, a built-out School Support Team may be utilized.

MDE will make a district support toolkit available to all identified with achievement gaps. In addition, district improvement facilitators will be made available to work in LEAs with multiple affected buildings.

Focus schools will be required to take advantage of the following interventions:

- Participate in the Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge by identifying 10-15 students in all elementary, middle and high schools who are nearing or in a transition year with multiple dropout risk factors and provide research-based supports and interventions.
- Take part in professional learning to build understanding of:
 - Effective ways to address root causes that are identified as a result of completing the school’s CNA
 - Data-driven decision making
 - Implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports that includes scaffolded instruction for SWD and ELL students if appropriate
 - Research-based interventions aligned to a building’s needs focusing on strategies to engage SWD and ELL students if appropriate
- Provide Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) to all core content teachers to analyze the degree of alignment between current instruction and state standards and assessments.
- Work with Content Coaches as needed.
- Take part in Culture/Climate Interventions as needed.

All districts with Title I Focus schools will be required to set aside an amount equal to up to 20% of the LEA Title I allocation for the following purposes:

- Transportation for students taking advantage of Public School Choice as outlined in Title I, Part A, Section 1116(b)(1)(D) - (required), and one of the following options:
 - Option 2: Provide a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for SWD and ELL students if the school does not currently implement one, OR if such a system is being implemented, the option below
 - Option 3: Professional learning for staff aligned to the building’s needs assessment.

At the building level, a 10% Title I set-aside will be required for one of the following purposes:

- Option 1: Professional learning on implementation of multi-tiered system of interventions and/or research-based instruction of students in lowest performing student groups
- Option 2: Provide weekly/daily time for teacher collaboration
- Option 3: Contract for the administration of Surveys of Enacted Curriculum

State Accountability

Michigan will monitor all districts with Focus Schools to ensure:

- The regional educational service agency has signed off on the school improvement plan and that required reports are submitted according to the timeline.
- District Improvement Plans have been revised to reflect the supports to Focus Schools
- The achievement gap in these schools is indeed narrowing.

School Accountability

Districts will monitor each of their own Focus Schools to ensure:

- The School Improvement Plan is being implemented as written; this monitoring includes using the MDE evaluation tool annually
- Progress monitoring of student achievement data in the core content areas at the classroom level occurs, is the basis of teacher collaboration and informs instruction
- The building principal has the competencies to manage school processes and lead the staff in improvement efforts
- The School Board is informed quarterly of the school's progress
- The monitoring and evaluation reports submitted to MDE reflect the school's reality

A Word About Our Partners

Agency support will be needed to train/develop team members and ensure access to high-quality tools/resources as they work. We cannot carry out these processes in isolation.

We have been working with the following key groups to ensure support for our proposed model and ensure their willingness to help us implement:

- Stakeholder associations
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Regional Educational Service Agencies
- Successful/Reward schools

The input from these groups, especially the educational service agencies who administer Regional Assistance Grants, has informed the ongoing development of the supports to Focus schools. Specifically, these partners have helped us focus on interventions at the district level, the inclusion of a multi-tiered system of supports, the inclusion of time for teacher collaboration and contracting for the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum.

Extra Support for Students' Extra Needs

Students with disabilities and English language learners are of particular concern in the discussion around Focus schools. Michigan's concerns about achievement gaps extend to all subgroups, but these

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students in particular merit attention, given the array of additional tools and supports that exist to boost their achievement.

As described in Principle 1, Michigan offers an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards. MEAP-Access is administered in the fall of each year and is intended to bridge the gap between the MI-Access assessments and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) for students with disabilities. MEAP-Access assesses students on grade level content expectations in the core content areas of Reading and Mathematics for students in grades 3 - 8, and Writing at grades 4 and 7. Accommodations such as scribes, tape recorders and Braille writers are available.

The cut scores for MEAP-Access will be available in early 2012.

For all assessments, individual education program teams must determine and document which assessments are appropriate for students with disabilities. IEP teams are encouraged to use the “Decision Making Worksheet for Statewide Assessments” to ensure students with disabilities are participating in the most appropriate statewide assessment. The Michigan Statewide Assessment Selection Guidelines and accompanying online professional learning module (MOPLS) direct IEP Teams to consider the MEAP/MME first with accommodations as needed. The Guidelines support data based decision making when determining appropriate assessments for students with disabilities.

Michigan has alternatives for English language learners, as well. English Language Proficiency Assessment is the annual assessment given to Michigan’s students who are eligible for ELL services. ELPA measures, on an annual basis, the progress Michigan’s ELLs are making in the acquisition of their English language skills. ELPA reports on their progress are provided to districts, regional educational service agencies, the state itself, and the federal government.

ELLs will take the general assessments, either MEAP or MME, with ELL accommodations that are recommended and routinely used for their instruction in the content area(s) assessed. ELL students who have an IEP will take the assessment specified in their IEP, either MEAP/MME, MEAP-Access, or MI-Access, with the accommodations also specified in the IEP for the assessment.

Our work around each of these populations, however, is not limited to testing alternatives. Please refer to Principle 1 to review standards, tools and resources available to help schools support English language learners and students with disabilities. We aim to help all students achieve ambitious, attainable objectives for their learning and growth. To that end, we will work with Focus schools to ensure they are capitalizing on these resources and delivering on the promise of excellence and equity for all.

Reward Schools

Michigan is working with its partners and stakeholders to identify innovative ways to recognize high-achieving schools. Although we do not have any funds available to reserve under ESEA section

1117(c)(2)(A) to provide financial incentives to Reward Schools, we have identified other types of incentives, as described below.

Incentive: Recognition in Annual Education Report

Every school in Michigan is required by state statute to complete an online Annual Education Report (AER). The AER for Reward Schools will include their reward status and spotlights their high achievement.

Incentive: Local Media Recognition

The Michigan Department of Education will provide local media with information on Reward Schools and encourage coverage telling each school's unique story.

Incentive: Recognition at MDE and Educational Organization Conferences

Reward Schools will receive special recognition at the Michigan Department of Education's annual School Improvement Conference. Reward Schools will receive certificates and banners for display in buildings. The banner will include the year of their recognition.

Incentive: Promising Practice Videos

As funding allows, the top 20-40 Reward Schools will each be featured in their own video or audio documentary spotlighting the practices used that results in high achievement. These will be placed on the MDE website for promising practices and provided to the LEA for inclusion on the school's website. Other similar schools will be encouraged to review these documentaries and contact the school to learn how to implement effective practices leading to high achievement.

Incentive: Networking Meetings

Representatives from Reward Schools will be invited to attend networking meetings with demographically similar lower performing schools. Focus will be on sharing promising practices and practical experience. Several state education organizations have offered to invite Reward schools to present at their annual conferences addressing promising practices.

Incentive: College/University Recognition

A number of Michigan Colleges have committed to recognizing reward schools by inviting students in grades 9-12 for a college and career day and inviting students graduating from a reward school to campus for special functions.

Incentive: Financial Flexibility

All Title I eligible reward schools will be invited to participate in the Michigan school wide consolidation project granting increased flexibility in the use of federal grant funds which is being piloted regionally in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Incentive: Corporate and/or Philanthropic Reward Schools Recognition

MDE is seeking corporate and philanthropic organization support for Reward School Recognition. MDE will reach out to these organizations for recognitions such as financial support, material support (supplies/technology, other resources). Final details are yet to be determined and are contingent upon waiver approval.

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA only includes student achievement on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <p>a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and</p> <p>b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.</p>
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a. Provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed:

General Populations Assessments:

Michigan administers the Michigan Merit Examination in the spring of 11th grade. Michigan also administers the Michigan Educational Assessment Program in the fall of grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics, grades 4 and 7 in writing, grades 5 and 8 in science, and grades 6 and 9 in social studies.

However, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, Michigan has implemented new proficiency cut scores for the Michigan Merit Examination and Michigan Educational Assessment Program, such that a proficient or advanced score now indicates that:

- In high school, a student is on track for success in further education (including technical career training) at two- and four-year colleges and universities

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- In elementary and middle school, a student is on track to being career- and college-ready in high school

To give an understanding of the impact of these new cut scores, the 2010-11 percentages of students who were considered proficient or above based on the old cut scores are presented in the figures below, alongside the percentages of students who would have been considered proficient had the new cut scores been in place. These data are shown for Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Social Studies in Figures 2.A.ii.1 through 2.A.ii.4, respectively. Because the cut scores on the Elementary, Middle, and High school writing assessments were already set to be reflective of career and college readiness, those cut scores were not reset. The actual percentages of students who met the proficiency bar on writing are presented in Figure 2.A.ii.5.

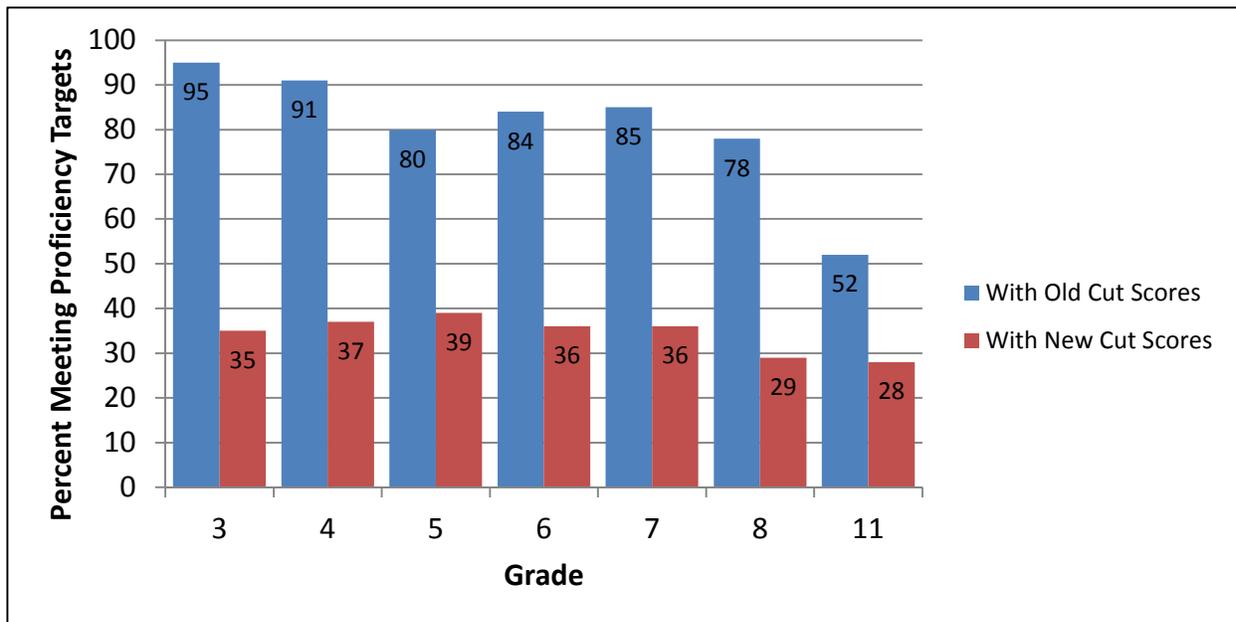


Figure 2.A.ii.1. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in mathematics.

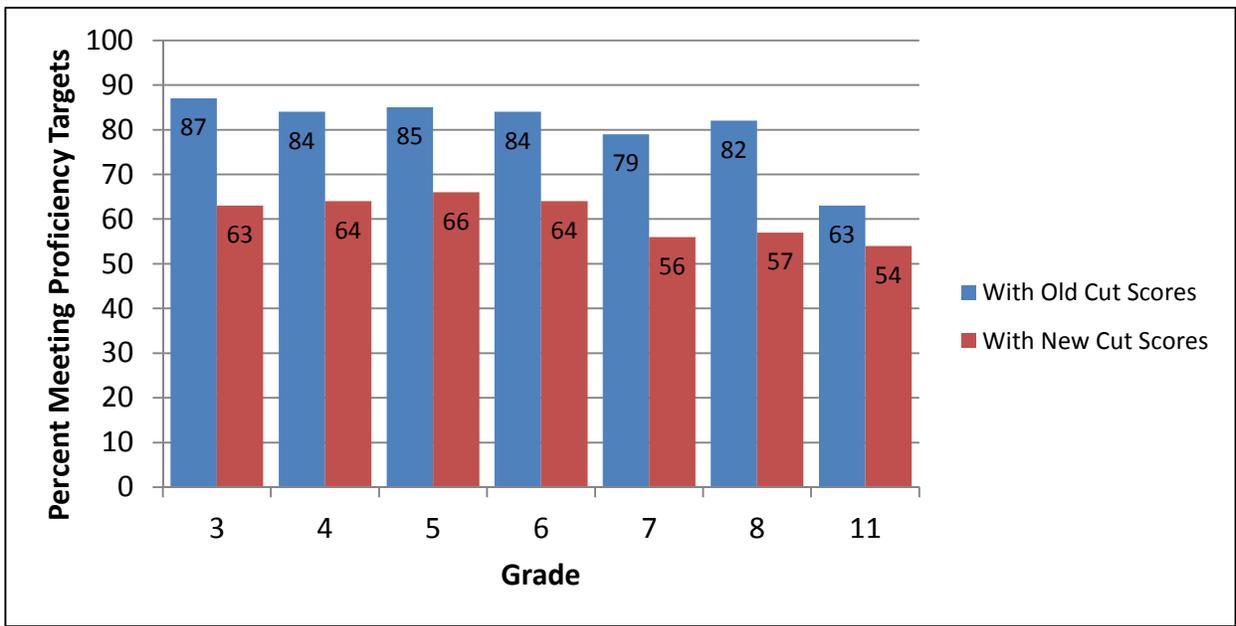


Figure 2.A.ii.2. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in reading.

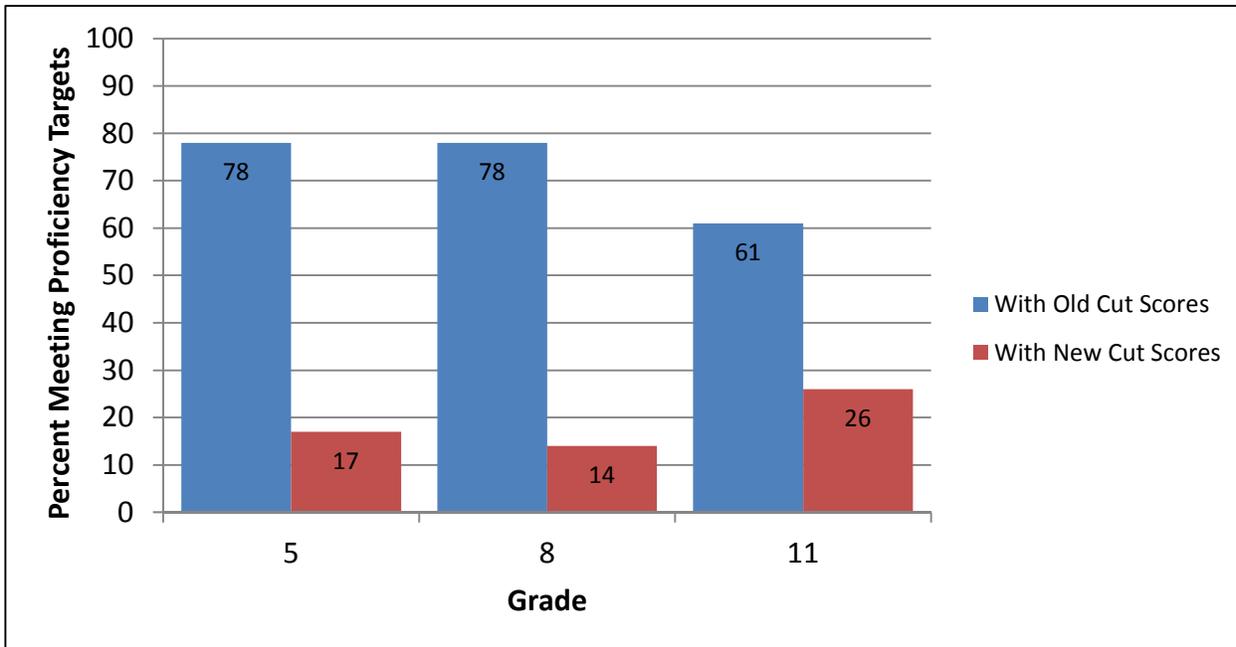


Figure 2.A.ii.3. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in science.

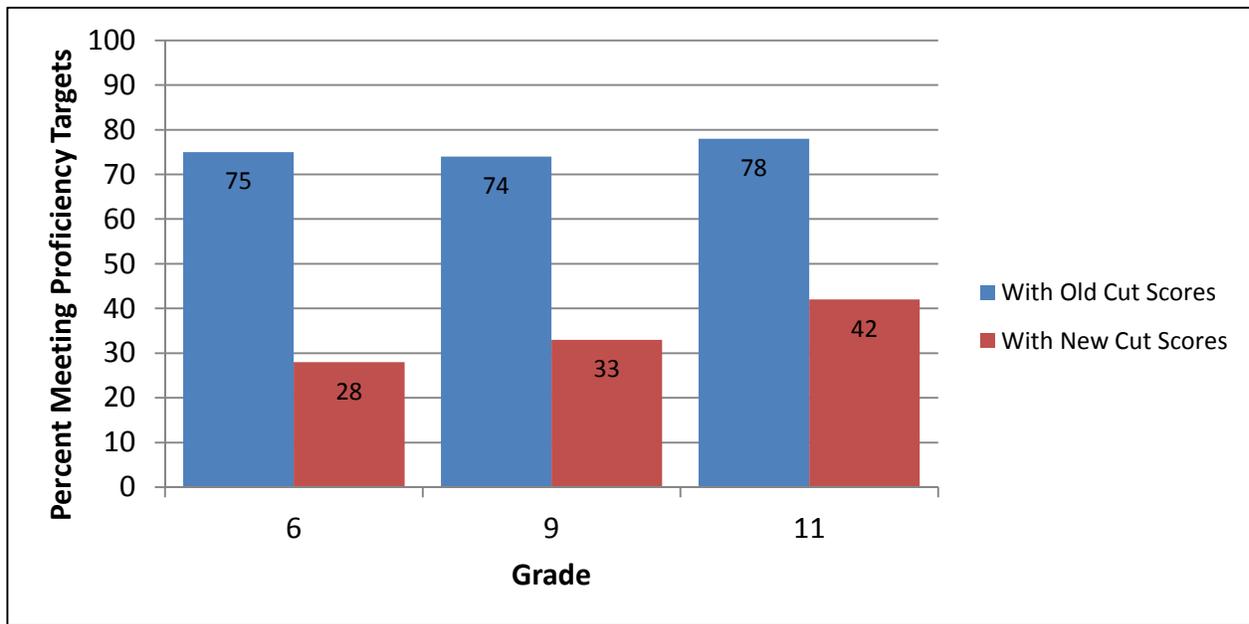


Figure 2.A.ii.4. Impact of new cut scores on statewide percents proficient in social studies.

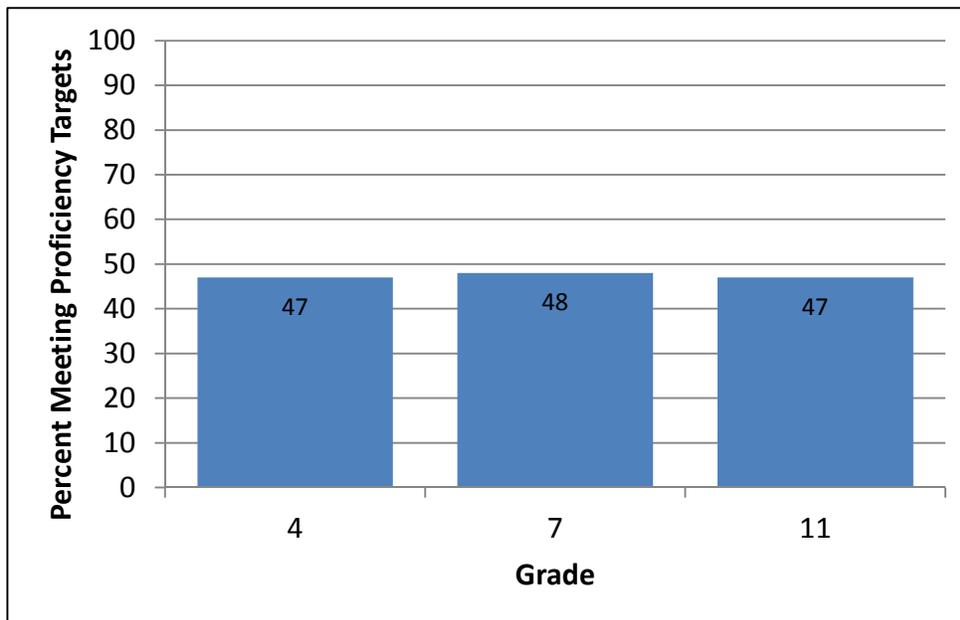


Figure 2.A.ii.5. Statewide percents proficient in writing.

In Principle 1, we discuss in detail our new cut scores, which are reflective of being on track for career and college readiness in the 11th grade, and on track for success in the next grade in grades 3-8. These cut scores are an important element in ensuring that Michigan is focused on career and college readiness for all students. For more information on how these cut scores were determined, please see Principle 1.

Alternate Assessment

MI-Access is Michigan's alternate assessment system, designed for students with cognitive impairments whose IEP (Individualized Educational Program) Team has determined that MEAP assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate. MI-Access satisfies the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as reauthorized in 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 that require all students with disabilities be assessed at the state level. Michigan has three levels of alternate assessment, for students with differing levels of significant cognitive disabilities. These are Functional Independence (for students with mild but significant cognitive disabilities, Supported Independence (for students with moderate cognitive disabilities, and Participation (for students with severe cognitive disabilities). The percentages of students scoring at the attained or surpassed level are presented below in Figures 2.A.ii.6 through 2.A.ii.8 for mathematics, accessing print (a combination of reading and writing), and science, respectively.

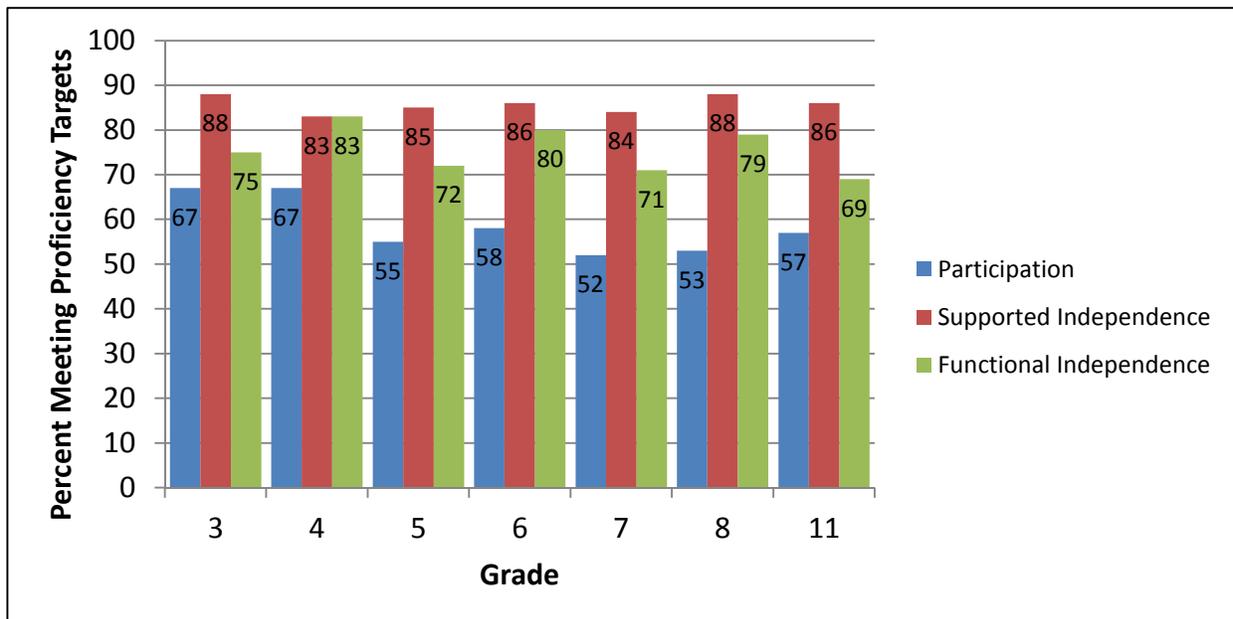


Figure 2.A.ii.6. Statewide percents proficient on MI-Access Mathematics

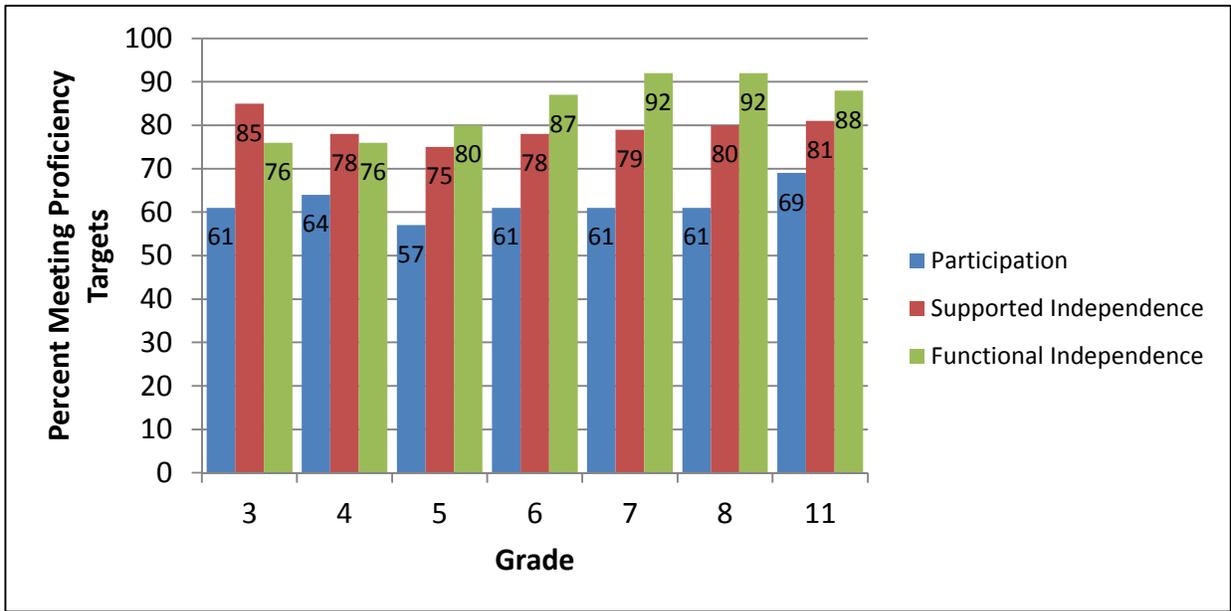


Figure 2.A.ii.6. Statewide percents proficient on MI-Access Mathematics

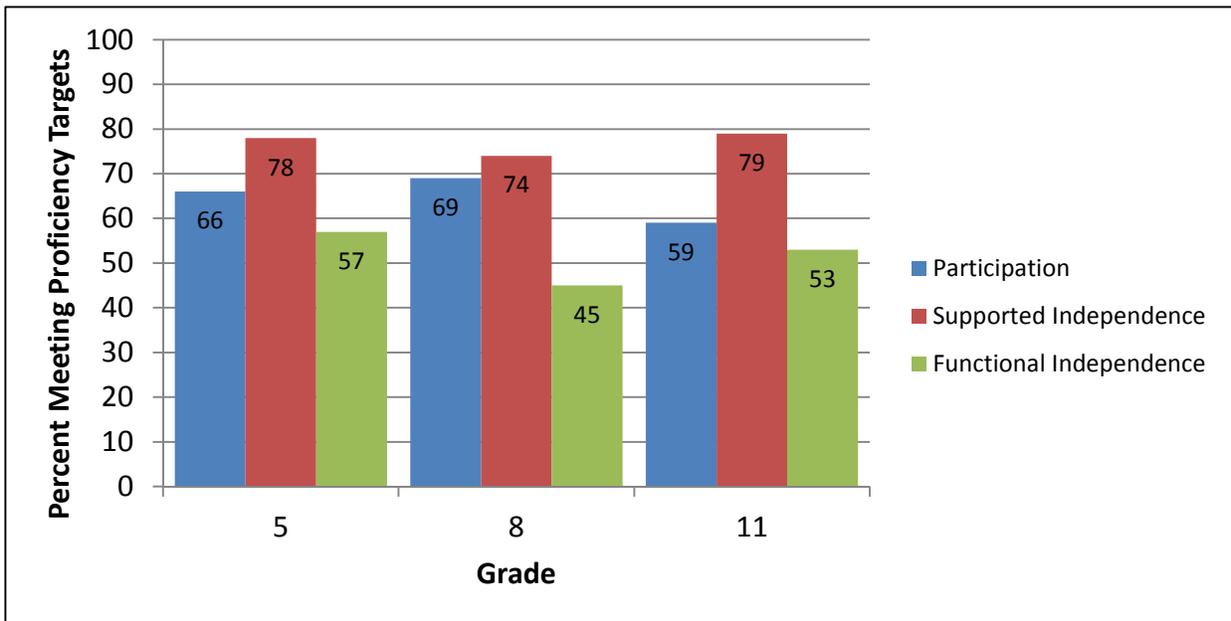


Figure 2.A.ii.7. Statewide percents proficient on MI-Access Science

b. Include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve career- and college-ready standards.

We welcome the opportunity to broaden our focus on student achievement by including all five tested content areas (mathematics, reading, writing, science and social studies) into both the ranking calculations as well as the AYP Scorecard calculations.

Ranking Calculations:

- Based on the original rules for identifying persistently low achieving schools for school improvement grants, Michigan has developed a top to bottom ranking methodology.
- This top to bottom ranking methodology includes all five tested subjects, with each subject weighted equally. If a school only has three tested subjects represented in the building, each subject would count for 1/3 of the final ranking.

In our stakeholder meetings regarding both the Top to Bottom ranking and this waiver application specifically, concerns were addressed regarding weighting each subject equally, since fewer students test in science, social studies, and writing than do in reading and mathematics, as science, social studies and writing are currently only tested once per grade level. Although MDE understands these concerns, we believe conceptually that including each subject as an equal ranking requires that schools pay equal attention to each subject, even though we *measure* some subjects less frequently. One of the lessons learned from NCLB is that schools have shifted substantial resources into teaching reading and mathematics, often at the detriment of other subjects. If Michigan plans to adhere to our goal of career and college readiness for all students, then we feel it is important to place equal weight on all tested subjects in the accountability calculations to remove the incentive to focus more narrowly on reading and math. A student who is truly prepared for career and college success will have the fundamentals of reading and mathematics, but they will also have solid science skills, familiarity with the various social science concepts, and in particular, will be competent and articulate writers.

- This top to bottom list is the baseline list from which priority, focus and reward schools would be generated.

Accountability Scorecard

- Currently, we use only reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Michigan proposes that we include writing, science and social studies beginning in the 2012-2013 school year in the Accountability Scorecard.
- AMOs will be set for each grade and subject area.
 - The 95% participation requirement will be extended to all tested subjects. This number will be for reporting only in the 2011-2012 accountability cycle in writing, science and social studies, and will then be used in the final AYP determination beginning in 2012-2013. This is due to the fact that this will be a new requirement for schools, and fair accountability practices suggest that schools should be notified of high-stakes requirements prior to their implementation.

Michigan will continue to include the content areas of science and social studies in the State's system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support as it has the past two years. In order to ensure

that all students have the opportunity to be appropriately included in this system, the State is developing an Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS) for social studies. Michigan already has AA-AAS assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics and science that have received full approval by the USED as meeting all ESEA requirements. The State will develop an AA-AAS assessment in social studies that contains the same level of technical adequacy, stakeholder involvement, and content alignment as its alternate assessments in the other content areas. This will ensure access for students with significant cognitive impairment to Michigan’s assessment continuum and enable schools and teachers to calculate valid and reliable individual student growth in a consistent manner for all content areas.

The table below captures Michigan’s progress to date and future timeline for developing an operational AA-AAS social studies assessment. Based on our experience with reading/language arts, mathematics and science, the high-level schedule below is achievable and reasonable given that Michigan receives no federal funds for this content area.

Table XX Michigan AA-AAS Social Studies Development Plan

Date	Task/Event	Status
October- November 2011	Gather information from the 13 states that have developed an alternate assessment in social studies.	Completed
December 2012	Develop preliminary budget and high-level scope of work	Completed
January 2012	Gather Department resources in preparation for developing extended social studies content standards	In Progress
February 2012	Submit AA-AAS social studies plan to USED as part of ESEA flexibility request	In Progress
March 2012	Convene standing Students with Disabilities (SWD) advisory committee to determine resources and stakeholder involvement opportunities	Specific Date/Location TBD
March 2012	Revise plan if necessary based on feedback from USED	TBD
April 2012	Finalize budget and scope of work	TBD
May-June 2012	Develop fully articulated project schedule	TBD

July – September 2012	Department staff draft extended social studies standards	TBD
October-December 2012	Stakeholder review and finalization of extended social studies standards	TBD
January-February 2013	Finalize test design and item development requirements	TBD
Spring 2013	AA-AAS social studies item writing and stakeholder review	TBD
Fall 2013	AA-AAS social studies cognitive labs and field-testing	TBD
Fall-Winter 2013	Field-test results analyzed; Bias and Content Committee meetings held; operational design finalized	TBD
Spring 2014	First operational AA-AAS social studies assessment administered	TBD
Spring 2014	Standard-setting	TBD
Summer 2014	Results incorporated into Michigan’s state accountability system	TBD

2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

Option A	Option B	Option C
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p> <p>ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.</p> <p>iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)</p>

- i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.

Beginning in 2012-2013, Michigan will hold schools accountable for achieving career- and college-readiness with their students by instituting new, rigorous cut scores that indicate whether or not a student is career- and college-ready (in the 11th grade) or on track for success in the next grade (in grades 3-8). To take into account the much higher standard set by the increased cut scores, we have proposed AMOs that are rigorous yet achievable. We also propose a “safe harbor” methodology for schools and for subgroups that sets an ambitious and attainable way for schools to demonstrate improvement toward the goals.

Michigan’s ultimate goal is that 100% of our students be career- and college- ready. However, we acknowledge that we are far from this goal now. In math, for example, the average school proficiency rate for mathematics is 22%. Given the reality of our current situation and acknowledging the need for a system that demands high levels of improvement but that also sets attainable goals, we will use 85% proficient as in interim goal by 2022 for any school below 85%. Once a school reaches 85% of students proficient, that school’s targets will reset and they will begin working toward a goal of 100% proficiency.

In stakeholder meetings with various groups, as well as in internal MDE discussions, we have wrestled extensively with the question of identifying targets that are appropriately ambitious and also attainable. One concern is that 85% is not ambitious enough—that it sounds as if we are willing to settle for 15% of our students NOT being career- and college-ready. We understand that concern. Michigan believes that *every* student should graduate with the skills necessary to succeed in career and college. However, we also know that we have a long way to go until we are at that point. Currently, even very high performing schools are not at 85% proficient on our new career- and college-ready cut scores. In fact, even the 95th percentile of schools—schools who are performing better than 95% of all other schools—fail to reach the bar of 85% of students proficient. See Table 2.b.i.1 below.

Table 2.B.i.1: 2010-11 Percent of Students Proficient by School Percentile

	2010 Performance			
	Math	Reading	Science	Social Studies
5th percentile	7.3	28.5	0.0	2.0
10th percentile	12.2	37.0	2.0	5.0
20th percentile	19.2	48.2	6.3	14.5
40th percentile	29.2	59.5	12.2	24.8
60th percentile	37.7	67.1	17.4	32.8
80th percentile	50.8	75.1	25.1	42.5
90th percentile	60.3	80.5	31.3	50.0
95th percentile	67.3	84.1	37.0	54.5

Looking at these numbers, we can see that 85% of students proficient on the new career-and college-ready cut scores is highly ambitious. Getting all Michigan schools to a point where 85% of their students are considered proficient on our new cut scores will represent a significant achievement and a fundamental shift in how we prepare students for the world beyond K-12 education. We believe we will get there. But we also believe 85% represents the appropriate interim goal, with 100% still our ultimate goal.

It is important to keep in mind that, for schools to achieve 85% of students proficient on our new and very rigorous cut scores, many schools will have to improve the percent of students who are proficient by five, six, seven or even eight percent each year. These rates of improvement are extremely aggressive. Michigan is setting a very ambitious proficiency standard for our students, and we will be relentless in our pursuit of that standard. However, we also recognize the importance of rewarding substantial progress toward these ambitious proficiency goals. In order to do this, we propose a new safe harbor methodology that asks schools to demonstrate a high level of improvement. This new safe harbor is discussed in further detail below.

Concerns have been raised that our AMOs are *too* ambitious. For schools to meet these targets, they will be required to improve the percent of students who are proficient at a rate that has rarely been demonstrated in the past four years. MDE spent substantial time considering the possibility of lower proficiency targets, to make them more attainable. After much discussion, we return to our theory of action—that we believe that the systematic and targeted use of data, accountability and related supports, coupled with increased expectations for all students, teachers, administrators, and the SEA, will lead to a fundamental change in student achievement and school improvement. It is not only a different accountability system; it is a different system of expectations, supports, consequences, and rewards that represents a shift in our work as an education enterprise. We want to change the culture of learning and expectations in the state, and also change the way that we do business as the SEA. We believe that this will result in changes in achievement, and therefore we choose to keep our targets where they are currently specified.

However, we acknowledge that it is difficult to predict future performance by looking at past data, because of the shifts in cut scores, as well as the variety of new interventions. Therefore, we will re-evaluate our targets after data becomes available on how students are performing on the new cut scores, and how schools are responding to the system of supports and interventions. We will also continually re-evaluate our *work*—the models, resources, supports, and interventions—so that we can adjust to meet the needs of our schools and students.

Setting AMOs

In the past, Michigan has set the same targets for each school statewide. Our original idea for the ESEA Flexibility Waiver was to continue to set targets in this manner. However, stakeholders indicated that differentiated targets provide a more meaningful way for a school to consider the improvements they need to make, and they also ensure that all schools are held to an increasing target each year.

Therefore, in order to differentiate our accountability system, we now propose differentiated targets for schools. Each school has its own target, which will be set as follows:

- Calculate the percent of students who are proficient (on the career- and college-ready cut scores) in the 2012-2013 school year.²
- Calculate the distance for each school between 85% and their current percent proficient, and divide that distance into ten increments.
- Those increments become the proficiency targets for each school.
- A school's targets do not reset each year. This way, a school knows what their trajectory needs to look like and can plan ahead. Having clear goals communicated in advance to schools is an important element in a transparent and useful accountability system.
- When a school reaches 85% proficient and remains there for two years, they are awarded a "green" status, and are given the opportunity to earn "reward" status by continuing to show improvement.³ As long as the school remains above the 85% target, they will not drop below an overall "green" rating. If the school does show improvement, they will be named reward schools. This ensures that schools who meet this rigorous target are rewarded for this difficult achievement, but are also incentivized to continue to improve toward a goal of 100% proficiency.
- Figure 2.B.i.1 below helps illustrate our system of differentiated proficiency targets (or AMOs).

² We will continue to identify students as "proficient" for the purposes of AYP if they are: Level 1 (Advanced) or 2 (Proficient); provisionally proficient (within two standard errors of the cut score; or growth proficient (demonstrated growth at a rate that will allow them to reach proficiency in three years). This is our current practice in AYP as well.

³ We will define improvement as being a positive four year slope that is statistically different from zero.

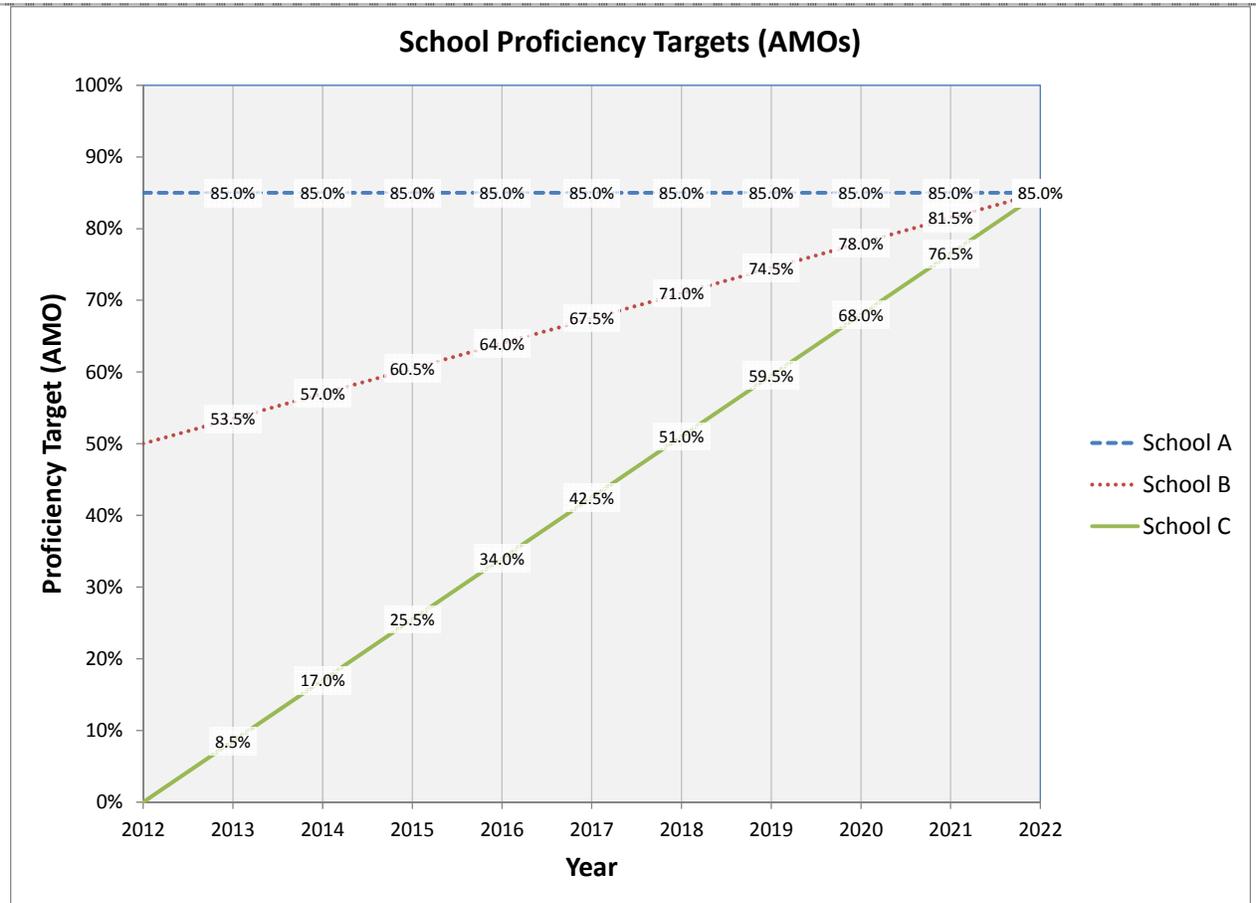


Figure 2.B.i.1. Setting differentiated AMO targets for individual schools.

MDE further proposes that our timeline for achieving 85% proficiency rates be extended to end in 2021-2022, which is ten years from the 2011-2012 school year. The new, very aggressive cut scores instituted in the 2011-2012 school year mean that the metric by which students are measured is much more rigorous, and we believe this should be reflected in both the targets and timelines we give to schools to meet those targets.

Safe Harbor

We need to strike the appropriate balance between ambitious proficiency targets and attainable improvement goals. We believe wholeheartedly in the need to dramatically move Michigan forward so that many more students are prepared for career and college upon graduation, and we know that this means that schools need to behave in fundamentally different ways than they have in the past. This is why we retained ambitious and aggressive *proficiency* targets in our AMOs.

We also know, however, that schools—particularly those who are furthest behind—need the ability to make progress and be rewarded for that progress. This is why we propose a new safe harbor methodology, and a new way of communicating this to schools, districts, and parents.

- For the whole school, as well as for the new “bottom 30%” subgroup, schools can make safe harbor if they demonstrate a high rate of improvement.

- To identify how much improvement is sufficient to make safe harbor, MDE needed to identify a rate that had been *demonstrated* by schools, but that was still ambitious and rigorous. To do this, we look at the distribution of improvement rates for schools over the previous four years (using a four year improvement slope). We find the improvement rate of a school at the 80th percentile. This means that 20% of schools had a greater improvement rate, but 80% of schools were improving at a slower rate. See Figure 2.B.i.2 below for an illustration of how this rate was determined.
- This improvement rate is then set as the “safe harbor” rate for each grade and subject. This rate is calculated each year based on that year’s distribution of improvement. However, it can never drop below the level from the 2012-2013 base year. This means that, in order to make safe harbor, schools are required each year to strive to be in the top fifth of the improvement distribution in order to make safe harbor, and removes the ability of schools to rely on safe harbor as their *de facto* method of making AYP.
- We believe that grounding this safe harbor rate in the actual data and improvement patterns of schools ensures that we are asking for ambitious but also attainable improvement rates for safe harbor.

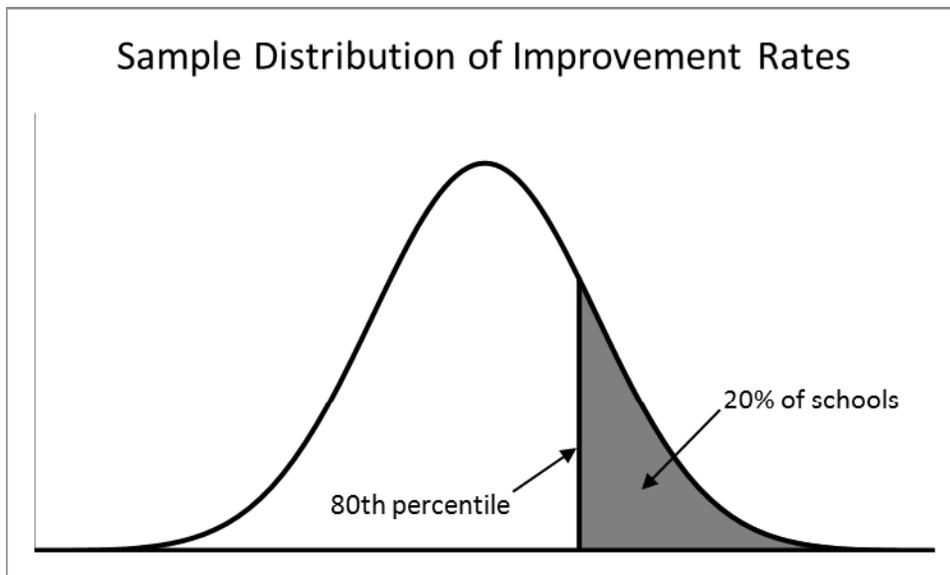


Figure 2.B.i.2. Identifying Safe Harbor Annual Improvement Targets for a Whole School and Bottom 30%.

If a school meets their target based on making safe harbor as opposed to meeting the initial proficiency target, we propose that we utilize the “yellow” category in the new Accountability Scorecard to indicate this to parents. While both yellow and green indicate “making” a target, yellow indicates that it was achieved through safe harbor (i.e. improvement) while green indicates that the school achieved the actual proficiency target. This enhances the ability of the accountability system to differentially identify and to reward, and to assist schools in targeting their resources more appropriately.

Focusing on Achievement Gaps and Low Achieving Subgroups

Michigan has developed an innovative strategy to aggressively address our achievement gaps and to ensure that strategic focus is placed on closing gaps by improving the achievement of those students who are still being left behind in their schools. To do this, we will add the “bottom 30%” subgroup to the current nine demographic subgroups already required under NCLB. Here’s how this will happen:

- Each student’s scale score on a given content area, grade level, and test (e.g. alternate versus general) is transformed into a z-score in comparison to students taking the same test in the same content area in the same grade level across the entire state. The z-scoring allows for comparison of scores across grade levels and test types to assure that all students are accounted for and to assure that a subgroup is created wherever 30+ Full Academic Year students take the test regardless of grade level.
- The lowest scoring 30% of students are identified in the “bottom 30%” subgroup.
- The school is then expected to make either the proficiency or the improvement targets for that “bottom 30%” subgroup, in addition to the other nine subgroups and the whole school targets.⁴

We believe the addition of this subgroup has many benefits.

- It requires that schools be strategic and specific about closing the achievement gap by requiring them to improve the achievement of their lowest performing students, regardless of the demographic subgroup of those students. If we are serious about closing achievement gaps, we have to identify those students who are furthest behind and hold schools accountable for doing something about those students.
- It helps reduce the “masking” effect that can occur when using only the nine traditional subgroups. If a low performing student is in a high-performing subgroup, this student will be missed by the accountability system—the group as a whole will meet the target, and the school will likely focus their attention elsewhere. By including a bottom 30% subgroup, schools now have to be intentional about those students.
- It ensures that all schools have at least that subgroup. One criticism of the current subgroup methodology in AYP is that schools in more diverse areas are penalized for this diversity, as they now have more targets to meet because they have more subgroups.⁵ In 2010-2011, there were over 700 schools in Michigan who did not have a subgroup (beyond the majority student “subgroup”), and many more who only had one additional subgroup. However, we know that low-performing students are in every school, and that for many of them, attending a

⁴ Every school with at least 30 full academic year students will have a bottom 30% subgroup calculated for AYP purposes. MDE plans to continue to utilize its current methodology for generating an AYP status for very small schools; this methodology makes use of a sliding confidence interval along with multi-year averaging to allow us to identify an AYP status for all schools in the state.

⁵ This is due to the fact that a school is required to have at least 30 full academic year (FAY) students in a particular demographic subgroup in order to be held accountable on that subgroup.

“successful” school may not be translating into personal success and progress. By including a bottom 30 subgroup, all schools have to address the needs of their lowest performing students, even if they are not identified using the traditional methodology.

- If a school is improving the performance of its bottom 30% subgroup, they are also improving the performance of all of their other subgroups, as well as their whole school. The bottom 30% identifies the portion of each subgroup that is low-performing. We think this is a powerful tool to actually close achievement gaps, both overall and within each subgroup.

We plan to also retain the nine traditional subgroups. Originally, MDE planned to propose that we hold schools accountable only on the overall performance of all students, and the performance of the bottom 30% subgroup, with the rationale that the bottom 30% captures the *low-performing* segments of each subgroup. As we reviewed the application and the proposal with stakeholders, however, they voiced concerns that we would lose the focus on individual subgroups that has been a critical component of NCLB for a decade. There was also concern that schools would not be able to understand the interventions necessary if we did not look both at the lowest performing students AND the students in the nine traditional subgroups. The combination of those demographic subgroups with the bottom 30% subgroup ensures that schools focus both on groups that have been historically underrepresented or neglected in the educational context while at the same time adding the specific focus on the lowest performing members of those groups (as described above).

Subgroup Targets and Safe Harbor

For all subgroups, including the bottom 30%, the proficiency targets remain the same as for the whole school. This is because we believe that our ambitious proficiency goals need to extend to all students in all groups.

Safe harbor is determined in a differentiated manner, however:

- *Bottom 30% subgroup:* This subgroup must show an improvement rate that is equivalent to the safe harbor improvement rate for the whole school—that is, the rate that is reflective of an improvement rate of a school at the 80th percentile of the improvement distribution. This means we expect the lowest 30% of students to show a rate of improvement that is ambitious but that has also been demonstrated by at least 20% of schools in the past. It also means that schools will need to be very purposeful about differentiating instruction and targeting resources to the students in this subgroup.
- If the bottom 30% subgroup meets their *improvement* target, this will be considered “green” in the AYP Scorecard (as opposed to the “yellow” that would normally be attributed to safe harbor). The reason for this is that the bottom 30% subgroup is, by definition, the lowest performing students and an improvement target is the goal as in almost all cases they will not be near the proficiency target because they are the lowest performing.
- *Nine demographic subgroups.* If one of the demographic subgroups does not meet the proficiency target for the whole school, the safe harbor rate for that subgroup is set at the rate

of improvement needed in order for that subgroup to reach 85% proficient by 2022 and therefore close the achievement gap between that group and the whole school. Figure 2.B.i.3 below helps to illustrate this:

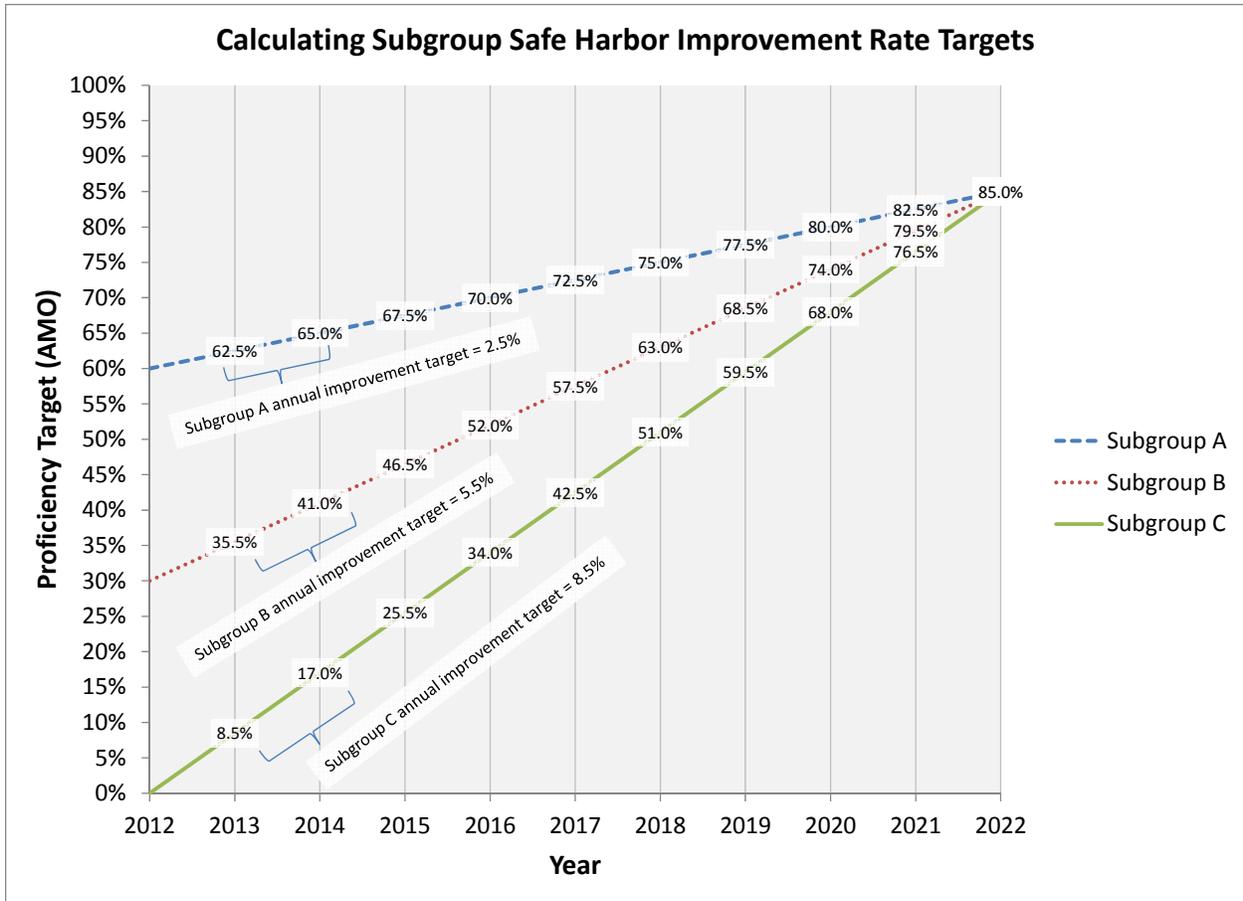


Figure 2.B.i.3. Setting Safe Harbor Annual Improvement Targets for Subgroups.

If one of the demographic subgroups does not meet the proficiency target, and instead meets the safe harbor improvement target, this subgroup will receive a “yellow” on the AYP Scorecard. This sends the message to the school and to parents and other stakeholders that, although the school is demonstrating improvements in those subgroups, their proficiency rates are still below the expected target. Again, we believe this strikes the balance between ambitious and rigorous expectations for proficiency, while providing attainable ways for schools to demonstrate progress towards goals. If a school fails to meet either the proficiency or the improvement target for a subgroup, that subgroup will be “red” on the Accountability Scorecard.

Overall Scorecard Compilation

Michigan has been engaged in the past several years in a series of initiatives to increase the accessibility of our data and reporting, to ensure that schools, parents, and other stakeholders can more easily find and understand information about their school. These projects have included the creation of more

user-friendly “lookup” tools, increased resources on our website, and concerted efforts in creating tools to assist end users with understanding the data and metrics. Additionally, in coordination with the Center for Educational Performance and Information (Michigan’s education data agency), Michigan has developed and rolled out a new data portal, [MiSchoolData](#).

The MI School Data portal is a critical element that allows us to specify a theory of action that calls for an accurate diagnosis of school challenges using data analysis and professional dialogue, as it provides an extensive set of data for stakeholders to access. It includes information about assessment trends, school demographics, graduation/dropout rates, staffing information and educator effectiveness.

Building on these initiatives and the lessons learned from them, as well as on Michigan’s desire to leverage “light-of-day” reporting and transparency more efficiently to help communicate important information about the performance of schools to the public, we will take the opportunity presented by ESEA Flexibility to redesign our school report card, moving to the Accountability Scorecard mentioned previously.

The key elements of this new Accountability Scorecard will be:

- Easy-to-understand color scheme (red, yellow, green) so that schools can see at a glance where their areas of strength, caution, and weakness are, and target their efforts appropriately.
- Clear labels for priority, focus and reward schools, helping stakeholders understand how the two types of metrics fit together.
- The ability to click through and see more detailed information on any given subject or subgroup, while at the same time retaining a simple, at-a-glance overview.

Determining the Colors

Colors will be determined for each school using the following set of business rules:

- The whole school and each subgroup will receive a red, yellow or green rating for each subject. Each group/subject red rating means that a school did not meet the proficiency OR the safe harbor improvement target. Yellow means the school met the safe harbor improvement target only. Green means the school met the proficiency target (or that the bottom 30 subgroup met the safe harbor target).
- If a school fails to assess at least 95% of their students overall and in each subgroup (with the exception of the bottom 30% subgroup, as it is only defined once students have already tested), the school automatically receives a red in that subgroup. If a school receives two red participation ratings, the school’s overall status will default to red. The purpose for this strict participation requirement is to prohibit schools from strategically choosing which students not to assess in order to raise their overall proficiency scores.
- To determine the final overall color for the school, each subgroup color in each subject will be assigned a point value: Green = 2 points; Yellow = 1 point; Red = 0 Points. Points will be tallied and a percentage of possible points attained calculated, and a school’s final color will be assigned as follows: Green = 80% or greater; Yellow = 50-80%; and Red = Less than 50%, unless

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they become yellow because of the next rule.

- If a school has a red for one or more subgroups, the maximum overall rating they can have is yellow.

Four example accountability scorecards are presented below for example schools that achieved an overall green (Figure 2.B.i.4), an overall yellow (Figure 2.B.i.5) an overall red (Figure 2.B.i.6) and another overall yellow because of having one red subgroup (Figure 2.B.i.7).

Group	Content Area				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	2	2	2	2	-
Bottom 30%	2	2	2	2	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	2	2	2	1	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	2	2	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	1	2	2	1	-
Economically Disadvantaged	1	1	1	1	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	1	1	1	1	-
Overall	45 / 56 = 80% of points earned				

Figure 2.B.i.4. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a School Achieving an Overall Green.

Group	Content Area				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	1	2	1	1	-
Bottom 30%	0	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	1	1	2	1	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	2	1	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	1	2	1	1	-
Economically Disadvantaged	1	1	2	1	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	1	1	0	0	-
Overall	33 / 56 = 59% of points earned				

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Figure 2.B.i.5. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a School Achieving an Overall Yellow.

Group	Content Area				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	1	1	1	1	-
Bottom 30%	2	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	1	1	1	0	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	1	1	1	0	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	0	1	1	0	-
Economically Disadvantaged	1	1	1	0	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	1	1	1	0	-
Overall	24 / 56 = 43% of points earned				

Figure 2.B.i.6. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a School Achieving an Overall Red.

Group	Content Area				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	2	2	2	2	-
Bottom 30%	2	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	-	-	-	-	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	2	2	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	-	-	-	-	-
Economically Disadvantaged	-	-	-	-	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Overall	22 / 24 = 92% of points earned				

Figure 2.B.i.7. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a School Achieving an Overall Yellow Because of a Subgroup Achieving a Red.

This system helps to counter the perception that there are “too many ways to fail AYP,” a common criticism that we have heard over the last ten years of AYP. In this system, a school has some wiggle room, in recognition of the fact that schools are complex ecosystems and changing performance is not

always a linear process. Introducing the “yellow” concept (which is essentially translated to making AYP—with cautions) means that we have the ability now to differentiate school performance beyond the former dichotomous make/did not make designation that lost a lot of the nuance about where schools were doing well and where they were doing poorly.

We also believe that the proposed Scorecard is highly intuitive to users, which is particularly important since education touches everyone but not everyone is a professional educator or has extensive data training skills. The red-yellow-green scheme is intrinsically familiar to everyone; and the grading scale for a school’s final color mimics an actual traditional grading scale, with which everyone is acquainted.

Michigan recognizes that, particularly in the first several years of this system, we are likely to have a large “yellow” category. This was a point of discussion with our stakeholder groups, many of whom felt we should make the “green” category larger and the “yellow” category smaller. After reviewing the data, MDE still believes this is appropriate given where our state is at with our current performance. While many of our schools are not “failing,” very few of them are succeeding at the level that we need them to succeed (i.e., preparing students for career and college), making yellow (with its cautionary message) an appropriate color for these schools. Yellow is also important in terms of utilizing being able to utilize the accountability data to appropriately target supports for continuous improvement of all schools. When a school has an overall yellow rating, it becomes necessary to look at the colors within the subjects, and assess the reasons for that yellow rating.

The red category will also serve as a warning system for schools with regard to their potential to become a priority school. The red category will include more schools than the lowest 5% of schools. This is appropriate, because although a school may not be in the lowest 5%, they may be close, and the red designation can be used to alert them to the fact that they are in a danger zone. Importantly, the colors within subjects and subgroups can then help them to target their work more efficiently so that they can increase achievement, close gaps, and improve subgroup performance strategically where it is most needed.

Other Academic Indicators

Michigan proposes to include the following elements in the Accountability Scorecard: graduation rate, attendance, participation, educator evaluations and compliance with state law.

Graduation Rate

As is currently done in AYP, we propose to hold schools accountable for making the 80% graduation rate target. If the school does not meet the target, they have an opportunity to make it on safe harbor, which is defined (as previously) as the reduction of 25% of the gap between the current graduation rate and the 80% target. If a school has the graduation rate of 80%, they will receive a “green” for graduation rate; if they make the graduation rate improvement target, they will receive a “yellow”; and if they miss both the rate and the improvement target, they will receive a “red.” A “red” on this indicator will function the same way as any other “red”—a school cannot be “green” if they have a “red.”

Attendance

In order to ensure that schools without a graduation rate have an additional indicator, we will continue to use attendance rate for elementary/middle schools. This is either a “green” (the school met the target) or a “red” (the school did not meet the target).

Participation

As mentioned previously, participation will be calculated in conjunction with each subject and subgroup, and a school must assess 95% of students. One “red” for participation keeps a school from being “green” overall; two “reds” for participation mean that a school is automatically “red” overall. This is to prevent schools from not assessing students, particularly those low-performing students in subgroups.

One common (and somewhat misleading) comment we received from stakeholders is that it’s too easy for “one student” to cause a school to miss a participation target. This is only true in schools with very small subgroups or numbers of students. In a school with 100 students, for example, 95% participation is 95 out of 100 students, leaving five students who, if not assessed for some reason, will not hurt the school. It is true that the 6th student to not be assessed would put the school over their limit, but there are five other students who were not assessed first.

However, to account for the fact that a very small school or very small subgroup can be negatively impacted by only one student, we propose that if more than 5% of the population OR two students, whichever is greater, is not assessed, the school fails to meet their participation target. For example: if a subgroup has 30 students in it, 5% of 30 students is 1.5 students. In this case, we would round up and say that the school needs to assess 28 of 30 students in order to meet the target.

Educator Evaluations: Reporting Effectiveness Labels

In order to strengthen our ability to ensure compliance from districts in terms of implementing their local evaluation systems (as well as the state evaluation system when it is developed), we will give schools credit for reporting 100% of their educator effectiveness labels. This will be either a “green” or a “red” indicator—either the school reports 100% of their required labels and receives a green, or they do not and receive a red. Transparency with parents and other stakeholders is critically important, and including this important measure of quality on the Accountability Scorecard is a key element to that.

Compliance with State Law

Schools are required by state law to have a school improvement plan, and to complete School Performance Indicator reports. These data are a necessary element of this systematic diagnosis of the school, their strengths and weaknesses, and developing and monitoring a plan. Therefore, we will give a school credit for submitting a school improvement plan and completing their School Process Rubrics. These data are then used in schools for their data analysis discussions and for targeting instruction and reforms.

- ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs.

The AMOs proposed above reflect the fact that Michigan’s starting point is dramatically different, given our new career- and college-ready cut scores. The proficiency AMOs require that schools grow by equal increments each year, remain the same once set, and reflect a school’s starting location. These were all important modifications that were introduced based on lessons learned from the previous AMOs. Schools need to have targets that relate to their own situation; they need to be clear on what the goals are so that they can plan ahead, and they need to be given a steady trajectory to work with, versus the “stair-step” approach taken previously, where targets remained constant for several years and then dramatically increased in the years approaching 2014.

The performance change we expect to see in our schools during the next few years is significant. However, it’s also carefully grounded in weeks of careful research, data analysis, and stakeholder input. As mentioned previously, we spent considerable time engaged with practitioners and policy groups as we set forth to build our new AMOs. We also ran volumes of data in an effort to test our assumptions and results.

We have sought to harness the tension between ambition and attainability, and we believe we have struck the right balance. We are cognizant of the challenges our schools face, particularly with the pending change in cut scores, but we believe they are capable of achieving their objectives if they have the right tools and support. As outlined in this waiver request, we think we can deliver that support through diagnostic intervention and data-driven approaches.

We could provide a good deal of data-based rationale for our work in this area. However, perhaps the best support for our thinking related to the core principles stated at the beginning of this document:

- * All means all. Every child has an innate capacity for learning, and we must meet the needs of each and every Michigan student with high-quality systems, tools and resources. Our expectations for all students must be consistently high.
 - * The use of for the bottom 30% subgroup for calling out subgroup achievement will allow us to isolate and address student achievement gaps wherever they exist, not just in Michigan’s larger schools.
 - * The growth rates we’re targeting are going to propel our students forward at a pace we’ve never before seen, but think our schools can manage.
 - * The state is prepared to leverage its partnerships and resources to make sure these AMOs are met. Why? Because of the next core belief, stated below.
- * We must ensure our children are career- and college-ready. We define this as student preparation that is adequate to allow a student to pass first-year community college courses without remediation. Our state is preparing students not just for the opportunities we know about today, but also for the economic and intellectual challenges of the future.
 - * We cite this quotation, which says it all:

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A May 2011 study by the Detroit Regional Workforce Fund found that 47 percent of adult Detroit residents, or about 200,000 people, are functionally illiterate — which means that nearly half the adults in the city can't perform simple tasks such as reading an instruction book, reading labels on packages or machinery, or filling out a job application. Depressingly, about 100,000 of those functionally illiterate adults have either a high school diploma or the GED equivalent. You can stimulate the Detroit economy all you want, but even if jobs come back, people who can't read won't be able to do them. (Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2011)

- * Michigan's economy, which is among the worst in the nation, needs educational rigor, innovation, and results. We are using this ESEA Flexibility waiver as the next step in our work to deliver those results.
- * Our teachers and administrators are professionals whose talents are equal to the task before them. We must ensure our systems support their work effectively and allow them to innovate to meet the needs of their students.
 - * We have high-caliber individuals working in classrooms and schools across Michigan. We owe it to them to set our expectations higher and give them an opportunity to produce the growth of which they are capable.
 - * Teacher organizations and policy experts are backing our plans. They support these proposed AMOs and, in fact, are asking for the ability to get started.
- * Our school-level interventions must similarly emphasize careful diagnosis and intervention, to maximize all available resources and effectively address the needs of all students.
 - * Michigan has a wealth of expertise that can be brought to bear. We must begin to coordinate and harness our leaders, with an eye toward continuous improvement for all.
 - * We must constantly review and inform, review and inform. If we get to a scenario where most schools are up along that 85% line, we'll keep pushing that bar upward and working to deliver even more for Michigan's children.
 - * One-size-fits-all approaches are clumsy, costly, and less effective than those that diagnose and treat specific concerns. If we get smart about our interventions, we can get faster, stronger results.

But the most important evidence we can provide to show these AMOs are appropriately targeted is this: we are willing to hold ourselves, our schools, and our state accountable for them.

- iii. Provide a link to the State's report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010-2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups.

<https://oeaa.state.mi.us/ayp/index.asp>

2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools.

MDE proposes four identification strategies for reward schools:

- Beating the Odds (identifies schools that should be rewarded for performing more highly than expected). The basic strategy for the Beating the Odds analysis is as follows:
 - Identify schools that are similar on demographic characteristic, and from each group of similar schools, identify the highest performing school.
 - Identify a school’s predicted outcome based on demographic characteristics, and then identify which schools over-performed their expected outcome.
 - Identify those schools who are determined by both methodologies to be “beating the odds” to be the final list of Beating the Odds schools.

MDE has received some suggestions from stakeholders regarding the Beating the Odds methodology. Prior to the ESEA Flexibility application, this was simply a report that MDE produced each year in order to encourage schools that were doing better than expected in terms of their performance. With the increased stakes attached to it via this application, however, MDE commits to engaging in a series of stakeholder meetings to refine and revisit the methodology. For example—in some of the clusters of schools, the school with the highest ranking may not be significantly higher than the mean ranking of that cluster, but that top-ranked school in the cluster would still be identified as beating the odds. These types of methodological business rules are best hammered out through thoughtful conversation with external stakeholders and experts.

- Top 5% of schools on the Top to Bottom list of schools (“high performing schools”). Detail on Top to Bottom methodology is included below; the basic strategy for the Top to Bottom list is as follows.
 - Using data on all five tested subjects and graduation rate where available, rank schools from the 99th percentile to the 0th percentile.
 - Each content area metric is based on achievement (1/2 of the metric), improvement (1/4 of the metric) and achievement gap (1/4 of the metric). This creates a tension between high achievement, but also improvement over time and keeping the achievement gap small so that all students are learning.
 - Once the complete top to bottom list is identified, the top 5% of that list can be considered “highest-performing” schools. These are schools with high overall achievement, who are demonstrating improvement over time, and who are demonstrating high achievement and improvement in all students as evidenced by

their small achievement gaps.

- Schools with the top 5% improvement rates (on a composite rate of improvement in all tested subjects)—for “high progress” schools
 - In the complete Top to Bottom ranking, an improvement rate is identified for each content area.
 - To determine “high progress” schools, the following steps are conducted:
 - Create a composite improvement index based on improvement in all available tested subjects.
 - Rank schools on their composite improvement index.
 - Identify the 5% of schools with the highest rates of improvement.
- Schools improving beyond the 85% ultimate proficiency target for the whole school and remaining a green school otherwise.

Interactions with other lists:

A school cannot be named a reward school if it is a priority school or a focus school, or if it has failed AYP (i.e. gotten a “red” overall status on the Accountability Scorecard).

Understanding the Top to Bottom Methodology

In 2011, Michigan produced a comprehensive Top to Bottom ranking of all schools in the state. This ranking was developed based on the original methodology for identifying persistently lowest achieving schools, following the federal School Improvement Grant ranking formula requirements. Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, MDE modified the original PLA ranking based on extensive comments from stakeholders and internal evaluation of the methodology and data. Although the 2011 PLA list was still run using the original methodology (due to a technicality in state legislation), MDE produced the full Top to Bottom list as part of our “light of day” reporting initiatives. It gave schools a “low-stakes” look at their ranking on the new metric, provided them with important diagnostic data for their schools, and afforded MDE the opportunity to educate schools and educators on the metric before it took on a more high-stakes nature.

The Top to Bottom list includes all five tested subjects (mathematics, reading, writing, science, and social studies) and graduation rate (when available). Each subject is measured using three indices: achievement, student growth/school improvement, and achievement gap.

- Achievement: To obtain a measure of a school’s achievement over all students in various grades and test types, we standardize each student’s scale score on the test they took. This gives us a value that tell us how well each student did on that test compared to all others statewide who took that same test in that same grade and subject in a given year. This allows us to standardize out potential differences in difficulty of cut scores or tests not accounted for

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in the psychometric properties of the test, and also allows us to put all students on a similar metric so that we can combine it for overall school achievement. Additionally, given our recent change in cut scores, looking at the percent of students proficient would have made it impossible to accurately rank at the bottom of the distribution, as so many schools have zero percent of their students proficient. Using standardized scale scores makes this truly a normative ranking system, as the proficiency criteria are not reflected in a school’s ranking.

- Improvement: Student improvement is included in two ways—integrating individual student-level growth data where available (reading and mathematics, grades 3-7) and examining school-level improvement rates where the student-level growth is not available. Provisions are made so that higher-performing schools are not penalized if they lack room to show improvement.
- Achievement gap: This gap is calculated as the distance between the average scale score for the top 30% of students and the bottom 30% of students in that each school. Larger gaps decrease a school’s overall ranking; smaller gaps help raise their ranking.

For schools with a graduation rate, the school is ranked on both the graduation rate as well as improvement in graduation rate, and this counts as 10% of the overall school ranking.

Each content index counts equally toward the final ranking, and a school receives a ranking if they have at least 30 full academic year students in both the current and the previous year in at least two content areas.

We have also created a webpage with extensive resources for schools, districts and others to understand their ranking. This can be found at www.michigan.gov/baa and click on “Michigan Schools Top to Bottom Ranking,” or click on this link: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_56562---,00.html

Finally, the MDE has initiated a significant informational campaign regarding the Top to Bottom ranking methodology. This included presentations on the ranking during a 12-stop Accountability Tour around the state, a statewide webcast, recorded interactive presentations, and numerous hands-on presentations with schools, districts, and other organizations.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

Michigan is working with its partners and stakeholders to identify innovative ways to recognize high-achieving schools. Although we do not have any funds available to reserve under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) to provide financial incentives to Reward Schools, we have identified other types of incentives, as described below.

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Incentive: Recognition in Annual Education Report

Every school in Michigan is required by state statute to complete an online Annual Education Report (AER). The AER for Reward Schools will include their reward status and spotlights their high achievement.

Incentive: Local Media Recognition

The Michigan Department of Education will provide local media with information on Reward Schools and encourage coverage telling each school's unique story.

Incentive: Recognition at SEA and Educational Organization Conferences

Reward Schools will receive special recognition at the Michigan Department of Education's annual School Improvement Conference. Reward Schools will receive certificates and banners for display in buildings. The banner will include the year of their recognition.

Incentive: Promising Practice Videos

As funding allows, the top 20-40 Reward Schools will each be featured in their own video or audio documentary spotlighting the practices used that results in high achievement. These will be placed on the MDE website for promising practices and provided to the LEA for inclusion on the school's website. Other similar schools will be encouraged to review these documentaries and contact the school to learn how to implement effective practices leading to high achievement.

Incentive: Networking Meetings

Representatives from Reward Schools will be invited to attend networking meetings with demographically similar lower performing schools. Focus will be on sharing promising practices and practical experience. Several state education organizations have offered to invite Reward schools to present at their annual conferences addressing promising practices.

Incentive: College/University Recognition

A number of Michigan Colleges have committed to recognizing reward schools by inviting students in grades 9-12 for a college and career day and inviting students graduating from a reward school to campus for special functions.

Incentive: Financial Flexibility

All Title I eligible reward schools will be invited to participate in the Michigan school wide consolidation project granting increased flexibility in the use of federal grant funds which is being piloted regionally in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Incentive: Corporate and/or Philanthropic Reward Schools Recognition

MDE is seeking corporate and philanthropic organization support for Reward School Recognition. MDE will reach out to these organizations for recognitions such as financial support, material support

(supplies/technology, other resources). Final details are yet to be determined and are contingent upon waiver approval.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools.

Using the top to bottom methodology described above, MDE plans to identify priority schools as:

- Schools in the bottom 5% of the top to bottom ranking.
- MDE will ensure that the number of schools identified as priority schools is equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools.
- In addition to the bottom 5%, MDE will also add any school with a graduation rate of less than 60% for three consecutive years and any Tier I or Tier II school using SIG funds to implement a turnaround model.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA’s list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

All LEAs with priority schools will be required to implement one of four intervention models as described in the US Department of Education Final Requirements for School Improvement Grants:

- Turnaround Model
- Transformation Model
- Restart Model
- School Closure

A priority school that implements one of the four School Improvement Grant models satisfies the turnaround principles. *See page 10 of the ESEA September 23, 2011 Flexibility document.*

2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA’s choice of timeline.

In January 2009, Michigan's legislature passed reform legislation and embodied it in Michigan's School Code. This law requires the following:

Section 380.1280c

(1) Beginning in 2010, not later than September 1 of each year, the superintendent of public instruction shall publish a list identifying the public schools in this state that the department has determined to be among the lowest achieving 5% of all public schools in this state, as defined for the purposes of the federal incentive grant program created under sections 14005 and 14006 of title XIV of the American Recovery and Reinvestment act of 2009 Public Law 111-5.

This law sets out timelines by which LEA's who have schools on the list must submit reform/redesign plans to Michigan's state school reform/redesign officer. Schools identified on this list must select as the basis for their plan one of the federal models--turnaround, transformation, restart, or closure. Plans must include all elements as described in the federal guidance.

Schools on this list formerly known as "Persistently Lowest Achieving" will now receive the designation of Priority Schools and will follow the timeline as given in the state law. All dates in the timeline required by law are shown with an *.

Timeline for Priority Schools

No later than September 1 of each calendar year*	List of Priority Schools published by MDE*
No later than three weeks after publication of Priority Schools list	<p>State School Reform Officer holds initial meeting with LEA and school(s) representatives to explain Reform and Redesign options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restart Model • Transformation Model • Turnaround Model • Closure <p>The following groups will be represented at the initial meeting to offer technical assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE staff with expertise in both school reform and knowledge of the guidance under which the plans must be developed and operated. • Representatives of the ISD/RESAs that have priority schools who will be offering assistance at the local level. • Members of district intervention teams with

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	<p>expertise in diagnosing systems problems at the district level. (Personnel, budget, procurement, instruction and instructional strategies, professional development)</p>
<p>Next 90 days</p>	<p>Category I schools (watch list) select intervention model and write draft plan. Assistance for plan development may be requested from MDE, the LEA’s ISD/RESA, or members of the School Support Team.</p> <p>Category II schools will receive assistance in developing their plan from the School Support Team members who will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Priority School(s) School Improvement Teams to conduct a needs assessment designed to identify root causes of low student achievement • Select the most appropriate Reform and Redesign model based on needs • Select which components of the Statewide System of Support meet the student and staff needs and be incorporated into chosen model <p>Category III districts/schools will meet with a State District Intervention Team . The Intervention Team will do the following:</p> <p>Review district level supports for the school(s) in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Achievement/Instruction • Budget and financial practices • Procurement • Recruiting, screening, hiring and placement of staff • Diagnose problem areas and provide prescription(s) for solutions • Conduct a needs assessment of the school(s) to select the most appropriate Reform and Redesign plan • Write the plan • Budget for the implementation of the plan • Provide oversight of plan implementation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective evaluation of teachers and principals • Support/mentoring of principals
Within 90 days after publication of Priority Schools list	LEA submits draft school(s) Reform and Redesign Plan(s) to State School Reform Officer
Within 30 days after Reform and Redesign Plan submission*	State School Reform officer reviews the draft plans and gives feedback to LEA.
Within 60 days after the draft Reform and Redesign Plan is reviewed and returned to the LEA	<p>LEA must resubmit plan for approval/disapproval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Reform and Redesign Plan is not approved, the school will be placed under the auspices of the Educational Achievement Authority beginning the following school year • If Reform and Redesign Plan is approved, LEA/school use the remainder of the school year to put the plan in place for implementation the following fall*
Throughout the school year	<p>School Support Team meets quarterly with Priority School(s) School Improvement Team to monitor the continuous improvement processes in the school</p> <p>Each school reports quarterly to the MDE on its plan implementation progress</p>
No later than June 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LEA must revise its district plan to indicate how its priority schools(s) will receive district supports 2. School must revise its school improvement plan to incorporate the elements from the Reform and Redesign Plan it has selected to implement and the supports chosen to meet its needs.
No later than August 30	MDE will perform a desk audit on both the district and the school to determine whether the improvement plans have been appropriately updated and create a file for each school that contains baseline data for both leading and lagging indicators
<p>During the following school year of Reform and Redesign Plan implementation</p> <p>These activities will continue in successive years of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE will hold a minimum of two networking meetings for LEA/school teams with Reform and Redesign Plans to share best practices around the implementation of college and career ready standards and the instructional strategies that best support such implementation

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<p>implementation if the data indicates a need, schools are moving off the Persistently Lowest Achieving List and new schools are coming on the list</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE will devote a strand of the Fall and Spring School Improvement conferences for Priority Schools to support implementation of their plans and the implementation of college and career ready standards • MDE will hire and train contractors, called District Improvement Facilitators, to monitor the implementation of the Reform and Redesign Plan, communicate regularly with the district and school board and meet monthly/bimonthly with MDE to share updates and network with other contractors.
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The SEA’s proposed timeline allows the District and its school(s) in the Planning Year to work with differentiated levels of supported based on each school’s status. It is projected that Districts with Tier I schools (Watch List) will need the least amount of support in selecting an intervention model and pulling together a plan for implementation that meets the requirements. Assistance will be available for these schools upon request. Districts with Tier II schools will work with a School Support Team Core (including a district representative and an ISD/ESA representative) to assess its needs, identify root causes of low student achievement and select a Reform and Redesign model that best aligns with its needs. Additionally, the needs assessment will also identify which components of the Statewide System of Support will best integrate with the selected Reform and Redesign model to support the needs of the school and staff. Districts with Tier III schools will be assigned a District Intervention Team with expertise in Student Achievement/Instruction/Professional Development; Budget, Accounting, and Procurement; and Recruitment, Screening, Hiring, Placement, and Retention of staff. This team will review district practices and procedures to diagnose policies and practices that need to be changed/corrected in order for the district to support its schools as they work to increase student achievement. The intervention team will choose the reform and redesign model for the school and develop the plan that the district/school will implement. The Intervention Team will continue to monitor the district’s support of the school and the changes that have been prescribed at the district level.

Level 4??

The School Support Team at each priority school will work with the School Improvement Team to infuse the Reform and Redesign model and MI Excel components in how to revise the building School Improvement Plan to incorporate these elements. In the first year of implementation, this School Support Team will meet at least quarterly with the School Improvement Team to monitor the implementation of the School Improvement Plan and the impact of this plan on student achievement of the Common Core Standards at the classroom level.

If the school continues to be identified as a Priority School in the second year of implementation, the School Improvement Team will work with the School Support Team to conduct another needs

assessment to determine if the appropriate component(s) of the MI Excel Statewide System of Support are impacting systems and improving student achievement, to determine continuation. The continued monitoring of the implementation and impact of the School Improvement Plan is expected to focus the school on the research-based delivery of the Common Core Standards and increase student achievement.

If a school continues to be identified as a Priority School after the third year of implementation, the school will be moved under the supervision of the State School Reform Officer as explained in Section 380.1280c of Michigan’s Revised School Code. Therefore, these schools may not be identified as Priority Schools for more than four years.

MDE’s Statewide System of Support is designed to build the capacity of School Improvement Team members to use the MDE School Data Profile/Analysis, School Process Profile/Analysis and Goals Management in order to conduct a needs assessment to identify root causes of low student achievement through the collaboration and direction of the School Support Team. Through quarterly meetings with the building School Improvement Team, this School Support Team is also building the capacity of staff to monitor the implementation and impact of the School Improvement Plan. These activities can be continued after the school is no longer identified and the School Support Team is not assigned to the school.

Additionally, the various components that might be chosen that align with the school’s needs will help develop skills and therefore increase the capacity of staff to:

- implement research-based strategies,
- deepen the knowledge of the Common Core Standards,
- lead improvement initiatives,
- use data to inform instructional decisions,
- continue climate, culture, student engagement initiatives, and/or
- implement new skills from job-embedded professional learning opportunities after the supports are no longer available.

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

MDE proposes the following exit criteria for priority schools:

- A priority school needs to make AYP after a year of planning and three years of intervention planning.

- AMO targets have been adjusted to reflect new cut scores.
- Student growth, provisional proficiency, and safe harbor are all still available to schools to help them make AYP.
- This holds priority schools accountable to move students toward proficiency at an escalated rate during their time in the priority school intervention.
- It sends the message that we hold equally high expectations for our priority schools as we do for all schools.

2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.”

Using the Top to Bottom methodology identified above, we further identify focus schools as follows:

- Schools with the largest achievement gap, where achievement gap is defined as the difference between the average scale score for the top 30% of students and the bottom 30% of students.
- MDE proposes that we redefine “subgroup” to be the bottom 30% of students, regardless of which demographic subgroup the student is in. WE’RE NOT LOOKING AT ALL THE SUBGROUPS?

Stakeholders have questioned whether or not this methodology might result in a relatively high-performing schools overall having a large achievement gap, where the bottom 30% subgroup is still relatively high-performing. . MDE believes it is appropriate to hold an overall high-performing school accountable for having a large achievement gap because of one of our core values, which is that we want to increase achievement and see growth in ALL of our students. Although a school may be doing relatively well compared to other schools in the aggregate, it is still a negative learning experience for those students who are left behind. The system of supports will also identify the appropriate type of interventions and supports for schools where this is the case. The school should still be held accountable, but what needs to be done to assist them may look different depending on their circumstances.

We also examined the relationship between the size of the achievement gap and the overall achievement level of the schools. Looking at Figure XX below, it can be seen that there are relatively high achieving schools with very large gaps—but there are also high-achieving schools WITHOUT large gaps. Similarly, there are lower achieving schools with large gaps as well.

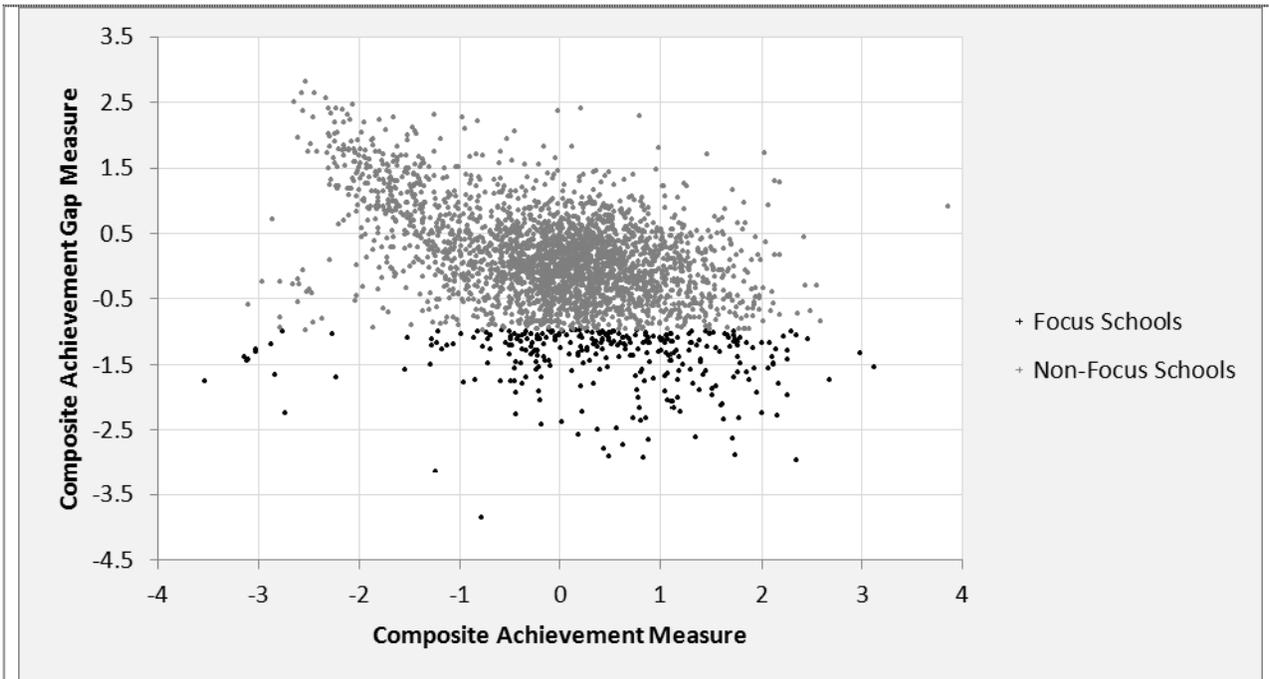


Figure XX: Distribution of Focus Schools by Achievement Measure

One final concern about focus schools that we have heard from stakeholders is that a low-achieving school may not be identified as a focus school because it avoids a large gap—but it is in need of interventions and support. This is where the system of differentiated accountability works together. A very low-performing school will be identified as a priority school; schools that are slightly higher than the bottom 5% but that are still low-performing will likely receive a “red” on the Accountability Scorecard, which serves to put them on warning that their achievement levels need to increase in order for them to avoid the more substantial sanctions associated with priority schools. Focus Schools are only one of many methods in the system to identify schools in need of interventions and supports, and are a critical component to Michigan achieving one of our key goals—to close the achievement gap within schools and the achievement gap statewide. This will only happen if we hold every school accountable for achieving success with all of its students.

2.E.ii Provide the SEA’s list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA’s focus schools and their students and provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

Timeline for Focus Schools	
No later than September 1 of each calendar year	List of Focus Schools published by MDE
No later than four weeks after publication of Focus Schools list	MDE convenes technical assistance meeting with Leas; school(s) staff to discuss requirements and next steps
By October 1	MDE appoints District Improvement Facilitator to work with LEA (central office staff and school board member(s))
October 1- March 1	District Improvement Facilitator works with LEA to identify areas in which district is not supporting its Focus School(s) using MDE’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment and revises its District Improvement Plan
By March 1	Revised District Improvement Plan submitted to MDE for review and approval
March 1 – June 15	District provides technical assistance, in collaboration with the District Improvement Facilitator, to Focus School(s) to identify student and staff needs using MDE’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment and revise its School Improvement Plan to address subgroup challenge areas and build in a tiered intervention system and plan for needed professional development
July 1	District submits its LEA Planning Cycle and Consolidated Application including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% district level Title I funding as set-aside for implementation of a multi-tiered intervention system for Focus School(s) • 10% building level Title I funding as set-aside for implementation of professional development in how to implement a multi-tiered intervention system and/or research-based professional development for staff on how to teach identified subgroups
By September 1	Focus School(s) submits revised School Improvement Plan(s)
September 1 of calendar year following identification	Implementation of District and Building Level School Improvement Plans in collaboration with the District Improvement Facilitator
September 1 – June 30	The LEA, in collaboration with the District Improvement Facilitator, will monitor the implementation of the Focus School(s) School Improvement Plan and the impact of this implementation on student achievement of all students, focusing on the performance of students in the identified subgroups. MDE will review at least 50% of Focus Schools’ School Improvement Plans and monitor the inclusion of a

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	tiered intervention system and professional development connected to identified subgroups.
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MDE is focusing interventions for Focus Schools at the district level. At this time, we do not have our own evidence that this approach will be successful. However, our state is working with the Center on Innovation and Improvement on the **Academy of Pacesetting Districts**. A team went to Philadelphia the week of October 17, 2011, to be trained in this work and we intend to apply this learning to our work with Focus Schools. The Center on Innovation and Improvement provided extensive research on the District Indicators of Effective Practice and we will be studying this work further and incorporating it into our interventions at this level.

In addition to focusing districts on the communication of the appropriate Common Core Standards to the appropriate grades, the District Improvement Facilitator working with the district level staff will focus on the appropriate level(s) of the Focus Schools when helping to conduct and analyze the needs assessment at the district level, as well as the lowest achieving students.

As we implement components of Academy of Pacesetting Districts using the state-appointed District Improvement Facilitator, Michigan will be monitoring the level of progress made, identify those districts that are making substantive progress and transfer our learning from these districts to the districts that are not making substantive progress. The success of districts and schools that are facing similar challenges should serve to motivate those districts that are not showing as much progress.

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

MDE proposes the following criteria:

- A focus school remains in the intervention and support pipeline for three years beyond its initial identification year.
- In that third year, a focus school must make AYP, including meeting the target for the bottom 30% subgroup, in order to exit the focus schools group.
- Removing the achievement gap in a school requires a strategic plan and time for proper implementation; this is why we plan to keep them in the intervention and on the focus list for at least three years.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

Provide the SEA’s list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
<i>Ex. Washington</i>	<i>Oak HS</i>	<i>111111100001</i>		<i>C</i>	
	<i>Maple ES</i>	<i>111111100002</i>			<i>H</i>
<i>Adams</i>	<i>Willow MS</i>	<i>222222200001</i>	<i>A</i>		
	<i>Cedar HS</i>	<i>222222200002</i>			<i>F</i>
	<i>Elm HS</i>	<i>222222200003</i>			<i>G</i>

Total # of Reward Schools: _____

Total # of Priority Schools: _____

Total # of Title I schools in the State: _____

Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: _____

Key**Reward School Criteria:**

- A. Highest-performing school
- B. High-progress school

Priority School Criteria:

- C. Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the “all students” group
- D. Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years
- E. Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model

Focus School Criteria:

- F. Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest-achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate
- G. Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate
- H. A Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE 1 SCHOOLS

- 2.F Describe how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

As described earlier in this request, all schools in Michigan will be ranked on a top-to-bottom list. Of those Title I schools not identified as Reward, Priority or Focus, MDE will take measures to ensure continuous improvement. The very fact that this ranking will be publically reported will be an incentive for schools to focus on increasing student achievement.

All Title I schools in Michigan will be expected to use Michigan’s Continuous Improvement Tools (MI CSI) to analyze its needs and determine the root causes of systems issues and learning gaps:

- MI CSI Tools
 - School Data Profile/Analysis
 - School Process Profile/Analysis
 - Goals Management in the School Improvement Plan

MDE has a robust building level School Improvement process, tools, training modules and a website that houses building’s School Data Profile/Analysis, School Process Profile/Analysis and School Improvement Plan. Title I schools also have their Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide components housed on this website.

When schools use these MI CSI tools as a diagnostic for uncovering the root causes of systems issues and student achievement challenges, schools can then identify goals, measurable objectives, strategies and activities in the core content areas that have the greatest likelihood of increasing student achievement, Michigan has identified many tools, resources and processes to support continuous improvement in all schools that Title I schools will be expected to use to improve student achievement:

- Common Core Academic Standards to ensure students’ readiness for college or careers
- Michigan’s READY Early Learning Program: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530_6809-33559--,00.html
- Modules to improve instruction available at no charge through Michigan Virtual University at Learnport: <http://learnport.org/>
- Michigan’s Teaching for Learning website: <http://teachingforlearning.org/> for professional development in research-based instructional strategies and the use of data to inform instruction
- Michigan’s Literacy Plan: <http://militnetwork.org/>
- Michigan Online Resources for Educators: <http://more.mel.org/> for professional development in how to integrate technology into instruction of the Common Core Academic Standards

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- Michigan’s elibrary resources: <http://mel.org/>
- Michigan’s School Data Portal: <http://www.mischooldata.org/>
- Michigan’s MORE technology portal: <http://more.mel.org/>
- Regional Data Initiatives: <http://www.gomiem.org/event/regional-data-initiatives-research-symposium>
- Participation in the Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge to identify students at risk of dropping out of school and implementation of research-based supports and student level interventions to reduce the dropout rate: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-5235_53792---,00.html

Title I schools also have Technical Assistance from Office of Field Services consultants at the district level around the LEA Planning Cycle to address supports for the root causes

For those schools continuing to make AYP, these supports will prove satisfactory. For those Title I schools not making AYP, MDE will take a more active role. These schools will receive technical assistance from their regional educational service centers – ISDs/ESAs - to ensure that the proper root causes are being addressed in appropriate research-based ways. The Title I buildings not making AYP will set-aside up to 10% of their building level Title I allocation to enable ISD/ESA consultants to provide technical assistance using an MDE developed Data Workshop to do this work. If an ISD/ESA does not have the capacity to provide this technical assistance, the school may contract with an approved MDE Schoolwide Facilitator. A prescription of resources available at no charge will be recommended to these Title I schools not making AYP to incorporate into their SI Plans.

MDE will randomly sample the school improvement plans resulting from this needs assessment to ensure that the AYP areas are being addressed with research-based strategies.

2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

- 2.G Describe the SEA’s process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
 - ii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools; and
 - iii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources).
- Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

All schools in Michigan are able to rely upon the state’s [School Improvement Framework](#) as a tool for building local capacity. This framework is based on current research and best practice, and can be individualized and used in multiple ways to develop, support and enhance school improvement plans. It can also be used by buildings and districts to review and enhance existing improvement plans to reveal where plans match or differ from state-of-the-art school improvement practice. In addition, this framework can be used during a peer-assessment exchange with a similar school, which could lead to mutual problem solving.

Michigan has also developed a number of useful tools to support local schools in their work. These tools complement the School Improvement Framework, and offer a pragmatic, thorough means of building school and student achievement. These tools are carefully aligned to ensure a strong basis for growth and achievement, as shown on the following pages.

SUMMARY OF RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT FOR PRINCIPLE 2;
ALIGNMENT WITH THE MICHIGAN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Strands of the School Improvement Framework					
School Type	<u>Strand 1</u> Teaching for Learning	<u>Strand 2</u> Leadership	<u>Strand 3</u> Personnel and Professional Learning	<u>Strand 4</u> School and Community Relations	<u>Strand 5</u> Data and Information Management
All Continuous Improvement Schools, Focus Schools, Priority Schools and Reward Schools	<i>MI CSI SI Planning Resources</i> MI MAP Toolkit <i>MDE Career- and college-ready Curriculum Resources</i> ASSIST for Teachers <i>Michigan Online Resources for Educator</i> Michigan’s Electronic Library MDE’s Teaching for Learning Framework	<i>MI CSI SI Planning Resources</i> MI MAP Toolkit <i>MDE Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge</i>	<i>MI CSI SI Planning Resources</i> MI MAP Toolkit	<i>MI CSI SI Planning Resources</i> MI MAP Toolkit <i>Parent Engagement Toolkit</i> MDE’s READY Early Learning Program	<i>MI CSI SI Planning Resources</i> MI MAP Toolkit <i>Regional Data Initiatives</i> MI School Data Portal <i>MORE Technology Portal</i>

Title I Continuous Improvement Schools not making AYP	Math/Science Center TA <i>Literacy Center TA</i>	District Support <i>MDE Monitoring</i>	Data Workshop <i>Professional Development in AYP area/ subgroup(s)</i>		Data Workshop
School Type	Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Strand 5
All Priority Schools	<i>See All Schools above</i>	<i>See All Schools above plus: Reform/Redesign Plan</i>	<i>See All Schools above</i>	<i>See All Schools above</i>	<i>See All Schools above plus: MDE Monitor</i>
Title I Priority Schools	SSoS Content Coach SSoS <i>Restructuring Model Extended Learning Time MDE approved instructional model Surveys of Enacted Curriculum</i>	School Support Teams SSoS <i>Instructional Leadership Coach SSoS Culture/ Climate Intervention District Improvement Liaison District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation MDE Monitoring Possible Placement in EAA if no substantial improvement after three implementation years</i>	PD aligned to root causes <i>Training in components of Reform/Redesign Plan SSoS aligned PD</i>	District quarterly reports to local school board <i>Expanded SST</i>	SST monitoring SI Plan implementation and student achievement at classroom level
Title I Focus Schools	Tiered system of interventions for identified groups <i>MDE approved instructional model Teacher</i>	<i>District Improvement Facilitator District conducted Instructional Rounds District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation of</i>	PD for effective instruction of identified groups <i>PD on implementation of tiered system of interventions</i>	District quarterly reports to local school board	Benchmarks for DI Plan implementation and student achievement at building level

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	collaboration time <i>Surveys of Enacted Curriculum</i>	<i>building SI Plan and processes</i> District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation of the building principal <i>MDE Monitoring of district support, the DI Plan and District Improvement Facilitators</i>			
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School Type	Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Strand 5
Title I Reward Schools	<i>See All Schools above</i>	<i>See All Schools above plus:</i> Increased flexibility in use of federal grant funds	<i>See All Schools above</i>	<i>See All Schools above plus:</i> Honored at MDE SI Conference <i>Visits by State Superintendent, Governor, other high ranking state officials</i> Provide banners and/or certificates	<i>See All Schools above</i>

Priority Schools: Supports and Interventions

Intervention Teams

Each LEA with a Priority School will be assigned an Intervention Team. At a minimum, the Intervention Team will consist of:

- a district representative that also sits on the School Support Team (see below)
- an individual with district business office experience
- an individual with knowledge in curriculum and instructional practice
- an individual with school improvement or turnaround experience
- an individual from a postsecondary institution
- any other individual the superintendent of public instruction or SEA feels will contribute to the effectiveness of the Intervention Team’s work

The Intervention team will begin its work by conducting a review of the district’s capacity to support rapid individual building turnaround efforts. At a minimum, the Intervention Team will address the following areas:

- District business practices, including but not limited to:
 - Human resource policies and practice
 - Contracting policies and procedures
 - Procurement policies and procedures
- District support of instructional programs
- District support of building principals
- District communication policy and practice
- Assist with writing the District Improvement Plan

School Support Teams

Each Priority School will receive a School Support Team (SST) as defined in Title I, Part A, Section 1117(a)(5). In addition to the statutory membership requirements, the SST will include an individual from a school with similar demographics that the SEA has recognized as “Beating the Odds.”

The SST will provide technical assistance to the Priority School to select the appropriate intervention model. The support team will:

- Attend a data workshop with Priority School staff and conduct a needs assessment using MDE’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). The CNA will identify the root causes of low student performance.
- Use the results of the needs assessment to help the Priority School choose a Reform and Redesign Plan /intervention model that best meets the school’s needs and choose the components of the Statewide System of Support that aligns with the chosen plan
- Incorporate the elements of the Reform and Redesign Plan into the revision of the School Improvement Plan

The SST will monitor the school’s implementation of the School Improvement Plan through a minimum of four quarterly meetings with the building School Improvement Team.

An MDE trained and appointed Reform and Redesign monitor will make sure that the components of the Reform and Redesign Plan/selected intervention model are being implemented as written and that benchmarks are being met.

MDE will approve or disapprove all Reform and Redesign Plans and perform a desk audit on a sample of District and School Improvement Plans to determine the revisions include the components of the Reform and Redesign Plans.

Accountability

LEA Accountability

LEA central office staff will meet regularly with the Reform/Redesign (R/R) school liaison from the priority school. Regular updates will be presented to the LEA school board. As noted previously, the R/R liaison will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Reform and Redesign Plans/intervention

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model. The LEA will also be responsible for submitting biannual monitoring reports to the SEA.

SEA Accountability

The SEA will ensure that biannual monitoring and evaluation reports are submitted as required. The SEA will also randomly sample school improvement plans for alignment with the needs assessment, the approved reform and redesign plan, and implementation of career- and college-ready standards.

As noted previously, Michigan statute requires a State School Reform Office to oversee the submission and approval of Reform and Redesign Plans, under the auspices of the State Reform Officer. In addition, the SEA will randomly sample Priority Schools' improvement plans for alignment with their needs assessments and the implementation of career- and college-ready standards.

If LEAs are unable to provide sufficient technical assistance and support to its Priority Schools so that they are no longer identified as Priority Schools after three years of Reform and Redesign Plan implementation, these schools may be placed in the Education Achievement Authority under the supervision of the Reform and Redesign Officer who administers the state's Reform and Redesign School District as described in Michigan's Revised School Code:

[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(kfriryf01oylyv552fnwrc55\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-380-1280c](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(kfriryf01oylyv552fnwrc55))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-380-1280c)

Priority School Funding

Priority schools have flexibility in leveraging Title I set-aside funds through the following mechanisms:

Intervention Team Funding

Michigan currently utilizes a portion of its 1003(a) funds to support an initiative that focuses on instructional leaders with emphasis on a coaching model. Michigan grants these funds to a third party (Michigan State University) that administers the programming through a fellowship program supporting administrators and their building leadership teams (The Michigan Fellowship of Instructional Leaders).

Michigan intends to shift some of the leadership focus toward the LEA, rather than concentrating solely on the building. This will necessitate a paradigm shift from a strict coaching model and to a more directive approach in the form of the Intervention Team. The Fellowship of Instructional Leaders will cease to exist in its current form and Michigan State University (MSU), under direction from the SEA will be responsible for developing and implementing a program for training the Intervention Team.

MDE does not have the capacity to hire/employ the Intervention Team members. Consequently, MSU will hire and employ the Intervention Teams. Intervention Teams will be deployed by MSU under the direction of MDE.

Michigan intends to keep some elements of instructional leadership coaching, but the extent to which it will be cannot be determined until more work is done on developing the Intervention Team training and

deployment process.

School Support Team Funding

School Support Teams are funded through grants to Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) via MDE's Section 1003(a) 4% reservation for schools in improvement (as waived to be used for Priority and Focus Schools).

Funding for Priority Schools: LEA Level 20% Obligation

Michigan intends to replace the current 20% obligation for Public School Choice and Supplemental Education Services for Schools in Improvement with the following: The LEA, in consultation with MDE, will reserve a portion of the 20% obligation to pay for transportation for students whose parents choose to transfer students in accordance with Title I, Part A, Section 1116(b)(1)(E). The amount to be reserved will be negotiated with MDE, but must be sufficient to support all reasonable and approvable transfer requests. The remaining amount from the 20% obligation will be used for at least one of the following three options:

Option 1:

Increase learning time in each Priority School in accordance with the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant guidance that states: *“Increased learning time means using a longer school day, week or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for:*

- *Instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography;*
- *Instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and*
- *Teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.”*

All Priority schools that choose the Transformation or Turnaround option as their Reform and Redesign Plan will be required to include increased learning time for all students as one of their interventions.

Option 2:

Implement a multi-tiered system of supports if the school does not currently have such a system in place.

Option 3:

Provide professional development for staff that is aligned to the buildings needs assessment. This professional development may include training in how to implement a multi-tiered system of supports

with fidelity.

Funding for Priority Schools: Building Level 10% Obligation

MDE intends to replace the current requirement for buildings identified for improvement to obligate 10% of their building level Title I allocation to pay for professional development related to the reason(s) why the school did not make Adequate Yearly Progress.

Instead, MDE will require districts with Priority Schools to set aside an amount no greater than 10% of their building Title I allocation for each Priority School to provide a Reform and Redesign Plan Liaison to ensure that this plan is incorporated into the building level School Improvement Plan and implemented by all staff. This Liaison will work with the LEA Central Office Administrators and School Board to ensure that monitoring of the plan is ongoing. The LEA may hire its own MDE-trained liaison or contract with an MDE appointed liaison.

Funding to Priority Schools: 1003(a) Funds

Regional educational service agencies will use 1003(a) funds to support needs-based supports for Priority Schools. As noted previously, the Intervention Team (LEA level) and School Support Team will assist the Priority School in selecting the supports as detailed in the plans for the Reform and Redesign plans/selected intervention model. These supports may include:

- School Support Teams (REQUIRED)
- Instructional Content Coaches
- Supports to address cultural and climate issues
- Restructuring/Turnaround services through third party vendors (screened/hired by the ISD)
- Professional development (supplements the professional development funds granted directly to LEAs as outlined below)

MDE will also grant 1003(a) dollars directly to the LEA to fund targeted professional development that supports implementation of the [Reform and Redesign Plan/intervention model](#).

Focus Schools

For districts with single Focus Schools, MDE will provide a toolkit, based on Michigan's improvement process and tools as well as the resources provided by the Academy of Pacesetting Districts so that the district may assess its capacity to support its Focus School. These districts will be required to report to their School Boards quarterly on the results of its self-assessment and its ensuing support of its Focus School. This toolkit will be developed in the summer of 2012 by MDE School Improvement staff who have been trained by Center of Innovation and Improvement in Center for Innovation and Improvement's Academy of Pacesetting Districts.

Supports and School Accountability

For districts with two or more Focus Schools, MDE will assign a trained District Improvement Facilitator

(DIF) with central office or related experience to provide technical assistance to central office and the school board in order to assist them in providing more effective support to their Focus Schools through:

- Guiding them in how to conduct a needs assessment using MDE’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment which includes MDE’s District Process Profile/Analysis and the District Process Profile/Analysis to identify the root causes of low student performance that could be improved by district support
- Revising the District Improvement Plan to incorporate supports to the Focus School(s.)
- Setting benchmarks for the support of Focus schools
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Focus Schools’ Improvement Plans using MDE’s evaluation tool
- Providing a structure of differentiated supports to all students, focusing on the lowest performing student subgroups.

LEA Accountability

The LEA will monitor and evaluate the School Improvement Plans of their Focus Schools and provide quarterly progress reports to their school board. The LEA will also implement the recommendations of the District Improvement Facilitator. Biannual reports of progress will be submitted to the SEA.

MDE Accountability

MDE will ensure that biannual monitoring reports are submitted as required. MDE will randomly sample District Improvement Plans for alignment with the needs assessment and support of Focus Schools. In addition, MDE will meet bimonthly with the District Improvement Facilitators to check on LEA progress.

Focus School Funding

Focus Schools have flexibility in leveraging Title I set-aside funds through the following mechanisms:

Funding for the Focus School: District Level 20% Obligation

Michigan intends to replace the current 20% obligation for Public School Choice and Supplemental Education Services for Schools in Improvement with the following: The LEA, in consultation with MDE, will reserve a portion of the 20% obligation to pay for transportation for students whose parents choose to transfer students in accordance with Title I, Part A, Section 1116(b)(1)(E). The amount to be reserved will be negotiated with MDE, but must be sufficient to support all reasonable and approvable transfer requests. The remaining amount from the 20% obligation will be used for at least one of the following two options that best meets the needs of the focus schools as diagnosed by the needs assessment:

Option 1:

Provide a multi-tiered system of supports within the school’s continuous improvement process to assure a research based core-curriculum focusing on college and career ready standards and to target the individual learning needs of specific learners contributing to the achievement gap. If the district does not have an integrated, multi-tiered system of instruction, assessment, and intervention designed to meet the achievement needs of all learners, it may choose to adopt [Michigan’s definition](#) and eleven essential elements with this set-aside.

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Option 2:

Implement a research-based intervention approved by MDE and selected by the district, in conjunction with the District Improvement Facilitator, aligned with the needs of students and staff in the Focus Schools

Funding for the Focus School: Building level 10% Obligation

MDE will require districts with Focus Schools to set aside no more than 10% of their building Title I allocation for each Focus School to provide at least one of the following supports that best meets the school's needs:

Option 1:

Provide high quality, job embedded, research-based professional development focused on the implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports and/or research-based instruction of students in the lowest performing subgroups, paying particular attention to SWDs and ELLs

Option 2:

Provide weekly/daily time for teacher collaboration to analyze student work, especially of students in the lowest performing groups, paying particular attention to the work of SWDs and ELLs

Option 3:

Contract for the administration of the Survey of Enacted Curriculum

Funding for the Focus School: Section 1003(g) School Improvement Funds (SIG)

If funding allows, Michigan intends to use Section 1003(g) dollars for Focus Schools after 2014 when the last round of SIG grantees have completed their 3 year grant cycle. MDE plans to expand the Regional Assistance Grant to regional educational service agencies to support the Focus Schools. The service agencies will offer the same types of supports and services as planned for Priority Schools. This will include the use of School Support Teams. Following the same process used for Priority Schools, the School Support Teams will assist the Focus School in determining where their needs lie, as based on achievement data and the results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). These supports may include:

- School Support Teams (REQUIRED)
- Instructional Content Coaches
- Supports to address cultural and climate issues
- Restructuring/Turnaround services through third party vendors (screened/hired by the ISD)
- Professional development

Improving MDE and School Capacity

MDE will build its capacity because it will have a better sense of the performance of all schools due to

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the dual identification of the top to bottom list and the identification of the largest gaps. This will allow MDE to better provide services, tools and products to meet the needs of schools.

The LEAs with Priority Schools will build their capacity to understand how to use MDE’s School Data Profile/Analysis, School Process Profile/ Analysis and Goals Management to identify root causes of why schools are not achieving. In collaborating with the regional educational service agency consultants on School Support Teams, LEAs will build their collaboration skills, planning skills, monitoring skills and evaluation skills. Identifying which components of the Statewide System of Support best meets the needs of its Priority Schools has the potential of building the LEAs capacity to form partnerships with the providers of the components.

The LEAs with Focus Schools will build their capacity to understand how to use MDE’s District Data Profile/Analysis, District Process Profile/ Analysis and Goals Management to identify the root causes of where their district falls short in being able to support a school with large achievement gaps. The District Improvement Facilitator will spend a minimum of 50 days with central office staff to build their capacity and many things including how to:

- identify priorities
- remove barriers to effective teaching and learning
- meet the professional development needs of teachers
- use the evaluation system to focus on instructional improvement
- monitor and evaluate school improvement plans

Schools will build their capacity to make the connection between student achievement data (summative and formative,) school demographic data, school process data, school perceptual data and what they do with students in the classroom. Schools will increase their capacity to monitor the implementation of school improvement plans and the impact of this implementation on student achievement.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed any guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14). 	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has already developed and adopted one or more, but not all, guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a copy of any guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); iii. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt the remaining guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year; iv. a description of the process used to involve teachers and principals in the development of the adopted guidelines and the process to continue their involvement in developing any remaining guidelines; and v. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the remaining guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14). 	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.
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i. The SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

Michigan believes in improving the quality of teaching, of leadership at the building and district levels, and also believes in rewarding excellence in our educators and enhancing the professionalism of the profession in our state.

Our Theory of Action → Principle Three

If a school’s challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- * **Consistent implementation of Career- and College-Ready Standards**
- * Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
- * Reduction in the achievement gap
- * Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
- * **Improvements to the instructional core**
- * Better understanding/utilization of data
- * **Improved graduation and attendance rates**
- * **Building of/support for effective teaching**
- * **Building of/support for school leadership capacity**
- * Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership, including school boards

As outlined in our theory of action, educators working in tandem with students within a system of accountability and supports are key elements to allowing Michigan to reach our goals of career and college readiness for all students and a reduction in the achievement gap around the state. To support this work, Michigan has been engaged in systematically implementing educator evaluations statewide, in efforts that include legislation, locally-driven initiatives, and initiatives supported by MDE. These efforts will eventually result in Michigan having a statewide evaluation model not only for teachers, but also for administrators. It is important to note that Michigan specifically extends responsibility and evaluations beyond the principal and into the central office leadership, believing that quality education practices must be evident at all levels of the organization. As Michigan works to develop a statewide evaluation model, we are simultaneously implementing locally-developed evaluation systems, which provide for a laboratory of ideas and opportunities for piloting local initiatives, and also ensure that we begin changing the quality of instruction and educational leadership in Michigan *immediately*.

Legislative and Policy Background

In 2009, Michigan passed legislation requiring annual educator evaluations that included student

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growth as a “significant part,” the results of which could be used to inform decisions about promotion, retention, placement and compensation. These evaluations were specified to begin in the 2011-2012 school year, and LEAs were given latitude in the development, piloting, and establishment of their systems. Michigan’s LEAs began preparing to implement this legislation, and are now in the midst of the first year of implementing these locally-developed annual educator evaluations for all teachers and administrators. For the first time, every single one of Michigan’s educators will be evaluated using measures of student growth, and the results of these evaluations will be reported into MDE’s data systems.

One issue with the original legislation was that it did not provide much in the way of standardization across districts, in order to ensure both a standard of quality and continuity in ratings. To address this shortcoming, the Michigan legislature revisited the original legislation in the summer of 2011 and revised it in order to introduce more standardization and comparability into both the educator evaluation system and the ratings produced by this system. This legislation now provides Michigan with a legislative template for implementing a statewide system of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.

At the same time, the Michigan legislature substantially revised the laws regarding tenure and the promotion and retention of teachers. Among other things, Michigan educators now earn tenure based solely on effectiveness, and all promotion and retention decisions must be based on effectiveness as well, with the time in the profession or the school no longer taken into consideration.

Michigan is one of few states implementing annual educator evaluations that include student growth as a significant portion in the 2011-2012 school year, due to our proactive and aggressive legislation. We believe this is a strength for us, even though the evaluations systems will differ. We do know, however, that districts have been having critical conversations with stakeholders, designing observation rubrics, looking for solutions to integrate growth, developing local assessments, partnering with foundations or other nonprofit enterprises in their area, and collaborating with each other as they work to develop a system that is fair and that meets the criteria of the original law. To support this, MDE hosted a statewide Educator Evaluation Best Practices conference in the winter of 2011, and will host a second in February 2012 focused on student growth, in order to help the field come together and share their best practices with each other.

Adopting Guidelines: Interim and Final

One of the key elements of the second round of educator evaluation legislation was the creation of the Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness, a two-year appointed body tasked with the creation of a statewide evaluation model for both teachers and administrators. MDE is excited about the opportunity afforded by this Council. This council consists of three members appointed by the Governor, including Deborah Lowenberg Ball (dean of the University of Michigan School of Education), Mark Reckase (professor of Measurement and Quantitative Methods at Michigan State University) and Nicholas Sheltroun (director of measurement, research and accountability at National

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Heritage Academies in Grand Rapids). The council has two additional members appointed by the Senate Majority Leader and Speaker of the House, respectively; David Vensel, the principal of Jefferson High School in Monroe, MI, and Jennifer Hammond, principal of Grand Blanc High School. Finally, the council includes a designee of the Superintendent of Public Instruction as a non-voting member; this individual is Joseph Martineau, Executive Director of the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability for the Michigan Department of Education. The statute required that the members of the Council have expertise in psychometrics, measurement, performance-based educator evaluation models, educator effectiveness, or development of educator evaluation frameworks in other states, and the selected Council is well-qualified and highly respected in this field.

This Council has begun meeting regularly, and has begun the daunting but critical task of figuring out the key elements of a statewide evaluation system. When completed, the Council will report these recommendations to the Legislature, the State board of Education, and the governor.

It is the intent of MDE to adopt these guidelines at the time that they are completed by the Council. We respect the Council's important role in this process, and believe that waiting until this thoughtful, informed, careful enterprise has been completed is critically important to ensuring that Michigan has a high-quality system of educator evaluations that has similar rigor statewide.

However, MDE also knows that this work may take time, and that in the interim, districts are still required to implement locally-developed evaluation systems. Therefore, based on the best practices and research we have seen both within the states and nationwide, and looking at the eventual elements of the system the Council will recommend, MDE is looking at the option of developing and adopting interim guidelines by June 2012. We would then engage in a series of meetings with stakeholders to refine the guidelines, and make them available to districts to support their work by the start of the 2012-2013 school year. MDE acknowledges that these guidelines are non-binding and are meant to be used by districts to support their work and provide a resource as they refine their local systems. They would be replaced by the more formal guidelines of the Governor's Council when that work is completed.

What will be included in the final guidelines?

The Governor's Council will develop a series of recommendations for a statewide evaluation system. Given that the Council is still engaged in their work, we do not know the exact recommendations at this point. However, we do know that the recommended statewide system will include several elements (because these are in the legislation? Should we say that so the readers know we have that level of back-up?): 1) a student growth and assessment tool that includes a pre- and post-test, and that will be able to be used for all content areas, apply to student with disabilities, and measure growth for students at all achievement levels; 2) a state evaluation tool for teachers; 3) a state evaluation tool for administrators; 4) recommendations for what constitutes each effectiveness rating, and 5) a system by which local evaluation systems can be approved as equivalent to the statewide system.

What would the interim guidelines include?

MDE would develop the interim guidelines to support what is specifically required in the legislation that relates to 2012-2013 and 2013-2104, and would also base them on best practices from the field and from nationwide research. We would produce guidelines related to: 1) integrating student growth from the state assessments into evaluations, as well as how to evaluate local and national assessment tools for their ability to measure growth; 2) developing an observation protocol (steps involved, quality checks necessary, how to evaluate the tool for appropriateness), 3) important elements of training for evaluators. For this, we would use the Measures of Effective Teaching findings as well as partner with organizations like the Michigan Education Association to help districts identify the key elements of a high-quality training program for their evaluators. Finally, we would 4) provide suggestions, ideas, and cautions for developing final metrics that combine multiple measures.

MDE reiterates that these interim guidelines are non-binding, and are also meant to support our districts while the Council continues their work. They would not be as specific as the eventual system developed based on the Council’s recommendations, but they would provide an intermediary step in helping to introduce some quality and consistency across district systems.

Below is a graphic that helps illustrate the interplay between MDE’s interim guidelines and the final guidelines and statewide system developed via the legislatively-outlined process:

School Year	Evaluation System/Guidelines	% of Evaluation Based on Student Growth and Achievement Data
2011-2012	Locally determined Educator Evaluation Systems	“significant part”
2012-2013	Locally determined Educator Evaluation Systems *Supported by MDE Interim Guidelines	“significant part”
2013-2014	Governor’s Council Evaluation Tool (if completed); local systems if not (supported by MDE Interim Guidelines)	25%
2014-2015	Governor’s Council	40%

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Evaluation Tool		
2015-2016	Governor's Council Evaluation Tool	50%

Note that the Governor's Council Evaluation Tool was originally slated to be in place by the 2013-2014 school year. However, given the complexity of the task facing the Governor's Council, MDE recognizes that this work may take longer than planned. It is for this reason that we plan to produce interim guidelines to support districts in using their local systems to make high quality determinations regarding educator effectiveness while the statewide evaluation system is being developed.

What will be in the statewide evaluation system when developed?

Michigan's educator evaluation legislation is some of the most aggressive and significant in the nation, following the 2011 revisions to the original 2009 law. This law provides us with some information about what the statewide evaluation system will include, even though specifics are still under development by the Council and via the legislatively described process. Therefore, we know that the system:

- Will be used for continual improvement of instruction. The statute specifies that "the annual year-end evaluation shall include specific performance goals that will assist in improving effectiveness for the next school year and are developed by the school administrator... in consultation with the teacher, that would assist the teacher in meeting those goals" (PA 102, (2)(a)(iii). Additionally, Michigan's new tenure laws (passed in conjunction with this evaluation legislation) requires that decisions related to promotion, retention, placement, and tenure be based solely on effectiveness, not length of service. This provides a high-stakes reason for educators to use the results of their annual evaluations to improve instruction, as there is now an incentive/consequence structure attached to these efforts.
- Differentiate performance using four performance levels. The statute requires that educators receive one of four ratings: ineffective, minimally effective, effective and highly effective (PA 102, (2)(e) for teachers and (3)(e) for principals and other school administrators.
- Use multiple valid measures, including a significant factor on student growth.
 - The legislation requires that evaluation systems will include student growth assessment data as a significant factor. The legislation requires the following:
 - 2013-2014: 25% of the annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and assessment data.
 - 2014-2015: 40% of annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and

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assessment data.

- 2015-2016: 50% of annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and assessment data.
- For teachers, the legislation requires that evaluation systems include, at a minimum: student growth and assessment data and multiple classroom observations.
- For administrators, the legislation requires that the evaluation systems include, at a minimum: student growth data (aggregate student growth data used in teacher evaluations), a principal or administrator’s proficiency in evaluating teachers, progress made by the school or district in meeting the goals set forth in the school’s school improvement plan, pupil attendance, student, parent and teacher feedback, and other information considered relevant [PA 102, s(3)(c)(i-iv)].
- Requires that all student growth and assessment data shall be measured using the “student growth assessment tool that is required under legislation enacted by the legislature after review of the recommendations contained in the report of the Governor’s Council” [PA 102, (2)(a)(i)]. Since the “student growth assessment tool” is required to provide a way to assess all students in all grades, including students with disabilities and English language learners, student growth data for all students will be included in the evaluation system.
- Will include a process for ensuring that all measures that are included are valid measures.
 - The Governor’s Council must recommend a “student growth and assessment” tool that can produce valid and reliable measures of student growth for use in evaluations.
 - They must also recommend a process for approving local evaluation tools for teachers and principals.
 - MDE will strongly urge the Governor’s Council to recommend that MDE be given a legislative mandate to monitor evaluation systems to ensure compliance.
- Will define a statewide approach for measuring student growth in grades and subjects that are not currently tested.
 - The clear intention of the legislation is that Michigan will expand its portfolio of state assessments to provide growth data in all grades and subjects; or will expand its portfolio of approved national or local assessment tools that can be validly used to determine growth in all grades and subjects.
 - Michigan is currently a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and will adopt all assessments developed via that collaboration.

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- Michigan is implementing Explore and PLAN to provide growth data in high school that are aligned with the ACT (which is part of Michigan’s high school assessment).
- Will require that teachers and principals be evaluated on a regular basis:
 - The statute requires annual evaluations for all educators.
 - The statute also requires multiple classroom observations, which means the evaluation system will, at a minimum, have to give teachers feedback at two or more time points throughout the year.
 - For provisional teachers, as well as teachers who have been rated as ineffective, a midyear progress report is required.
 - The legislation that is already in place and that governs the evaluation work in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 requires that all educators be evaluated annually.
- Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development.

As stated previously, the statute requires that “the annual year-end evaluation shall include specific performance goals that will assist in improving effectiveness for the next school year and are developed by the school administrator... in consultation with the teacher, that would assist the teacher in meeting those goals” [PA 102, (2)(a)(iii)].

- i. A description of the process the SEA will use to include principals and teachers in the process.

The Michigan Department of Education will follow a two-pronged approach to involve principals and teachers in the process of developing guidelines for a state system: 1) through the legislatively-mandated process and 2) through more iterative and hands-on interactions with stakeholders through MDE’s technical assistance and support to the field. We believe that the combination of these two processes will engage principals and teachers in multiple ways.

As described above, the state legislation has specified involvement of principals and teachers in the process. This includes:

- Two principals serve on the five-member Governor’s Council on Educator Effectiveness.
- The 14-person advisory committee to the Governor’s Council has to include teachers, administrators and parents.
- As noted above (recommendation (b)(ii) of the Governor’s Council), the Council must seek input from school districts, intermediate school districts, and public school academies that have already developed and implemented successful, effective performance evaluation systems.

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- The final report of the Governor’s Council will be submitted to the legislature and the State Board of Education, both of which solicit feedback from various stakeholders.

Additionally, MDE is supporting the work of the Council and acting as a conduit for best practices, examples from the field, and stakeholder feedback. MDE has conducted the following activities with teachers and principals as of the time of this waiver application:

- Hosted a “best practices” conference in April 2011 for districts, schools and professional organizations in Michigan to demonstrate to other districts and schools, as well as to MDE, educator evaluation systems or components of these systems. This was an opportunity for MDE, as well as the education community, to hear feedback from those engaged in this work. The conference was attended by over 600 individuals from around the state.
- MDE plans to host a second conference in February 2012 focusing specifically on three topics related to student growth: 1) how to use the growth data from state assessments in evaluation systems, 2) how to measure student growth in currently non-tested subjects and grades, and 3) how to combine multiple measures when determining a final effectiveness level. This conference is in specific response to feedback we have received from districts and schools regarding their questions, concerns and needs, and will again feature “best practices” from districts that have identified ways to integrate student growth for all educators.
- Offering continual and ongoing technical assistance to districts upon request; reviewing their proposed systems and offering suggestions or providing resources; and collecting information on the needs of the field in terms of developing rigorous systems.
- Presented in multiple venues statewide to groups of stakeholders to share information on the legislative timelines, as well as to gather information and feedback from attendees regarding their concerns, suggestions and activities to develop these systems in their local context.

This work by MDE, in addition to providing support to LEAs and schools as they navigate this process, allows us to gather feedback on a micro-level from stakeholders, both regarding challenges and concerns but also regarding best practices and successful strategies. MDE plans to continually share this feedback with the Governor’s Council, to supplement the formal methods outlined in statute for principals and teachers.

3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 3.B Provide the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines.

Michigan’s strong educator evaluation legislation provides a legislative mandate by which the majority of this work will be accomplished. At the present time, each LEA is required to adopt the state evaluation system, or to have a high-quality system in place that meets all requirements by the 2013-2014. This provides the legislative “muscle” necessary to begin the process of ensuring that these systems are implemented.

However, MDE recognizes that legislation is only the beginning step in ensuring successful implementation of these evaluations, and that additional efforts are need both to provide *supports* for implementation and to ensure *compliance* from our districts.

Providing Supports

MDE is currently engaged in a number of efforts to support districts as they implement their local evaluation systems. These include:

- Educating the field on the requirements of the legislation currently (2011-2012 and 2012-2013) and in the future with the statewide system. MDE has conducted nearly 30 presentations statewide, including webinars and other virtual resources, aimed at educating the field in the requirements of the law, and providing them with access to best practice. We developed a web resource to support districts: http://michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_57992---,00.html (or go to www.michigan.gov/baa and click on “Educator Evaluations”).
- Educating the field on the elements that will be required in the final system so that they can align their local systems with the upcoming statewide requirements whenever possible.
- In conjunction with the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), Michigan now has information on teachers linked to the students they taught in the 2010-2011 school year. This enables us to provide this linked teacher/student data and all available student assessment data back to districts for potential inclusion in their local systems. MDE will release both the high school assessment results (the Michigan Merit Examination, and the MI-Access assessment) as well as the elementary/middle school assessment (MEAP, MEAP-Access, and MI-Access) to districts by early March 2012.

The only assessments that provide actual student *growth* are the elementary/middle

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school MEAP and MI-Access, in grades 3-7, reading and mathematics, as this is where adjacent grade testing is currently available (see Principle 1 for a further discussion of Michigan’s plans to adopt additional measures of student growth in the next several years). To support the use of this growth data, MDE developed an easy-to-use tool that allows district to summarize the number of students who are demonstrating growth .

- In February 2012, MDE will host our second annual statewide Educator Evaluation Best Practices conference, with a specific focus on integrating student growth into educator evaluations. Educators from around the state who have more mature systems in place for educator evaluations will share topics regarding how they are using student growth measures, how they are using local assessments for student growth, ways to automate the data collection necessary for a good system, and how they’ve developed, piloted and refined observation rubrics. MDE experts in research, evaluation, and measurement will also offer findings and recommendations regarding the use of state assessment data in educator evaluations, and what to keep in mind in terms of establishing the validity and reliability of tools and measures.
- MDE has begun a partnership with one of our larger regional education agencies to assist them in conducting standard setting on their common assessments, in order to utilize those assessments for determining growth at the local level. We plan to publish both the procedure and the findings from this exercise, so that other districts can engage in similar efforts to set standards on their own common assessments. This helps increase the rigor of the local assessments being used to measure growth, and allows MDE to provide some of the measurement expertise that we have at the department to the field, via a pilot example.
- MDE is engaged in a pilot study with another large urban district to use their historical teacher/student data link (as the statewide link contains only one year of data, and at least three are required for value-added modeling) to estimate a variety of value-added models using the state assessment data (the MEAP), and to provide some guidelines to the field about specifying and using these value-added models. Very little is known at this time about the accuracy of these models to classify teachers into the appropriate effectiveness categories, particularly when using the state assessment data. We plan to make this information available to the field, but also to the Governor’s Council to help inform their decisions regarding a new student growth and assessment tool to be used in the statewide evaluation system. Having good information and evidence will greatly enhance our ability as a state to develop a high-quality statewide system. MDE believes that leveraging these smaller pilots is an efficient way to help generate some of that information.
- MDE will produce interim guidelines for selecting “off-the-shelf” assessments, including elements of a high-quality assessment and how a district or regional service agency can

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evaluate the assessment’s ability to measure student growth to assist districts during the locally-developed educator evaluation years.

- MDE will produce interim guidelines for the use of locally-developed interim benchmark and formative assessments, again to assist districts until the statewide evaluation tool is developed and implemented.
- In conjunction with producing the interim guidelines, MDE plans to develop a model observation protocol and guidelines for districts in how to use that protocol that keys to Michigan’s Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers and the Common Core State Standards. This will be a “best practices” tool that districts can utilize or can reference in their own work in the interim years until the Council recommendations can be implemented.
- One of our larger districts is planning to make use of student, parent and teacher surveys, as done in the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project. We plan to partner with them to evaluate the consistency of ratings generated from value-added measurements, observations, and the survey data, and make that information available to districts, as well as to the Council to inform their decision-making process.
- A key concern of many districts is how to document and defend their system, once they have developed it. MDE has a great deal of experience in establishing business rules and building comprehensive accountability systems in which all decisions are documented and applied, and we plan to produce a “best practices” toolkit regarding the steps necessary to document and defend each decision in the evaluation system, as well as suggestions for how to collect, store, and utilize the data collected.
- MDE has begun conversations with the Michigan Education Association (MEA) to provide districts with a framework for providing training for evaluators. Evaluators (principals and others) need to be trained in *how* to do an evaluation, regardless of which evaluation system they are using. We will also produce guidelines for districts to utilize as they develop their local training programs for their local evaluation systems. Again, this information will be made available to the Governor’s Council to assist them with their development and recommendation efforts.
- We are also assisting the Persistently Lowest Achieving (which will now be priority schools as well) with the implementation of their educator evaluation systems through the intervention of the State School Reform Office (SSRO), and the hands-on assistance provided to those schools who fall under the purview of the Statewide System of Support. The Intervention Teams, district-level facilitators, and other leaders engaged in the process of turning around low-performing schools will ensure that teacher evaluation and support is carefully woven into their diagnostic treatment of performance issues.

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Establishing an official pilot year

Although MDE is engaged in a number of local pilot partnerships with districts, and although districts are engaged in piloting their own measures as well, there is not currently a provision in the legislation for an official pilot year on the statewide evaluation system. MDE, via our non-voting member on the Governor’s Council, has encouraged the Council to recommend that an official pilot year be added to the legislation.

Ensuring Compliance

In the current legislation, MDE is not given any specific authority with regard to compliance with educator evaluations. However, we plan to suggest to the Council, as well as to the legislators, that the legislation for the final statewide evaluation system include a provision for MDE compliance monitoring for schools and districts, to ensure that districts have systems that meet the requirements, as well as that they are implementing them with fidelity.

MDE also has tools available to encourage compliance. Foremost among them is the power of “light of day” reporting. In our theory of action, we make the role of data and information a central piece of the conversations that the education community will have in order to drive their work. MDE has substantially increased our reporting efforts in the past several years, providing more information regarding how districts and schools are doing, even if it is not for a formal accountability system or required report. We plan to leverage this focus on dashboards, public transparency, and reporting to help ensure compliance. Key activities will include:

1. Publishing the educator effectiveness labels in the aggregate by school and district, using the MiSchoolData portal.
2. Hold schools accountable for submitting 100% of their required effectiveness labels in the new Accountability Scorecard. This gives schools credit for submitting their labels (after conducting evaluations).
3. Use available state assessment data and the teacher-student data link to cross-reference reported educator effectiveness labels with available data. If a district is reporting all highly effective teachers, but the district, school, grade and/or individual level data suggest otherwise, this suggests the district may need to better align its system with rigorous evaluation principles.

Resources available to support this work

Districts and schools have access to several resources, including the ones named above. In addition, the systems of supports outlined throughout this application will foster diagnostic leadership on the part of school leaders and improvement specialists alike. This is an important feature of Michigan’s program design, in that it weaves our state’s system of support back through the delivery of daily classroom instruction, and ensures the content we intend to deliver (career- and college-ready

standards, as established through the Common Core) —and, indeed, are intervening to deliver in diagnostic, personalized ways, as described in Principle Two —is being achieved at the classroom level. We consider teacher evaluation to be a school improvement tool as much as any other intervention described in our waiver request.

Our Statewide System of Support will work with building- and district- level leaders to provide hands-on, specific assistance with teacher evaluation processes. As diagnostic improvement decisions are made, local leaders can use the teacher evaluation process to support staff in achieving critical results. MDE and other intervention specialists will be actively engaged in supporting local schools as they accomplish this work.

Enhancing the Preparation of Teachers through Teacher Preparation Institution Reform

MDE understands that the work of educator evaluations is actually far larger than the evaluation system itself. Now that we have adopted the Common Core State Standards, teachers need to be adequately prepared to teach those standards. They also need to be familiar with the ways in which they will be evaluated when they are employed in a district and school. This requires that we rethink, as a state, how teachers are prepared in Michigan.

Michigan is currently involved in utilizing the linked data between the teachers and their teacher preparation institutions to understand how many graduates from each institution are employed, if they are employed in high-need schools, and more importantly, are they effective or not? We are also planning to redesign our teacher preparation institution rubric in order to hold the institutions more accountable for the outcomes of their students. Finally, we are considering changes to our certification tests, both to increase the rigor of their cut scores to be reflective of the increased rigor required of students with new student cut scores, and to assess potential teachers more directly on their ability to understand and teach content. We are also strategizing ways for student teachers to be evaluated by the evaluation system of the district in which they are hired, to provide an assessment of pedagogy as an exit criterion for the student teacher and also to familiarize them with the process of being evaluated using student growth.

Michigan plans to meet our core values of career and college readiness for all students through reforms in teacher and administrator preparation, so that our teachers are better prepared to meet the challenges of today's students and standards.

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR PLAN

Below is one example of a format an SEA may use to provide a plan to meet a particular principle in the *ESEA Flexibility*.

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles

Appendix XX

As referenced above, MDE made substantial modifications to the original persistently lowest achieving schools (PLA) methodology over the course of the 2010-2011 school year. Although we knew that the SIG grants would require a certain methodology, we also had state statute around low performing schools and accreditation that allowed us to modify the ranking system for our own purposes. Below is a chart that compares the two rankings. The changes to the Top to Bottom list were made largely due to stakeholder feedback and concerns with the PLA list.

COMPARING TOP TO BOTTOM AND PLA METHODOLOGIES		
	Top to Bottom	PLA
Subjects included	Math Reading Writing Science Social Studies	Math Reading
Graduation rate?	Yes	No
Components	Achievement (1/2) Improvement (1/4) Achievement gap (1/4)	Proficiency (2/3) Improvement (1/3)
Proficiency?	Uses standardized measure of student performance (z-score)	Uses proficiency levels
High achieving schools?	Calculation adjustments to avoid "ceiling effects"	No adjustment
Tiers?	No tiers; all schools included	Tiers; Title I, AYP and school level considered

Who did we work with?

MDE presented approximately 30 times on this methodology over the course of the 2010-2011 school year. Presentations included:

- Middle Cities Education Association
- The School Improvement Facilitator's Network
- Students in Low-Incidence Populations (SLIP)
- Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education
- Michigan Association of Adult and Community Education
- The School Improvement conference
- Smaller presentations to individual districts, smaller groups, etc.

We also presented this ranking system, in its various iterations, to the State Board of Education on three separate occasions, which generated substantial feedback not only from the Board members but also from audience members.

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We conducted a statewide webinar in October of 2010 to introduce people to the ranking system, and then posted that webinar online along with supporting documentation for further review and discussion.

In the 2011-2012 school year, prior to the first publication of the top to bottom list using the new methodology, MDE has presented on this at approximately 15 persistently lowest achieving schools, as well as at various ISDs around the state. We have included it on our Accountability Tour, which went to 12 ISDs around the state, and received feedback from stakeholders there.