STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

May 16, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers and Consolidated Application Main Contacts

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Frequently Asked Questions on the Annual Education Report

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is releasing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Annual Education Report (AER) that is to be used this summer by local education agencies (LEAs) and schools to meet federal and state reporting requirements.

The AER is designed to meet the federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (also known as NCLB) for an annual report. The report provides detailed data on state administered student assessment results, accountability results, teacher qualification information, and the state results for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). There is an AER for the state, each LEA, and each school, populated with the appropriate information.

If used as designed, the AER reports and cover letters also meet the state requirement for reporting to parents and communities in an annual education report.

However, in a recent audit of AER cover letters, the state Auditor General, found that 18 of 25 LEA or school cover letters did not report one or more elements required by state law, PA451, P.A. 1976, and six omitted reporting one or more elements of federal law, ESEA of 2001. Please address all elements found in the AER cover letter templates to help resolve these findings and ensure your district's compliance with state and federal laws. We hope the attached list of FAQs will help you effectively use the AER. If you have additional questions, please email Mike Radke at radkem@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

Attachment

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
DANIEL VARNER – SECRETARY • RICHARD ZEILE – TREASURER
MICHELLE FECTEAU – NASBE DELEGATE • LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY
KATHLEEN N. STRAUS • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde (• 517) 373-3324

Frequently Asked Questions
Regarding the Annual Education Report
****Updated 5/31/13****

1. Are local education agencies (LEAs) and their schools REQUIRED to use the state produced Annual Education Report (AER)?

   ANSWER: Yes. All LEAs, including public districts, public school academies (PSAs), and intermediate school districts (ISDs) or regional education service agencies (RESAs), and their schools are required to use the state produced AER reports in the summer of 2013 to report their 2012-2013 performance. This is how Michigan schools and LEAs will meet the requirement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (ESEA or NCLB) and State law, Act 451, P. A. 1976 (and P.A. 25).

   Using the AER reduces the burden on nearly 850 LEAs and 3,000 schools to collect and format this complicated set of data for presentation to parents and community stakeholders in order to meet federal requirements. There remain only a few much simpler tasks for educators to perform. See #3 below. To meet both state and federal requirements the AER reports and all relevant portions of the cover letter templates must be addressed.

   Audits of both state and federal requirements to notify parents noted that the AER reports and cover letter templates address all required elements adequately. However, in a follow up audit of AER cover letters, the state Auditor General, again found that 18 of 25 LEA or school cover letters did not report one or more elements required by state law, PA451, P.A. 1976, and 6 omitted reporting one or more elements of federal law, ESEA of 2001.

   Please address all elements found in the AER cover letter templates to help resolve these findings. MDE is considering options to enforce the state and federal laws.

2. What are the components of the AER that LEAs and schools must use?

   ANSWER:
   <u>LEA Components:</u>
   - The "Combined District AER Report" and,
   - a cover letter using the content outlined in the district template cover letter.

   <u>School Components:</u>
   - The "Combined School AER Report" and,
   - a cover letter using the content outlined in the school template cover letter.

   Both the report and the cover letter templates must present information unique to the LEA or school and can be found on the MI School Data website: http://www.michigan.gov/mischooldata.

The combined AER is different for each LEA or school. See Q&A number 8 below for a description of the content in the AER reports.

3. What do the LEA and each school need to do to meet the reporting requirements?

   ANSWER:
   - The LEA must save the district AER report and post it to the district website.
   - Edit the district template cover letter addressing all of the requirements and post this with the district AER. The letter should include the date posted/sent.
   - The LEA must make available paper copies of the AER report and the cover letter to parents and members of the community who do not have internet access.
   - The district must announce to the parents and community that both the district and the school AERs and cover letters are available and how to access them.

   Each school must also:
   - Post the school AER report and dated school cover letter on the school website, if the school has a website. If the school does not have its own website, these must be posted to the district website.
   - The school must make paper copies of both documents available to parents and the school community members who do not have computer access.
   - The school must notify parents that the AER and cover letters are available and how to access them.

4. When must the AERs and cover letters be posted and available?

   ANSWER: LEAs and schools must post and make copies available 15 days before school starts in the fall of 2013 and no later than August 20, 2013. Providing this information at least 15 days before school starts allows parents to make a better choice about which school to select for their child. This information should remain available on the website(s) for one year, until the next year's report is prepared. MDE will notify schools of the earliest date for public release. See #14.

5. Where will I find the Cover letter Templates to be used in the summer of 2013?

   ANSWER: Log in to the MI School Data website: https://www.mischooldata.org
   - For access to the site, contact your ISD system administrator. Refer to #7 for detailed information.
   - Click on "Annual Education Report" button at the bottom of the left-hand portion of the screen. This will take you to the correct page where you will find a button labeled "Cover letter Templates." Click on this button.

     NOTE: The cover letter templates have been substantially simplified. Do not use the templates from previous years. We have learned much since we

started using these, Michigan has received approval on our Flexibility Request, new reporting guidance has been issued by the federal Department of education and we have responded to feedback from school officials. These factors have driven the simplification of the cover letter templates.

6. How will the state monitor implementation of these reporting requirements?

   ANSWER: Both the state and federal government will be monitoring the district and school websites for the AER reports and cover letters. Between 100 and 200 LEAs and their schools will be monitored next year. The state will also ask to review the paper copies during on site monitoring and during other monitoring activities of the ESEA programs.

7. How do school staff members preview the AER and find the template cover letters?

   ANSWER: MDE will provide early access to the AER reports so that LEAs can have them ready to distribute and post within the required timeline. Districts and schools should finalize the related cover letters after reviewing this data. The cover letter templates have been updated to reflect Michigan's federally approved flexibility request and updated specifics to reflect the new data.

   The embardoed AER reports will be available at https://www.mischooldata.org on August 6, 2013 for preview of the final data. The assigned district and school staff members responsible for these annual reports should finalize the cover letters and prepare to post or distribute AER reports and cover letters in final form no sooner than August 15, 2013 and no later than August 20. The parents must be notified when the district and school release these annual reports.

8. If my staff does not have a log-in name and password to the MI School Data website, how do I establish one for them?

   ANSWER: Contact your ISD/RESA. For a list of these contacts, visit https://www.mischooldata.org/Downloads/isdresa_key_contacts_201112.pdf.

9. What will we find in the AER Report on the MI School Data website?

   ANSWER: The content of the report is presented in several sections:

   - Teacher Quality: This report identifies teacher qualifications in relation to requirements. Here you can find how many teachers in a school, district or across the state possess specific qualifications.
   - Student Assessment: This report presents assessment information for English language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, social studies and science (where relevant) for grades 3 to 9 and grade 11 compared to targets for all students as well as subgroups of students. The report helps users to understand achievement and progress within grades and schools, and to make comparisons to district, state and national achievement benchmarks.
   - National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP) assessment data (state

results) as required by federal law.

- Accountability data as revised and required in the federally approved Flexibility request.
- Combined Report: This report provides all of the information of Teacher Quality, Student Assessment, Accountability and state NAEP data for schools, LEAs, and the state in one convenient place. This is the report that districts and schools need to obtain the AER report for posting on their websites with edited cover letters, and print for parents and community members who do not have internet access.

NOTE: The data in AER reports appropriately address all required subgroups consistent with federal requirements with appropriate cell suppression for small "n" size subgroups.

10. When will the REAL data be available for preview?

    ANSWER: The 2012-2013 data needed for the reporting during the summer of 2013 will be available to LEAs and schools on or before August 6, 2012, as soon as the high school MME and accountability data are finalized. This information is embargoed until the state publicly releases the information. See #13.

11. Where does this data come from? Will we have a chance to appeal the data presented?

    ANSWER: The data in the AER report has been extracted directly from a variety of state databases. For example, the assessment data comes directly from the MEAP, MME, MI-Access, and NAEP reports prepared by the MDE, Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA). Teacher Quality data comes from the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) as reported in the Registry for Educational Personnel (REP). Some Accountability data comes from BAA and some data comes from CEPI.

    LEAs and schools will have had the opportunity to appeal this data during the appeal or correction windows of the source reports. For example, a district that wanted to appeal assessment results or participation rates had the opportunity to do so during the assessment appeal window. Districts that wanted to correct the teacher quality data had the opportunity to do so shortly after submitting the REP data.

    To appeal or correct next year's data, take full advantage of the assessment and accountability appeal or CEPI data correction opportunities. There are no appeals of data once it is part of the AER.

12. What can I do now to prepare for the release of the 2012-2013 AER?

    ANSWER:

    - Go to the MI School Data website and log in. Open the AER for your LEA or school. Familiarize yourself with the data from last year. Learn how to

navigate the reports. Identify how to print the "Combined" report and how to export it to your website.

- Find the new, 2013, district and school cover letter templates on the MiSchoolData website . As soon as you have assessment results you can start drafting your cover letters. The accountability sections of the cover letter will have to wait until you can preview the 2012-13 data on the Mischooldata website, beginning August 6, 2013.
- Elementary and middle schools have received the 2012-2013 MEAP, MME, and MI-Access assessment data. High schools will receive their preliminary MME assessment data soon. Familiarize yourself with this information. Begin drafting your AER cover letters using the templates found on the website.
- All schools and districts will receive their preliminary accountability data in early July. If it is not being appealed, you can also start drafting the district and school AER cover letters. If it is being appealed, you will soon know the outcome of the appeal and can start drafting the LEA and school cover letters.
- As soon as the embargoed 2012-2013 data is forwarded to the AER (no later than August 6, 2013), it will be released to LEAs and districts. At this time you should do final edits on your cover letters. Prepare to export and print the AER reports and cover letters for the LEA and schools.
- Post your AER reports and cover letters as soon as the state publicly releases Accountability results, but no later than 15 days before school starts on September 3, 2013.

13. Does a district, PSA, ISD/RESA, or LEA that has ONLY ONE SCHOOL need to produce and distribute both district and school AERs and cover letters?

    ANSWER: No. If there is only one school in your LEA, ISD/RESA or PSA, you only need to produce and distribute a school level AER report and cover letter. Do NOT produce, post or distribute district level reports or cover letters.

14. How will the 2012-2013 Accountability public release and the AER tool public release be coordinated?

    ANSWER: The AER reports with 2012-2013 data will be made publicly available on August 20, 2012. School districts will have access to data by August 6, 2012. The 2012-2013 Accountability results are embargoed by MDE until the mid-August public AYP release. See #16.
    RELEASE OF SCHOOL AND DISTRICT AYP DATA FROM THE ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT IN ADVANCE OF THE PUBLIC RELEASE DATE IN MID-AUGUST BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MAY JEOPARDIZE THIS ADVANCE AER POSTING IN THE FUTURE.

15. Can I just link to the MI School Data site to provide the AER report for my LEA and each of my schools?

    ANSWER: No. Although the ability to bookmark a district or school report is available within the AER tool, we encourage you <u>not</u> to attempt

to link to the MI School Data website to make you AERs available. The bookmark would only supply access to the data report and not the narrative cover letter that is required.

Instead, please export your LEA and school AER reports and post them on your LEA or school websites with the appropriate cover letters. Directions for this process are:

- Log in to the MI School Data website: https://www.mischooldata.org
- For access to the site, contact your ISD system administrator. Refer to #7 for detailed information.
- Click on "Combined Report" button at the bottom of the left-hand portion of the screen. This is the report you must use. It contains all required data elements if used properly.
- Find your ISD name and LEA/district or school name from the drop down to produce the appropriate AER. Click on the "View Results" button to generate the AER report
- To export the required "Combined Report," scroll to the bottom and click on the "Export All Tab Reports" button. (Don't make the mistake of clicking on the "Export Current Tab" button, as this will only give you a portion of the required data.) Click "Save" and specify where on your computer you would like to save the PDF file.
- Verify that you have the right report for your school or district AND that you have the complete report containing all elements (assessment, accountability and teacher qualifications data for your school/district, and the required NAEP Data for the state).
- You have successfully saved the data portion of the LEA or school AER. Now you must download and complete the appropriate cover letter from the template available under the "Cover Letters" button on the left hand navigation bar. Once the cover letter is edited and approved, the letter must be posted with the AER report on the appropriate LEA or school website.

16. hat are the content changes in the AER and cover letters required by the approval of the federal Flexibility request?

ANSWER: You may find the complete Flexibility request as approved at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_60094---,00.html. However, a summary of several key content changes to the AER report are identified below:

- Prior to approval of the Flexibility request, all schools were required to meet the state's Annual Measureable Objectives (AMOs) requiring 100% of students to be proficient by 2014-15. Under the Flexibility request, each school has its own unique set of annual targets for proficiency and progress based upon the number of students proficient in 2011-12. Schools that start with lower achievement must progress faster than those with higher achievement but all must reach 85% proficient by 2021-2022. Each LEA also

has unique annual targets based on its starting proficiency and is treated as a large school with all students in the LEA's schools. The AER reflects these changes.

- One of the U.S. Department of Education goals for the Flexibility requests was to accelerate achievement for student subgroups. Requirements include reporting of subgroup performance for the groups previously identified (disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency and economically disadvantaged status) and for a new "combined subgroup." The 2012-2013 AER report will contain information for the new "combined" subgroup, which consists of the lowest performing 30% of students in the school or LEA. Each school and LEA with more than 30 students tested will have a measure of this gap and targets for closing the gap for this subgroup.
- Prior to the approval of the flexibility request, schools not meeting AMOs were identified as being in Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring depending on the number of years they had not met the AMOs. Under the Flexibility request, schools in the bottom 5% on the Top to Bottom list are identified as Priority schools, and schools with the largest gaps between their bottom 30% of students and their top 30% of students are identified as Focus schools. Also, prior to the Flexibility request approval there were no designations for high performing schools. With the Flexibility request, schools that are high performing, high progress or Beating the Odds are identified as Reward schools. The AER reflects these new designations: Priority Schools, Focus Schools or Reward schools.

17. What are the key changes to the process of producing the required AER reports and cover letters?

    ANSWER:

- The AER reports and cover letter templates to be used in the summer of 2013 reports containing the 2012-13 school year data may be found at the following website: https://www.mischooldata.org
- Final AER reports will be posted on the website by August 6, 2013 so that schools and LEAs may finalize their reports and cover letters.
- Please refer to questions 7 and 15 for detailed instructions on logging into the site where AER will be available for preview. Please send an email to helpdesk@misd.net for additional assistance.