Personal Curriculum Study and Report

Venessa A. Keesler, Ph. D.
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services, Michigan Department of Education

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Background

- Part of Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) law
  - MCL 380.1278b effective July 11, 2011
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) request November 7, 2012
- Michigan Department of Education intern conducted study in summer of 2013
- Report on Implementation across state and recommendations for next steps

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What is the Personal Curriculum?

The Personal Curriculum (PC) is a process to modify specific credit requirements and/or content expectations based on the individual learning needs of a student. It is designed to serve students who want to accelerate or go beyond the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) requirements and students who need to individualize learning requirements to meet the MMC requirements.

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Types of PC Modifications

- Enrichment beyond the academic credit requirements.
- To modify the Algebra II requirement
- To modify the requirements in ways “not otherwise allowed” for transfer students
- To modify the requirements in ways “not otherwise allowed” for students with an IEP

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PC Process

- The parent, school personnel, student age 18 or older, or emancipated student requests a PC.
- The PC team meets (student, parent, counselor or designee, and teacher(s) who currently teaches the student or has expertise in the content being modified). The PC team reviews student information, performance data, and supports—including the EDP—and decides whether to recommend a PC. The PC team develops measurable performance goals for modifications and methods to evaluate the achievement of those goals.
- The PC team writes an agreement and gets sign-off from the superintendent or chief executive and the parent or legal guardian (or emancipated student).
- The PC is implemented.
- The parent or emancipated student monitors progress through quarterly communication with each teacher of modified content area. If revisions to the PC are needed, the PC team reconvenes and makes revisions using the same process.
- The student is awarded a diploma upon completing all PC requirements.

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Key Questions

- How many districts utilize the option and for how many students?
- What are the demographic characteristics of students using a PC to meet the MMC requirements?
- Are some districts using this option more often than others?
- In what ways and to which extent do educators understand PC?
- What are the barriers or challenges to implementing a PC?

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The Goals

- Refine and expand the use of PC
- Promote and support the use of PC through guidance and further feedback from the field

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The Big Picture

Interpret Current Data

The MDE uses data to determine how often the PC option is used, through which modifications, and geographically where this is happening.

Analyze District Policy

What are districts currently doing and how does that align to state policy? What is MDE doing to educate districts/ schools on this option?

Focus Groups

FUTURE: How do districts implement PCs, what do they know about PCs, and what are the barriers and challenges to their implementation?

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Reported Data: Analysis Findings

- Most schools using PC are suburban, but school size varies widely.
- African American, Hispanic, and Multiracial students are underrepresented amongst student with a PC.
- Priority and Reward Schools are underrepresented amongst schools using PC while Focus Schools are overrepresented.
- Enrichment modification to PE/Health is the most common type of modification with Math being the second most common type of modification.
- On average, the percentage of Special Education PCs reported were 16%, for high use schools, and 46%, for low use schools overall.

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Entity	Number that Report PCs for 2011-12
Students	4,140
Schools	161
Districts	120
ISDs	42

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PC School Types

- High-Use: 2.36% or more of students use a PC
- Low-Use: Less than 2.36% of students use a PC and the school reports at least one PC
- No-Use: Zero PCs reported
- Why 2.36%? Percent PC-using students comprise of the total 9th-12th student population of schools who report at least one PC

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	High-Use Schools	Low-Use Schools
Average Number of Students	760 students	915 students
Largest High School Population	2.098 students	2,658 students
Smallest High School Population	14 students	67 students
Average Percent Minority	15%, ranging from 0 to 64%	14%, ranging from 0 to 64%
Accountability Status Breakdown	1 priority school, 8% are focus schools, 14% are reward schools	0 priority schools, 15% are focus schools, 8.6% are reward schools
PC-Use	Ranges from 2 to 259 PCs per school	Ranges from 1 to 57 PCs per school
Average Economically Disadvantaged Percent	42.5%, ranging from 0 to 100% per school	40%, ranging from 7 to 100% per school
Average Limited English Proficient Percent	2%, ranging from 0 to 24% per school	2%, ranging from 0 to 38% per school
Average Special Education Percent	11.5%, ranging from 0 to 60% per school	10%, ranging from 0 to 21% per school
Modal Modification	Health/Physical Education then Mathematics	Mathematics then Health/Physical Education
Percent IEP PC Type	16% of PCs are implemented for students with IEPs; most PCs used for general enhancement	46% of PCs are implemented for students with IEPs

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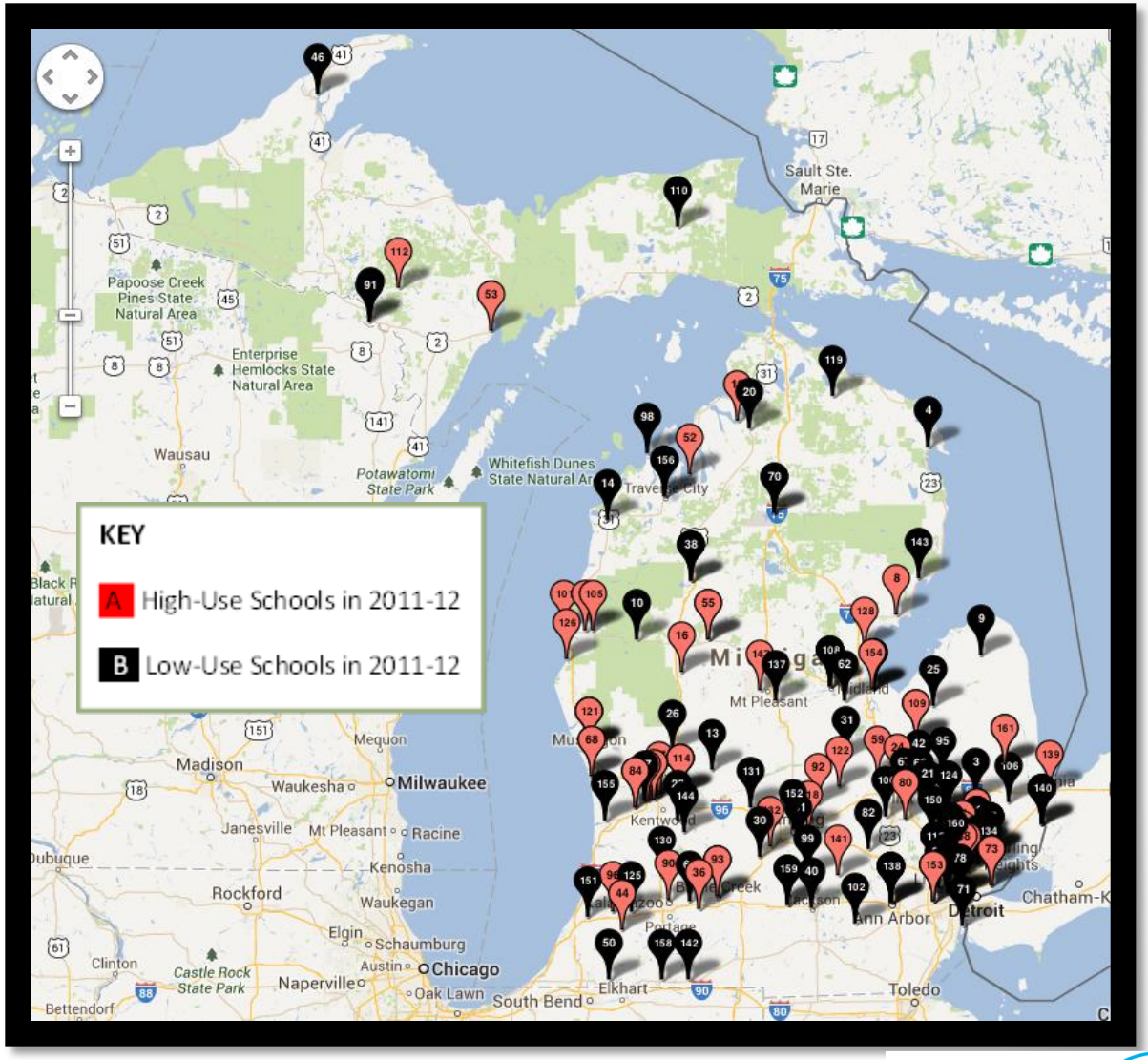
PC-Using Schools



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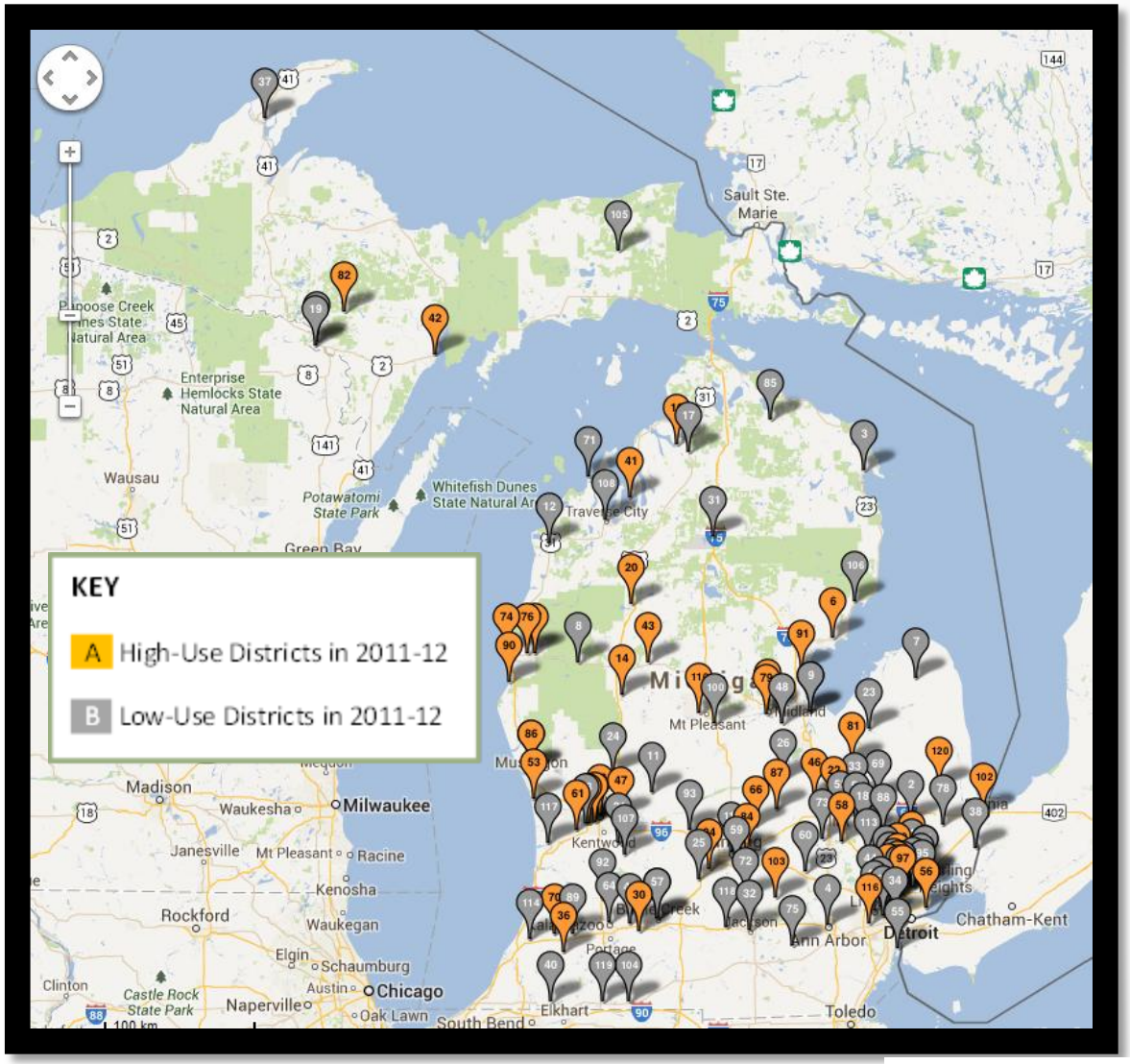
PC-Using Districts



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Survey Findings

- High-use schools had the highest survey response rate (42%), then low-use (36%), then no-use (31%), potentially indicating school engagement with the PC.
- A challenge to PC implementation is misconceptions and lack of understanding of the option at the school level.
- Much of PC implementation is for enhancement, particularly in high-use schools
- Across all school types, many schools report not using Actpoint, a tool to help schools determine appropriateness of modifications and are unfamiliar with the resource
- Although No-Use schools report zero PCs to the state, in the survey under 6% of these schools say they never receive PC requests, with over a quarter of them citing 10 or more PC requests in a year
- In high- and low-use schools, counselors were the modal answer for school staff responsible for PC issues. In no-use schc principals have this title.

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Recommendations

1. Gather More Information About Schools'/Districts' Experiences with the Personal Curriculum

2. Explore Additional Options for Personal Curriculum Training Opportunities and Guidance for Educators While Continuing to Share Existing Resources

3. Examine Parent/Guardian Awareness and Further Develop Systems to Share Existing and New Resources

4. Provide Sample Scenarios to Help Schools/Districts Better Understand Personal Curriculum Requirements

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Next Steps: Focus Groups

- Conduct targeted focus groups to gather additional feedback and advice on the development of helpful resources
- Gather participants to cover No-Use, Low-Use, and High-Use schools to target next steps for promoting the use of PC when applicable.
- Engage stakeholders including school and district personnel, parents, and students to gather information and formulate next steps.

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Conclusions

- The modal PC type is enhancement
- Students with Individualized Education Plans comprise 16% of the PC-using population at high-use schools, while they comprise 46% at low-use schools
- Additional guidance will help schools further understand the appropriate use of the PC.
- PC reporting might be an issue
- African American, Hispanic, and Multiracial students are underrepresented among students with a PC.

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Contact Information

Venessa Keesler, Ph. D.

Deputy Superintendent, Education Services, Michigan Department of Education

keeslerv@michigan.gov

Study conducted by Melissa Helberg with support from Gregg Dionne, Rashell Bowerman, and Office of Education Statistics Research and Assessment

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