



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

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SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

February 1, 2011

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Mike Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of New Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Writing Assessment Cut Scores

This item is a follow up to the item from the December 2010 Board meeting in which staff presented a description of the new Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Writing assessment and presented information on the process used to recommend cut scores to the Board.

On January 18-20, the Michigan Department of Education convened a group of Michigan educators and community members to carry out the process (an overview of which will be presented by staff at the Board meeting).

The process resulted in three recommendations from the panel for performance standards (or cut scores) on the new MEAP Writing assessment. These include the following three cut scores:

- (1) Minimum score to be *Partially Proficient* (the *Partially Proficient* cut score)
- (2) Minimum score to be *Proficient* (the *Proficient* cut score)
- (3) Minimum score to be *Advanced* (the *Advanced* cut score)

The panelists conscientiously and appropriately carried out the process. During the process, the panelists were notified on multiple occasions that consistency of the recommended MEAP Writing cut scores with the existing cut scores on the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) Writing cut scores needed to be an important consideration. The reason for this consideration is the need for students in a given performance level to be considered as being "on-track" to achieve that same performance level the next time they take a Writing assessment.

The MEAP Writing cut scores recommended by the panel are given in Table 1 below. The numbers in the table represent the score a student must achieve out of 50 total points and (in parentheses) the percent correct score that represents.

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Table 1. *Panelists' recommended cut scores for MEAP Writing in Grades 4 and 7 Based on the Fall 2010 MEAP Writing Test.*

Cut Score	Grade 4	Grade 7
Partially Proficient	15 (30%)	20 (40%)
Proficient	23 (46%)	28 (56%)
Advanced	39 (78%)	43 (86%)

The percent of students that would be in each performance level (*Not Proficient, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced*) based on the panelists' recommended cut scores are displayed in Figure 1 below, along with the actual percentages of eleventh graders in each performance level on the Spring 2010 MME.

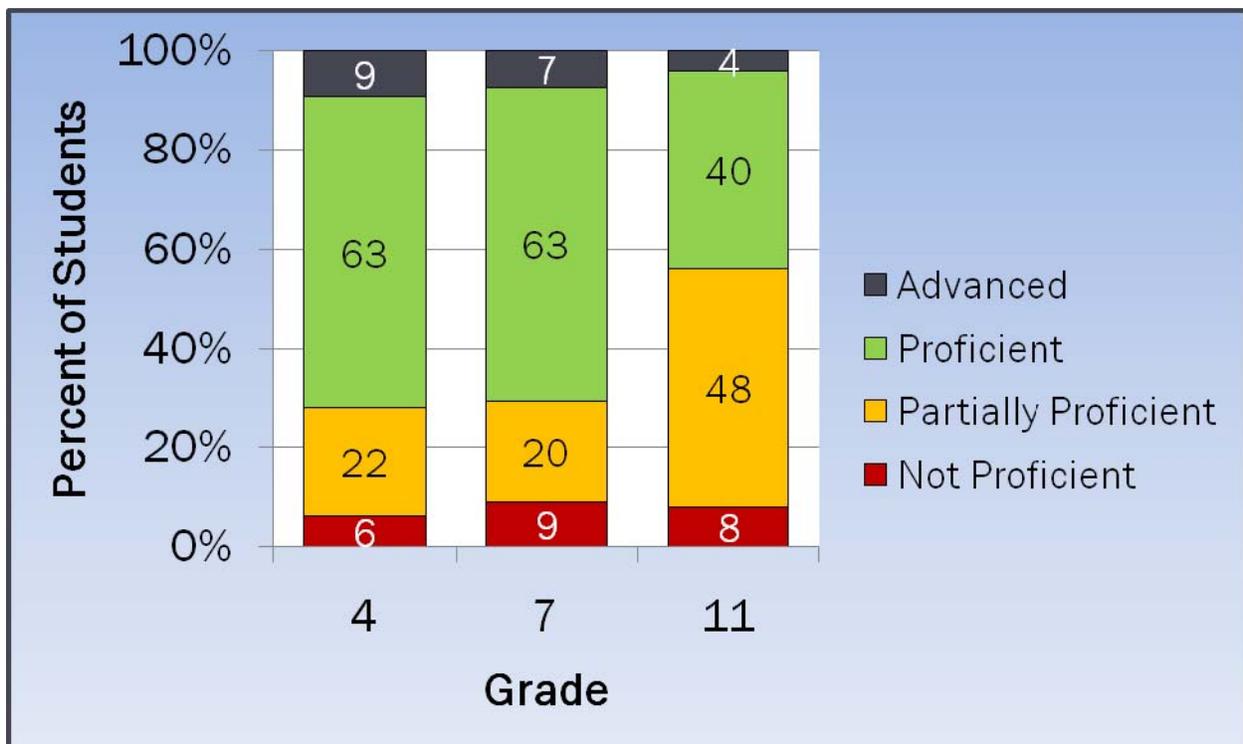


Figure 1. *Percentages in Each Performance Level Based on the Panelists' Recommended Cut Scores.*

From Figure 1, it can be seen that the MEAP Writing cut scores recommended by the panel for *Partially Proficient* and *Advanced* were consistent with the corresponding MME Writing cut scores. However, the MEAP Writing cut scores recommended by the panel for *Proficient* were not consistent with the corresponding, existing MME Writing cut score for *Proficient*.

This outcome is problematic, but understandable given the past trend of identifying *Proficient* cut scores that represent the acquisition of basic skills. To address this issue, revised recommended cut scores for the *Proficient* category were identified on the grade 4 and grade 7 MEAP that give provide consistency with the MME.

Therefore, it is my recommendation that in order to both (a) honor the effort and conscientious work of the panel and (b) attain consistency of MEAP Writing cut scores with MME Writing cut scores, the following actions be taken:

- Adopt the panel recommendations for the *Partially Proficient* and *Advanced* cut scores
- Adopt the revised recommendations for the *Proficient* cut score

The revised recommended cut scores are displayed in Table 2 in the same format as in Table 1, but with the revised recommendations displayed in bold font.

Table 2. *Panelists' recommended cut scores for MEAP Writing in Grades 4 and 7 based on the Fall 2010 MEAP Writing Test.*

Cut Score	Grade 4	Grade 7
Partially Proficient	15 (30%)	20 (40%)
<b>Proficient</b>	<b>30 (60%)</b>	<b>34 (68%)</b>
Advanced	39 (78%)	43 (86%)

The percent of students that would be in each performance level (*Not Proficient*, *Partially Proficient*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*) based on the revised recommended cut scores are displayed in Figure 2 below, along with the actual percentages of eleventh graders in each performance level on the Spring 2010 MME.

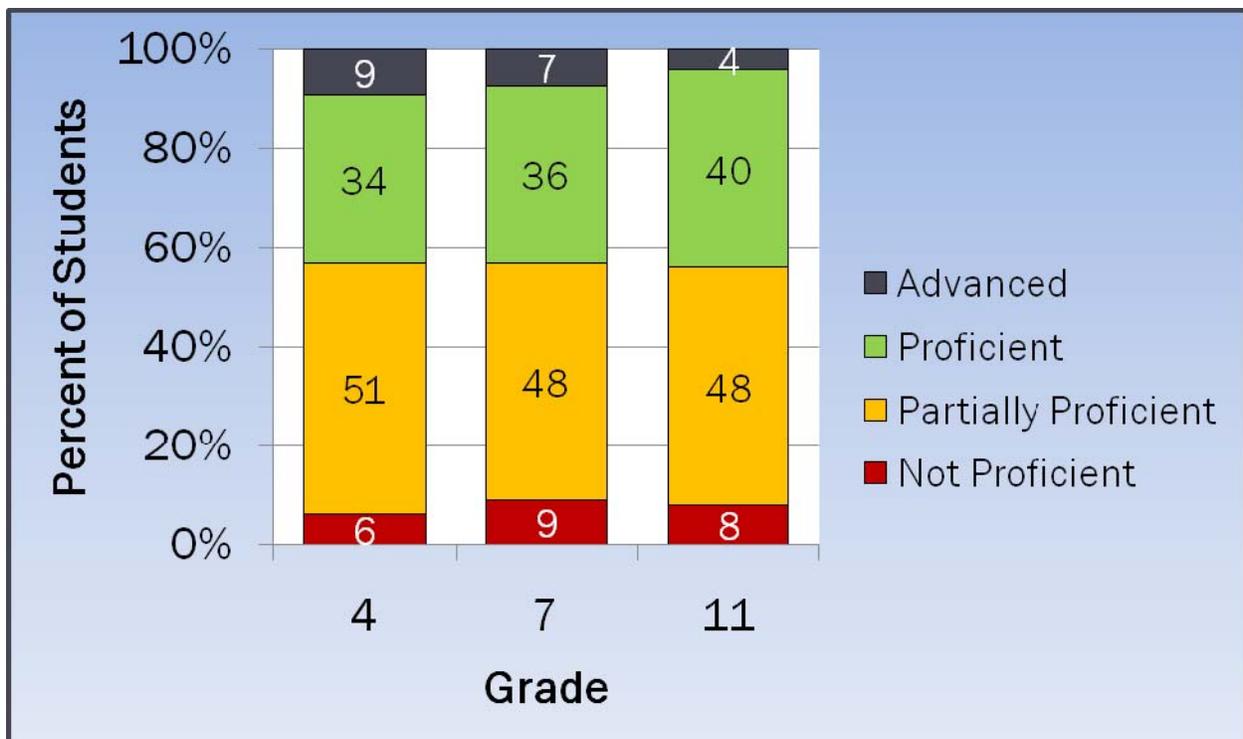


Figure 2. *Percentages in Each Performance Level Based on the Revised Recommended Cut Scores.*

From Figure 2, it can be seen that the revised recommended cut scores result in consistency across not only grades 4 and 7 MEAP, but also with the grade 11 MME.

Based on the work of the standard setting panelists and the analyses displayed here, it is recommended that the State Board of Education adopt the revised recommended cut scores displayed in Table 2 of the Superintendent's memorandum dated February 1, 2011.