



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Mike Flanagan, Chairman 

DATE: February 1, 2011

SUBJECT: Approval of Revised Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System (MI-SAAS)

In October 2010, the State Board of Education approved the "Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System" (MI-SAAS) as the state's new accreditation system to provide a means of setting standards for continuous school improvement. This system reflected changes made from the original MI-SAS system (approved in June 2009) in order to align Michigan's accreditation system with new federal policies as well as new state reform laws. A timeline of the history of the development of this system is attached (Attachment B).

Based on experience with the Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) ranking methodology, understanding of the impact of raising cut scores on the Michigan Education Assessment Program and Michigan Merit Exam to represent college readiness, and feedback from a stakeholder committee, three modifications to MI-SAAS are recommended.

1. Removal of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and accounting for subgroup achievement by including the largest achievement gap between any two subgroups in each school in the top-to-bottom ranking.
2. Removal of graduation rate from the "Compliance and Board Policy Factors" portion of MI-SAAS and accounting for the graduation rate by including it in the top-to-bottom ranking.
3. The addition of the following "sunset clause": "MI-SAAS will be revised when at least 80% of students are scoring proficient or higher in at least 80% of Michigan schools, with proficiency cut scores tied to college and career readiness or being on track to college and career readiness."

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Attachment A reflects the three recommended revisions to MI-SAAS outlined above using ~~strikeouts~~ (for deletions) and CAPS (for additions).

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the revised Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System (MI-SAAS) as attached to the Superintendent's memorandum dated February 1, 2011 (Attachment A).

**Michigan's School Accreditation and Accountability System:
From Education YES! To MI-SAAS**

BACKGROUND

In March, 2002, the State Board of Education approved "Education YES!—A Yardstick for Excellent Schools" as the state's accreditation system to provide a means of setting standards for continuous school improvement and measuring the need for support and intervention for schools. Michigan's initiation of this accreditation system was concurrent with passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which required states to have an accountability system. As a result, Education YES! has been Michigan's method to align state and federal requirements by blending state accountability and adequate yearly progress (AYP) reporting for NCLB.

Since 2002, the Board has made significant policy changes that resulted in the Michigan Merit Exam, expanded indicators for the School Improvement Framework self-assessment, MI-Access for students with special needs, testing in grades 3-8, and inclusion of a growth model. In addition to policy changes, educators, parents, and employers have identified concerns with the system and made numerous recommendations to make it more understandable and transparent.

As a result, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) staff determined a major redesign of the current system was needed. A stakeholder group was convened to evaluate the current system, review the statutory basis for school accreditation, and make recommendations for a redesigned system of state school accreditation.

The redesign team, which met regularly for over a year to complete its work, analyzed the current system and identified the following concerns with EducationYES!:

- Consequences of Michigan accreditation and NCLB AYP are not aligned.
- It shifts emphasis from Michigan to federal requirements.
- Its grading structure uses the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status to lower the Michigan accreditation status.
- It needs additional clarity, usefulness, and credibility.
- Educators, parents, and employers want and deserve an understandable one-stop information system.

In analyzing NCLB requirements, the team determined that Education YES! failed to distinguish between schools making progress but missing one or two of the 40-plus requirements from those not making progress and missing many or most of the requirements. The team concurred that Michigan needed a system that could make such distinctions as a means to identify schools most in need of interventions and support services.

The proposed redesign, the Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System (MI-SAAS), addresses these concerns. It makes Michigan standards the primary determinants for the state's accreditation system. It recognizes academic progress in all core subjects, recognizes five and six year graduation rates as successes, and enables schools to understand how their accreditation statuses were calculated. Using a "dashboard" display rather than a single letter grade, MI-SAAS provides greater credibility, more transparent accountability, and increased usefulness to those interested in the continuous improvement of Michigan schools. The MI-SAAS will report a school's accreditation status, as well as its AYP status and subgroup data as required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This will provide both state and federal data to identify those schools that merit the highest priority for support and intervention.

MICHIGAN SCHOOL ACCREDITATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM (MI-SAAS)

The MI-SAAS is based on student outcomes and compliance with Michigan statute and Michigan State Board of Education policy. These components are combined to assign an Annual State Accreditation Status to each school. To provide educators, parents, and employers with a complete picture of the school, additional information about the school and its district, community, and the state is included as part of the "dashboard" display.

Each of these three elements is described below:

- 1) Factors other than performance on state tests (compliance with state statute and Michigan State Board of Education policy)
- 2) Statewide Top To Bottom Ranking, including
 - a. Student achievement and improvement over time.
 - b. STUDENT GRADUATION RATES AND IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME.
- 3) Appearance on the list of Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools.

Based on these three components, each school is assigned an "Annual State Accreditation Status." On the website displaying schools' accreditation statuses, additional School, District, Community, and State information will also be displayed.

The three components are described in detail below, followed by a further description of the annual state accreditation status and additional information to be displayed.

1. Factors other than performance on state tests (compliance with state statute and Michigan State Board of Education Policy).

The first core element for accountability in the MI-SAAS is a school's compliance with Michigan statute and policy. For schools to be accredited, they must comply with basic accreditation requirements in MCL 380.1280 and with the requirement to

employ only teachers who hold a valid teaching certificate (MCL 380.1233). The nine statutory/policy requirements appear below.

- Do 100% of the school's staff hold the necessary Michigan certification? (MCL 380.1233)
- Is the school's annual School Improvement Plan published? (MCL 380.1204a)
- Are required curricula offered (MCL 380.1204a):
 - Grade Level Content Expectations in grades K-8?
 - Michigan Merit Curriculum in grades 9-12?
- Is a fully compliant Annual Report published?
- Have the Performance Indicators or equivalent been submitted through the School Improvement Framework or AdvancED Standards and Assessment Report? (MCL 380.1204a)
- Are literacy and math tested annually in grades 1-5? (MCL 380.1280b)
- If the school was designated for participation in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), did the school participate? (MCL 380.1280b)
- ~~Is the five- or six-year high school graduation rate 80% or above (if the school has a graduation rate) or~~ Is the attendance rate 90% or above (if the school does not have a graduation rate?)¹ (MCL 380.1280b and MCL 388.1619).
- Did the school test at least 95% of eligible students in every subject tested? (Board Policy 10/18/2001)

If the answer to **any** one of these questions is "no" for two consecutive years, the school's accreditation status is lowered one level even if the "no" is for a different question each year.

2. Statewide Top to Bottom Ranking

The second core element used in calculating a school's MI-SAAS status is the statewide top to bottom ranking, which takes into account both student achievement on state tests AND GRADUATION RATES.

Student achievement on state tests is included in the statewide top to bottom ranking in the ~~two~~ THREE following ways:

- Achievement (elementary, middle, and high schools).
- Improvement in achievement over time.
- THE LARGEST ACHIEVEMENT GAP BETWEEN THE ANY TWO SUBGROUPS (CALCULATED BASED ON THE SUBGROUPS USED IN AYP).

STUDENT GRADUATION IS INCLUDED IN THE STATEWIDE TOP TO BOTTOM RANKING (FOR SCHOOLS WITH A GRADUATION RATE) IN THE TWO FOLLOWING WAYS:

- GRADUATION RATE.

¹ Graduation rate will not be considered in the compliance factors as it will be included in the top-to-bottom ranking

- IMPROVEMENT IN GRADUATION RATE OVER TIME.

To align the accreditation system with new federal accountability measures and state reform law, the calculations for student achievement and improvement are the same as those used to determine the Persistently Lowest Achieving schools list, with the addition of calculations for writing, science, and social studies.

Based on the statewide top to bottom ranking, MI-SAAS establishes the following standards to determine a school's initial accreditation status:

- ACCREDITED: Rank at or above 20th percentile on Statewide Top to Bottom ranking.
- INTERIM: Rank greater than or equal to 6th percentile but less than 20th percentile on Statewide Top to Bottom ranking.
- UNACCREDITED: Rank less than or equal to the 5th percentile on the Statewide Top to Bottom ranking.

This initial accreditation status is then finalized based on a school's meeting the compliance factors and whether it appears on the list of Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools.

The assessment data used to determine a school's accreditation status will use only the scores of students at the school for a full academic year prior to the assessment. Since the grade 3-9 assessments (elementary and middle school) are given in the fall and cover content learned the previous year, feeder codes will be used to attribute the students' scores to the school attended during the prior school year. In contrast to federal AYP requirements, MI-SAAS does not cap the number of students with scores on the MI-Access assessments. All scores on MI-Access will be included in the achievement calculation.

3. Appearance on the List of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools.

The third core element for accountability in MI-SAAS is whether a school appears on the list of Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools. Any school appearing on the PLA list will be considered unaccredited.

ANNUAL STATE ACCREDITATION STATUS

Student achievement and compliance with Michigan statute and State Board of Education policy are combined to annually assign a state accreditation label for each school. A school cannot be fully accredited ~~if it does not make AYP or if it is among the lowest quintile in the state's top to bottom school ranking as illustrated in Table 1². Failure to make AYP can only lower a school's accreditation status to interim.~~

² The table from the previous iteration of MI-SAAS has been replaced by Table 1.

Table 1. *Different combinations of factors resulting in different accreditation results.*

Statewide Percentile Rank*	Not on PLA List	Met Additional Factors	Accreditation Result
High	Y	Y	Accredited
High	Y	N	Interim
Mid	Y	Y	Interim
High	N	N	Unaccredited
High	N	Y	Unaccredited
Mid	N	N	Unaccredited
Mid	N	Y	Unaccredited
Mid	Y	N	Unaccredited
Low	N	N	Unaccredited
Low	N	Y	Unaccredited
Low	Y	N	Unaccredited
Low	Y	Y	Unaccredited

* Low = Ranking less than 5th percentile

Mid = ranking greater than or equal to the 5th percentile, but less than 20th percentile

High = Ranking greater than or equal to 20th percentile

SUNSET CLAUSE

BECAUSE MI-SAAS INCLUDES A SCHOOL RANKING, AS CURRENTLY CONSTITUTED, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE AT LEAST 5% OF SCHOOLS UNACCREDITED AND APPROXIMATELY 15% OF SCHOOLS INTERIM ACCREDITED.

TO ASSURE THAT SCHOOLS THAT ARE ADEQUATELY PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE NEXT LEVEL OF PRIMARY, SECONDARY, OR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ARE NOT IDENTIFIED AS UNACCREDITED OR INTERIM ACCREDITED, THE FOLLOWING SUNSET CLAUSE PROVIDES A TRIGGER TO THE REVISION OF MI-SAAS:

MI-SAAS WILL BE REVISED WHEN AT LEAST 80% OF STUDENTS ARE SCORING PROFICIENT OR HIGHER IN AT LEAST 80% OF MICHIGAN SCHOOLS, WITH PROFICIENCY CUT SCORES TIED TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS OR BEING ON TRACK TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS.

THIS SUNSET CLAUSE DOES NOT PRECLUDE REVISION BEFORE SUCH A POINT IN TIME.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL, DISTRICT, COMMUNITY, AND STATE INFORMATION

Additional school, district, community, and/or state information will also be presented on a dashboard. Data displayed on the dashboard will not be used in MI-

SAAS calculations, but will be given to provide contextual information about individual schools. The data to be displayed on the dashboard are of two types:

- Data already collected by the state (e.g., financial, enrollment, demographic data, whether the school has received AdvancEd accreditation)
- Information voluntarily submitted directly by local schools and districts (e.g., points of pride, local outcomes)

~~In the same way that a car's dashboard provides gauges with a variety of helpful information, MI SAAS displays various data elements to create a more complete picture of the school. These data elements are clustered into three areas: District Context, People/Programs, AND Success Indicators. These elements are not included in the accreditation status calculation in the interests of credibility and transparency. That is, when a school is unaccredited, it is because of achievement and compliance with statute, not due to other variables. MI SAAS also includes space for the school or school district to report its own "points of pride."~~

~~The District Context can display financial data comparing the district's per pupil funding with the state average, the average teacher salary, the percent of funds spent on instruction as a percent of operating costs and other data already collected by MDE. Enrollment trends for both the building and district may be displayed, along with the percentage of students in the building from various feeder schools in the district and their annual state accreditation status.~~

~~People/Programs section may display the teacher/student ratio and percent of teachers receiving professional development. The percentage of students enrolled and participating in Career and Technical Education programs is displayed, as well as the percentage of students who are "concentrators" (i.e., a secondary student who has completed at least six of the twelve segments and is enrolled in the next segment). Finally, the different student populations served in the building are reported: English Language Learners, students eligible for Free and Reduced Price meals, and students with Special Needs.~~

~~The Success Indicators may include post-secondary readiness (for high schools) to report the percentage of students who applied to post-secondary institutions, the percent who achieved a college ready score on the state adopted college entrance examination, and the percent who achieved a workforce ready score on the WorkKeys assessment. Completion success rates for high schools are reported for the percentage of students dually enrolled, graduated within six years, or dropped out of school. Schools also show the percentage of students making progress as English Language Learners and the 9th-grade promotion rate. Schools may choose other data to report, such as Title I Distinguished Award, or Teacher of the Year. If a school is accredited through AdvancED (THE parent organization of North Central Accreditation), the accreditation logo appears in this section.~~

History of the Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System

2002-2011:	Yardstick for Excellent Schools (EdYES!) implemented as Michigan's school accreditation system <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redesign of the system needed because of lack of clarity, transparency, and utility.
Late 2007-2008:	Referent group formed to redesign the accreditation system <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly meetings.• Named the Michigan School Accreditation System (MI-SAS).• Recommendation made to State Superintendent in October 2008.
December 2008	Presentation of MI-SAS to State Board of Education (SBE).
2009:	Public hearings and web-based public input.
May 2009:	Presentation of public comments to SBE.
June 2009:	MI-SAS approved by the SBE.
2009-spring 2010:	Two new policy initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• United States Department of Education (USED) provided guidelines for identifying the persistently lowest achieving schools and School Improvement Grant funds to support significant reform to improve student achievement.• State education reform legislation was passed, creating a School Reform Office for low achieving schools.
2010	MI-SAS revised to align with the new federal accountability measures and state reform legislation and renamed the "Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System" (MI-SAAS).
August 2010:	Proposed changes presented to the SBE.
September 2010:	Public hearings.
October 2010:	Presentation on public comments and approval by the SBE.

January 2011:

MI-SAAS revised to align with SBE focus on school accountability for preparing students to be college and career ready. Key revisions include:

- Replacement of AYP in MI-SAAS with the use of the largest achievement gap in the top-to-bottom ranking.
- Replacement of Graduation Rate in the “compliance” section with the use of graduation rate in the top-to-bottom ranking.
- Inclusion of a “sunset” clause indicating that MI-SAAS will be revised (at a minimum) at the time that 80% of students demonstrate proficiency or higher in at least 80% of Michigan schools, based on proficiency cut scores tied to college and career readiness or being on track to college and career readiness.