STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman

DATE: January 8, 2010

SUBJECT: Presentation and Approval of MEAP-Access Fall 2009 Assessment Results and Recommendations

In 2007, Michigan received a federal grant to develop an alternative assessment based on modified achievement standards (AA-MAS), which was named "MEAP-Access." It is intended to fill the gap between general assessments and assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The following chart illustrates the continuum of assessments for students with disabilities:

Assessment		
Name	Type	Eligible population
MEAP or MME	General	All students
MEAP or MME w/accommodations	General	Students w/disabilities
MEAP-Access	**AA-MAS**	**Students w/disabilities**
MI-Access Functional Independence	AA-AAS	Students w/mild cognitive disability
MI-Access Supported Independence	AA-AAS	Students w/moderate cognitive disability
MI-Access Participation	AA-AAS	Students w/severe cognitive disability

A large-scale pilot of MEAP-Access was carried out in Winter 2009 with approximately 23,000 students. Based on the results of the pilot, some modifications were made to the test design. Unfortunately, the results of the Fall 2009 administration of MEAP-Access were problematic. Far fewer students participated in the assessment and the resulting reliabilities were insufficiently high. OEAA contacted members of the OEAA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of national and local experts who provide advice on technical issues, who recommended that OEAA conduct a large number of additional analyses to determine whether the low reliabilities could be improved to acceptable levels. None of those analyses was successful.

Therefore, OEAA determined that setting standards on the MEAP-Access in the traditional manner was inappropriate and called a joint meeting of the OEAA TAC and the OEAA Advisory Committee (comprised of stakeholders from various

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educational associations who provide advice on policy issues from the stakeholder perspective).

The group made the following recommendations:

- Set two interim cut scores on each test to comply with NCLB regulations requiring three performance levels.
- Set the cut scores using statistical criteria rather than teacher judgment.
  - Set the cut score between levels 2 and 3 at a score which is statistically significantly above the chance level.
  - Set the cut score between levels 1 and 2 at the 90th percentile or higher.
- Do not name the performance levels (use the labels 1, 2, 3 instead).
- In terms of calculating AYP, do everything possible to hold schools harmless that in good faith administered the MEAP-Access, by
  - Counting each student who took the MEAP-Access as participating.
  - Counting students in level 1 and 2 as proficient for calculating AYP (unless USED rejects this use).
- Revise the MEAP-Access to address the issues for future cycles (see below).

Based on these recommendations, a score of 14 is the cut score between levels 2 and 3 for all grades and both subjects. This gives at least a 90% probability that a student could not score in level 2 or higher simply by chance. Also based on these recommendations, a score of 23 is the cut score between levels 1 and 2 for all grades and both subjects. This gives a cut score at approximately the 90th percentiles for all grades and subjects. Having a consistent cut score across grades and subjects was deemed desirable.

These recommended cut scores would result in the following percentages in each level for each grade and subject:

Subject	Grade	Percent in			
		Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	**Levels 1 & 2**
Reading	3	68.2	28.4	3.4	**31.8**
	4	49.1	41.6	9.3	**50.9**
	5	49.9	42.8	7.3	**50.1**
	6	51.7	42.8	5.5	**48.3**
	7	47.7	45.1	7.2	**52.3**
	8	41.9	50.7	7.4	**58.1**
Mathematics	3	39.4	49.5	11.1	**60.6**
	4	27.1	55.2	17.7	**72.9**
	5	37.4	55.7	6.9	**62.6**
	6	52.1	46.8	1.1	**47.9**
	7	52.4	44.3	3.3	**47.6**
	8	62.5	36.4	1.1	**37.5**

OEAA has identified possible reasons for the insufficient reliability on the 2009 MEAP-Access:

- Difficulty in getting IEPs revised for eligible students in time for the test as the eligibility criteria was released shortly before the end of the 2007-2008 school year, and a model standards-based IEP has still not been provided (thus the small number of students who took MEAP-Access).
- The pool of available items from the MEAP for inclusion on MEAP-Access was insufficiently broad to cover the lower range of difficulty necessary to capture the spread of student achievement because of the history of complete or near complete release of MEAP items in the past (thus a significant number of items with average scores below the chance level).
- The population of students who took the MEAP-Access may not be receiving sufficient grade-level instruction on the grade level content standards (thus a significant number of students performing below the chance level).

In consultation with advisory groups, it is expected that each of these issues is resolvable. The eligibility criteria have now been out for over six months and will be available during the next traditional round of IEP team meetings. The model standards-based IEP will also be released in time for the next traditional round of IEP team meetings. Custom development of items targeted at the GLCEs and specifically written to capture differences in the low ranges of achievement and making more significant modifications of existing MEAP items that were not included in the original grant can now be done through savings made in other assessment areas. Finally, if many students who took the MEAP-Access are not receiving sufficient grade level instruction, sufficient reliability can be achieved by extending the lower reach of MEAP-Access.

Through custom development, it is possible that the MEAP-Access concept could be expanded to high school to create an MME-Access that would provide the same coverage for high schools as for elementary and middle schools on the MEAP. Because the ACT and WorkKeys items that appear on the MME are proprietary and may not be modified or appear outside ACT products, creation of a MME-Access in the same vein as MEAP-Access was not previously possible.

<u>It is recommended that, for the 2009-2010 school year only, the State Board of Education: 1) approve three preliminary performance levels (labeled 1, 2, and 3) on the MEAP-Access, with levels 1 and 2 being treated as proficient for purposes of calculating AYP, and 2) approve preliminary cut scores of 14 and 23 (on the raw score metric) as the cut scores between levels 2 and 3, and 1 and 2, respectively, for all grade levels and both subjects on the MEAP-Access</u>.