



## Frequently Asked Questions

Revised October 2010

The following is a simplified summary of MI-Access, intended primarily for parents. It is not intended to be a thorough analysis of every issue surrounding the use of MI-Access. If your question is not answered here, please call 877-560-8378 option 4 or email [oeaa@mi.gov](mailto:oeaa@mi.gov).

1. **What is MI-Access?** - MI-Access is Michigan's alternate assessment system, designed for students with cognitive impairments whose IEP (Individualized Educational Program) Team has determined that MEAP or MME assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate. MI-Access is administered to students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 who have, or function as if they have, mild, moderate or severe cognitive impairment that limits their ability to generalize or transfer learning.
2. **What assessment types are administered for MI-Access?** - MI-Access is available for three student populations.
  1. The Participation (P) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, *severe* cognitive impairment. These students may have both significant cognitive and physical impairments that limit their ability to generalize or transfer learning, and thus makes determining their actual abilities and skills difficult.
  2. The Supported Independence (SI) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, *moderate* cognitive impairment. These students may also have both cognitive and physical impairments that impact their ability to generalize or transfer learning; however, they usually can follow learned routines and demonstrate independent living skills.
  3. The Functional Independence (FI) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, *mild* cognitive impairment. These students typically can assess their personal strengths and limitations, and access resources, strategies, supports, and linkages to help them maximize their independence.
3. **Are students allowed to participate in MI-Access and MEAP?** – Yes. Students in grade 3-8 may be assessed in MEAP and/or MI-Access (FI only) in different subjects. The student's IEP Team is responsible for making this decision.
4. **What is the difference in administering MI-Access versus MEAP?** – MEAP is a test where students work independently and/or in conjunction with a predetermined set of accommodations. MI-Access is designed to have administrators more closely involved in the process with the students. For example, the FI students answer directly in the FI test booklets, and the administrator transfers those responses to the student's answer sheet. The P and SI assessments are designed to have two administrators involved in the process. Each Assessment Administrator independently scores the student's response to each item. The purpose for two administrators is to provide consistency and validity to the scores given. The P/SI assessments use items where students can select from options or pictures to demonstrate what they know. Another P/SI format is the administrators observe the student's responses to predetermined activities and provide dual scores based on the student's responses
5. **When will MI-Access be administered?** - MI-Access is administered each fall (Grades 3-8) and spring (Grade 11) during a six week window. A testing schedule is available on the MI-Access Web page ([www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)).
6. **What content areas will be assessed?** - MI-Access covers numerous content areas, including English language arts, (accessing print, expressing ideas), mathematics, and science. (There currently are no state-level alternate assessments for social studies; therefore, IEP Teams must consult with the district to determine how their students will

be assessed in that content area). English language arts, accessing print, expressing ideas may not be split between different assessment types (i.e. P, SI, FI or MEAP).

7. ***What standards are MI-Access assessments based on?*** - As required by federal law, the MI-Access assessments reflect Michigan's Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs), High School Content Expectations (HSCEs), and/or Benchmarks (EBs) for the content areas assessed; however, they have been extended—or reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity - so they are appropriate for the student populations being assessed. The extended GLCEs, extended EHSCes, and EBs on which the assessments are based can be downloaded from the MI-Access Web page ([www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)).
8. ***How will students be identified for MI-Access testing?*** - The selection process for MI-Access participation is the responsibility of each student's IEP Team. Parents are a vital part of the IEP team and should have access to all the information leading school professionals to a decision to assess their child with an alternate assessment.
9. ***Why were MI-Access Assessments developed?*** - The MI-Access assessments were developed based on the premise that every child deserves to participate in statewide assessments. Under the federal guidelines this also allows students to be counted as participating and receive scores based on their proficiency.
10. ***Why are nonpublic schools not required to assess their students?*** - Michigan law does not require nonpublic schools to participate in statewide assessments administered by the MDE. Participation is voluntary for nonpublic schools.