



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents, School Principals, School Staff involved in State Assessments, Intermediate School District and Local Special Education Directors, Public School Academy Directors and Public School Academy Special Education Contacts

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: New Statewide Assessment, MEAP-Access

This fall Michigan will administer a new statewide alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards called MEAP-Access. Last March, the State Board of Education approved a format for the MEAP-Access assessment that was piloted in February 2009. We encourage you to review Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students who may be eligible for this new assessment in order to allow the appropriate students to take this assessment.

The MEAP-Access is intended to bridge the gap between the MI-Access assessments and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) for students with disabilities. With the addition of the new MEAP-Access, the following continuum of assessment options now exists for students in grades 3 through 8 for Reading/Writing and Mathematics:

- MEAP
- MEAP (with accommodations)
- MEAP-Access**
- MI-Access Functional Independence
- MI-Access Supported Independence
- MI-Access Participation

The assessment is based on modified academic achievement standards that cover the same grade level expectations as the general assessment. In Michigan, the general assessment for grades 3 through 8 is the MEAP assessments. According to the regulations, only the academic achievement standards are modified, *not* the content standards upon which the assessment is based.

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In Michigan, the content standards for the general assessments are the Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs). The requirement that modified academic achievement standards be aligned with grade level content standards is important in order for students to have an opportunity to achieve at grade level. Therefore, students must have access to and instruction in, grade level content. The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has published a guidance document in a question and answer format and can be downloaded at www.michigan.gov/meap-access.

Eligibility criteria and guidelines for participation have been developed to assist Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams in the identification of students who may appropriately participate in MEAP-Access. Students selected for participation must meet all of the following criteria in order to be eligible:

- The student must have IEP goals based on grade-level content standards, not extended standards, for the grade in which the student is enrolled.
- The student must have access to, and instruction in, grade level content from highly qualified teachers.
- There must be objective evidence demonstrating that the student's disability precludes the student from achieving the grade-level standards at the same level of rigor as the student's peers.
- The student's lack of progress must be based on multiple objective and valid measures of the student's academic achievement over time.
- The IEP Team must be reasonably certain that the student will not achieve grade-level standards, at the same level of rigor as their peers, within the year covered by the IEP.

The eligibility criteria are provided on the MEAP-Access web page mentioned above.

Students selected for participation in the MEAP-Access assessment may be pre-identified by using the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) Secure Site at www.michigan.gov/oeaa-secure. Student counts should be entered by September 17, 2009 in order to receive printed labels in the initial order of materials. Counts entered beyond that point will require the school district to print labels locally from the OEAA secure site. Additional materials may be ordered on the OEAA secure site between September 29 and October 26, 2009.

MEAP-Access will be administered during the MEAP assessment cycle which is from October 13–29, 2009. MEAP-Access content areas will mirror MEAP in that they have the same start dates; however, the schools have the flexibility to administer the tests between the start and ending dates for each content area. For example:

- Reading is administered October 13–29, 2009.
- Mathematics is administered from October 20-29, 2009.
- Writing (Grades 4 and 7 only) is administered October 22-29, 2009.

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The final day to return all materials, with no penalty or fees, is November 4, 2009.

MEAP-Access is a test designed to improve access to grade-level assessments for students currently receiving grade-level instruction. If you have questions regarding this new assessment, you may visit the MEAP-Access website, call 877-560-8378 or send an e-mail message to oeaa@michigan.gov.

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