

# Center for Educational Performance and Information

## Michigan e-Transcript Initiative

### Frequently Asked Questions

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Questions?

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## General Audience

### GA-1. What is the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative?

The State of Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information has a contract with Parchment, Inc., to deliver the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative. The Parchment Exchange service enables the electronic exchange of academic transcripts between school districts, colleges and universities throughout the state. Students can request transcripts and other supporting admission documents from their high schools or colleges to be sent to more than 4,500 other colleges and universities nationwide, as well as to third-party destinations, electronically or on security paper mailed by Parchment.

### GA-2. What is CEPI?

CEPI is a division of the State Budget Office in the Department of Technology, Management and Budget. CEPI is responsible for coordinating the collection, management and reporting of all education data required by state and federal law for preschool, elementary, secondary and postsecondary education (PK-20). CEPI accomplishes this in a manner that reduces the administrative burden on reporting entities, complies with federal and state privacy laws, and provides data and reports to state and local policymakers and the residents of this state (including parents and other resident/taxpayers and stakeholders in the state). CEPI is also responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive P-20 longitudinal data reporting system and the collection of data necessary to implement the system.

### GA-3. What is Parchment?

Parchment works with institutions and corporations around the world helping people collect, promote, and share their education credentials in simple and secure ways. At [Parchment.com](http://Parchment.com), students can research colleges and discover their chances of admission, see how they compare with peers, get college recommendations, and send official transcripts when they are ready to apply. The company's Software-as-a-Service offering, Parchment Exchange enables the secure, rapid exchange of millions of electronic transcripts and other student records among nearly 9,000 schools and universities, and hundreds of thousands of individuals. Founded in 2003, Parchment Inc. is headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona.

### GA-4. Whom do I contact for more information?

Please visit the CEPI [e-Transcript website](#) for more information. If you have questions pertaining to the registration process and technical support, contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#). If you have questions regarding the Michigan e-Transcript service, please contact CEPI at [cepi@michigan.gov](mailto:cepi@michigan.gov) or call 517-335-0505 x3.

### GA-5. What is the [Midwestern Higher Education Compact](#)? What are the partner states that make up the MHEC, and what is its role in Michigan?

The purpose of the MHEC is to provide greater higher education opportunities and services in the Midwestern region, with the aim of furthering regional access to, research in and choice of higher education for the citizens residing in the several states which are parties to the Compact. Michigan became a member of the MHEC when it enacted Michigan Statute Section 390.1531 in July 1990.

In doing so, the state of Michigan recognized MHEC as an entity acting under the authority of the State of Michigan but in conjunction with similar authority granted to it by the other member states of the Compact. The legislation charges MHEC to provide services and research in areas of regional concern and grants MHEC the power to enter into contracts for the services of personnel from any institution, foundation, person, firm or corporation. MHEC followed a competitive request for proposals process prior to awarding the bid and entering into an agreement with Parchment to provide e-Transcript services.

Twelve states make up the MHEC region and include: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

**GA-6. What is the Parchment Exchange service provided by Parchment?**

It is a service that automates the ordering, processing and delivery of student transcripts for both secondary and postsecondary education. Parchment Exchange offers online convenience, saves school registrars time and effort with a web-based workflow management tool, and it ensures secure delivery of transcripts in a consistent format to receiving institutions.

**GA-7. How does the e-Transcript service work?**

A student at a participating institution uses the link on the school's website, enters identifiable information, selects a password and chooses where to send the transcript. These transcript requests are made available electronically to the sending institution's administrator, who approves the requests and uploads student transcript records electronically to Parchment. Parchment then delivers official transcripts, electronically or on paper, according to the receiving institution's preference. The student receives an email confirmation when the transcripts are sent, and if delivered electronically, when received as well.

**GA-8. Is the Parchment Exchange service FERPA compliant?**

Yes. Transcripts are sent through the Parchment Exchange service in a manner compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

**GA-9. What are the benefits of participating in the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative?**

The benefits of participating are:

- Students and parents can request transcripts online at any time.
- There is no charge for high school students to have transcripts sent electronically. However, a fee of \$3.75 is charged per electronic transcript after August 1 of the student's high school graduation year.
- Automated notifications are sent to students when transcripts are processed and received, reducing student support calls.
- Faster transcript delivery to Michigan and nationwide colleges, other participating secondary schools, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the military, scholarship programs, third-party destinations such as employment verification and insurance companies as well as the ability to send Electronic Secondary School Reports.
- Reduction of time commitment by school staff to process transcripts, allowing staff to focus on other student needs.
- Creation of a legible electronic transcript to be read by and shared with admissions counselors, academic advisors, scholarship committees, etc.
- The review process has been made easier by providing a standard appearance to the transcript.
- Comprehensive reporting has been built into the system for all authorized administrators. Reports are available from the system that detail sent transcripts with a robust set of search criteria and the capability to export to Excel for further data analysis.

#### GA-10. Who pays for the e-Transcript services?

CEPI pays for Parchment to provide the software download installation and necessary online staff training to enable the electronic exchange of high school student transcripts to other institutions for free where possible.

However, e-Transcript services do involve costs depending upon your situation. Please note the following costs:

- Recent high school graduates can send e-transcripts for free until August 1 of their graduating year. After August 1, alumni will be charged a \$3.75 fee per transcript sent.
- All software installation, updates and training are free for schools.
- Currently enrolled Michigan high school students can send electronic transcripts to any e-Transcript-registered institution for free.
- If an institution in the United States is not registered to receive transcripts electronically, Parchment will mail the paper transcript for a fee.

- Some higher education institutions may charge their college students for data handling costs, but the state of Michigan does not control or receive a portion of these fees.

**GA-11. How does a school get registered and become “live” with Parchment Exchange?**

To become registered and “live” with Parchment Exchange, the school must:

1. Complete the registration steps online:
  - a. [Visit Parchment’s web page for K12 Schools or Districts.](#)
  - b. [Please provide primary e-Transcript contacts and other information.](#)
  - c. [Review and accept the Service Agreement.](#)
2. Complete each of the following steps:
  - a. Software installation.
  - b. Include the required fields on the transcript (district code, building code, UIC).
  - c. Send test files to Parchment.
  - d. Complete required online training.

The State of Michigan hopes that high schools find this service beneficial to school staff and students. There is no charge to have transcripts sent to participating institutions. However, there may be a fee associated with requests for non-participating institutions. High schools can determine the level of implementation of this service for those destinations.

**GA-12. Our school has been sending transcripts electronically for a while now. Are we already participating in the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative?**

Unless the vendor is Parchment, then no. Parchment is the selected vendor to provide electronic transcript exchange under the Michigan e-Transcript Service.

**GA-13. What information will be included on the e-Transcript?**

All of the information a school currently places onto a transcript, with the addition of the student’s state-assigned UIC, building code and district code, will be included.

**GA-14. How does the Parchment e-Transcript service work with the Common Application?**

Parchment has created a frequently asked questions document discussing how the service works with the Common Application. This document contains information pertaining to how students request a transcript through Parchment when: a) the high school counselor intends to submit the forms online, b) the high school counselor intends to submit the forms through the US mail and c) when the college accepts the Common Application, but



the student will be using a different application. This document also contains information for high school counselors regarding Parchment transcripts and how to complete the Common Application process for both online and US mail submissions. To obtain this document, please contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#).

GA-15. Are alternative high schools included in the service?

Yes. All public and private secondary and postsecondary institutions, including alternative high schools, are included in the initiative.

GA-16. Are home-schooled students included in the service?

No. Parchment has no way of getting a home-schooled student's data electronically unless the student transfers to a public or private school prior to earning a high school diploma. Home-schooled students must send transcripts using their current methods.

GA-17. Do colleges and high schools get to choose what their e-Transcripts will look like?

The Parchment-delivered transcript will contain the exact same information a school's current transcript contains, but will be delivered in a Parchment standard appearance. An official seal and signature will be included on each transcript.

GA-18. Who will see the student's e-Transcript?

Only key personnel in charge of handling transcripts (usually the school registrar/guidance counselor), the receiving institution's selected staff and Parchment staff members who mail paper transcripts are able to view the student's transcript. The information is secure during transmission. Parchment does not send documents to students, parents or other non-validated recipients without signed authorization from the student or parent.

GA-19. Is an e-Transcript provided through the Parchment Exchange service official?

Yes. Schools who register legally appoint Parchment as their exclusive "agent," allowing Parchment to send official school transcripts on their behalf.

GA-20. Who can order transcripts with the Parchment Exchange service?

Any current or past student from the sending school or their parent(s) can order transcripts through the Parchment Exchange system. However, a fee of \$3.75 is charged for alumni after August 1 of their graduating year. Of course, requests from students who have records that cannot be retrieved electronically will need to be processed by the sending school.

GA-21. What personal information does the student provide during the Parchment account set-up process?

Parchment asks the student to enter a full name, date of birth, gender, graduation year and school name for two reasons:

1. The administrator at the sending school uses this information to identify the student in their system, and if the administrator has any questions, he/she can email the student for more information.
2. Parchment uses some of this information to confirm that the records sent from the school match the student's request.

**GA-22. How is personal information kept safe?**

Every sending and receiving institution is authenticated by Parchment, and all transmissions between them are carried over secure channels. Parchment employs the same Secure Socket Layer technology that powers today's online banking solutions.

**GA-23. Can students view their transcripts?**

Yes. When the student is logged in to request that a transcript be sent, the student can go to the "My Transcripts" tab to view included information.

**GA-24. How will the school be notified of any updates?**

Parchment will provide all software updates as needed.

## Sending Institutions

### SI-1. How can a school register to send electronic transcripts?

Registering with Parchment only takes a few minutes, and there's no cost for students until after August 1 of their high school graduating year. Please visit the [CEPI e-Transcript web page](#) and click the links listed under K-12 Schools and Higher Education. If you have questions pertaining to the registration process and technical support, contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#).

### SI-2. Which school staff members can use the Parchment Exchange service?

Anyone the school designates can use the system, but typically the registrar or guidance counselor would. Everything a school needs to use Parchment Exchange is in Parchment's downloadable Welcome Kit, which gives step-by-step instructions.

### SI-3. As a sending school, do I need special software?

Parchment Exchange software is all that is needed. The Parchment Exchange service is a non-invasive system that captures information from any student information system and requires no changes to a school's SIS. This is an application which sends student record data to Parchment's servers over secure connections. Download the software from Parchment's website at no charge, and install it on the computer where transcripts are processed.

### SI-4. How long will it take to set up the Parchment Exchange service at our school?

Setup typically takes 15-20 minutes and consists of two simple steps:

1. Download the "Welcome Kit" document package from a link on the Parchment website (it contains a Setup Guide for the Parchment Exchange software installation).
2. Install the software by clicking on another link that will automatically download and install the software to the primary user's computer.

### SI-5. Can more than one person at our school access the system?

Yes. For security purposes, each user will have a unique login name and password. In addition, roles are assigned to users that will determine their access to certain system information and functionality.

### SI-6. How do I let my students know they can use the Parchment e-Transcript service?

Upon successful installation, Parchment will send communication materials for distribution to students so they can begin sending transcripts electronically.

SI-7. Can high schools charge their students to send e-Transcripts?

No. High schools cannot charge their students to send e-Transcripts.

SI-8. When are e-Transcripts sent?

Parchment sends transcripts to receiving institutions when schools approve the order and upload the transcript records to Parchment. Parchment notifies the student, via email, as soon as the school has made the student's records available to Parchment. Parchment sends the electronic transcript immediately. Mailed transcripts are typically sent within one business day.

SI-9. Where can transcripts be sent?

Parchment sends records to all colleges and universities in the United States, as well as to the NCAA and scholarship funds that require transcripts. Parchment regularly updates the list of accredited agencies in response to suggestions from schools and students. In addition, transcripts can also be delivered to individuals and other destinations not present in the Parchment Exchange recipient database upon receipt of student or parent electronic signature authorization.

SI-10. How long does Parchment retain transcripts?

Parchment securely stores the student record data on a temporary basis in order to deliver transcripts to the destinations chosen by the student. Within the Parchment Exchange system, student information is deleted after Parchment is sure that the delivery was successful.

SI-11. When a student fills out an online college application, how is the application matched back to the e-Transcript?

Within the Parchment Exchange system, the student has the ability to enter the online college application tracking number supplied when the application was submitted. The application tracking number will then be placed onto the e-Transcript when moving forward to enable the college to easily match up the online application with the electronic transcript.

SI-12. Can students get a copy of their transcripts?

Yes, students can have access to their transcript within the Parchment Exchange system.

SI-13. Can a high school student send his/her transcript to another high school, free of charge, outside of Michigan but still within the Midwestern Higher Education Compact states?

Any electronic request is free for current high school students and recent graduates up until August 1 of their graduating year. Previously, the destination needed to be a participating institution located within the MHEC states. This has changed, the key factor now is the type of delivery – electronic copy (free), physical copy (fee).

SI-14. I do not want my high school students to be charged to send a transcript to a non-registered Michigan college. What can be done?

If a postsecondary institution in Michigan is not yet registered to receive transcripts electronically from Parchment, encourage this institution to register to enable your students to send electronic transcripts for free. Until that happens, when a student logs into the Parchment Exchange system to request a transcript, the school has the ability to post a welcome message on the site. Here, a school can inform their students to request, in person, to send a paper transcript to a non-registered institution. The school will send the paper transcript.

SI-15. Are student signatures required?

While signatures are typically required to release transcripts to students, they are not required for transcripts being sent to colleges in which students may enroll or when sent to scholarship funds that may consider providing aid to students.

SI-16. What does a student need to order transcripts online?

To order transcripts online, all a student needs is an email address. If any fees apply, a credit or debit card may be required for payment. If a student does not have a credit or debit card, money cards can be purchased at local retailers to use online.

SI-17. How many transcripts can a student order at once?

A student can select as many receiving institutions as he/she wishes at one time. A student can also log in again at any time to request transcripts for additional institutions.

SI-18. Can a parent/guardian order a transcript for a student?

If the student is under 18 years of age, the student's parent/guardian can order transcripts.

SI-19. Can a student order seventh-semester or final transcripts?

If a student wants to order transcripts now, but the school has not posted final grades yet, a student can choose the "next grading period" option when placing an order. Parchment will wait until the school has posted final grades to send the transcript.

SI-20. Can a school place a transcript request on hold?

Yes. If a transcript request has been placed on hold, this means the school has chosen not to approve the request at this time. There can be many reasons, including a student's standing with the school or a data-entry error that must be corrected.

**SI-21. Do all colleges and universities accept transcripts from Parchment?**

Parchment sends records to all colleges and universities in the United States, as well as to many scholarship funds that also require transcripts. Parchment regularly updates the list of accredited agencies and appreciates your suggestions for colleges not currently available on the site.

**SI-22. Will the student's Unique Identification Code, Michigan Merit Exam scores, and attendance information be included on the e-Transcript?**

Institutions that have the state-assigned student UIC will be required to include the UIC onto the e-Transcript. MME test scores and summary attendance information should be included on the e-Transcript pursuant to the Michigan Merit Exam Statute in Michigan Compiled Laws 380.1279g, which states:

- (4) A school district or public school academy that operates a high school shall include on each pupil's high school transcript all of the following:
  - (a) For each high school graduate who has completed the Michigan Merit Examination under this section, the pupil's scaled score on each subject area component of the Michigan Merit Examination.
  - (b) The number of school days the pupil was in attendance at school each school year during high school and the total number of school days in session for each of those school years.

**SI-23. Will ACT and SAT scores be included on the e-Transcript?**

The results of the ACT, taken as part of the MME, are required (see FAQ # SI-22 above.) Test scores from other ACT sessions and from SAT may be included on the e-Transcript at the school's choice.

**SI-24. If a paper transcript must be sent because the receiving institution is not registered to receive electronically, how is the paper transcript branded?**

Parchment will print and mail the PDF version of the transcript, so the paper version will still be branded. All transcripts are mailed on Secure Paper.

**SI-25. After several years of graduating from a high school, student transcripts are sent to our Central/District office to be scanned into our CEO Imaging system. How will this affect our Central/District office?**

Parchment can add the Central/District Office as a “school location,” allowing this destination to process the alumni transcripts. However, keep in mind that Parchment can only process transcripts that are in an electronic format and have data tied to them. If the alumni transcripts are turned into image files only, Parchment would be unable to process them.

SI-26. We have historical transcript data on microfilm. Will those need to be a part of the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative program? Will they need to be converted from microfiche to paper documents?

Parchment is unable to process transcripts on microfilm. Only transcripts coming from a database of student data where the transcript information can be delivered in a data format can be processed by Parchment. An image file of the transcript cannot process through Parchment.

SI-27. We had one high school close last year and all records are now in our Central/District office (both historical and recent graduates). How will the e-Transcript system support these records?

Parchment can add the Central/District Office as a “school location,” allowing this destination to process alumni transcripts.

SI-28. What is the process for sending transcripts to unique/one-time only third-party destinations (e.g., law offices or an employment agency)?

The student would request his/her transcript through the normal process, but since the location is not already in the Parchment database, he/she would need to select “other” for the transcript destination. This will bring up an electronic form the student will fill out, providing Parchment with the information to deliver the transcript to the requested destination.

SI-29. For a low-income student wishing to send a transcript to a destination which has a fee, can this student obtain a fee waiver?

Yes. Parchment provides four free transcript requests for qualifying students. To qualify, students need to meet the qualifications for and have been issued a College Board (or ACT) fee waiver (for the SAT, ACT and/or their college applications). To issue fee waivers just follow these simple steps:

1. The student first needs to register with Parchment.
2. The administrator will:
  - a. Log into your Parchment account
  - b. Click on **Preferences** and select **Issue Fee Waivers**
  - c. Enter the last name of the student and click on **Search**

- d. Select the appropriate student's name and click **Continue**
  - e. Ensure that the student qualifies for the waiver and enter your name as the signature
3. The student receives an email letting him/her know that a fee waiver has been applied to his/her account.
  4. The student logs into his/her Secure Transcript account and completes his/her transcript order. The fee for the first four fee-destinations will be waived by Parchment.

To obtain a document on Parchment's fee waiver program, contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#).

SI-30. Parchment offers automated workflow functionality. What is it and how can I learn more about this feature?

Automated Workflow provides the capability to upload student transcripts to a Parchment secured library for your school. Parchment will match the student roster records with the appropriate transcript for processing to the requested destination(s). The result is a streamlined and expedited system for processing transcript requests for school staff and students. To obtain a user's guide and a document explaining Parchment's automated workflow feature or to schedule a training session on this feature, contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#).



## Receiving Institutions

### RI-1. How can colleges receive electronic transcripts?

Register with Parchment. It only takes a few minutes and there's no cost. Please visit the [CEPI e-Transcript web page](#) and view the links under Additional Information. If you have questions pertaining to the registration process and technical support, contact Parchment via their [customer support page](#).

### RI-2. How does a receiving institution get listed with Parchment?

Parchment maintains a database of colleges and universities, plus a growing number of scholarship funds, so that it can send transcripts wherever students request. Colleges and universities should register with Parchment to update address information and to enable electronic delivery at their [customer support page](#).

### RI-3. What if the mailing address for a college is different from the one on Parchment's site?

While Parchment strives to provide up-to-date addresses, each institution should confirm that the address listed in the system is correct. If there is a different address, request that Parchment add it. Parchment must verify any address additions before sending transcripts. Verification will take up to two business days, after which Parchment will release the transcript. If Parchment is unable to confirm the address provided, the transcript will be sent to the address on file for that destination and the requestor will be notified immediately.

### RI-4. How can I verify that Parchment's transcripts are official?

Each participating school has signed an authorization agreement with Parchment, appointing Parchment as its exclusive agent for ordering, processing and delivering official transcripts. These agreements can be viewed after registration and/or after logging in to Parchment Exchange.

### RI-5. As a postsecondary institution, what should we do with the UIC field included on the e-Transcript?

All postsecondary institutions that receive the state-assigned 10-digit, student Unique Identification Code on the e-Transcript must store this field in their student information system. The UIC will be included in the e-Transcript for those students who currently have one. Storing the UIC in the postsecondary institution's SIS will make the link between high school and postsecondary education records a reality.

### RI-6. As a private high school, what should we do with the UIC field included on the e-Transcript?

All private secondary institutions that receive the state-assigned, 10-digit student UIC on the e-Transcript must store this field in their student information system. The UIC will be included in the e-Transcript for those students who currently have one. Storing the UIC in the secondary institution's SIS will make the link between high school and postsecondary education records a reality.

RI-7. Some schools used to provide receiving institutions with profiles. Are they still available?

Yes. Available school profiles can be viewed by registering/logging in and going to "school information." The footer of each transcript indicates if a profile is available for that school.

RI-8. What formats are currently available for electronic transcripts?

The Parchment Exchange service delivers transcripts in a variety of electronic formats. Acrobat PDF™ image files (which require no integration to receive), XML and EDI are available. Initial registration requires institutions to receive in PDF format. Other formats are available, at no charge, after contacting Parchment for computer configuration requirements.

RI-9. Can postsecondary institutions charge their students to send e-Transcripts?

A postsecondary institution may charge their college students for data handling costs at their choice. If a college student is charged by the postsecondary institution, fees are paid online to Parchment and then reimbursed to the college/university, usually on a semi-annual basis. Contact Parchment to set up this service and for scheduling the payment period. When placing a request to send an e-Transcript covered under the initiative, the student will see the charge added on by the college.

RI-10. Is it free to receive electronic transcripts?

Yes. It is free to receive electronic transcripts for the life of an institution's account with Parchment. It is also free to receive software updates for the life of the institution's account.

## **Students**

### **S-1. How much does Parchment cost to use?**

An electronic transcript is free to current high school students and recent graduates until August 1 of their graduating year. After August 1 of their graduating year, alumni are charged \$3.75 per electronic request, and an additional \$2.00 charge if the request involves printing and mailing a physical transcript.

### **S-2. How long will it take to process an order?**

Electronic transcripts are delivered within minutes after the school administrator processes the order. The receiving institution then downloads the transcript periodically, or automatically routes the document to their server.

Additionally, you can access your Parchment account to track your orders.