



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the State Board of Education

From: Tom Watkins, Superintendent 

Date: January 4, 2005

SUBJ: **REPORTING OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IN
2005 SCHOOL REPORT CARDS**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the State Board of Education an update on current plans to report School Performance Indicator information in Spring, 2005 for inclusion in the school report cards that will be issued later in the school year for the EducationYES! state accreditation system. Michigan has been a leader in developing an accreditation system that is not reliant on a "single test given on a single day." Further, as we noted when we began the development of this system of accreditation, that it would need to be refined and improved as we gained knowledge through implementation and feedback from stakeholders. As part of our continuous improvement process, staff has been working with educators, parents and business partners to enhance our EducationYES!.

As has already been indicated, a revision of the School Performance Indicators is currently underway. Plans call for the indicators themselves to be revised in early January, for a field review of these to take place in February, and for staff to develop measures for the new indicators by March, so that a field test of the indicators can occur in a small number of schools in April, and for revised measures to be available for use in October-November, 2005 for the 2005-2006 school report cards.

Because new measures (and new indicators) will likely not be approved for use this school year, staff has made plans to use the current Indicators one last time. Staff has also made plans to modify the use of these Indicators in the 2004-2005 report cards. These modifications were presented in the item presented to the State Board of Education at the October 12 meeting. A copy of this item is attached. Staff is proposing to change how the School Performance Indicators will be combined with the MEAP Status and Change categories (which staff is proposing not to change this year.)

Specifically, staff is proposing to reduce the likelihood that a school can receive low achievement scores and yet rate itself at a high level on the School Performance Indicators and thus receive a passing grade and be accredited. Three options were presented at the October 12 meeting. They are:

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- Option 1** Temporarily adjust the weight the indicators carry in the report card, from the current 33% to 25%, 20%, or 15%. This would increase the weight carried by the Achievement grade to 75%, 80%, and 85% respectively.
- Option 2** If a school receives an "F" or a "D" in the overall Achievement report card grade, a higher grade for the School Performance Indicators would only allow the final, composite grade to be increased by one grade level category (that is, from "F" to "D," or from "D" to "C"). (Note: this option would be similar, but in reverse, to the revision the State Board of Education approved earlier for the Achievement "Change" grade.)
- Option 3** If a school received an "F" or a "D" in the overall Achievement report card grade, a higher grade for the School Performance Indicators would not allow the final, composite grade to be any higher than a "C."
- Option 4** If a school does not make AYP, the indicator score and grade are ignored and the composite grade is based on the achievement grade. (Note: This was not an option discussed with the Board on October 12 but has been added by staff.)

Data from the 2004 Report Card was used to simulate the impact of several options proposed for weighting and reporting of the Indicator scores and grades for the 2005 Report Card. For each option the distribution of composite letter grades is compared with the 2004 composite grade distribution, and with other options.

Option 1 - Temporarily adjust the weighting that the indicators carry in the composite grade

Option 1a - 75% Achievement; 25% Indicators;

Option 1b - 80% Achievement; 20% Indicators;

Option 1c - 85% Achievement; 15% Indicators

Grade	Current 67/33		Option 1a 75/25		Option 1b 80/20		Option 1c 85/15	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
A	772	22.3%	654	18.9%	591	17.1%	536	15.5%
B	1622	46.9%	1458	42.2%	1383	40.0%	1318	38.1%
C	896	25.9%	1093	31.6%	1157	33.4%	1218	35.2%
D/Alert	154	4.5%	233	6.7%	295	8.5%	323	9.3%
Unaccredited	15	0.4%	21	0.6%	33	1.0%	64	1.9%

There will be fewer "A"s and more unaccredited schools under these options. These options have moderate impact at both the high and low ends of the range of options.

Option 2 - If "F" or "D" for Achievement Grade, limit composite grade increase to one grade category.

Option 3 - If "F" or "D" for Achievement Grade, limit composite grade to "C."



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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Tom Watkins, Superintendent 
DATE: September 30, 2004
SUBJ: **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (SCHOOL SELF ASSESSMENT)**

Background

At the September 14 State Board of Education meeting the revision of the school performance indicators was discussed. In the course of that discussion, it was mentioned that Kent Intermediate School District had been commissioned to study and recommend improvements in the indicators that would align them even better with what is known about effective school improvement.

The Board requested a brief summary of the Kent recommendations. Summary pages from the Kent report are attached. The recommendations are categorized as short-term, intermediate, and long-term recommendations.

A major recommendation was that the Department of Education:

“Form a study group to review the current indicators for appropriateness and priority, (i.e. review alignment with current effective schools research and demonstrated impact on student achievement). In addition, the group should study and act on the following:

- A) Add and remove indicators as needed and pare the system down to a more manageable set of truly relevant indicators.
- B) Organize the indicators under *Educational Leadership, Core Academic Processes* (directly concerned with teaching and learning) and *Supporting Processes* (those concerned with school culture and climate).

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- C) Prioritize the indicators (adjust their weighting within the non-MEAP portion of EducationYES!).”

Response

The Office of School Improvement has moved immediately to form the recommended study group, which has been commissioned to develop its recommendations by the school districts' winter break in December.

Issue

The goal of the study group is to recommend improvements in the School Performance Indicators that will align them even more tightly with research based school improvement, and which will increase the public's confidence that there is a relationship between a school's self-assessment and its success in improving student achievement.

There remains the question, however, of whether the study group's recommendations, once approved by the State Board, can be fully implemented and revisions made in time to be included in the Spring 2005 self assessment data collection from the schools. In this respect, another recommendation of the Kent study speaks loudly to the need to inform schools well in advance if changes are going to be made:

“Districts need to be notified as soon as possible of any changes that occur in the indicators as a result of this study. This will help them to identify needs and begin to adapt processes and determine evidence.”
 (“Evidence” here refers to evidence for the self-ratings schools submit.)

Possible Responses

Until revisions can be approved by the State Board and fully implemented, with proper advance notice to schools:

Option 1 – Temporarily adjust the weight the indicators carry in the report card, from the current 33%, to 25% or 20% or 15%. This would increase the weight carried by the Achievement grade to 75%, 80%, or 85%.

Option 2 – If a school receives an “F” or a “D” in the overall Achievement report card grade, a higher grade for the School Performance Indicators would only allow the Achievement grade to be increased by one grade level category (that is, from “F” to “D,” or from “D” to “C”). (Note: this option would be similar, but in reverse, to the revision the State Board approved earlier for the Achievement “Change” grade.)

Option 3 – If a school received an “F” or a “D” in the overall Achievement report card grade, a higher grade for the School Performance Indicators would not allow the Achievement grade to be any higher than a “C.”

Department staff are not at this time recommending that one of the above, or any other possible options, be chosen, only that the Board be aware that mechanisms such as the above can be used in the next report card if revisions cannot be made, completely or with proper notice to schools, and the Board is interested in taking steps to increase public confidence in the next report card grades.

As part of our continuous improvement process, staff have been instructed to bring forth to the State Board of Education final recommendations that will address perceived weaknesses in the original performance indicator design. We remain committed to ensuring that Michigan's educational accountability assessment system is more than a single test given on a single day and is one that engenders confidence that it paints an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of our schools.

With your continued support and the active engagement of educators, parents, business leaders, and other stakeholders, we will continue to strengthen our educational accountability system.

Education YES! Revised (Now What?) - System

Short-term Recommendations (Spring 2004 Data Collection and Reporting)

Keep the SSA. This tool has promoted good discussion and focused SI teams on school development/improvement efforts. It is also very apparent that the SSA has provided many benefits to ISD and local district staff. It is recommended that the SSA be kept as part of the system with revisions as suggested.

Districts need to be notified as soon as possible as to the timeline for the completion of the SSA for 2004. This is necessary to ensure that training is provided to buildings in the use of MI-Plan to access the indicator components.

- Districts need to be notified as soon as possible of any changes that occur in the indicators as a result of this study. This will help them to identify needs and begin to adapt processes and determine evidence.

MDE needs to continually work to align Education YES! with other state initiatives such as: Michigan Curriculum Framework/Grade Level Expectations, MI-Plan, Michigan Educational Assessment Program, Office of School Improvement (OSI) and Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) activities, MEGS, etc. Feedback from all stakeholders reveals a frustration with the number of initiatives and requirements put upon districts. The more that the initiatives can be aligned, the more districts will be able to efficiently align limited resources and personnel to positively affect change.

Collaboration between MDE, ISDs and LEAs throughout the state should continue in order to provide a more focused effort and alignment of resources. Continued collaboration between the state/ISD/LEA levels will also help to build capacity at all levels to ensure the implementation of initiatives and best practices.

Remove the letter grades and replace them with more descriptive and meaningful labels.

Intermediate-term Recommendations (Spring 2005 Data Collection and Reporting)

- It is critical that MDE, in collaboration with ISDs and LEAs, continue to provide the leadership to align and integrate the various state initiatives that support school excellence into a single coherent system, (i.e. establishing common criteria, determining common measurements, and allocating resources accordingly). These initiatives need to be aligned across departments at MDE in order to allow schools the opportunity to focus on student achievement by also aligning the various initiatives at the local district level.
- Buildings with unusual profiles, denoted in some of the previous tables, would benefit from an on-site review. This would help to determine the extent to which they understand the content of the indicators and help to provide them with feedback and guidance to support them in their school improvement efforts. Working with the buildings to provide an analysis of their evidence may also be helpful and serve as a means to validate/invalidate responses.
- Institute a process by which additional stakeholders provide input on the continuing development of the indicators (components, criteria), including parents, school board members and community leaders.
- Institute a process wherein the indicators are validated through selective on-site reviews, either in collaboration with the Office of School Improvement (OSI) or as a separate process.
- MDE (OSI) should use the SSA results as a tool in helping high priority schools evaluate their processes and identify their priority focus areas. Training for Office of School Improvement staff or High Priority school coaches to increase knowledge of the indicators may be necessary to align these efforts.

Long-term Recommendations (Beyond Spring 2005)

Michigan has an unprecedented opportunity to continue creating this holistic accountability/improvement system that engages all stakeholders in the process of evaluating and improving both core academic and support processes for student learning as well as defining and assessing the system wide leadership necessary to implement those processes (see attached PA 25/NCLB systems model). The future success of this system will depend on the ability of its developers to successfully articulate the unique processes (roles and responsibilities) of all stakeholder groups who support our children. This system cannot simply target classrooms (teachers) and buildings (principals) as if they operated in a vacuum disengaged from those systems that support their vital work. The accountability/improvement system must also engage districts, parents, communities and state policy makers in articulating and assessing their key processes (roles and responsibilities) as well. The more clearly the accountability system defines the key processes at the classroom and building level the easier it will be for those parts of the system that support them to develop, articulate and assess the productivity of their own key processes.

Some additional key steps to the long term success of Michigan's fledgling system will be:

- Continuous and laser-like focus by the MDE on the integration and alignment of all state initiatives into a single coherent system that helps move schools towards excellence. A long-term plan involving all stakeholders is needed with specific goals, activities, timelines and responsibilities identified.
- That the OSI and the OEAA become co-leaders giving guidance and focused vision to those who partner with them in the evolution and support of Education YES!, MI-Plan and other school improvement initiatives.
- As the SSA evolves, ensure that the indicators, components and criteria provide formative data to support the work of all the partners in the system, as well as summative data for accountability.
- The creation of a two way communication system that allows for real time information to flow to and from all segments of the accountability/improvement system.
- The creation of an evaluation process to regularly assess the quality and integrity of the holistic accountability/improvement system.

Education YES! Revised (Now What?) – Criteria

Short-term Recommendations (Spring 2004 Data Collection and Reporting)

Remove component 9.1 (Attendance and Dropout Rates) and rename Indicator 9 with the remaining components, which are focused on things schools do to create student connectedness, increase attendance and reduce dropout rates. Component 9.1 should be removed because attendance (elementary and middle schools) and Graduation Rate (high schools) are already being used as the additional non-MEAP factors for calculating AYP.

Remove component 11.1 (Inventory) and retain the remaining components. The SID is much reduced from its original intent and asking schools whether they have complied with a required data submission does not seem particularly relevant.

Intermediate-term Recommendations (Spring 2005 Data Collection and Reporting)

Form a study group to review the current indicators for appropriateness and priority, (i.e. review alignment with current effective schools research and demonstrated impact on student achievement). In addition the group should study and act on the following:

A) Add and remove indicators as needed and pare the system down to a more manageable set of truly relevant indicators.

B) Organize the indicators under Educational Leadership, Core Academic Processes (directly concerned with teaching and learning) and Supporting Processes (those concerned with school culture and climate).

C) Prioritize the indicators (adjust their weighing within the non-MEAP portion of Education YES!)

Develop and implement a process, similar to the original development process, to create Indicator versions for the specialized schools and centers, (i.e. special education, alternative education, career and technical education, pre-schools and adult education). This would require involvement by individuals who are considered "expert" in those areas.

Begin to include the Office of School Improvement staff in the ongoing refinement of the Education YES! process and Indicators.

Long-term Recommendations (Beyond Spring 2005)

Time and budget did not allow an examination of the evidence data from the SSA. MDE should undertake a qualitative analysis of the evidence provided by schools in the January 2003 SSA submission. Select a set of 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low' performing schools, based on MEAP Status and Change, and perform on-site reviews of SSA ratings and evidence vis-à-vis on-site reality. Use the results of this analysis and review to expand the rubrics in the SSA with more detailed and informative descriptions, (i.e. provide well-crafted exemplars for each component or criteria for each level of performance).

An analysis of the Evidence from the Indicators should also provide additional information in helping to determine future needs of the buildings experiencing difficulty. Providing examples of schools that successfully achieved a score of A or B on Status, Change and the Indicators may identify processes and activities that would be helpful for struggling schools. Sorting these "exemplars" by school size/demographics would help to match similar building contexts.

The design and development of new SSA versions that give guidance and accountability to other portions of Michigan's educational community such as: districts, ISDs, Department of Education, Communities and parents would move Education YES! into a truly holistic accountability model.

Education YES! Revised (Now What?) - Measurement

Short-term Recommendations (Spring 2004 Data Collection and Reporting)

Consideration should be given to increasing the range for the "safe harbor" calculation for Change at the upper ends of the student achievement spectrum. Currently, this calculation has unintended negative consequences for schools that display high student achievement.

Re-evaluation of the Change calculation must be done to avoid assigning a grade of F to buildings that have slight drops in MEAP scores.

Further analysis of the schools that have scored low on the Change score as well as on the Status score has implications for school improvement efforts. It indicates that low achieving buildings are not "getting better". Further analysis of this data may have implications for school improvement efforts for these buildings.

Intermediate-term Recommendations (Spring 2005 Data Collection and Reporting)

Remove component 4.1, Instructional Staff Qualification and replace with a direct calculation based on certification, assignment codes, and highly qualified status information from MEIS.

Convene a study group to determine the truly informative data in MEIS. Establish a schedule for bringing this data into MI-Plan and using it to inform Education YES!

Develop / expand data collection in MI-Plan perceptual surveys to include administrators. Minimal teacher, student and parent surveys already exist that are aligned to the Education YES! indicators. Strengthen this alignment and connection. Develop contextual surveys as a means to collecting information about important school processes. Maintain the alignment of these surveys with the Education YES! criteria.

It may be beneficial to do a comparison of the buildings that did not make AYP and consider their Education YES! score profile.

Compilation of evidence "profiles" of schools that did well on all components of Education YES! in order to create exemplars would be helpful for those engaged in working in the area of school improvement. This information could be organized around other factors such as building size and/or level, SES, minority population, etc. so that buildings could be "matched" as they look at exemplars.

Long-term Recommendations (Beyond Spring 2005)

- Develop reliable and valid ways to measure Educational Leadership, Core Academic Processes, and Supporting Processes.
- Develop / expand data collection from administrators, teachers and students around the indicators.

Align as much of the data collection required of buildings to minimize redundancy at the building and district level. Creating compatible databases that can interact will be critical in this process.

It would be helpful if the state would take a leadership role in helping to develop a data warehouse and/or support a data warehouse network through the ISDs to assist districts in the collection, use and analysis of data. Providing this service statewide would help to equalize access to districts without the personnel or capacity to pursue this option on their own, thus are not able to efficiently make use of data. It would also help to standardize some of the information available in each district.

Education YES! Revised (Now What?) – Professional Development

Short-term Recommendations (Spring 2004 Data Collection and Reporting)

- Training for ISD and LEA staff to clarify the indicators and any changes that occurred to Education YES! needs to occur as soon as possible and well in advance of the next data collection. Explanation and support of the use of MI-Plan as the data collection portal for the SSA is especially critical.

Intermediate-term Recommendations (Spring 2005 Data Collection and Reporting)

- Schools with a grade of A on the indicators, and a D or F on the achievement components, would benefit from professional development to better understand the indicators.
- If exemplars are created, this information could be used to assist buildings struggling to identify and make necessary changes.

Long-term Recommendations (Beyond Spring 2005)

- Ongoing training for all identified partners in the accountability/improvement system to clarify the indicators and any changes that occurred to Education YES! needs to occur well in advance of the next data collection.
- Ongoing training that enables all partners to understand the entire system and who is accountable for what.