



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TO: LEA and ISD Superintendents, Directors and Authorizers of
Public School Academies

FROM: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D. *JMH*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

DATE: July 13, 2005

SUBJ: HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

About a year ago, the Michigan Department of Education embraced the challenge to initiate a “high school redesign” project. Since then, the national call to create more rigorous learning for high school students has become a major priority for state leaders across the country. The Cherry Commission Report highlighted several goals for Michigan including the development of high school content expectations that reflect both a rigorous and a relevant curricular focus.

Dovetailing with this call to “curricular action” is Michigan’s legislative change in high school assessment. The Michigan Merit Exam is to be fully implemented by 2007 – just two years from now – and be based on rigorous high school learning standards.

Given these two catalysts, the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of School Improvement is spearheading the development of high school content expectations for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Each content area is chaired by a nationally known scholar in their respective field: Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy from Michigan State University for Mathematics, and Dr. Rebecca Sipe from Eastern Michigan University for English Language Arts. Susan Codere Kelly, on behalf of the Office of School Improvement, is coordinating the project.

A small work group of academicians has been assembled for each content area. The content expectations will be identified through this initial scholarly review. The first draft will be presented to the State Board of Education before it is provided to the field for feedback. It is anticipated that both a field and national review will begin in October of 2005. Professional organizations will be asked to provide constituent commentary as well as an open web review. Feedback will then be compiled and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final document. The final set of content expectations

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

KATHLEEN N. STRAUS – PRESIDENT • JOHN C. AUSTIN – VICE PRESIDENT
CAROLYN L. CURTIN – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
NANCY DANHOF – NASBE DELEGATE • ELIZABETH W. BAUER
REGINALD M. TURNER • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

will be presented to the Board in early 2006. Upon their approval, dissemination sessions will begin across the state.

This initiative promises to bring both rigor and relevance to Michigan's high school curriculum, the process will be both iterative and deliberate. We are confident that you will lend your expertise when asked and assist us in our efforts.

Thank you in advance for your support.