MI-Access
Functional Independence
Assessment Plan

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability

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Purpose of the Assessment Plan

This document constitutes the MI-Access Functional Independence Assessment Plan. It was created to

- provide important and pertinent background information on MI-Access, why it was developed, and how the first two MI-Access assessments—Participation and Supported Independence–were developed and implemented;

- describe what the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments look like, including who is assessed, what is assessed, the format of the assessments, the blueprints, and sample assessment items;

- enable districts, schools, special educators, and others to begin aligning curriculum and instruction as needed; and

- inform students, parents, teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, and the public about the new assessments.

> *Plan:* 1. A detailed scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of a task, goal, or objective. 2. A systematic arrangement of details; an outline or sketch.

Background on MI-Access

When it is fully implemented, MI-Access, Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program, will consist of three—or possibly four—statewide assessments (each of which is comprised of one or more components) designed specifically for students with disabilities. Students will participate in MI-Access because their Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams have determined it is *not* appropriate for them to participate in the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), even with assessment accommodations.

The three current MI-Access assessments are

- MI-Access Participation, which was administered for the first time statewide in 2002;

- MI-Access Supported Independence, which was also administered for the first time statewide in 2002; and

- MI-Access Functional Independence, which will be administered for the first time statewide to students in grades 3 through 8 in fall 2005 and students in grade 11 in spring 2006.

Why were alternate assessments needed? There are a number of reasons, all of which help to explain why MI-Access is now part of the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS).

Federal Influences

MI-Access was created, in part, to comply with several federal legislative initiatives, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and its Title programs (I–IX), and most recently the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. In different ways, these laws maintain that assessments are an integral part of educational accountability because they provide valuable information that can benefit students by regularly measuring their progress against agreed-upon standards. They also maintain that *all* students—including those with disabilities—should be part of each state's accountability system and should not be treated separately.

> *Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS):* State Board of Education-approved assessment system, comprised of three state assessment programs: (1) the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), MI-Access, and the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) for English language learners.

State Influences

MI-Access also was developed in response to various State Board of Education (SBE) policies, priorities, and goals. The two goals that related most directly to MI-Access at the time of its development called for the state to (1) increase the participation and performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessments, and (2) develop guidelines for participation in alternate assessments for students for whom participation in the MEAP was inappropriate. Furthermore, in November 2001, when the SBE adopted a policy creating the MEAS, it stated that:

> *Alternate assessments:* Assessments used to measure the learning progress and performance of students with disabilities who, according to their IEP Teams, are unable to participate in general education assessments (i.e., the MEAP).

> "It shall be the policy of the State Board of Education that each local and intermediate school district and public school academy will ensure the participation of *all* students in the Michigan Educational Assessment System."

MI-Access helps achieve the SBE's policies, priorities, and goals in a number of ways. It provides (1) access to the high standards reflected in Michigan's Model Content Standards for the general curriculum, (2) access to the statewide assessment system for students with disabilities, and (3) access to meaningful results showing student performance.

Program Purpose and Implementation

Program Purpose

The overall purpose of MI-Access is to provide teachers, parents, and others with a point-in-time picture of what students with disabilities in a certain grade know and are able to do. The activities selected for the assessments—all of which were designed with input from Michigan classroom teachers—are applicable to real-world situations; that is, they reflect the knowledge and skills students need to be successful in school and in adult life roles.

Because of the student population taking part in MI-Access, it uses a different format than most standardized assessments. MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments, for example, rely entirely on teacher observation. Students are observed as they

carry out a standard set of activities during the course of a normal school day. Then, teachers score students using a standardized scoring guide which, on some assessments, can be individualized for a particular student.

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are not based on teacher observation, but instead resemble more traditional paper and pencil tests. They incorporate a variety of assessment item formats, including multiple-choice and constructed response, but are designed in such a way that students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a manner consistent with their abilities.

> *Standardization:* In test administration, maintaining a constant testing environment and conducting the test according to detailed rules and specifications, so that testing conditions are the same for all test takers.
>
> *Taken from "Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing," American Educational Research Association.*

To ensure that MI-Access complies with state and federal legislation, all of its assessments are linked with the Model Content Standards contained in the *Michigan Curriculum Framework.* They also used components of *Addressing Unique Educational Needs of Students with Disabilities* (AUEN) as a framework for developing assessment activities and/or clarifying student populations. The AUEN was selected for use because it is one tool, or strategy, used by teachers to help students with disabilities access and make progress in the general curriculum.

Program Implementation
Given the enormity and importance of the task of developing MI-Access, the MDE divided its implementation into two phases.

First Phase of Development: Participation and Supported Independence
The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments were developed in the first phase. MI-Access *Participation* assessments are designed specifically for students who have, or function as if they have, *severe* cognitive impairment. These students are expected to require ongoing support in adulthood. They may also have both considerable cognitive and physical impairments that limit their ability to generalize or transfer learning, and thus may make determining their actual abilities and skills difficult. For that reason, MI-Access Participation focuses only on how a student responds to the *opportunity to participate* in an activity, not on how well he or she carries out that activity.

The MI-Access *Supported Independence* assessments are designed for students who have, or function as if they have, *moderate* cognitive impairment. These students are expected to require ongoing support in adulthood. They 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. The Supported Independence assessments, therefore, are designed to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Specifically, they measure how students perform certain tasks while acknowledging that they may require some allowable level of assistance to do so. (See Figure 1 for more information on the characteristics of students who would likely participate in MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments.)

In the first two years of implementation, MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments were administered once each year to students who were 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 18 years old. These ages were selected because (1) many students taking part in these assessments were not assigned a grade level, and (2) they ensured that students assessed with MI-Access were assessed with the same frequency as general education students (that is, the ages corresponded with the grades assessed by the MEAP).

Figure 1
Overview of MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence Students

AUEN Level of Independence	Student Characteristics	Anticipated Life Roles	Curriculum	Instruction	Likely State Assessment
Participation	Have, or function as if they have, severe or profound cognitive impairments that preclude their ability to (or our skills to ascertain their abilities to) generalize learning.	Are expected to participate in major adult living roles. Will require extensive, ongoing support in all areas of functioning throughout life. Will be dependent on others for most, if not all, daily living needs.	Focuses mostly on the non-core Michigan Model Content Standards (career and employability, technology, health, and physical education) and instructional strategies provided in such tools as the AUEN with ELA mathematics embedded.	Requires collaboration among teachers, parents, and therapists to determine the "maximum extent possible" concept for each student. Encourages consistent instructional focus among educators. Requires that home, school, and community work together to integrate each student as much as possible into major life roles. Includes use of assistive devices and accommodations.	MI-Access Participation
Supported Independence	Have, or function as if they have, moderate cognitive impairments that seriously impact their ability to generalize or transfer learning.	Are expected to achieve supported independence in adulthood. Will require some supervision throughout lives, but can learn skills to maximize independence.	Based on a combination of the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* core and non-core content standards, extended benchmarks, and extended grade level content expectations.	Direct instruction carried out within settings in which students are and will be expected to function.	MI-Access Supported Independence

In 2003/2004, however, MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence were converted from ages to grades in order to (1) comply with NCLB requirements, and (2) allow the proper calculation of participation rates and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). With that conversion, students in grades 4, 7, 8, and 11 were assessed since these were the grades in which English language arts and/or mathematics were assessed by the MEAP. In 2005/2006, grades 3, 5, and 6 will be added as required by federal law.

Second Phase of Development: MI-Access Functional Independence
The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are designed for students whose IEP Teams have determined it is not appropriate for them to take part in the MEAP, the MEAP with assessment accommodations, MI-Access Participation, or MI-Access Supported Independence. This primarily involves students who have, or function as if they have, *mild* cognitive impairment. They also have a limited ability to generalize learning across contexts, their learning rates are significantly slower than those of their age-level peers, they have a restricted knowledge base, they tend not to be very aware of environmental cues or details, *and* they do not learn incidentally. In adulthood, these students will most likely be able to meet their own needs and live successfully in their communities without overt support from others. It was determined that these students could benefit from an assessment containing a mix of English language arts and mathematics items presented in the contexts of daily living, employment, and community experience. (See Figure 2 for more information on the characteristics of students who would likely participate in the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments.)

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments will be implemented for the first time statewide in 2005/2006. They will be administered in the fall to students in grades 3 through 8 and in the spring to students in grade 11. As required by federal law, the assessments include

the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics. In 2007/2008, science will be assessed as well. [NOTE: While Michigan was developing the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments, students were administered the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE assessments.]

Figure 2 Overview of MI-Access Functional Independence Students					
AUEN Level of Independence	**Student Characteristics**	**Anticipated Life Roles**	**Curriculum**	**Instruction**	**Likely State Assessment**
Functional Independence	Have, or function as if they have, mild cognitive impairments that impact their ability to transfer and generalize learning across performance contexts. Learning rate is significantly slower than age-level peers (roughly one-half to three-quarters the rate). Restricted knowledge base. Tend not to be very aware of environmental cues or details. Do not learn incidentally.	Are expected to achieve a functional level of independence in adulthood.	Based on the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* content standards, extended benchmarks, and extended grade level content expectations. Focuses on basic academics, social effectiveness, health and fitness, community access and use, work, and personal and family living. Stresses minimal reliance on others and maximum functional independence.	Direct instruction and repetition with practical, authentic, and concrete experiences reflecting real world contexts. After mastery, should continue to present the concept/skill in gradually varying contexts and instructional situations to maximize knowledge/skill transfer. Includes frequent reminders to be alert to environmental cues. Highlights salient information and reduces distracting and irrelevant stimuli.	MI-Access Functional Independence Content areas: English language arts and mathematics.

Additional Assessments

The APWT suggested that, because MI-Access Functional Independence covers students with such a broad range of skills and abilities, the state may want to explore the development of additional assessments for students who may not necessarily have cognitive impairments and may be capable of transferring and generalizing learning across contexts, but their impairments—such as visual, hearing, physical, other health, and severe emotional impairments—impact their (1) opportunities to learn, (2) progress in the general education curriculum, and/or (3) ability to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. Students in this population are expected to achieve at least a functional level of independence in adulthood, but may move closer to or even achieve full independence as adults as the impact of their impairment(s) is ameliorated over time by appropriate interventions and student learning. The state is still deliberating about whether students with these characteristics may be able to successfully participate in the state's general assessment with appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations or whether additional assessments are needed.

Participation in the MEAP

While there is a clear role for alternate assessments within the state's assessment system, it is important to keep in mind that the vast majority of students with disabilities will still participate in the state's general assessment (the MEAP) with or without assessment accommodations. Alternate assessment is *not* intended for *all* students with disabilities; it is only appropriate for a small percentage of them. MI-Access also is not appropriate for Section 504 students. (See Figure 3 for more information on the characteristics of students with disabilities who would likely participate in the MEAP.)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">Figure 3
Overview of Students with Disabilities Who Would Likely Take the MEAP</th></tr>
<tr>
<th>AUEN Level of Independence</th>
<th>Student Characteristics</th>
<th>Anticipated Life Roles</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Likely State Assessment</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Independence</td>
<td>Have physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. Function in the normal range of intelligence. Have the cognitive ability to transfer or generalize learning across performance contexts. Have the capacity to apply knowledge and skills to the tasks, problems, or activities encountered in life.</td>
<td>Are expected to achieve full independence in adulthood.</td>
<td>Based on the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* content standards, benchmarks, and grade level content expectations.</td>
<td>Often requires accommodations, assistive devices, adaptive strategies, and/or technology to assure student success in the general curriculum. Needs to include knowledge and skills necessary to effectively use the above.</td>
<td>MEAP with or without accommodations.

Content Areas: English language arts and mathematics</td>
</tr>
</table>

Figure 4 shows when the existing MI-Access assessments—Participation, Supported Independence, and Functional Independence—were developed and implemented.

Figure 4: MI-Access Development Timeline

MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence

Date	Task
Statewide Implementation Winter 2002	Age 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 18 assessments completed. (Note: In 2003/2004, these assessments switched from ages to grades.)
Spring 2003-Spring 2004	Develop assessment activities for grades 3 and 6
Spring 2004	Content Advisory Committee (CAC), Sensitivity Review Committee (SRC), and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review assessment items and revise items as needed
Statewide Implementation Winter 2005	MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments in grades 3-8 and 11

MI-Access Functional Independence (ELA and Mathematics)

Date	Task
Spring/Summer 2003	Locate/develop and review reading passages for the ELA assessment
Summer 2003	Complete Draft Proposed Functional Independence Assessment Plan and item specifications
Summer 2003	Post draft proposed assessment plan for viewing
Summer 2003	Item writing begins
Early Fall 2003	Disseminate Final Proposed Functional Independence Assessment Plan for field review and input via online survey
Fall 2003	Field review of proposed assessment plan completed
Fall 2003	CAC, SRC, and TAC review assessment items
Winter 2003	MDE and advisory committees review feedback from the field and revise items as needed
Winter/Spring 2004	Assessment plan to SBE
Spring 2004	Functional Independence Item Tryouts
Summer 2004	CAC, SRC and TAC review tryout data and revise items as needed
Spring 2005	Functional Independence Pilot
Summer 2005	CAC, SRC, and TAC review pilot data and revise items as needed
Statewide Implementation Fall 2005	MI-Access Functional Independence Assessments in grades 3-8 and 11

MI-Access Functional Independence Assessment Plan Development

As a first step in developing the MI-Access Functional Independence assessment plan—and ultimately the assessments themselves—the MDE convened a plan-writing group of twenty-four educators and parents experienced in working with learners with special needs. The knowledge and expertise of Michigan educators and parents was integral to the successful development of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence Plan and assessments; therefore, it was a logical place to start for Functional Independence.

The Functional Independence Assessment Plan Writing Team (hereafter referred to as the APWT) included some members of the MI-Access Alternate Assessment Advisory Committee, some participants from MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence standard-setting panels, and additional interested and qualified stakeholders. The MDE's goal was to establish a well-balanced team of individuals representing a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experience, including general and special education teachers, parents, teacher consultants, administrators, school psychologists, and so forth. The group also was intentionally geographically and demographically diverse. (See Appendix A for a list of team members.)

> *Assessment Plan:* Much like a builder's blueprint, an assessment plan guides how an assessment is built or developed. It includes detailed information on (1) the assumptions underlying the assessment; (2) the populations and subject areas assessed; (3) the number of assessment items and their formats; (4) prototype items to guide item writers; and (5) other information clarifying how and why the assessment should be developed.

Reviewing Resources

Over the course of eleven meetings—some of which lasted several days—the APWT developed all the elements of the assessment plan. Its work was informed by the following resources.

- The *Michigan Curriculum Framework* is the foundation of local curricula in general education programs. Since the U.S. Education Department and NCLB require that states link *all* statewide assessments with the same content standards, or a subset of those standards, this document guided content development for the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments.

- The MI-CLiMB (Clarifying Language in Michigan's Benchmarks) CD-ROM was used to help the APWT better understand the benchmarks related to Michigan's Model Content Standards in the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics. The CD-ROM explained each benchmark in detail and provided example instruction and assessment strategies, concept definitions, resources, Web links, and MEAP connections. By better understanding the benchmarks, the team was better able to extend them for the student population assessed by MI-Access Functional Independence.

- The AUEN document, titled *Educational Performance Expectations for Achieving Functional Independence in Major Life Roles*, helped the team better define the student population and develop appropriate sample assessment items.

- Federal legislation, including IDEA and NCLB, was thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the assessment met all federal requirements and guidelines.

- A former statewide assessment called *Exit Performance Assessments—Educable Mental Impairment* provided a backdrop to discussions about the connection between instruction and assessment and the potential influence an effective state assessment can have on promoting systemic change.

- A review of alternate assessment efforts in other states as well as presentations of other potentially applicable assessment tools helped the team focus on its charge and begin formulating what Michigan's new assessments would look like.

Unpacking Content Standards

Once the APWT felt comfortable with the background documents and the team's overall charge, it began unpacking the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* Model Content Standards, benchmarks, and grade level content expectations (GLCEs), the latter of which were finalized mid-way through the plan development process. For years educators working with special needs populations have participated in curriculum development, which involves unpacking state content standards, constructing grade-by-grade indicators, and designing classroom instruction and assessments linked with the standards. This work, therefore, was familiar to many team members.

> ***Content Standards***: Models for the development of local district curriculum by the Michigan State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education. They represent rigorous expectations for student performance and describe the knowledge and abilities needed to be successful in today's society.

The whole team was then divided into three sub-groups, each specializing in a specific content area—English language arts (ELA), mathematics, or career and employability skills. These sub-groups were asked to go through the following seven-step process.

1. Take one content standard at a time from its assigned content area and read and discuss its meaning.

2. Beginning with the first benchmark and/or grade level content expectation (GLCE), read and underline key concepts and skills appropriate for the target student population. If a benchmark or GLCE contains no appropriate activities for the target population, skip it and go on to the next one.

3. "Extend" the benchmark and/or GLCE by rewriting or otherwise modifying it in terms of the embedded access or enabling skills needed to achieve the content standard. Ensure that the extension represents a rigorous but realistic challenge for the target population and reflects the state's high expectations for student learning.

> ***Benchmarks:*** While content standards describe what all students should know and be able to do in certain broad subject areas, benchmarks indicate what students should know and be able to do at various developmental levels (i.e., by grade or by general levels, such as early elementary, late elementary, middle school, and high school) within the content standard.

4. List related AUEN Functional Independence Performance Expectation components. (The functional contexts in AUEN relate directly to real-world activities and the adult life roles for which the target population must be prepared.)

5. Ask what kinds of real-life, hands-on activities students would need to engage in to provide evidence of proficiency in the extended benchmark and/or GLCE, and record examples of student work.

6. Consider what level assessments (state, local, or classroom) could best be used to collect evidence of competency. Record assessment strategies.

7. Continue with subsequent benchmarks and/or GLCEs, move to the next content standard, and repeat the process.

> *Grade Level Content Expectations:* Indicators of what students should know and be able to do in specific grades (3-8) within the content standard.

The decisions made by each sub-group were then turned into initial plans that guided the remainder of each group's work.

It should be noted that, during the course of developing the MI-Access Functional Independence Plan, the state revised its GLCEs—or indicators of what students should know and be able to do in specific grades. Therefore, the APWT conducted the extension process a second time. (Keep in mind that GLCEs are available only for grades 3 through 8; benchmarks are still used at the high-school level.)

Identifying Content Assessable at the State Level

After creating their initial plans, the sub-groups shifted their focus toward identifying assessment constructs within their content areas. Each subgroup considered the following:

- What will teachers and parents learn from assessment data on ELA, mathematics, and career and employability skills?

- What results/scores will be reported?

- Which of the unpacked content standards, extended benchmarks, and/or extended GLCEs can be assessed appropriately at the state level?

- How might the assessable extended benchmarks and/or extended GLCEs be assessed? What strategies could be used?

- What task/item formats and response modes might be used? Create an example.

- What practical issues are related to the proposed content (e.g., the length of the assessment, the time of administration, the costs of administration, and so forth)?

After asking and answering these questions, each sub-group began compiling a more detailed description of the assumptions underlying their particular assessment; the assessment format; the number, format, and distribution of items (often referred to as the assessment "blueprint"); the time the assessment would take; and how assessment results might be reported.

Universal Test Design

When developing their plans and blueprints, all of the sub-groups were asked to use universal design principles. "Universally designed" assessments are based on the premise that every child deserves to participate in assessment, and that assessment results should not be affected by disability, gender, race, or English language ability. In addition, universally designed assessments aim to reduce the need for assessment accommodations by removing access barriers associated with the tests themselves. (National Center for Educational Outcomes, *Universal Design Applied to Large Scale Assessments, Synthesis Report 44.*)

What does that mean in practice? There are several elements of universal design that the APWT used to prepare its plans and blueprints. Following is a brief discussion of some of them.

Accessibility: The APWT designed the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments to include a broad range of students with diverse learning needs and provide them with meaningful opportunities to demonstrate their competence using the same content standards as the general state assessment.

Accommodations: The need for assessment accommodations can be reduced if assessments are developed thoughtfully and with the broad student assessment population clearly in mind. To that end, the APWT spent considerable time trying to define and understand the student population that would be participating in MI-Access Functional Independence. Furthermore, it recommended that barriers be removed whenever possible, such as (1) using graphs or pictures only when necessary and accompanying them with verbal/textual descriptions, (2) eliminating distracting or purely decorative pictures, (3) designing the assessments to be administered in multiple, short sessions to reduce the need for extra breaks and/or extended time, and (4) allowing multiple access and response modes to further reduce

> ***Assessment Accommodation***: An assessment procedure that is intended to minimize the impact of a student's disability on his/her performance on the assessment. Decisions regarding accommodations should be made on an individual, case-by-case basis, and should be based on the relative appropriateness to a disability and the impact the disability has on the student.

the need for assessment accommodations. At every turn, efforts to reduce barriers were explored to ensure that students would have every opportunity to participate fully and meaningfully in the assessments.

Clear Constructs: The APWT made a concerted effort to remove what the National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) refers to as non-construct-oriented cognitive, sensory, emotional, and physical barriers. In other words, it wanted to make sure that students could participate in the assessments in the same way they participate in instruction. For example, if students access print by having it read to them during instruction, then they should be able to have the assessments read to them without affecting the validity of their scores. The intent of the APWT was to develop proposed assessments that measure a student's ability to comprehend what is read, not how he or she obtains the information. This principle was applied to all content areas, including mathematics and career and employability skills.

Instructions and Procedures: As assessment items were developed, the APWT recommended that simple, clear, and intuitive instructions and procedures be used. It also recommended that item writers employ consistent response modes (for example, if a student is asked to circle the correct choice in one item, they should not be asked to check a box or cross out the correct choice in another). In addition, it recommended that all directions given to assessment administrators be clear and direct so that student knowledge would be assessed as opposed to the administrator's ability to discern meaning from the instructions.

Reading and Comprehension: The APWT recommended that Gaster and Clark's (1995) readability guidelines be used for all MI-Access Functional Independence assessments. The guidelines include

- using simple, clear, commonly used words;

- eliminating unnecessary words;

- clearly defining technical terms when they must be used;

- breaking compound complex sentences down into several short sentences;

- stating the most important ideas first;

- introducing one idea, fact, or process at a time;

- developing ideas logically;

- making all noun-pronoun relationships clear;

- placing important times and settings at the beginning of the sentence;

- sequencing steps in the exact order of occurrence in instruction; and

- if processes are described, illustrating and labeling them simply and placing them close to the text they support.

The APWT maintained that using these guidelines, among others, would help ensure that the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments would measure student knowledge of the subject matter as opposed to their reading ability.

While there are other universal design principles that the APWT followed, these examples demonstrate the group's attempt to ensure that the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are accessible, are designed to meet the unique and varying needs of the student population being assessed, and yet are still objective and valid.

Underlying Student and Assessment Assumptions

While each sub-group was asked to develop best practice assumptions for its content area, there are some underlying assumptions that cut across all content areas. For example, the APWT noted that all students taking the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are expected to achieve at least a functional level of independence in adulthood. As described in the AUEN document called *Educational Performance Expectations for Achieving Functional Independence in Major Life Roles*, instruction, curriculum, and assessment for these students should reflect the desire for them to live productive and fulfilling lives with the greatest degree of independence and personal decision-making possible, with the understanding that full independence may be unrealistic. All educational efforts on behalf of these students, therefore, should stress minimal reliance on others and maximum independence.

Furthermore it is understood that these students need instruction in basic academics, but their curriculum should also focus on social effectiveness, health and fitness, community access and use, work, and personal and family living. For that reason, the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are all provided within the contexts of daily living activities and skills, community experience and participation, and employment.

In addition to being provided in context, instruction for students participating in MI-Access Functional Independence assessments should be direct. This student population typically does not learn through incidental contact as many others do. They particularly need direct instruction when it comes to social skills and abstract ideas. For example, many students in this population fail to notice social cues and are often surprised when others react negatively to their overtures, such as hugging a stranger. The Functional Independence student may not notice the other person's discomfort and has to be taught directly to observe their reactions and understand and respect personal space.

The MI-Access Functional Independence student population also does not generalize well, meaning that a skill learned in one area may not necessarily transfer to another. For example,

the rule to speak in a quiet voice in the student's classroom may not transfer when he or she is somewhere else in the school building. The rule is understood only in the context of his or her *own* room.

In summary, students in this assessment population need direct instruction, guided practice, extended learning time, and instruction that includes age appropriate, concrete, and authentic materials and experiences in settings in which the students are expected to function. The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments, consequently, are designed to reflect these unique instructional approaches.

The assessments also were built on the underlying assumption that the state's content standards will drive curriculum. Therefore, all students—including those with disabilities—must be provided opportunities to achieve those standards, and their progress must be followed and evaluated at the classroom, building, district, and where appropriate, state level.

Following are the detailed assessment descriptions that were developed by each APWT sub-group. They are the cornerstones of the MI-Access Functional Independence Assessment Plan, and give a clear view of what the assessment for each content area looks like.

Description of the MI-Access Functional Independence English Language Arts Assessment

Assumptions Underlying the English Language Arts (ELA) Assessments

Underlying the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments is the assumption that an effective state-level alternate assessment should

- evaluate the communication skills that students with disabilities need to acquire meaning from the printed word;

- evaluate the skills they need to effectively express ideas;

- assess these skills within the contexts of daily living, community experience, and employment; and

- cover the same knowledge and skills currently evaluated through the MEAP, albeit in slightly different ways.

With that premise in mind, the ELA sub-group recommended that the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments have two primary areas of focus: accessing print and expressing ideas. With regard to accessing print, students are assessed on their ability to gain meaning from print, including word knowledge and text comprehension. With regard to expressing ideas, students are asked to respond to a prompt and then evaluated on their ability to (1) focus on the topic; (2) develop and organize their ideas; and (3) appropriately use rudimentary conventions.

While many students taking the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments will read text passages and items and prepare written responses, it is widely acknowledged that this population also uses the language arts modes of listening, viewing, speaking, and visual

representation (such as drawing) to successfully navigate text. Therefore, the needs of non-reading and non-writing students are accommodated on the ELA assessments.

Constructs Assessed

The MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments cover much of the same content as the MEAP, but in a somewhat different way. For example, instead of assessing a student's ability to *decode* print, these assessments measure a student's ability to *access* print in the same manner that the student accesses print during instruction. Similarly, instead of measuring a student's ability in the area of *written* expression, these assessments measure a student's ability to *express* meaning, again in whatever form he or she typically uses to express thoughts and ideas in the classroom.

Furthermore, many of the standard and nonstandard accommodations students with disabilities need to participate effectively in the MEAP ELA assessments are not needed to participate in MI-Access Functional Independence. This is because the latter assessment is universally designed, which means it was developed in such a way that the need for accommodations was reduced, if not eliminated, by removing barriers to accessing the test ahead of time.

Grades Assessed

As required by federal law (NCLB), the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments are administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The student population taking part in these assessments is described in detail in Figure 2 on page 6.

ELA Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Content Expectations

In the *Michigan Curriculum Framework*, there are twelve English language arts content standards—or broad curriculum statements common to all grades—that describe what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school.

Following each of the twelve content standards are 3 to 8 benchmarks that describe the knowledge and skills students must have in order to achieve particular content standards. The benchmarks are not written at individual grade levels, but instead are written for grade-level *clusters*, including early elementary, later elementary, middle school, and high school.

Over the past six years, school districts across the state have worked to align their local language arts curricula to the state's content standards and benchmarks. In most cases, their efforts involved the process of converting the state's grade-cluster benchmarks into expectations specific to each grade level. With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states were required to do the same—that is, they were mandated to develop *statewide* grade level content expectations (GLCEs) in ELA and mathematics.

In July 2002, a committee of Michigan ELA leaders studied more than 100 local and intermediate district, state, national, and international curriculum documents in order to develop statewide GLCEs. Based on extensive feedback, these grade-level "targets" were further refined and now truly represent not only the theoretical research-based content of English language arts, but also the common views and best instructional practices of exemplary literacy teachers in Michigan.

The new GLCEs represent a more discrete layer of learning at each grade level and are meant to assist teachers in better preparing students for grade-level assessments. They capture the rich content of the benchmarks; eliminate much of the redundancy inherent within them; reduce

them in number; and express in precise and measurable terms what students in grades Kindergarten through 8 should know and be able to do. (GLCEs are not yet developed for high school.)

To develop ELA assessments appropriate for the Functional Independence student population, the ELA APWT sub-group "extended" the ELA GLCEs (or benchmarks for high school students). The extended GLCEs (EGLCEs) and extended benchmarks (EBs) were then compiled into tables. The first column in the table lists the GLCEs/benchmarks for the general population of students at a specific grade level, the second column describes the EGLCEs/EBs (which represent a rigorous but realistic challenge for the target population and reflect the state's high expectations for student learning), and the third column indicates whether the EGLCEs/EBs are more appropriately assessed at the state level or the local education agency/intermediate school district level**.** (Please note that large-scale assessment is not appropriate for assessing many of the EGLCEs/EBs. It *is* appropriate and expected, however, that ALL of the EGLCEs/EBs will be taught and assessed consistently at the district and classroom levels.) The grade-specific EGLCE/EB tables are posted on the MI-Access Web page at **www.mi.gov/mi-access**. Scroll down to "Functional Independence," and click on "MI-Access EGLCEs and EBs for Functional Independence Students."

As mentioned earlier, the state revised the GLCEs during the assessment development process; therefore, the APWT sub-groups "extended" them a second time during the course of their work.

Assessment Format

While item difficulty varies for each grade-level MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessment, the general organization of the assessments is similar. They are based on three adult life contexts (community experience, daily living skills, and employment) and comprised of three distinct components (word recognition, text comprehension, and expressing ideas). The components are described below.

Word Recognition: Part one of the assessment is called Word Recognition. Students answer multiple-choice items that measure their ability to access or recognize highly familiar and frequently encountered words in print.

Text Comprehension: Part two of the assessment is called Text Comprehension. Students access three types of passages (narrative, informational, and functional) that are based on the three adult life contexts. For each passage, students answer multiple choice items that measure their comprehension skills.

Expressing Ideas: Part three of the assessment is called Expressing Ideas. Students respond to a prompt by writing, drawing, dictating, or using a combination of the three response modes. Responses are scored according to a four-point, holistic rubric that evaluates students' ability to focus on the prompt topic and develop and organize their ideas in a logical manner.

The ELA assessments include both core and embedded items. Core items are those upon which students' scores are based. Embedded items are those that are placed in the assessment for field testing purposes to gather statistical data; performance on these items does not impact a student's score. Each multiple-choice item on the Word Recognition and Text Comprehension components is worth one point; each Expressing Ideas prompt is worth up to four points.

To better understand what the overall ELA assessments look like, the ELA APWT sub-group prepared a sample assessment booklet template (see Figure 5). It pertains specifically to grades 4 and 5, and includes the content presented in the *Grades 4/5 Sample Assessment Booklet*, which is available for download on the MI-Access Web page (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**) and at the MI-Access Information Center (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**). Templates for the other grades being assessed are included in Appendix B, and are also presented in sample assessment booklets available at the same Web addresses.

Figure 5
English Language Arts Sample Assessment Booklet Template for Grades 4 and 5

ACCESSING PRINT		EXPRESSING IDEAS
Part 1: Word Recognition Students will access multiple-choice questions and select the word that correctly completes the sentence from three answer choices. **20 Points** *Plus 4 embedded field-test items*	**Part 2: Text Comprehension** Students will access three types of passages (narrative, informational, functional) and respond to 7 multiple-choice questions about each. Each question will have three answer choices. **21 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test passage and 7 items*	**Part 3: Prompt and 4-Point Rubric** Students will respond to a prompt through the mode(s) of writing, drawing, and/or orally dictating. **4 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test prompt*
Example: Item 8, Page 6 Follow the rules on the school bus. Do not _____ while the bus is moving. A. look B.* stand C. read	**Functional Passage:** Page 16 *French Toast* Passage is based on "daily living skills" adult life context. Students learn history of and how to make French toast. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc.	**Prompt**: Page 42 What job would you like to have when you grow up? Tell three reasons why you would like to have that job. **Embedded Prompt**: Page 46 TO BE DETERMINED **Scoring Rubric**: Page 47 **NOTE**: The rubric was revised in June 2005 to include only writing and drawing. **Score Point 4** The student's response will: • focus on the topic • develop ideas with appropriate details and examples • show organization of ideas • reflect some accuracy in the use of conventions Sample student responses at each of the four score points begin on page 48 of the ELA Sample Assessment Booklet.
	Narrative Passage: Page 22 *A Trip to the Firehouse* Passage is based on the "community experience" adult life context. Students go on field trip to a firehouse and learn about fire safety. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions that measure sequence and plot elements, (i.e., characters, problem, setting, etc.).	
	Embedded Passage: Page 34 **Embedded Passage and items (to be determined)**	

Assessment Blueprint

The purpose of a blueprint is to show how many assessment items are included in an assessment, which EGLCE and/or EB is reported, the assessment format, and the approximate amount of time it will take to administer each component of the assessment. The ELA blueprints developed by the APWT ELA sub-group are captured in Figures 6, 7, and 8. Please note that the assessments for each grade are divided into two major sections–*Accessing Print* and *Expressing Ideas*.

<div style="text-align:center">

ACCESSING PRINT

</div>

Accessing print involves two primary skill areas: word recognition/vocabulary (Figure 6) and text comprehension (Figure 7). For text comprehension, each of the passages used in the Functional Independence ELA assessments consists of content, vocabulary, and language structures that are appropriate for the age and interest levels of the students being assessed. The readability for all passages has been determined by the professional judgment of item writers, content editors, and item review committees composed of Michigan educators. In addition, *Degrees of Reading Power*® (DRP®) software has been used to analyze the difficulty levels of the passages. All text comprehension passages were written to approximate the word count and DRP ranges in Figure 7.

Figure 6
Accessing Print Blueprint: Word Recognition/Vocabulary (by grade)

Grades	Item Type	Item Format	Example	Estimated Administration Time	PRIMARY EGLCE and EB	Total Points
3	20 high-frequency function words, plus 4 embedded field test items.	Multiple choice – pictured word and 3 distracters each	[Picture of egg] Teacher or student reads, "This is an ____." Student circles "orange, apple, *egg."	45 minutes	WS.02.EG05	20
4/5	20 high-frequency function words, plus 4 embedded field test items.	Multiple choice, 3 distracters each	Students are given a sentence with a blank. They use context to select appropriate fit.	45 minutes	**Grade 4:** WS.03.EG05 **Grade 5:** WS.04.EG04	20
6/7/8	20 high-frequency function words, plus 4 embedded field test items.	Multiple choice, 3 distracters each	Students are given a sentence or two with a blank. They use context to select appropriate fit.	45 minutes	**Grade 6:** WS.05.EG03 **Grade 7:** WS.06.EG03 **Grade 8:** WS.07.EG03	20
11	20 high-frequency function words, plus 4 embedded field test items.	Multiple choice, 3 distracters each	Students are given a sentence or two with a blank. They use context to select appropriate fit.	45 minutes	WS.11.EB.03	20

Figure 7
Accessing Print Blueprint: Text Comprehension (by grade)

Grades	# of Passages	Difficulty Level*	Narrative Length (# of words)	Informational /Functional Length (# of words)	Item Format	Estimated Time	PRIMARY EGLCE & EB	Points
3	Students access 3 passages of different types (narrative, functional, and informational) related to one adult life context, plus one embedded field test passage.	35-45 DRP Units	200-275	100-175	7 multiple-choice questions, 3 concrete distracters for each passage	75 minutes	WS.02.EG08 NT.02.EG03 NT.02.EG04 IT.02.EG01 IT.02.EG02 IT.02.EG03 CM.02.EG02 CM.02.EG03	21
4/5	Students access 3 passages of different types (narrative, functional, and informational) related to one adult life context, plus one embedded field test passage.	40-50 DRP Units	225-300	150-225	7 multiple-choice questions, 3 concrete distracters for each passage	75 minutes	**Grade 4**: WS.03.EG06 NT.03.EG02 NT.03.EG04 IT.03.EG01 IT.03.EG02 IT.03.EG03 CM.03.EG01 CM.03.EG02 **Grade 5**: WS.04.EG05 NT.04.EG03 NT.04.EG04 IT.04.EG01 IT.04.EG02 IT.04.EG03 CM.04.EG01 CM.04.EG02	21
6/7/8	Students access 3 passages of different types (narrative, functional, and informational) related to one adult life context, plus one embedded field test passage.	45-55 DRP Units	250-325	200-275	7 multiple-choice questions, 3 concrete distracters for each passage	75 minutes	**Grade 6**: WS.05.EG05 NT.05.EG03 NT.05.EG04 IT.05.EG01 IT.05.EG02 IT.05.EG03 CM.05.EG01 CM.05.EG02 **Grade 7**: WS.06.EG05 NT.06.EG03 NT.06.EG04 IT.06.EG01 IT.06.EG02 IT.06.EG03 CM.06.EG01 CM.06.EG02 **Grade 8**: WS.07.EG05 NT.07.EG03 NT.07EG04 IT.07.EG01 IT.07.EG02 IT.07.EG03 CM.07.EG01 CM.07.EG02	21
11	Students access 3 passages of different types (narrative, functional, and informational) related to one adult life context, plus one embedded field test passage.	50-60 DRP Units	275-350	250-325	7 multiple-choice questions, 3 distracters for each passage	75 minutes	WS.11.EB07 NT.11.EB02 NT.11.EB03 NT.11.EB04 IT.11.EB01 IT.11.EB02 IT.11.EB03 CM.11.EB01 CM.11.EB02	21

DRP = Degrees of Reading Power® The DRP Scale of Readability ranges from 0 to 100 units, with higher values indicating more difficult material. The DRP Readability Analysis Service computes the readability of continuous prose material in DRP units.

Figure 8
Expressing Ideas Blueprint

Grades	Prompts	Rubric	Estimated Administration Time	PRIMARY EGLCE and EB	Points
3	Students respond to one practical, concrete prompt related to an adult life context, plus one embedded field-test prompt.	4-point holistic rubric.* Evaluation of on-topic focus, development, logical organization, and attention to conventions.	30 minutes	GN.02.EG01 GN.02.EG03	4
4/5	Students respond to one practical, concrete prompt related to an adult life context, plus one embedded field-test prompt.	4-point holistic rubric.* Evaluation of on-topic focus, development, logical organization, and attention to conventions.	30 minutes	**Grade 4:** GN.03.EG01 GN.03.EG03 **Grade 5:** GN.04.EG01 GN.04.EG03	4
6/7/8	Students respond to one practical, concrete prompt related to an adult life context, plus one embedded field-test prompt.	4-point holistic rubric.* Evaluation of on-topic focus, development, logical organization, and attention to conventions.	30 minutes	**Grade 6:** GN.05.EG01 GN.05.EG03 **Grade 7:** GN.06.EG01 GN.06.EG02 **Grade 8:** GN.07.EG01 GN.07.EG02	4
11	Students respond to one practical, concrete prompt related to an adult life context, plus one embedded field-test prompt.	4-point holistic rubric.* Evaluation of on-topic focus, development, logical organization, and attention to conventions.	30 minutes	GN.11.EB01 GN.11.EB02	4

* See Appendix B for scoring rubric

Assessment Administration

In the past, the MI-Access assessment window ran from the last two weeks in February through the month of March. Starting in 2005/2006, students in grades 3-8 will be assessed in the fall and students in grade 11 will be assessed in the spring. The assessment window will open for six weeks.

It is estimated that the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments will take about 150 minutes, divided into three separate sessions—one each for Word Recognition, Text Comprehension, and Expressing Ideas. Assessment administrators, however, will be allowed to determine how much time to dedicate to assessment administration and how much of the assessment to administer at one time.

Assessment Results

Each ELA assessment has a total value of 45 points. Students receive one overall score for ELA, as well as a score for *Accessing Print* (which itself has two sub-scores—one for Word Recognition and one for Text Comprehension) and *Expressing Ideas*.

Sample Assessment Items

Sample assessment booklets have been developed to show the types of items that are included in the MI-Access Functional Independence ELA assessments. The sample booklets are available on the MI-Access Web page (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**) and at the MI-Access Information Center (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**).

Description of the MI-Access Functional Independence Mathematics Assessment

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Assumptions Underlying the Mathematics Assessments

Underlying the MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments is the assumption that, in order to be effective and meaningful, a state-level alternate assessment should

- evaluate the mathematical concepts and procedures that students with disabilities need to effectively solve problems;

- present those problems within the real-world contexts of daily living, community experience, and employment; and

- cover the same knowledge and skills currently evaluated by the general state assessment (the MEAP), albeit in slightly different ways.

With that premise in mind, the APWT mathematics sub-group recommended that the MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments have four overarching areas of focus: (1) numbers, (2) data analysis, (3) geometry, and (4) measurement.

Also underlying the MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments is the assumption that, with mathematics, it is particularly important to present concepts that students have mastered through gradually varying instruction and contexts in order to maximize their knowledge and skill transfer. For this reason, mathematics instruction—and, hence, mathematics assessment—should ideally move from a skills focus at the elementary level, to a skill application focus at the middle school level, and ultimately to an application and problem-solving focus at the high school level.

Within problem solving, instruction should focus primarily on step-by-step procedures, rather than on mastering an array of splinter skills. Unfortunately, due to the nature of large-scale testing, statewide assessment items often are limited (and necessarily so) to assessing individual skills. It is assumed, therefore, that classroom-level instruction and assessments will include synthesis and real-world application of skills.

Finally, it is understood that the MI-Access Functional Independence student population accesses information—including mathematical information and concepts—in a variety of ways. While some students will read questions and record responses themselves, others will use listening, viewing, speaking, and visual representation (such as drawing) skills to navigate the assessment. Therefore, the mathematics assessments will pay close attention to the needs of non-reading and non-writing students, and will be designed in such a way that they measure a

student's knowledge of mathematical concepts as opposed to his or her reading and/or writing ability.

Constructs Assessed

The MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments assess much of the same content as the MEAP. There are differences, however, in the number of items used and the time allocated for completing the assessment. In addition, many of the standard and nonstandard accommodations that students with disabilities need to participate fully in the MEAP are not needed to participate in MI-Access Functional Independence. This is because the latter assessment is universally designed, which means it was developed in such a way that the need for accommodations was reduced, if not eliminated, by removing barriers to accessing the test ahead of time.

Grades Assessed

As required by federal law (NCLB), the MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments are administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The student population taking part in these assessments is described in detail in Figure 2 on page 6.

Mathematics Strands, Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Content Expectations

Unlike the content area of English language arts, which is organized in the *Michigan Curriculum Framework* by content standards, mathematics is organized first by strands. These strands describe what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from college.

The strands are further broken down into

- content standards—or broad curriculum statements common to all grades—that describe what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school, and

- benchmarks that describe the knowledge and skills students must have in order to achieve particular content standards. The benchmarks are not written at individual grade levels, but instead are written for grade-level *clusters*, including early elementary, later elementary, middle school, and high school.

Over the past six years, school districts across the state have worked to align their local mathematics curricula to the state's strands, content standards, and benchmarks. In most cases, their efforts involved the process of converting cluster-level expectations (benchmarks) into expectations specific to each grade level. With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states were required to do the same—that is, they were mandated to develop expectations for every grade assessed at the state level in the content areas of ELA and mathematics.

In July 2002, a committee of Michigan mathematics leaders studied more than 100 local and intermediate district, state, national, and international curriculum documents in order to develop grade level content expectations (GLCEs) for the state assessment program. Based on extensive feedback, these grade-level "targets" were further refined and represent both the theoretical research-based content of mathematics, and the common views and best instructional practices of exemplary teachers in Michigan.

The new GLCE's represent a more discrete layer of learning at each grade level and are meant to assist teachers in better preparing students for grade-level assessments. They capture the rich content of the benchmarks; eliminate much of the redundancy inherent within them; reduce them in number; and express in precise and measurable terms what students in grades Kindergarten through 8 should know and be able to do. (GLCEs are not yet developed for high school; instead, benchmarks continue to be used.)

To develop mathematics assessments appropriate for the Functional Independence student population, the mathematics APWT sub-group "extended" the mathematics GLCEs (or benchmarks for high school students). The extended GLCEs (EGLCEs) and extended benchmarks (EBs) were then compiled into tables. The first column in the table describes the EGLCEs and EBs (which represent a rigorous but realistic challenge for the target population and reflect the state's high expectations for student learning), and the second column indicates whether they are more appropriately assessed at the state level or at the local education agency/intermediate school district level. (Please note that large-scale assessment is not appropriate for assessing many of the EGLCEs/EBs. It *is* appropriate and expected, however, that ALL of the EGLCEs/EBs will be taught and assessed consistently at the district and classroom levels.) The grade-specific EGLCE/EB tables are posted on the MI-Access Web page at **www.mi.gov/mi-access**. Scroll down to "Functional Independence," and click on "MI-Access EGLCEs and EBs for Functional Independence Students."

As mentioned earlier, the state revised its GLCEs during the assessment development process; therefore, the APWT sub-groups "extended" them a second time during the course of their work. At the same time, the state collapsed and renamed some of the mathematics strands, making it difficult to demonstrate a clear line of progression from strand to content standard to benchmark to GLCE to EBs and EGLCEs. The APWT has done the best it can, however, to show which extended GLCEs, benchmarks, standards, and strands are assessed.

Assessment Format
While item difficulty varies on specific grade-level MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments, they generally are designed the same way.

- All questions/items are provided in a real-world context.

- Hands-on materials or objects—such as coins, clocks, and so forth—may be used as long as the material or object does NOT change the nature of a question or elicit a different response.

- Any data, tables, charts, advertisements, and/or text that are necessary for a question are provided as part of the item, not supplied by the teacher.

- The use of calculators is permitted, although no items are written to be calculator dependent.

Assessment Blueprint
The purpose of a blueprint is to show how many assessment items are included in an assessment, in this case, by strand and topic. Two tables were created to provide this information as it relates to mathematics: Figure 9 shows the blueprint for the grade 3 through 8 assessments, and Figure 10 shows the blueprint for the high school (grade 11) assessment.

It is important to note that (1) all mathematics items are multiple-choice, (2) each item has three answer choices from which students may choose, and (3) it is estimated that the assessments take between 40 and 90 minutes to complete, depending on a student's grade. Assessment administrators, however, are allowed to determine how much time to dedicate to assessment administration and how much of the assessment to administer at one time.

Figure 9
Mathematics Blueprint: Grades 3-8

Mathematics Strands and Topics	Number of Items Assessed by Grade *(all items are multiple-choice with three answer choices)*					
	3rd	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**
1. Numbers and Operations						
Count, write and order whole numbers	10	10	10	11	7	6
Compute with whole numbers	N/A	6	4	4	6	3
Fractions and decimals	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	5
Problem solving and estimation	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	4	3
2. Algebra						
Expressions and equations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
3. Measurement						
Measure and use units	5	5	6	8	8	8
Money	3	3	4	4	4	2
4. Geometry						
Identify and describe shapes	6	2	2	2	1	N/A
Patterns	3	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Use maps and grids	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	3
5. Data Analysis						
Explore data	3	2	2	3	3	3
Number of Core Items	30	30	30	35	35	35
Number of Embedded Items (which do not impact scores)	8	8	8	10	10	10
Total Number of Items on Assessment	38	38	38	45	45	45
Estimated Time for Administration (in minutes)	*40*	*40*	*40*	*60*	*60*	*60*

Assessment Administration
In the past, the MI-Access assessment window ran from the last two weeks in February through the month of March. Starting in 2005/2006, students in grades 3-8 will be assessed in the fall and students in grade 11 will be assessed in the spring. The assessment window will be open for six weeks.

Assessment Results
Each mathematics multiple-choice assessment item has a value of one point. Total points for the assessments, therefore, range from 30 to 40 points depending on a student's grade. (These scores are based only on student performance on the core items. Embedded items are not included in a student's overall score.) Students receive one overall score for mathematics as well as sub-scores for each strand assessed.

Sample Assessment Items
Sample assessment booklets have been developed to show the types of items that are included in the MI-Access Functional Independence mathematics assessments. The sample booklets are available on the MI-Access Web page (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**) and at the MI-Access Information Center (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**).

Figure 10
Mathematics Blueprint: High School (Grade 11)

Mathematics Strands and Topics	Number of Items Assessed *(all items are multiple-choice with three answer choices)*
1. Patterns and Relationships	
Patterns	4
2. Geometry and Measurement	
Measure and use units	10
Money	2
Use maps and grids	4
3. Data Analysis	
Explore data	2
4. Number Sense and Numeration	
Count, write and order whole numbers	4
Compute with whole numbers	N/A
Fractions, decimals and percentages	8
Problem solving and estimation	3
5. Algebra	
Expressions and equations	3
Number of Core Items Assessed	40
Number of Embedded Items (which do not impact scores)	10
Total Number of Items on Assessment	50
Estimated Time for Administration (in minutes)	*90*

Description of the Proposed MI-Access Functional Independence Career and Employability Skills Assessment

There was a section on Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) in the first draft of the assessment plan (Summer/Fall 2003), which was posted on the MDE Web site for field review. However, due to capacity and cost constraints, it was later determined that this portion of the assessment would NOT be developed.

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments still comply with NCLB requirements because they cover the mandatory content areas of ELA and mathematics (and in 2007/2008 will cover science). In addition, because many of the items on the ELA and mathematics assessments are presented in the context of employment and because C&ES Content Standard 1—which relates to academics—is also covered in the ELA and mathematics portions of the assessment, much of the knowledge and many of the skills the APWT believed were necessary for students to become functionally independent adults in the area of C&ES are, in fact, still being assessed.

*Like the ELA and mathematics sub-groups, the C&ES sub-group went through the process of extending the C&ES benchmarks to represent a rigorous but realistic challenge for the target assessment population and reflect the state's high expectations for student learning. The extensions are posted on the MI-Access Web page (**www.mi.gov/mi-access**, scroll down to "Functional Independence," and click on "MI-Access EGLCEs and EBs for Functional Independence Students") and may prove useful to educators as they strive to develop curriculum and refine instruction for their functional independence students.*

APPENDIX A:
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APPENDIX B:
ELA Expressing Ideas Scoring Rubric

	Writing	Drawing
4	The writing focuses on the topic. The topic may not be explicitly stated, but can be easily inferred by the reader. The text includes appropriate details and/or examples based on the student's prior knowledge and experience. There is a clear organizational structure with transitions between ideas, resulting in a unified whole. The writing demonstrates use of mostly precise word choice and syntax. Errors in language conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) do not interfere with understanding.	The drawing focuses on the topic. Pertinent details and/or examples based on the student's prior knowledge and experience are: (1) clearly present in the drawing; (2) present in the drawing and enhanced through written explanation by the student and/or transcribed oral explanation by the assessment administrator; or (3) provided solely through written and/or transcribed oral explanation. The visual text presents a logical organization and arrangement of figures. Errors in language and visual conventions (e.g., composition, perspective, shape, and clarity) do not interfere with understanding.
3	The writing is mostly on topic. The topic may not be explicitly stated, but can be inferred with little effort by the reader. There is some development of the topic with appropriate details and/or examples. The text reflects a mostly organized structure and may include transitions between ideas. The writing demonstrates some attention to word choice and syntax. Errors in language conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) may slightly interfere with understanding.	The drawing is mostly on topic. Some details and/or examples are (1) present in the drawing; (2) mostly present in the drawing and supported through written and/or transcribed oral explanation; or (3) are provided solely through written and/or transcribed oral explanation. The visual text presents an attempt at logical organization and arrangement of figures. Errors in language and visual conventions (e.g., composition, perspective, shape, and clarity) may slightly interfere with understanding.
2	The writing is somewhat on topic. If not explicitly stated, the topic may not be easily inferred. There is limited development with simplistic details and/or examples. The focus may wander. The writing lacks a clear organizational structure, and ideas may be repetitive. Errors in language conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) may make understanding difficult.	The drawing is somewhat on topic, but is developed with limited details and/or examples that are (1) present in the drawing; (2) present in the drawing and supported through minimal written and/or transcribed oral explanation; or (3) presented solely through minimal written and/or transcribed oral explanation. The visual text lacks a clear structure and arrangement of figures. Errors in language and visual conventions (e.g., composition, perspective, shape, and clarity) may make understanding difficult.
1	The writing shows some evidence of an attempt to respond to the prompt, although there is little or no development of the topic and little direction. The vocabulary may be limited to one or two words, not a complete sentence. The text may show minimal sound/letter correspondence and use of language conventions. Errors may make understanding nearly impossible.	The drawing shows some evidence of an attempt to respond to the prompt, yet it presents little or no development of the topic and is supported with little to no written or transcribed oral explanation. The visual text lacks direction or organization. Errors in language and/or visual conventions (e.g., composition, perspective, shape, and clarity) may make understanding nearly impossible.

Not ratable if:
A – off topic, **B** – illegible, **C** – written in a language other than English, **D –** blank/refused to respond

APPENDIX C:
ELA SAMPLE ASSESSMENT BOOKLET TEMPLATES

Grade 3 English Language Arts Sample Assessment Booklet Template

ACCESSING PRINT		EXPRESSING IDEAS
Part 1: Word Recognition Students will access multiple-choice questions and select the word that correctly completes the sentence from three answer choices. **20 Points** *Plus 4 embedded field-test items*	**Part 2: Text Comprehension** Students will access three types of passages (narrative, informational, functional) and respond to 7 multiple-choice questions about each. Each question will have three answer choices. **21 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test passage and 7 items*	**Part 3: Prompt and 4-Point Rubric** Students will respond to a prompt through the mode(s) of writing, drawing, and/or orally dictating. **4 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test prompt.*
Example: Item 1, Page 4 [Picture of a baby.] Teacher reads the question (not the choices): *This is a _____.* A. mommy B. daddy C.* baby	**Narrative Passage:** Page 32 *A Clean Room* Passage is based on "daily living skills" adult life context. Students read story about a boy who must clean his room before going to the movies. 7 literal and mildly inferential questions about sequence and plot elements, (i.e., characters, problem, setting, etc.). **Informational Passage:** Page 39 *School Bus Rules* Passage is based on "community experience" adult life context. Students learn about several school bus rules and the importance of them. 7 literal and mildly inferential questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas. **Functional Passage**: Page 44 *Puppies Need a Home* Passage is based on "community experience" adult life context. Students read a sign about puppies that need a home in the form of a flyer. 7 literal and mildly inferential questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas. **Embedded Passage:** Page 48 **Embedded Passage and items (to be determined)**	**Prompt**: Page 56 Tell about a safety rule you follow at your school. Tell why this rule is important. **Embedded Prompt**: Page 60 TO BE DETERMINED. **Scoring Rubric**: Page 61 **NOTE**: The rubric was revised in June 2005 to include only writing and drawing. **Score Point 4** The student's response will: • focus on the topic • develop ideas with appropriate details and examples • show organization of ideas • reflect some accuracy in the use of conventions Sample student responses at each of the four score points begin on page 62 of the Sample Assessment Booklet.

Grades 4 and 5 English Language Arts Sample Assessment Booklet Template

ACCESSING PRINT		EXPRESSING IDEAS
Part 1: Word Recognition Students will access multiple-choice questions and select the word that correctly completes the sentence from three answer choices. **20 Points** *Plus 4 embedded field-test items*	**Part 2: Text Comprehension** Students will access three types of passages (narrative, informational, functional) and respond to 7 multiple-choice questions about each. Each question will have three answer choices. **21 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test passage and 7 items*	**Part 3: Prompt and 4-Point Rubric** Students will respond to a prompt through the mode(s) of writing, drawing, and/or orally dictating. **4 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test prompt.*
Example: Item 8, Page 6 Follow the rules on the school bus. Do not _____ while the bus is moving. A. look B.* stand C. read	**Functional Passage:** Page 16 *French Toast* Passage is based on "daily living skills" adult life context. Students learn history of and how to make French toast. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc. **Narrative Passage:** Page 22 *A Trip to the Firehouse* Passage is based on the "community experience" adult life context. Students go on field trip to a firehouse and learn about fire safety. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions that measure sequence and plot elements, (i.e., characters, problem, setting, etc.). **Embedded Passage:** Page 34 **Embedded Passage and items (to be determined)**	**Prompt**: Page 42 What job would you like to have when you grow up? Tell three reasons why you would like to have that job. **Embedded Prompt**: Page 46 TO BE DETERMINED. <u>**Scoring Rubric**</u>: Page 47 **NOTE**: The rubric was revised in June 2005 to include only writing and drawing. **Score Point 4** The student's response will: • focus on the topic • develop ideas with appropriate details and examples • show organization of ideas • reflect some accuracy in the use of conventions Sample student responses at each of the four score points begin on page 48 of the Sample Assessment Booklet.

Grades 6-8 English Language Arts Sample Assessment Booklet Template

ACCESSING PRINT		EXPRESSING IDEAS
Part 1: Word Recognition	**Part 2: Text Comprehension**	**Part 3: Prompt and 4-Point Rubric**
Students will access multiple-choice questions and select the word that correctly completes the sentence from three answer choices.	Students will access three types of passages (narrative, informational, functional) and respond to 7 multiple-choice questions about each. Each question will have three answer choices.	Students will respond to a prompt through the mode(s) of writing, drawing, and/or orally dictating.
20 Points	**21 Points**	**4 Points**
Plus 4 embedded field-test items	*Plus 1 embedded field-test passage and 7 items*	*Plus 1 embedded field-test prompt.*
Example: Item 1, Page 4 Lee was born in 1990. His date of _____ is November 29. A.*birth B. first C. home	**Functional Passage:** Page 16 *A New School* Passage is based on "community experience" adult life context. Students read about a student's experience at a new school and with a class schedule. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc.	**Prompt**: Page 42 Describe your favorite meal. Then, tell why you like it. **Embedded Prompt**: Page 46 TO BE DETERMINED. **Scoring Rubric**: Page 47 **NOTE**: The rubric was revised in June 2005 to include only writing and drawing. **Score Point 4** The student's response will: • focus on the topic • develop ideas with appropriate details and examples • show organization of ideas • reflect some accuracy in the use of conventions Sample student responses at each of the four score points begin on page 48 of the Sample Assessment Booklet.
	Narrative Passage: Page 22 *A Butterfly Patch* Passage is based on "daily living skills" adult life context. Students read a story about a girl who repairs the hole in her jacket with a special patch. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions that measure sequence and plot elements, (i.e., characters, problem, setting, etc.).	
	Informational Passage: 28 *Clean Hands* Passage is based on "daily living skills" adult life context. Students learn how to wash their hands appropriately. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc.	
	Embedded Passage: Page 34 **Embedded Passage and items (to be determined)**	

Grades 11 English Language Arts Sample Assessment Booklet Template

ACCESSING PRINT		EXPRESSING IDEAS
Part 1: Word Recognition	**Part 2: Text Comprehension**	**Part 3: Prompt and 4-Point Rubric**
Students will access multiple-choice questions and select the word that correctly completes the sentence from three answer choices. **20 Points** *Plus 4 embedded field-test items*	Students will access three types of passages (narrative, informational, functional) and respond to 7 multiple-choice questions about each. Each question will have three answer choices. **21 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test passage and 7 items*	Students will respond to a prompt through the mode(s) of writing, drawing, and/or orally dictating. **4 Points** *Plus 1 embedded field-test prompt.*
Example: Item 9, Page 6 To make sure your milk is fresh, check the _____ before you buy it. A.* date B. price C. place	**Functional Passage:** Page 16 *Registering a Car* Passage is based on "community experience" adult life context. Students read a passage about a girl who learns to register her car for the first time. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc.	**Prompt**: Page 42 Your science teacher wants to take your class on a field trip. Your teacher asks the class for ideas about places to visit. Tell which place you would like to visit for the field trip. Give three reasons for your answer. **Embedded Prompt**: Page 46 TO BE DETERMINED.
	Informational Passage: Page 22 *Museums* Passage is based on "community experience" adult life context. Students learn about 3 different kinds of museums. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions about purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, etc.	**Scoring Rubric**: Page 47 **NOTE**: The rubric was revised in June 2005 to include only writing and drawing. **Score Point 4** The student's response will:
	Narrative Passage: Page 28 *Doing What You Love* Passage is based on "employment" adult life context. Students read a story about a young boy who wants a summer job and must figure out what kind of job he is best suited for. 7 literal and mildly inferential comprehension questions that measure sequence and plot elements, (i.e., characters, problem, setting, etc.).	• focus on the topic • develop ideas with appropriate details and examples • show organization of ideas • reflect some accuracy in the use of conventions Sample student responses at each of the four score points begin on page 48 of the Sample Assessment Booklet.
	Embedded Passage: Page 34 **Embedded Passage and items (to be determined)**	