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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

To: Local and Intermediate District Superintendents
High School Principals

From: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D. 
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

Date: August 28, 2006

Subject: **Clarification of August 15 Memorandum on the Michigan Merit Examination**

My memorandum on the status of the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) dated August 15, 2006, has apparently caused some confusion in a few school districts. As I indicated in the memorandum, the Michigan Department of Education cannot implement the MME without approval of the U.S. Department of Education (USED). We are expecting word from USED at any time. However the fact that we have not heard from USED at this point should not deter high schools from beginning to prepare for the administration of the MME.

We expect to receive approval and thus are moving ahead to plan for the MME next spring. One thing we learned from last spring's MME pilot is that it does take a significant amount of time and effort to plan for a successful MME assessment administration. If schools put off planning until word is received from USED, it may be difficult for your schools to adequately plan for the assessment.

It is essential to begin that process now, before official word has been received, since there is so much planning to be done by high schools. Every Michigan high school will be receiving a packet of establishment materials from ACT next week. It is critical that high schools review those materials carefully and complete the forms on a timely basis. More importantly, each high school should begin now to plan for the assessment administration next spring, including how students with disabilities, section 504 plans, and English language learners will participate in the assessments.

Inside the establishment packet from ACT will be directions for the three individuals who will direct major MME activities in planning for the MME. These three individuals, the Test Supervisor, the Backup Test Supervisor, and the Test Accommodations Coordinator, will be designated by the high school principal, and have important duties spelled out in the establishment packet that begin immediately.

It is for this reason that I am writing to indicate strongly that you and your staff begin the planning process early this fall. Doing so will assure that the MME is implemented in a smooth and satisfactory manner. Please don't let the uncertainty surrounding the approval of the MME by USED deter you from adequate planning for the MME administration.

If you have any questions about this memorandum, the MME approval process, or the status of MME approval, please contact Ed Roeber at (517) 373-0739 or via e-mail at roebere@michigan.gov.

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