

2013 Legislative Report on Michigan's Priority Schools



Michigan Department of Education
State Reform/Redesign Office
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LEGISLATIVE REPORT-MICHIGAN'S PERSISTENTLY LOWEST ACHIEVING/PRIORITY SCHOOLS

September 2013

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the Michigan legislature passed a law (MCL 380.1280c) requiring the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to publish a list identifying the public schools in the state that have been determined to be among the lowest achieving five percent of all public schools in the state. Each school on the list must submit a redesign plan that address one of four federal intervention models identified by the U.S. Department of Education. The State School Reform Office (SSRO) reviews and approves or disapproves the plans and provides technical assistance to schools. Schools remain under the authority of the SSRO for a total of four years; one year of planning and three years of implementation. This report is provided as a requirement of this law to give an annual update on the efforts of the SSRO, and provide progress information on those schools previously identified in the bottom five percent in the state.

The Michigan Department of Education submitted a Flexibility Request to ESEA ("No Child Left Behind") that was approved in July 2012. The U.S. Department of Education required Michigan to identify three new categories of schools: Priority schools, those identified from the lowest five percent of schools on the Top to Bottom ranking of schools; Focus schools, those identified with the largest achievement gaps; and Reward schools, those identified with the highest achievement and greatest increases in achievement. Based on this request, the former designation of schools as Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) is now changed to Priority schools.

INTERVENTION MODELS

The four intervention models are identified below.

Transformation Model-Districts address four specific areas: 1) developing teacher and school leader effectiveness, which includes replacing the principal who led the school prior to commencement of the transformation model; 2) implementing comprehensive instructional reform strategies; 3) extending learning and teacher planning time and creating community-oriented schools; and 4) providing operational flexibility and sustained support.

Turnaround Model-Districts replace the principal and at least 50 percent of the school's staff, adopt a new governance structure, and implement a new or revised instructional program.

Restart Model-Districts close the school and reopen it under the management of a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an educational management organization selected through a rigorous review process. A restart school is required to enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend.

School Closure-Districts close a failing school and enroll the students who attended that school in other high-achieving schools in the district.

OVERVIEW OF LOWEST ACHIEVING SCHOOLS

2010 Cohort

In August 2010, 92 schools were identified on the 2010 lowest achieving five percent of schools list, using the U.S. Department of Education metrics for Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools. Of the 92 schools, 42 schools are operated under an Emergency Manager. Schools under Emergency Managers are not placed under the supervision of the School Reform Officer. All redesign plans for those schools not overseen by Emergency Manager were approved and monitored in their second year of implementation during the 2012-2013 school year.

2011 Cohort

In August 2011, 98 schools were identified on the 2011 lowest achieving five percent of schools list using the PLA methodology. Of the 98 schools, 58 remained on the list from the previous year and 40 new schools were added to the list. All redesign plans for those districts not overseen by Emergency Managers were approved and monitored in their first year of implementation during the 2012-2013 school year.

2012 Cohort

In August 2012, 146 schools were identified in the lowest five percent on the 2012 Top to Bottom List, and are now identified as Priority schools. Of the 146 schools, 48 remained on the list from the previous year and 98 new schools were added to the list. Due to changes in supports and requirements for federal funding that come from Michigan's ESEA Flexibility, all newly-identified schools (those not identified as PLA in 2010 or 2011) in this category, will need to create a reform/redesign plan in order to access federal Title I funds. All reform plans were approved and schools will begin their first year of implementation during the 2013-2014 school year.

2013 Cohort

In August 2013, 137 schools were identified in the lowest five percent on the 2013 Top to Bottom List, and are now identified as Priority schools. Of the 137, 76 remained on the list from the previous year, and 61 new schools were added to the list. These schools are in the process of developing a reform plan during the 2013-2014 school year.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORTS

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and its partner organizations provide a range of technical assistance and other supports to Priority schools, to address broad issues of improvement and student achievement. These supports also are strengthened through Michigan's ESEA Flexibility Request specifically for Title I schools that are identified as Priority schools.

MI Excel Supports for Title I Priority Schools:

As a result of Michigan's ESEA Flexibility Request, the MI Excel program is changing dramatically starting in the 2012-2013 school year. MI Excel is now more directly linked to the needs of Michigan's Priority and Focus schools from this point on, and will provide a range of supports and services to these schools. . They will also provide other resources and toolkits to support these processes. Additionally, they will be supporting Focus schools with related supports to address achievement gaps through targeted school improvement planning efforts. The following are supports available through MI Excel:

The School Support Team consists of the ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator, the District Representative and the MSU-assigned Specialist will schedule Quarterly Reporting Meetings with teacher teams to check on the implementation of the Instructional Learning Cycle.

The School Improvement Facilitators are provided from the ISD/ESA, as part of the School Support Team, will meet with the Priority School principal and School Improvement Team to review the school's needs and select appropriate supports offered through the MI Excel SSoS to address those needs.

Intervention Specialists are trained and prepared by Michigan State University to help districts identify opportunities for transformation and student growth

Data Dialogues are available to any Title I school that is identified as a Priority or Focus school. They will receive supports that include trained facilitators from both ISDs and Michigan State University who will work with schools to engage in a data-based dialogue to develop specific strategies for the reform/redesign plans

Superintendent's Dropout Challenge requires the district to identify 10-15 students in all elementary, middle, and high schools who have multiple dropout risk factors and provide research-based supports and interventions.

Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) is a set of data collection tools to help school analyze the instructional content being delivered in the classroom. Using SEC, schools can determine how well content standards are being taught and where changes are possible.

MISchoolData.org is a tool that provides a comprehensive picture of a schools performance, demographic, and perception data for beginning deep conversations about areas of strength, opportunity and focus for future transformation efforts.

State School Reform Supports for All Priority Schools

Next Network

Next Network is an extensive suite of online tools and resources designed to support changing instruction. Next Network serves as a comprehensive, digital resource for educators focused on rigor, relevance, and relationships for all students. Six trainings were held throughout the state during the 2012-2013 school year. The State Reform Office purchased 140 licenses for Priority schools. In the 2012-13 school year, 81 Priority schools took advantage of this opportunity. In 2013-14 school year, the remaining licenses will be offered to schools newly identified as Priority schools.

Teaching for Excellence

Teaching for Excellence Institute models a comprehensive look at research and evidence-based principles, concepts, strategies, and techniques that significantly impact student learning. Teaching for Excellence Summer Training was a five day intensive training for educators held June 10-14, 2013. The State Reform Office supported the registration of 110 educators from Priority schools.

Instructional Leadership Academy

Instructional Leadership Academy is a regional and online program provided free-of-charge to all Priority schools wishing to focus on implementing curricular and instructional changes effectively during a school turnaround effort. Instructional Leadership Academy trainings were held eight times throughout the state during the 2012-2013 school year. In 2012-2013 school year, 385 teachers took advantage of this opportunity.

Principals Academy

Principals Academy is focused on creating and sustaining a professional learning community for leaders of Priority schools. The Academy was created by Priority school principals and members of the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation (OEII). The topics are heavily driven by the Academy's most pressing needs and are differentiated and interactive, including a panel of successful Priority principals and study groups.

During the 2012-2013 school year, over 96 principals from 37 school districts participated in the Principals Academy, which included topics on school climate and culture, and addressing the achievement gap for African-American young males.

Closing the Achievement Gap

Background- During 2012, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) worked diligently to identify internal policies, practices, structures, and systems perceived to contribute to the achievement gap. The effort began as the result of a 2012 State Board of Education priority to reduce the achievement gap in the state, with an emphasis on young men who are African American. Data show that this student group is Michigan's lowest performing. State Superintendent Michael Flanagan placed the achievement gap initiative under the purview of the State School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO). In partnership with American Institutes for Research (AIR), the Great Lakes Equity Center and the Great Lakes Comprehensive Center,

SRO worked collaboratively with other MDE offices to develop strategies to close achievement gaps.

Planning the Work- Using the Social Justice Framework as a guide, the MDE introduced strategies designed to lay the foundation for increasing achievement for underperforming students; especially African American young men. For example, in May 2012, the department held an achievement gap Think Tank where longitudinal data were examined and potential causes were revealed. A comprehensive report was then compiled on how other states were attempting to close achievement gaps, so that Michigan could learn from their experiences. The Achievement Gap Core Planning Team developed an influence map that identified strategies believed to make dramatic and positive impact. In addition, an MDE Leadership Forum was held in August featuring Tim Wise, an expert on anti-racism and white privilege.

Informing the Work- Perhaps a hallmark of the MDE's work was "The Closer Series," four all-day insight meetings designed to inform internal leadership team members about achievement gap research. In October 2012, the Core Planning Team initiated the Achievement Gap Brown Bag Professional Learning Community, which included monthly luncheons open to all MDE staff. In an effort to include student voice in the department's strategy, MDE co-sponsored two student focus groups, interviewing African American young men in partnership with external youth organizations.

Communicating the Work- The MDE has written and published a series of one-page message documents, each focusing on a different aspect of the achievement gap. During the annual School Improvement Conference in November 2012, MDE sponsored a luncheon with urban school expert Principal Baruti Kafele. At the same time, MDE identified a group of pilot schools to engage in research strategies aimed at improving specific metrics identified by MDE's internal research/data team. MDE's Office of Education Improvement and Innovation will follow the Focus, Priority, and Rewards schools involved in the pilot while offering research-based interventions.

Tracking and Measuring the Work- The core team developed the following metrics to track changes in the achievement gap:

- Expulsion and disciplinary rates
- MEAP/NAEP scores
- Graduation/dropout rates
- Special education designation
- Students enrolled in AP courses
- Students needing remediation
- Participation in early childhood education
- Teacher quality

The work: The work culminated on June 5, 2013 with the Achievement Gap Summit. This summit offered a venue for MDE to introduce a set of preliminary strategies aimed at eliminating achievement gaps by 2022. The plan includes a multidimensional approach engaging immediate actions aligned with classic and emerging research. The summit was attended by 99 different organizations and 176 stakeholders

National Board Certification

The State Reform Office sponsored teachers wishing to engage in high-level professional development under the National Board certification field of Early and Middle Childhood Literacy: Reading–Language Arts. Currently 40 teachers have enrolled in the program.

Educator Evaluation Training

The State Reform Office along with Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) offered Educator Evaluation Training to all Priority School Administrators. The purpose was to create definitions of effective instruction and student engagement. Administrators were given many helpful handouts along with access to a specially developed Moodle website to allow ongoing development of observation skills.

Webinars:

The State Reform Office uses webinars to provide a wide variety of technical assistance information and dissemination of policies and supports for Priority schools. Five webinars were presented during the 2012-2013 school year addressing reform strategies and monitoring considerations.

Technical Assistance Workshops:

The State Reform Office provides technical assistance workshops to all priority schools undergoing reform efforts. These include ISD personnel, Intervention Specialists, and School Improvement Facilitators who support Priority schools. These workshops focus on tools and strategies, including development and implementation of redesign plans. During the 2012-2013 school year, the State Reform Office held four technical assistance workshops which were attended by 158 districts, and 547 school personnel.

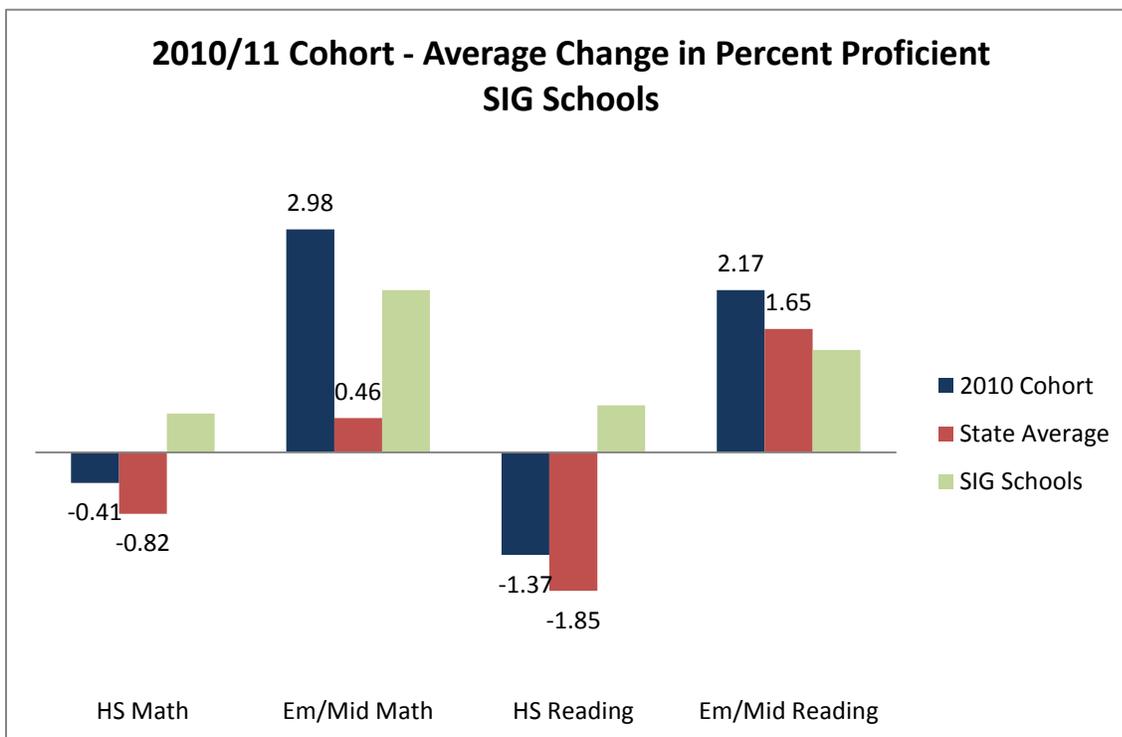
FUNDING SUPPORT FOR PRIORITY SCHOOLS

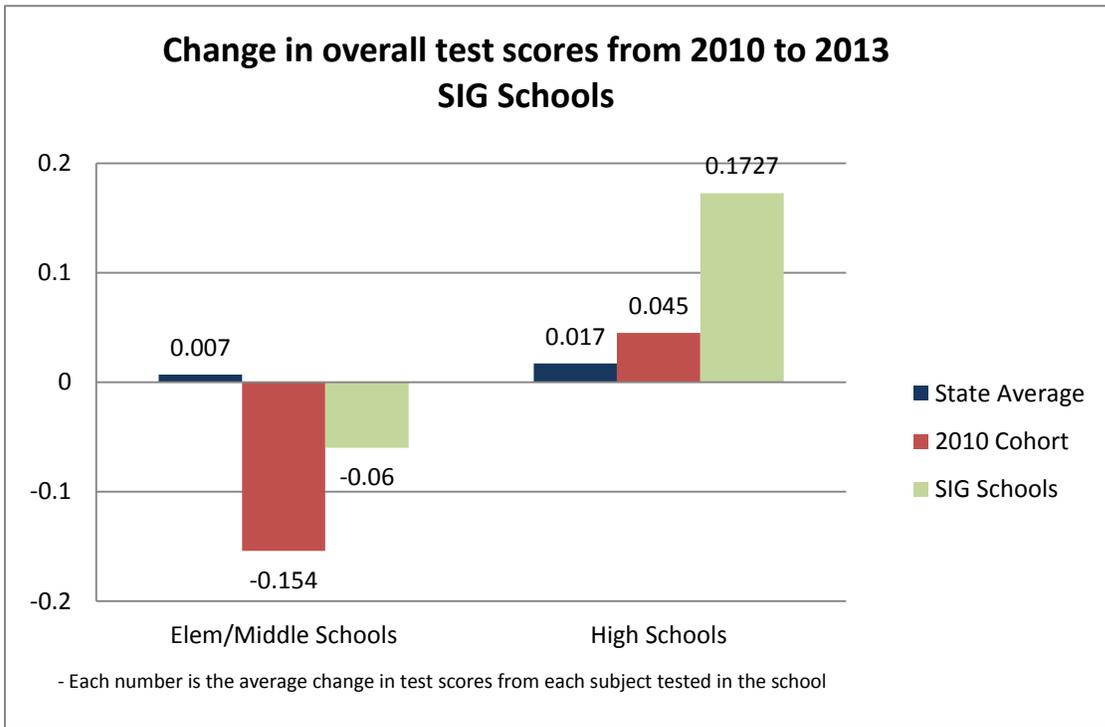
School Improvement Grants (SIG):

School Improvement Grants (SIG) are competitive federal grants administered by the state to dramatically increase academic achievement of students in Michigan's Priority schools. Only Priority Schools are eligible to receive these grants.

SIG grants provided up to \$2 million per year over a three-year period for each school receiving these awards. The schools are able to use their grant funding to purchase supplemental services and supports to affect rapid turnaround. These supports and services are identified in the school's approved grant application and reform/redesign plan.

There are 28 Cohort I schools that completed 3 years of SIG funding and will begin year 4 (2013-2014) strategies to in sustain reform efforts without funding. There are 21 Cohort II schools that will continue to be funded for a 3rd year (2013-2014). MDE received a waiver from USED to extend unspent 2010 1003(g) and 2011 1003(g) funds until September 30, 2014. Any unspent funds will be allocated to Cohort II schools.





Safe and Supportive School Grants (S³):

The overarching goal of the Federal S³ initiative is to help grantee schools raise the level of academic achievement by improving conditions for learning. In addition to raising academic achievement, the secondary intent of the initiative is to improve the overall school climate, by helping schools reduce substance abuse and to increase student safety.

The S³ grant has been awarded to 22 Priority high schools; each school received between \$125,500 and \$175,500 depending on student enrollment.

PRIORITY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA

This section of the report includes information on the progress of two cohorts of Priority Schools:

1. The 2010 Cohort (just completed the second year of reform plan implementation)
2. The 2011 Cohort (just completed the first year of reform plan implementation)

The information below looks at the change in performance on the Statewide Top to Bottom Ranking for the 2010 and 2011 cohorts of PLA schools. We would expect to see, and the data reflects, the strongest impacts for the 2010 cohort, as they have completed two full years of implementation, and the least impact for the 2012 cohort, as they have had the least amount of time for implementation.

2010 Cohort (92 schools)

- 28 schools (30%) still considered lowest 5% schools (labeled Priority Schools in 2013)
- 41 (45%) no longer in the lowest 5% of schools.
- 23 (25%) no longer open or receiving a ranking

For those 41 schools no longer on the Priority/PLA list (i.e. those schools still in the intervention, but out of the bottom 5% of the ranking):

- The average percentile ranking on the 2012 Top to Bottom Ranking is 23rd percentile
- The highest percentile ranking is the 88th percentile (meaning the school is performing better than 88% of schools in the state)
- The lowest percentile ranking is 5th percentile (meaning the school is performing better than 5% of schools in the state).

2011 Cohort (98 schools)

- 30 schools (31%) are still considered lowest 5% schools (labeled Priority Schools in 2012)
- 50 schools (69%) are no longer in the lowest 5% of schools (although still expected to continue with their intervention plans).
- 18 (18%) are no longer open or receive no ranking.

For those 50 schools no longer in the lowest 5% of schools:

- The average percentile ranking on the 2012 Top to Bottom ranking is the 23rd percentile.
- The highest percentile ranking is the 92nd percentile (meaning the school is performing better than 92% of schools in the state)
- The lowest percentile ranking is the 5th percentile (meaning the school is performing better than 5% of schools in the state).

2012 Cohort (146 schools)

- 76 (52%) are still considered Priority Schools
- 37 (25%) are no longer considered Priority Schools.
- 33 (23%) are no longer open or receive no ranking.

For those 37 schools no longer in the lowest 5% of schools:

- The percentile ranking in the 2013 Top to Bottom ranking is 10th.
- The highest percentile ranking is 48th.
- The lowest percentile ranking is 5th.

CHANGE IN PROFICIENCY IN THE 2010 AND 2011 PRIORITY SCHOOLS¹

Assessment data is used to measure change in proficiency and reflects where the student took the test, and reflects all students taking the test at a given school, regardless of how long that student has been in that school.

This section of the report will focus primarily on mathematics and reading, as these subject areas were used for the original determination of Priority schools in 2010 and 2011. These are broken into two categories: high schools (using MME assessment data) and elementary and middle schools (using MEAP data). It is important to note that the 2011 cohort includes schools that remained priority schools from the 2010 cohort as well as schools that were newly designated priority in 2011.

There are two ways to think about proficiency. The first is simply test scores. The second is the percentage of students who meet the “proficient” threshold, typically referred to as “percent proficient”. Both are useful in different ways. For instance, a school with students who score very low on assessments in the first year of their intervention may see a dramatic increase in student scores the following year, but that increase may not be enough to send a lot of students over the “proficient” threshold. In this case, measuring percent proficient does not capture the entire story. Alternatively, measuring percent proficient is a good way to measure a school’s performance against standards and expectations.

Overall Findings

Priority schools are showing signs of improvement. Further, the 2010 cohort has shown more improvement than the 2011 cohort, which is to be expected since the 2010 cohort has been implementing turn-around processes for a longer period of time. Remember that in the data, the 2011 cohort includes schools from the 2010 cohort, so most gains will show up in the 2011 cohort.

Unsurprisingly, elementary and middle priority schools show much greater improvement than priority high schools. This is likely due to the fact that it is much easier for students to “catch up” early on in their academic career. Further, high schools are showing improvement that is greater than the state average, but it is not significantly greater.

Note: All changes in proficiency are from the cohort-year to the 2012-2013 school year.

Changes in Mathematics Proficiency

2010 and 2011 Priority High Schools: Mathematics

2010 Priority High Schools (44 of the 92 schools had high school data)

- 20 (45%) saw a relative² increase in math scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- 24 schools (55%) saw a relative decrease in math scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2010 Priority high schools, mathematics proficiency on average decreased 0.41%, compared with a statewide decrease of .82%.

¹ Any comparison of these numbers to last year’s numbers is not advised, as some schools have either closed or no longer receive rankings.

² “Relative” to the state average change. Imagine the state’s average change was a negative 10 points, but your school fell by only 5 points. This would be considered a “relative increase” in this measurement even though your school performed worse than last year.

- The 2010 Priority high schools change in mathematics proficiency in high schools ranged from a 16.4% increase to a 97% decrease. Statewide among non-Priority schools, proficiency change ranged from a 81% increase to a 97% decrease.³

2011 Priority High Schools (49 of the 98 schools had high school data)

- Of those 49 high schools, 23 (47%) saw a relative increase in math scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- 26 (52%) saw a relative decrease in math scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2011 Priority High Schools, mathematics proficiency on average increased .96%, ranging from a 13% increase to a 6.8% decrease. Statewide among non-PLA schools, proficiency decreased by .96% and change ranged from a 100% increase to a 100% decrease.

2010 and 2011 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools: Mathematics

2010 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools (30 of the 92 schools had elementary/middle school data)

- Of the 30 schools with elementary/middle school data in mathematics, 12 (41%) saw a relative increase in math scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- 18 of the schools (59%) saw a relative decrease in math scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2010 Priority elementary and middle schools with MEAP data, mathematics proficiency on average increased 2.98%, compared with a statewide average of a .46% increase in proficiency.
- The 2010 Priority schools change in mathematics proficiency in elementary/middle school ranged from a 23.7% increase to a 5.22% decrease. Statewide among non-Priority elementary/middle schools, proficiency change ranged from a 75% increase to a 66% decrease.

2011 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools (41 of the 98 schools had elementary/middle school data)

- Of the 41 schools with MEAP mathematics data, 18 of the schools (44%) saw a relative increase in math scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- 23 of the schools (56%) saw a relative decrease in math scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2011 Priority schools with MEAP data, mathematics proficiency on average increased 3%, ranging from a 34% increase to a 12% decrease. Statewide among non-Priority schools, proficiency rose by an average of 2.44% and ranged from a 100% increase to a 69% decrease.

Changes in Reading Proficiency

2010 and 2011 Priority High Schools: Reading

2010 Priority High Schools (44 of the 92 schools had high school data)

- Of these 44 high schools, 31 (70%) saw a relative increase in reading scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- 13 (30%) of these schools saw a relative decrease in reading scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2010 Priority schools with high school data, reading proficiency on average decreased 1.37%, compared to a 1.85% decrease statewide.

³ Typically these outliers are special cases such as traditional schools that changed to special education schools.

- The 2010 Priority schools change in reading proficiency in high school ranged from a 15% increase to a 62% decrease. Statewide among non-Priority schools, proficiency change ranged from an 100% increase to an 81% decrease.

2011 Priority High Schools (49 of the 98 schools had high school data)

- Of those 49 high schools, 36 (73%) saw a relative increase in reading scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- 13 (27%) saw a relative decrease in reading scores on the MME between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2011 Priority schools with high school data, reading proficiency on average increased 2.8%, ranging from a 22% increase to a 15% decrease. Statewide among non-Priority high schools, proficiency change averaged a .83% decrease and ranged from a 100% increase to a 100% decrease.

2010 and 2011 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools: Reading

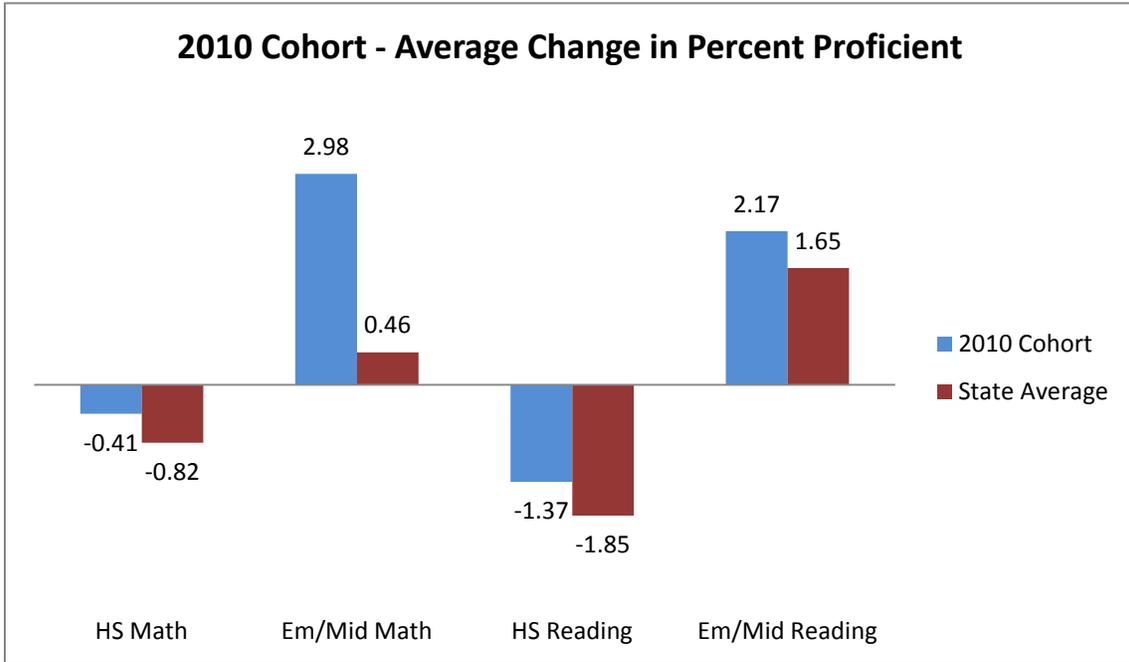
2010 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools (30 of the 92 schools had elementary/middle school data)

- Of the 30 schools with elementary/middle school data in reading, 13 (43%) saw a relative increase in reading scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- 17 schools (57%) saw a relative decrease in reading scores on the MEAP between 2009 and 2013.
- Of all 2010 Priority schools with MEAP data, reading proficiency on average increase 2.17%, compared to a 1.65% increase statewide.
- The 2010 Priority schools change in reading proficiency for elementary/middle school ranged from a 32% increase to a 37% decrease. Statewide for non-Priority schools, proficiency changes ranged from a 75% increase to a 80% decrease.

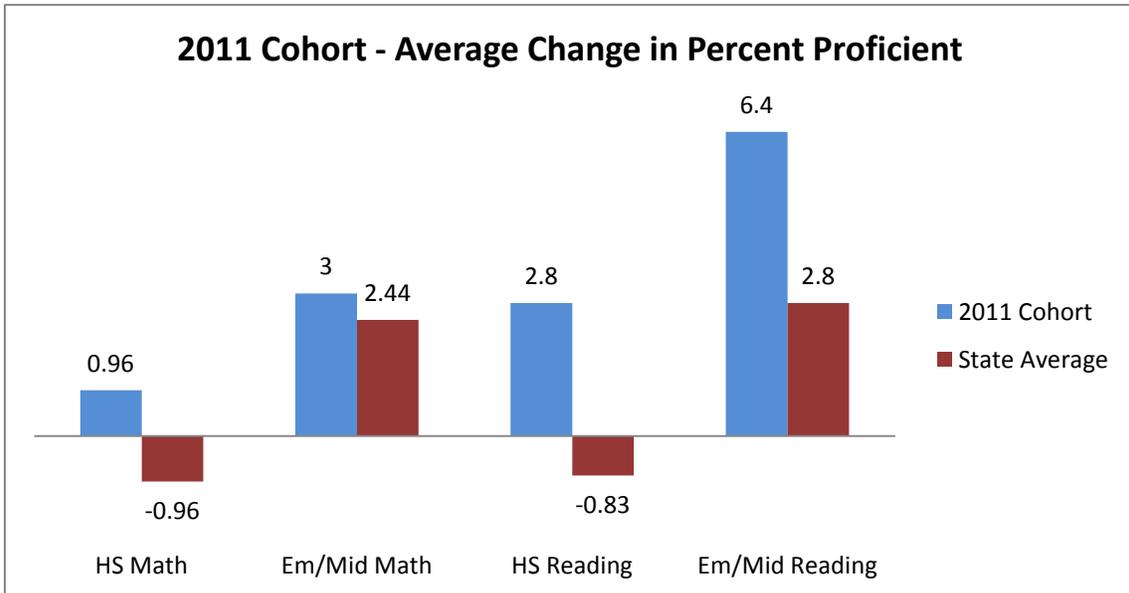
2011 Priority Elementary/Middle Schools (41 of the 98 had elementary/middle school data)

- Of the 41 schools with elementary/middle school data in reading, 20 (49%) demonstrated an improvement in the percent of students proficient in reading.
- 21 (51%) schools demonstrated a decline in the percent of students proficient.
- Of all 2011 Priority schools with MEAP data, reading proficiency on average increased 6.4%, ranging from a 26% increase to 10% decrease. Statewide for non-Priority schools, proficiency changes averaged a 2.8% increase and ranged from a 100% increase to a 100% decrease.

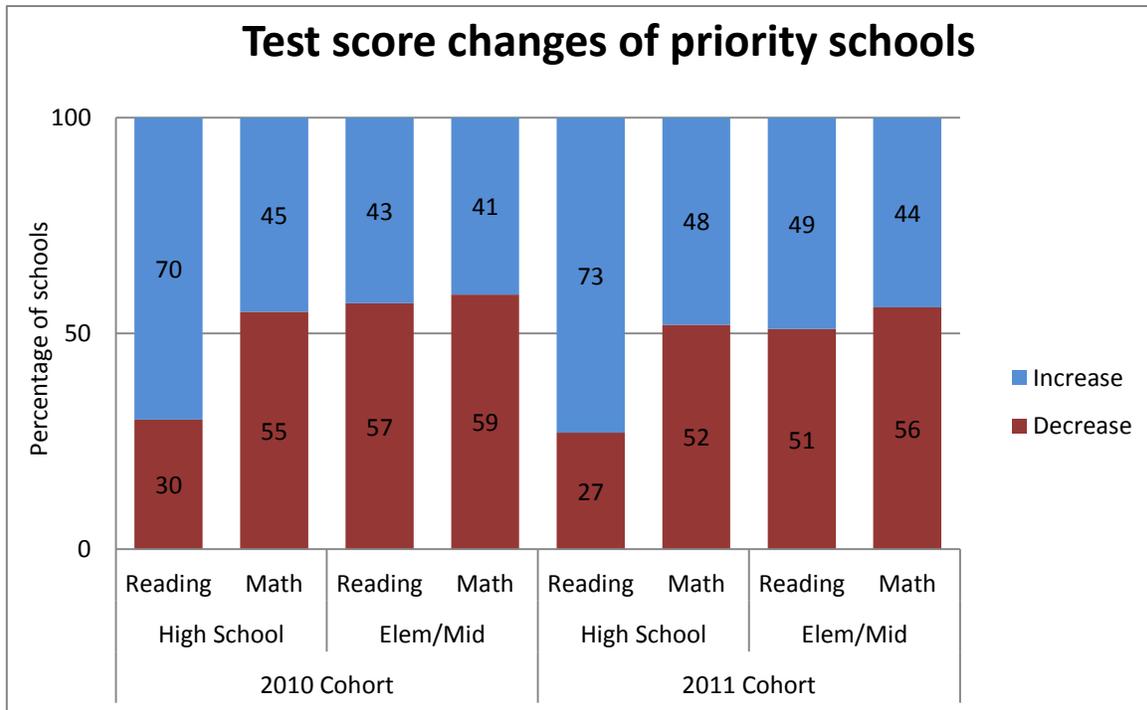
Charts and Tables – Testing scores and Percent Proficient



Eg: High Schools in the 2010 cohort saw a 0.41% decrease in the number of students proficient in high school math, whereas the state saw an 0.82% decrease



Eg: High schools in the 2011 cohort saw a 0.96% increase in the number of students proficient in high school math, whereas the state saw a 0.96% decrease.



Change in Graduation Rates of Priority High Schools

For the 2010 Priority Cohort:

- 35 of the 43 schools with graduation rate data have 2013 graduation rates above 80%
- 25 of the 43 schools (58%) have improved their graduation rate since the 10-11 school year.
- The average graduation rate change for the 2010 Priority Cohort is actually positive.; on average, the 2010 Priority cohort has seen an increase in graduation rate of 1.6%
- However, for the 25 schools that improved their graduation rates, the average rate of improvement was 6.4%, with some schools improving as much as 19% in graduation rate.
- The statewide graduation rate for 2010-2011 is 74%, down 0.9% over the last four years. The statewide graduation rate for 2011-2012 is not available at this time.

For the 2011 Priority Cohort:

- 34 of the 48 schools with graduation rate data have 2011 graduation rates above 80%
- 26 of the 48 schools (54%) have improved their graduation rate since 2008.
- Unlike the 2010 cohort, the average graduation rate change was positive.
- However, for the 26 schools that have improved their graduation rate, the average improvement was 5% with some schools improving as much as 19% in graduation rate.

ADDITIONAL METRICS FOR PRIORITY SCHOOLS

While the 2010 and 2011 Priority schools were identified based upon mathematics and reading achievement and graduation rates from statewide assessments, Michigan's ESEA Flexibility Request expands the range of considerations that affect a school's ranking on the statewide Top to Bottom list. Subject area assessments in writing, science, and social studies are now considered for this ranking, along with mathematics and reading, to provide equal emphasis for all of these subject areas. Students' scale scores, based solely on the number of items answered correctly by students, are used to determine achievement, rather than proficiency levels, which were recently adjusted with new cut scores to reflect realistic career and college readiness requirements. While these subjects were not specifically used to identify Priority schools in 2010 and 2011, summary information for these areas is provided here, as these subjects and indicators will now have greater emphasis on school progress from this point in time forward. More information about the metrics can be obtained from the Office of Evaluation, Strategic Research and Accountability (OESRA) at <http://mi.gov/baa>.

Note: The number of schools changing for these data points is due to some schools serving non-traditional grade levels (such as a school serving all grades K-12), resulting in a school having more than one data point for achievement gaps (one for elementary/middle and one for high school). Also, some schools may not have data for a particular subject if their grade levels do not align with the subject assessments.

Overall Findings

Generally, it seems that achievement does change by subject in priority schools. Most gains are seen in Science and Social Studies while fewer gains are seen in Writing and Math.

Why "one standard deviation"?

A standard deviation is a standard statistical measure of distance from an average. In the context used here, one standard deviation above the average is the point at which about 84% of all observations fall below, or conversely, about 16% of observations fall above. One rule-of-thumb about a standard deviation is that any school greater than one standard deviation above the state average is simply "in the top 15%" and any school greater than one standard deviation below the state average can be considered "in the bottom 15%".

Methodologically we use a standard deviation because it is widely used in state accountability metrics such as the Top-To-Bottom Rankings.

Science

Science is assessed in 5th and 8th grade on the MEAP assessment in October, and at 11th grade on the MME assessment in March. These changes represent a change from one cohort of students to the next for each school; they do not represent the change of individual students. An analysis of science achievement data from 2011-12 for the 2010 Priority schools reveals the following information:

- 38 of 72 schools showed test score improvement equal to or greater than improvement among all schools in the state.
- 13 of the 72 schools showed test score improvement gains greater than one standard deviation above the state average.
- 13 of 77 schools have achievement gaps that are less than the state average.
- 41 of 77 schools have achievement gaps that are greater than one standard deviation above state average.
- Priority schools ranged from 0 to 24% proficient in science using new college and career ready proficiency levels, with an average of 6.4% proficient at the high school level (compared to 22% proficient statewide).

Social Studies

Social Studies is assessed in 6th and 9th grade on the MEAP assessment in October, and at 11th grade on the MME assessment in March. These changes represent a change from one cohort of students to the next for each school; they do not represent the change of individual students. An analysis of social studies achievement for 2010 Priority schools reveal the following information:

- 36 of 73 schools showed test score improvement equal to or greater than improvement among all schools in the state.
- 11 of the 73 schools showed test score improvement gains greater than one standard deviation above the state average.
- 16 of 100 schools have achievement gaps that are less than the state average.
- 43 of the 100 schools have achievement gaps that are greater than one standard deviation above the state average.
- Priority schools ranged from 0 to 37% proficient in social studies using new college and career ready proficiency levels, with an average of 11% proficient at the high school level (compared to 31% proficient statewide).

Writing

Writing is assessed in 4th and 7th grade on the MEAP assessment in October, and at 11th grade on the MME assessment in March. These changes represent a change from one cohort of students to the next for each school; they do not represent the change of individual students. Since the writing assessment is relatively new, only two years of data are used to determine improvement trends. An analysis of writing achievement for 2010 Priority schools reveals the following information:

- 23 of 44 schools showed improvement equal to or greater than improvement among all schools in the state.
- 9 of the 44 schools showed test score improvement gains greater than one standard deviation above the state average.
- 10 of 72 schools have achievement gaps that are less than the state average.
- 27 of 72 schools have achievement gaps that are greater than one standard deviation above the state average.
- Priority schools ranged from 2 to 57% proficient in writing using new college and career ready proficiency levels, with an average of 19% proficient at the high school level (compared to 38% proficient statewide).

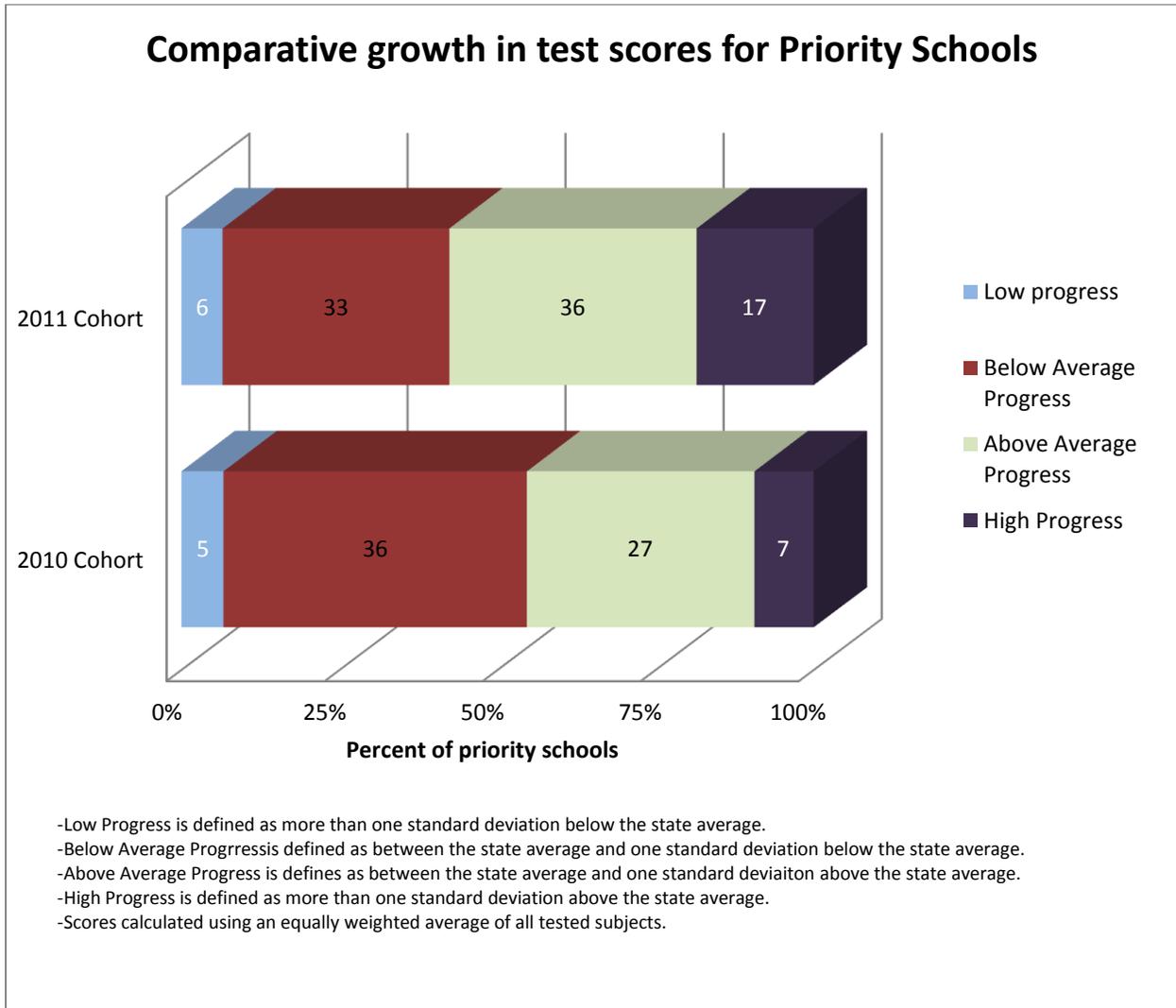
Overall Improvement

In addition to basic student achievement, improvement in each of the assessed subject areas is now considered as a factor in the overall performance and ranking of schools. Such metrics can help determine the change over time for a school to try to ensure that student achievement in any area is improving over time. For the Top to Bottom metric, this improvement is standardized, so that schools can look at their own scores from year to year, and compare this improvement to statewide averages for all schools in the state.

An analysis of growth and improvement in each of the subject areas for the Top to Bottom list for 2010 Priority schools reveal the following information:

- 30 of the 79 schools with achievement data from 2011-12 (removing closed schools) showed overall improvement in achievement compared to all schools in the state, averaged for all subjects.
- 10 of the 80 schools with achievement data from 2011-12 showed improvement greater than statewide averages in all areas assessed.
- 6 of these schools showed significant improvement (greater than one standard deviation above the state average) in three or more areas.

- 7 of the 80 schools showed significant overall improvement greater than one standard deviation above the state average).

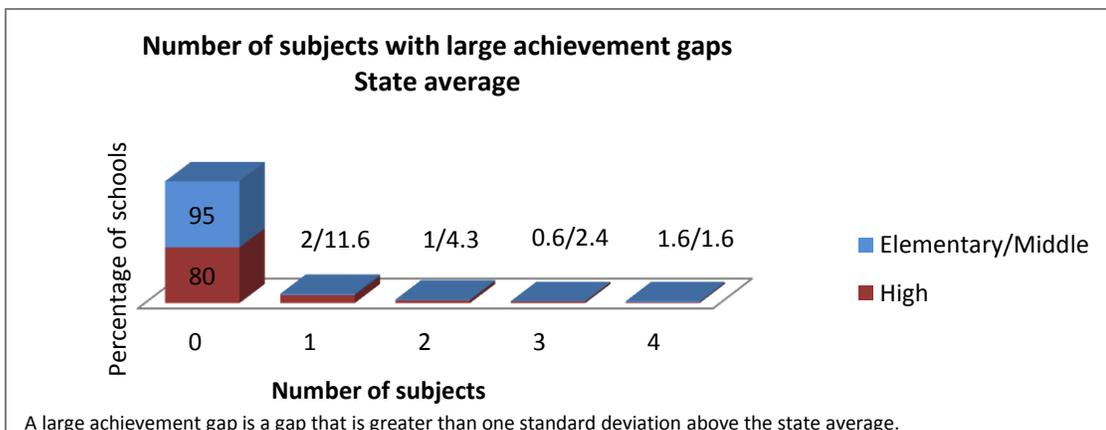
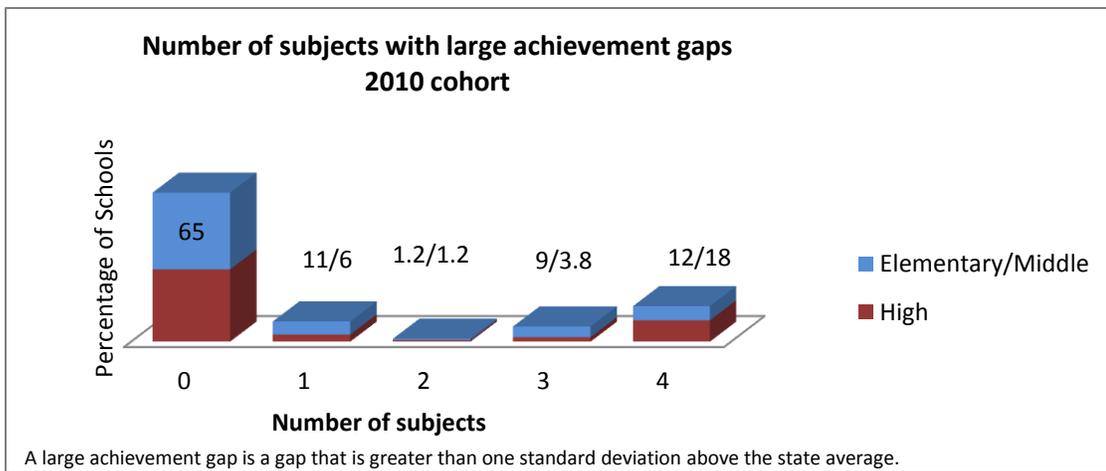


Achievement Gaps

While average achievement scores can be useful, they do not provide enough information to reflect the range of achievement of all students in a school. For Michigan’s ESEA Flexibility, the MDE’s Office of Evaluation, Strategic Research and Accountability developed a metric to help provide a better picture about the range of achievement within a school. This metric compares relative performance of each student to others in the state who use the same assessment instrument, and then groups the highest and lowest performing 30% of students within a school, and compares the gaps between the averages for these groups. While this metric specifically identifies Focus schools, it can also provide a picture of all schools, including Priority/Priority schools, to note whether some students are not being served appropriately by the school.

An analysis of achievement gaps in each subject area for the Top to Bottom list for 2010 Priority schools:

- 28 of the 79 schools have no achievement gaps greater than one standard deviation from the state average, meaning they have no significant achievement gaps.
- 32 of the 79 schools have achievement gaps in all four subjects.
- It is unusual for a school to have achievement gaps in one or two subjects. Typically a school either has achievement gaps in zero subjects or in all four subjects. See chart below.
- 15 of the 79 schools show achievement gaps greater than two standard deviations above the state average in mathematics.
- 15 of 79 schools show achievement gaps greater than two standard deviations above the state average in reading.
- Overall, priority schools are much more likely to have high achievement gaps than non-priority schools.



**LEADING AND IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS
FOR Priority SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTING REFORM PLANS**

In order to monitor progress of schools in implementing the reform/redesign plans, the School Reform Office developed a decision matrix regarding satisfactory progress for Priority schools as they work to enact their reform efforts. Based on federal guidance for School Improvement Grant schools, and utilizing outcome indicators to account for variability in each school’s individual plan, the matrix focuses on implementation and leading indicators during the first full year of implementation. Student achievement and other lagging indicators will be used in the second and third year of plan implementation to note progress. The matrix is provided below.

	Planning	Implementation		
PROGRESS INDICATORS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Leading Indicators: (added instructional time, assessment participation, dropout rate, course completion, student attendance, advanced course rate, discipline incidents, truancy, teacher performance level, and teacher attendance)	--	20%	20%	5%
Implementation Indicators: (based on outcomes linked to the Turnaround or Transformation reform requirements)	--	80%	55%	40%
Lagging Indicators: (average scale scores; percentage of students who attain English proficiency; graduation rate; college enrollment rate; percentage of students in each proficiency level)	--	0%	5%	5%
Student Achievement	--	0%	20%	50%

The implementation of the reform plans by schools was monitored by SRO staff (and OEII staff for SIG schools) to note progress in implementation, and to also provide focused technical assistance to help schools identify potential barriers to progress, or strengths to build upon in the broader reform effort. During implementation, all Priority schools are also required to examine progress on ten specific leading indicators. These indicators, while not directly related to student achievement, are “early-notice” metrics that can often be used to determine broader progress in implementation. These two metrics were used to determine progress for the 2010 schools monitored by the School Reform Office.

Findings from Monitoring and Implementation

While the main goals of monitoring implementation are to ensure that schools follow through on reform efforts, and to provide focused technical assistance when schools run into barriers to this implementation, a broader goal of the School Reform Office is to review data and findings to identify replicable practices that are successful for schools engaged in transformation/turnaround, so that these may be shared more broadly as new Priority schools are identified. Likewise, a goal is to examine the barriers to implementation, or the details of the implementation efforts, to understand what challenges may arise, and how specific aspects of the implementation may affect the overall outcome. These are used to inform other schools through the newly added supports or content of the MI Excel system. Reviews of progress and implementation using a variety of evidence and data have resulted in some key findings thus far in the implementation of reform efforts:

1. **District Support for School Initiatives.** Implementation of reform plans was often limited by a lack of support or ineffective systems at the district level, especially in larger school districts. SIG schools in particular struggled with human resources and procurement systems that took considerable time to process purchases or payment to implement reform strategies. This is echoed by statewide research throughout the country, and a new focus identified by the U.S. Department of Education to address school reform efforts at the district level.
2. **Early Focus on Instructional Practices.** Schools that showed greatest gains in student achievement picked a specific focus on instructional practices that could be tested with a small group first, and then implemented school-wide after working out implementation details. Such efforts encouraged teachers to take ownership and focus on academic outcomes for specific strategies, rather than vague instructional reforms that were applied only by individual teachers.
3. **Paying Attention to Data to Inform Instruction.** Schools that performed well set up data-review practices early in their reform efforts, and were able to develop their own capacity to collect, review, and analyze data to make instructional decisions. Many other schools only recently started paying attention to data, and were overwhelmed by the range of possible data to review, and which data were most relevant to the decisions to be made. Most of these lower-achieving schools also did not have the technological infrastructure to gather and review data on a regular basis, and have struggled to implement data-based reform measures.
4. **Curriculum Alignment.** Many schools that were able to show significant gains did so by reviewing what is taught and realigning curriculum resources and instruction to address current standards and assessments. A number of schools reported changes in what topics were being taught, the grade level they were being taught at, or the level or rigor in which they were taught. Other schools used common assessments as a way to standardize the content for courses taught by more than one teacher.

SCHOOLS SHOWING SIGNIFICANT TURNAROUND

<i>Reading High School Reading Community Schools</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>SWD</i>	<i>ED</i>	<i>2010 PLA Rank</i>	<i>2013 TTB Rank</i>
	407	7-12	18%	65%	10	Reward 63
<p>Reading High School is a rural school located in Hillsdale County. In 2011 Reading High School was identified on the lowest achieving five % of schools in Michigan with a ranking of 10. They implemented Transformation Plan and in 2013 were identified as a Reward school. Reading High School's reform efforts have focused largely on creating more rigorous learning opportunities through several strategies. The school created several new courses to increase students' college and career readiness and also foster increased engagement by offering topics aligned with student interests. The school implemented a multi-tiered system of support to increase the use of data to target instruction. Finally, through the use of professional learning time the school focused on aligning curriculum to the state standards and developing and using formative assessments to differentiate instruction.</p>						

<i>Lakeview High School Lakeview Community Schools</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>SWD</i>	<i>ED</i>	<i>2010 PLA Rank</i>	<i>2013 TTB Rank</i>
	572	8-12	13%	68%	11	Reward 62
<p>Lakeview High School is a rural school located in Montcalm County. In 2010 Lakeview High School was identified on the lowest achieving five % of schools in Michigan with a ranking of 11. They implemented a Transformation Plan and in 2013 were identified as a Reward school. Lakeview High School has made great progress since being named a 2010 Priority School by the Michigan Department of Education. They were given operational flexibility by the school district and had the full support of their local school board. Lakeview High School staff used data to drive and inform instruction. ACT scores for each senior class were posted in the hallways as a way to challenge students to do better than the previous class. Students were provided with additional support and extended learning time was utilized. Perhaps the biggest change was in creating a culture and climate which supports and sets high expectations for all learners. Lakeview High School has a school culture which promotes high achievement and a learning environment focused on student centered learning.</p>						

<i>Detroit Community High School Detroit Community Schools</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>SWD</i>	<i>ED</i>	<i>2010 PLA Rank</i>	<i>2013 TTB Rank</i>
	492	9-12	9%	45%	0	Reward 27
<p>Detroit Community High School is an urban Public School Academy located in Wayne County. In 2010 they were identified on the lowest achieving five % of schools in Michigan with a ranking of 0. They implemented a Transformation Plan and in 2013 were identified as a Reward school. Detroit Community HS still has room for improvement in their test scores but they are going in the right direction on the TtB List. They are using Danielson's evaluation model, the internal communication has improved, and they are working closely with their authorizer to improve leadership and governance. They have also tried Carnegie math, E2020 credit recovery, a more project based science program, and revamped their READ 180 program. DCS HS went through several leadership changes and hopefully, will now have some stability at the principal position. DCS HS tries to integrate technology in the classrooms whenever possible.</p>						

SCHOOLS SHOWING SIGNIFICANT TURNAROUND

<i>Berrien Springs High School Berrien Springs Public Schools</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>SWD</i>	<i>ED</i>	<i>2011 PLA Rank</i>	<i>2013 TTB Rank</i>
	517	9-12	10%	58%	13	Reward 92

Berrien Springs High School is a small town school located in Berrien County. In 2011 they were identified on the lowest achieving five % of schools in Michigan with a ranking of 13. They implemented a Transformation Plan and in 2013 were identified as a Reward school. Berrien Springs has focused much of their reform efforts improving school climate and culture, creating rich learning environments, and increasing the leadership capacity to specifically address school turnaround efforts. One strategy they implemented was a creative and flexible schedule that increased learning time for both students and teachers and allowed for flexibility in course creating such as an independent study course with community members. Berrien Springs also implemented a building-wide focus on project-based learning. To facilitate the project-based learning initiative, the schedule was modified to allow for teachers to work in cohort groups to collaborate on project planning, co-teaching, and sharing time to extend learning opportunities when needed. A second instructional initiative that is related to project based learning is an emphasis on the Four C's: Collaborator, Communicator, Creator & Critical Thinker. These skills are emphasized and taught throughout the instructional year by teachers of all contents. Finally, the leadership has relentlessly focused on the collection, analysis, and use of data to drive their day-to-day practices. The principal closely monitors the implementation of initiatives and supports teachers in how they analyze student work to make instructional decisions.

<i>Stephenson High School Stephenson Area Public Schools</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>SWD</i>	<i>ED</i>	<i>2011 PLA Rank</i>	<i>2013 TTB Rank</i>
	202	9-12	9%	60%	13	Reward 81

Stephenson High School is a rural school located in Menominee County. In 2011 they were identified on the lowest achieving five % of schools in Michigan with a ranking of 13. They implemented a Transformation Plan and in 2013 were identified as a Reward school. Stephenson HS saw rapid improvement in their achievement by working on high priority efforts described in their reform plan. Their initial efforts focused on providing a process for greater analysis of data. To provide guidance for this process they established a leadership team which included administrators and teachers. It was then determined that data teams would be formulated and enabled to meet multiple times monthly to look at assessment scores and to discuss how to use the information for interventions. They also focused on an instructional model that intentionally guides students to higher order thinking skills using Bloom's Taxonomy. Many strategies were encouraged and used by teachers to support this emphasis. They had already implemented some of these ideas into their intervention models in their middle school grades and that paid dividends by having better prepared students entering high school. The Middle School became a Reward School and now the High School has joined them.

Key:

SWD-students with disabilities

ED-economically disadvantaged (based on free and reduced lunch numbers)

TTB-Top to Bottom

Data taken from MI School Data on 10.2.2013

CONTACT INFORMATION

This report was compiled in collaboration with the following offices within the Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education Improvement and Innovation

Direct questions regarding MI Excel to:

Karen Ruple

ruplek@michigan.gov

Direct questions regarding School Improvement Grants (SIG) to:

Kristine Davidson

Davidsonk1@michigan.gov

Office of Evaluation, Strategic Research and Accountability

Direct questions regarding performance data to:

William Metz

metzw@michigan.gov

or

Tyler Sawher

sawhert2@michigan.gov

School State Reform/Redesign Office

Direct questions regarding Priority Schools to:

Jill Baynes

baynesj@michigan.gov

