



# **MDE-CEPI Research Collaborative Confidential Data Request Application Instructions**

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## Introduction

A completed Confidential Data Request Application is necessary for all data requests from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) for individual-level confidential data. All applications will be reviewed by the MDE-CEPI Research Collaborative Internal Review Board (IRB) Committee. The approval process is outlined in a document available on the MDE Evaluation and Strategic Research website which can be found at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Data\\_Request\\_Approval\\_Process\\_429545\\_7.pdf?20141211151021](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Data_Request_Approval_Process_429545_7.pdf?20141211151021)

While the MDE and CEPI collect a vast array of information at all levels of public education in Michigan, data provided for a single research request are limited to the extent possible to (1) maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the data and (2) demonstrate a clear alignment with research questions in the proposed study.

## Application Requirements:

To request confidential data for a new research project, all requestors are **required** to submit:

1. A completed Confidential Data Request Application, including completed data confidentiality and security agreement form(s) for each study team member listed on the project.
2. A summary of your request on institutional letterhead. The summary should include a brief abstract of the proposed project.
3. An IRB approval letter from your institution.
4. Proof of FERPA training for all study team members listed on the project.

**All questions and completed confidential data request applications should be submitted to:**

[MDE-Research@michigan.gov](mailto:MDE-Research@michigan.gov)

**Incomplete applications will be rejected.**

## Applicants Must

- Submit a request form that:
  - Demonstrates a direct relationship between the data elements requested and the research questions posed.
  - Clearly identifies why individual-level confidential data is needed instead of publicly available, aggregate data.
  - Includes a list of requested data elements, the corresponding data source, years needed, and justification for the data within the table on page 7.

- Has successfully completed each section within the request form and provided the required documentation. Incomplete forms will result in a return of the application and potential delays in the review.
- Is written in terms may be understood by non-experts. Please do not assume anything is implied, fully explain all requests and justifications. The IRB is comprised of individuals from a range of disciplines who may not be familiar with various aspects of your request.
- Review the MI School Data site ([www.mischooldata.org](http://www.mischooldata.org)) to ensure that the applicant is fully aware of what data are publicly available and that the research proposed to the committee cannot be done with data already available through the site. *Applications deemed redundant with data available through this site or that do not clearly demonstrate a need for individual level data will be denied.*
- Illustrate their understanding of and ability to adhere to FERPA regulations. Researchers with access to our data will be responsible for the information obtained, must use it appropriately, and only for authorized purposes. Please see the Secure Data Checklist (Appendix B) for the expectations that must be met to ensure that all confidential data are appropriately protected.
- Destroy unit record data that have been provided from the Committee pursuant to a formal agreement within the time limitations defined in the agreement and provide certification to the Committee staff that such records have been destroyed.
- Prior to publication/release, provide any documents generated as a result of using data received from the Committee for review and verification that the intended purpose has been adhered to at least 30 days in advance. Additionally, the applicant must include the Committee-provided disclaimer regarding the data and findings.
  - The 30 day submission is *prior to initiating a dissemination process*, meaning prior to submitting a report, manuscript, presentation to a given entity (conference, journal, etc.). Though not typically requested, in the event that the Committee requests revisions to any reports, manuscripts, presentations, etc. designated for publication/release, the applicant(s) must comply with the request and provide proof of the compliance.
  - Research results must include the following disclaimer:
 

"This research result used data collected and maintained by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and/or Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). Results, information and opinions solely represent the analysis, information and opinions of the author(s) and are not endorsed by – or reflect the views or positions of – grantors, MDE and CEPI or any employee thereof."
- Understand that deliberate or accidental misuse of information may result in one or more of the following: loss of access, disciplinary action, dismissal or prosecution under the scope of all applicable federal and state laws.

## Applicants Must NOT

- Share confidential, identifiable data with any individual beyond those approved within the application.
- Use data for any other purpose or research besides the specific research approved by the Committee.
- Make or allow any unauthorized use of information provided/generated.
- Use the results of information provided/generated in an effort to determine the identity of any individual for whom data is included.
- Publish reports with a cell size of less than 10. Reports must mask these cells so that results are not revealed.

## **Appendix A: Top 10-in-10 Goals**



## Guiding Principles

- To be successful at becoming a Top 10 performing state in 10 years, Michigan must develop a *coherent* and *cohesive* strategy for the children, and implement that plan with continuity for multiple years. Education reform takes time; we must implement, use evidence and data to correct course, and continue with progress on key goals.
- A “Can-Do Culture” that focuses on student-directed learning and student outcomes, and the work on the instruction must take priority.
- Data and accountability will be used to help drive resources and focus improvement activities for students and educators. Attention will be on transparency in support of key goals for the entire system to make Michigan a Top 10 state for education.
- Poverty matters, not to be used as an excuse, but as a purpose to design a Michigan system of education that motivates and excites all children about learning, keeps them in school, and provides them with hope and knowledge for a successful future.

## Strategic Goals

To realize Michigan becoming a Top 10 education state within the next 10 years, the existing structure and system of education must be challenged and reshaped. Michigan must establish an educational system that grants indelible rights for all stakeholders to succeed – a system focused more on what is best for children and their learning. This is a framework of the strategic goals necessary to move Michigan forward.

- 1) Provide every child access to an aligned, high-quality P-20 system from early childhood to post-secondary attainment – through a multi-stakeholder collaboration with business and industry, labor, and higher education—to maximize lifetime learning and success.
- 2) Implement, with strong district and building leadership, high-quality instruction in every classroom through a highly coherent, child-centered instructional model where students meet their self-determined academic and personal goals to their highest potential.
- 3) Develop, support, and sustain a high-quality, prepared, and collaborative education workforce.
- 4) Reduce the impact of high-risk factors, including poverty, and provide equitable resources to meet the needs of all students to ensure that they have access to quality educational opportunities.
- 5) Ensure that parents/guardians are engaged and supported partners in their child’s education.
- 6) Create a strong alignment and partnership with job providers, community colleges, and higher education to assure a prepared and quality future workforce, and informed and responsible citizens.
- 7) Further develop an innovative and cohesive state education agency that supports an aligned, coherent education system at all levels (state, ISD, district, and school).



## **Appendix B: FERPA Regulations**

## What is FERPA & How does it Impact My Project?

Evidence-based research is essential to each state as they make decisions, develop policies, and set priorities of focus for their education system. Collaborative research partnerships enable a state to more efficiently and systematically assess their progress with respect to the priorities and initiatives they have set forth. However, the dissemination of student level data that may include personally identifiable information (PII) is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In the event that a research project requires individual student level data FERPA exceptions may be made under certain circumstances. In order to access these data researchers must utilize the data for, or on behalf of, an educational agency for the purpose of:

- Studies that either
  - Develop, validate, or administer predictive tests;
  - Administer student aid programs; or
  - Improve instruction
- Auditing or evaluating for, or on behalf of an educational agency, for the purpose of
  - Federal or State supported program.
  - Enforcing or complying with Federal legal requirements related to those programs.

For further explanation of the exceptions listed above please see the following information provided by the US Department of Education:

- Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) Exceptions Document:  
[http://ptac.ed.gov/sites/default/files/FERPA%20Exceptions\\_HANDOUT\\_horizontal\\_0.pdf](http://ptac.ed.gov/sites/default/files/FERPA%20Exceptions_HANDOUT_horizontal_0.pdf)
- Overview of the Protection of Human Subjects in Research:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/overview.html>

### Free FERPA Training

If your institution does not provide FERPA training go to the link below, enroll in, and complete the free FERPA course listed on the page. It should take no longer than 1 hour to complete.

<http://www.learnport.org/Compliance-Courses/FERPA-HIPAA>

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations

For more information on data privacy policies as they relates to research we have included the following excerpts from the current FERPA policy. We have highlighted key sections to help researchers better understand the lens through which applications are evaluated for feasibility of compliance.

For the full law see the link below from the U.S. Government Publishing Office

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9ab293b9e1467138518362d41c79314b&node=34:1.1.1.1.33.4&rgn=div6>

### **§ 99.31 Under what conditions is prior consent not required to disclose information?**

- (a) An educational agency or institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without the consent required by § 99.30 if the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions:
  - (1)(i)(A) The disclosure is to other school officials, including teachers, within the agency or institution whom the agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests.
    - (B) A contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom an agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions may be considered a school official under this paragraph provided that the outside party—
      - (1) Performs an institutional service or function for which the agency or institution would otherwise use employees;
      - (2) Is under the direct control of the agency or institution with respect to the use and maintenance of education records; and
      - (3) Is subject to the requirements of § 99.33(a) governing the use and redisclosure of personally identifiable information from education records.
  - (6)(i) The disclosure is to organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions to:
    - (A) Develop, validate, or administer predictive tests;
    - (B) Administer student aid programs; or
    - (C) Improve instruction.
  - (ii) An educational agency or institution may disclose information under paragraph (a)(6)(i) of this section only if--
    - (A) The study is conducted in a manner that does not permit personal identification of parents and students by individuals other than representatives of the organization that have legitimate interests in the information;
    - (B) The information is destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes for which the study was conducted; and
    - (C) The educational agency or institution enters into a written agreement with the organization that--
      - (1) Specifies the purpose, scope, and duration of the study or studies and the information to be disclosed;
      - (2) Requires the organization to use personally identifiable information from education records only to meet the purpose or purposes of the study as stated in the written agreement;
      - (3) Requires the organization to conduct the study in a manner that does not permit personal identification of parents and students, as defined in this part, by anyone other than representatives of the organization with legitimate interests; and

(4) Requires the organization to destroy or return to the educational agency or institution all personally identifiable information when the information is no longer needed for the purposes for which the study was conducted and specifies the time period in which the information must be returned or destroyed.

(iii) An educational agency or institution is not required to initiate a study or agree with or endorse the conclusions or results of the study.

(iv) If this Office determines that a third party outside the educational agency or institution to whom information is disclosed under this paragraph (a)(6) violates paragraph (a)(6)(ii)(B) of this section, the educational agency or institution may not allow that third party access to personally identifiable information from education records for at least five years.

(v) For the purposes of paragraph (a)(6) of this section, the term "organization" includes, but is not limited to, Federal, State, and local agencies, and independent organizations.

(7) The disclosure is to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.

(b)(1) *De-identified records and information.* An educational agency or institution, or a party that has received education records or information from education records under this part, may release the records or information without the consent required by § 99.30 after the removal of all personally identifiable information provided that the educational agency or institution or other party has made a reasonable determination that a student's identity is not personally identifiable, whether through single or multiple releases, and taking into account other reasonably available information.

(2) An educational agency or institution, or a party that has received education records or information from education records under this part, may release deidentified student level data from education records for the purpose of education research by attaching a code to each record that may allow the recipient to match information received from the same source, provided that--

(i) An educational agency or institution or other party that releases de-identified data under paragraph (b)(2) of this section does not disclose any information about how it generates and assigns a record code, or that would allow a recipient to identify a student based on a record code;

(ii) The record code is used for no purpose other than identifying a deidentified record for purposes of education research and cannot be used to ascertain personally identifiable information about a student; and

(iii) The record code is not based on a student's social security number or other personal information.

(c) An educational agency or institution must use reasonable methods to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, students, school officials, and any other parties to whom the agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from education records.

(d) Paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section do not require an educational agency or institution or any other party to disclose education records or information from education records to any party except for parties under paragraph (a)(12) of this section.

**99.35 What conditions apply to disclosure of information for Federal or State program purposes?**

- (a) (1) Authorized representatives of the officials or agencies headed by officials listed in § 99.31(a)(3) may have access to education records in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs.
  - (2) Authority for an agency or official listed in § 99.31(a)(3) to conduct an audit, evaluation, or compliance or enforcement activity is not conferred by the Act or this part and must be established under other Federal, State, or local authority.
- 
- (b) Information that is collected under paragraph (a) of this section must:
    - (1) Be protected in a manner that does not permit personal identification of individuals by anyone other than the officials or agencies headed by officials referred to in paragraph (a) of this section, except that those officials and agencies may make further disclosures of personally identifiable information from education records on behalf of the educational agency or institution in accordance with the requirements of
    - (2) Be destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes listed in paragraph (a) of this section.
- 
- (c) Paragraph (b) of this section does not apply if:
    - (1) The parent or eligible student has given written consent for the disclosure under § 99.30; or
    - (2) The collection of personally identifiable information is specifically authorized by Federal law.



## **Appendix C: Data Security Checklist**

## Data Security Checklist

This document should help researchers receiving confidential data develop and enforce systems for data storage and access. The list below is comprehensive but not exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each researcher to review institution and Research Collaborative policies and standards for complete guidance on FERPA compliance related to your study specific situation. Additional guidance may be found through the US Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) <http://ptac.ed.gov/>

## Data Management Plan

Every research project should include a data management plan detailing the following:

- ✓ Identify all data to be utilized in this study:
  - What format will the data come in (csv, txt, etc.)?
  - Will the data need to be reformatted for analyses?
  - What type of variables are included (numerical, image, text, etc.)?
  - What is the classification of each variable (publically available aggregate vs. personally identifiable information [PII])?
- ✓ What steps are being taken to ensure data remains secure at all times?
  - Secure Servers
  - Encryption
  - Password protecting
  - Restricted access
- ✓ If data sharing is required,
  - What data is being shared?
  - With whom is the data being shared?
  - Why is this data share necessary?
  - When is the data being shared?
  - How will data be securely transferred?
- ✓ If the data will be disseminated,
  - What steps will be taken to ensure reporting maintains the anonymity of those included in the data?
  - What steps will be taken when reporting involves small numbers of individuals?
- ✓ Once a project has reached its completion, what methods will be taken to dispose of the data?
- ✓ Who is responsible for managing the storage, access, and destruction of the data?
- ✓ Is there a documented procedure for reporting and monitoring each step of the data management process?



## **Electronic/Device Security**

All data stored electronically should be kept on:

- ✓ Secure servers maintained by trained systems administration staff
- ✓ Encrypted devices (e.g., thumb drives, externals, laptops) with up-to-date endpoint, anti-virus, anti-spyware protection

***Do not copy confidential data to individual workstations or personal devices.***

## **Physical Security**

Every effort to remove PII from hard copy materials should be made. In the event that PII is necessary, these documents must be:

- ✓ Kept in locked cabinets
- ✓ Transferred off premise in a secure manner (e.g., locked containers)
- ✓ Accessed only by study team members listed on the Research Collaborative IRB application
- ✓ Shredded and disposed of through FERPA compliant methods once no longer needed

Machines storing PII data must also have physical security measures.

- ✓ All machines must be kept in restricted access, locked rooms.
- ✓ Devices that are removable (e.g., thumb drives, DVDs, laptops) must be kept in locked storage within restricted access areas when not utilized.
- ✓ All devices must include security programs (encryption, password protection, locking the device after a given length of inactivity).

## **Access to Data**

- ✓ Only those staff listed on the Research Collaborative IRB application may have access to the data in any format.
- ✓ Access to data is only for those research aims detailed in the Research Collaborative IRB application.
- ✓ Transfer of data must be done through secure file transfer and may not be sent to email accounts that are not secure (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, Comcast).

**Appendix D: Commonly Requested Data Elements**

There are a number of commonly requested MDE and CEPI data sources, as well as some less common sources. Below see links to, and examples of, commonly requested data elements related to public education in the State of Michigan, some possible additional data elements from other departments or agencies with the State of Michigan, and information on the differences between Assessment and Accountability data elements.

*Please note that some school and district level data elements may be publicly available in [mischooldata.org](http://mischooldata.org) and other public sources; in such cases we can direct you to the appropriate source.*

## **MDE-Specific Data:**

Commonly requested Accountability, Assessment, and Educator Certification (MOECS) data elements include, but are not limited to, the following variables. Please review the below options.

### **Accountability File**

Contains one record for each Michigan public student’s valid state-administered standardized assessment test results by school year, entity information (District name and code, building name and code), and student demographics (gender, race/ethnicity); growth data (if available); scaled score; points scored; and Z-scores (research and accountability). Please see the glossary for further definition of these elements.

Assessment Data Includes:

- **Summative:**

<u>Test</u>	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Grades</u>
MEAP	Fall 2008 – Fall 2013	3-9
MSTEP	Spring 2015 – Present	3-9
MME	- MEAP & ACT: Spring 2007 – Spring 2014 - MSTEP only: Spring 2015 - MSTEP & SAT: Spring 2016	11

- **Alternate**

<u>Test</u>	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Grades</u>
MEAP-Access	Fall 2011 – Fall 2013	3-8
MI-Access	- Fall 2008 – Fall 2013 and Spring 2015 – Present - Spring 2009 – Present	3-8 11

- **English Language Learner**

<u>Test</u>	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Grades</u>
ELPA	Spring 2006 – Spring 2013	K-12
WIDA Access	Spring 2014 – Present	K-12

- College Readiness

<u>Test</u>	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Grades</u>
ACT	Spring 2007 – Spring 2015	11
SAT	Spring 2016	11
PSAT	Spring 2016	9, 10

- Career Readiness

<u>Test</u>	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Grades</u>
WorkKeys	Spring 2007 – Present	11

### Michigan Online Educator Certification System (MOECS) File

Contains one record for each certified or permitted educator for the State of Michigan. MOECS includes all teaching, occupational, school psychologist, school counselor, school nurse, school administrator, substitute permits, emergency permits, and occupational permits that are valid or expired.

Data is collected continuously with frozen data sets created in the spring and winter to coincide with the data snapshots created for CEPI’s Registry of Educational Personnel (REP) database.

Available data include:

#### Demographics Information

Name	Will need to strongly justify this request
Ethnicity	
Gender	
Age	Age in Years
Zip Code	

#### Educator Certificate Information

License Type	e.g. Professional, Provisional, Occupational, etc.
Issue Date	
Expiration Date	
Program Type	Elementary/Secondary
Preparation Institute	Available 2011 – Present
In-State or Out-of-State	Only applies to initial certification; Available 2011 – Present
Alternative Route	Educator Preparation, School Administrator, Alternate Route

#### Certificate Endorsement Information

Endorsement Type	
Endorsement Code	
Grade Level	
Preparation Institute	If additional endorsement to original certificate; Available 2011 – Present
Date Added to Certificate	If additional endorsement to original certificate

## Educator Permit Information – Available 2011 – Present

Permit Type	
School District Code	The district that applied for the permit
School District Name	The district that applied for the permit
School Year	
Endorsement	
Endorsement Level	If applicable; Elementary, Middle School, High School

## **CEPI Data Sources**

### **K-12 Student Data (MSDS/Graduation Cohort)**

CEPI is creating a “researcher ready” pre-set file containing the most commonly requested variables for K-12 educational research.

The pre-set file contains data from school years 2009/2010 for all variables. School years 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 are available for graduation status/variables only.

The pre-set file will contain one row per school year\*student\*district\*school, except for discipline variables (separate file, one row per incident) and coursework data (separate file, one row per course).

Data in this file are collected in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) application, the home of most student-level state and federal data reporting for K-12 education. For links to all potential MSDS data elements, visit the link and look for the latest MSDS Collection Details Manual: [http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,1607,7-113-986\\_50502---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,1607,7-113-986_50502---,00.html)

***NOTE:** Research using graduation data should use the graduation cohort exit date/status, which is audited and reviewed after the completion of the school year and before publication of graduation rates, rather than the unaudited exit date/status.*

A portion of the pre-set file will be extracted based on the variables you request (and are approved for) in the research application. A data dictionary will also be provided.

### **Postsecondary Student Data (NSC/STARR)**

CEPI combines data from its Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR) collection (<http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,4546,7-113-57943---,00.html>) with National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data to create a merged dataset for state and federal reporting. This dataset includes data for students who enrolled in an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) from the 2009-2010 school year to present.

More information about the variables included in the pre-set file can be found in the Student Pathways Data File Layout at this link:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/cepi/student\\_pathways-data\\_file\\_layout\\_437361\\_7.xlsx](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/cepi/student_pathways-data_file_layout_437361_7.xlsx)

A portion of the pre-set file will be extracted based on the variables you request (and are approved for) in the research application. A data dictionary will also be provided.

### **Other Datasets**

REP – school personnel level data (available end of year 2002)

Registry of Educational Personnel (REP) is used to produce reports for the U.S. Department of Education and for the state of Michigan regarding school personnel. For links to all potential REP data elements, see the link: [http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,4546,7-113-986\\_10478---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,4546,7-113-986_10478---,00.html)

Commonly requested REP data elements include, but are not limited to,

- Racial/Ethnic Code
- Date of Hire
- Highest Educational Level
- Type of Credential

## **Additional Sources of Data**

Researchers occasionally request data elements from other departments within the State of Michigan. If appropriate, please add requested data element(s) to the application.

If the applicant needs data elements from a state department outside of MDE/CEPI, you will be required to contact the appropriate State of Michigan department directly. MDE and CEPI cannot authorize or approve release of data from other state agencies/departments.

The researcher's completed Confidential Data Request Application must specify the contact person at the agency that the data request was discussed with and his/her contact information. This individual may be invited to the Research Collaborative IRB Committee's meeting to review and discuss the application.

## **Things to Consider when Asking for Data:**

- What type of data will best answer each research question?
  - Cross-sectional: Student/teacher data collected at one point in time
  - Cohort: A group of students/teachers followed over a period of time
- Which assessment content areas will be used to answer each research question?
- What variables are required for each research question?
  - Student demographics vs school demographics
  - Special populations (e.g. migrant students, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, etc.)
- If looking at longitudinal data, do any business rules or measures change from year to year
  - If looking at years that include both the M-STEP and MEAP how will you take the differences into account?
  - Does the definition of a variable, such as a subgroup flag, change in the timeframe?

## **Appendix E: Acronyms & Terms**

## Acronyms

CEPI	Center for Educational Performance and Information
ELA	English Language Arts
ELPA	English Language Proficiency Assessment
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FID	Financial Information Database
FAY	Full Academic Year
GAD	Graduation and Dropout
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
IRB	Internal Review Board
ISD	Intermediate School District
LEA	Local Education Agency
MDE	Michigan Department of Education
MSDS	Michigan Student Data System
MEAP	Michigan Educational Assessment Program
M-STEP	Michigan – Student Test of Educational Progress
MME	Michigan Merit Exam
MOECS	Michigan Online Educator Certification System
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse
PEPE	Primary Education Providing Entity
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PSA	Public School Academy
REP	Registry of Educational Personnel
SGP	Student Growth Percentile
SID	School Infrastructure Database
STARR	Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository
WIDA	World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment



## Definitions

**Enrolled school/district:** This is the school and district in which a student is enrolled at the time the snapshot of research data is taken. It is the school and district primarily responsible for educating the student (PEPE).

**Feeder school/district:** The feeder school and district are determined in order to calculate school proficiency values for school accountability, but are also often useful in answering research questions. Put simply, the feeder school is where the student received the instruction that is tied directly to the test. For spring tests, this is almost always the school in which the student is enrolled and takes the test. For fall tests (such as those from 2013-14 and before), it is the school where the student was enrolled in the year prior to the year the test was taken.

**Full Academic Year:** A student is considered Full Academic Year (FAY) if he/she meets certain requirements for enrollment across the span of an academic year. The definition of FAY varies depending on year and test, but the common requirement is that the student must be enrolled in the same school for a certain number of contiguous count days. Student counts are collected three times a year. For school accountability, only FAY students are included. Whether to include FAY students were all tested students depends on the research question to be addressed.

**Tested school/district:** Michigan does not have rules requiring a student to test in a certain school or location. Thus, a student may take a test in a building other than his/her home school. When the test is returned or submitted for scoring, the location in which the test was completed is recorded. Initial assessment reports are based on the tested location. To track where the student was instructed in the content tested, one should use the feeder school.

## Statistics

**Performance Level:** A categorical variable indicating the degree to which the measured standards are mastered by the student. *Note:* Scales vary by assessment – 1-4 for the general assessment (MEAP, MSTEP), 1-3 for MI-Access, and 1-6 for WIDA.

**Performance Level Change (PLC):** A categorical variable indicating the level of change in a student's assessment performance across adjacent year testing. Levels are low, medium, and high. Only available for the MEAP and MI-Access assessments prior to the school 2014-15 and in grades 4-8, and content areas math and reading. PLC calculation is dependent on a consistent scale and was unable to be calculated following the transition to M-STEP. Thus, it was replaced by SGPs in the school year 2014-15.

**Scaled Score:** Scale scores are linear transformations of theta values to fit on scale with a particular set of properties. For example, we defined the proficiency cut in any subject areas at grade 3 as 1300 (thus whatever theta cut we define through standard setting should correspond to 1300 after transformation). We also defined the standard deviation (SD) of the final scale to be 25. We then compute the intercept (a) and slope (b) of the linear transformation formula as follows: the slope (b) =  $SD(SS) / SD(\Theta)$ , and the intercept (a) =  $1300 - b * \Theta_{cut}$  (where  $\Theta_{cut}$  denotes the Theta value corresponds to the proficiency cut).

**Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs):** SGPs describe a student's learning over time compared to other students with similar test scores in an earlier year (the comparison group). SGPs are only calculated for students who took a similar assessment for a given content area in the previous year

the assessment was available. For example, SGPs were calculated for math, ELA, social studies and science for students transitioning from the MEAP to the MSTEP but not for students who switched from MI-Access to MSTEP.

**Theta:** Theta denotes students' ability or latent trait estimated based on students' responses to assessment items. For example, we try to estimate students' ability in Math through their responses to items on a Math test. The theoretical distribution of Theta is usually assumed to be standard normal, i.e., has mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1.

**Z-score (accountability):** The accountability Z-score is the student's scale score (or points for certain MI-Access tests), standardized so that it is on a scale with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. These scores are used in State school accountability systems, and include only Full Academic Year (FAY) students in the calculation. All valid scores for tests taken by public school students that meet this restriction are included in the calculation, and each score is compared to all scores on the same test, subject, and grade in the state. In addition, the Z-scores have a van der Waardens transformation applied to put them into a more nearly normal distribution, and are capped at +2 and -2.

**Z-score (research):** The research Z-score is the student's scale score (or points for certain MI-Access tests), standardized so that it is on a scale with a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1. The research Z-score includes all students, not just Full Academic Year students. All valid scores for tests taken by public school students are included, and each score is compared to all scores on the same test, subject, and grade in the state. The Z-scores have a van der Waardens transformation applied to put them into a more nearly normal distribution. Research z-scores are not capped.

## Assessments

**M-STEP:** The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) is the current assessment system. It was designed to measure student growth effectively for today's students. English language arts and mathematics will be assessed in grades 3–8, science in grades 4 and 7, and social studies in grades 5 and 8. The M-STEP also includes the MME in 11th grade, which consists of a college entrance exam, work skills assessment, and M-STEP summative assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

**MEAP:** *No longer in use – replaced by M-STEP.*

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) was Michigan's general assessment for students in grades 3 through 9 until the 2014-15 school year. MEAP was based on Michigan's Grade Level Content Expectations in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students were assessed in the fall of each year on the prior year's expectations. All students in grades 3 through 8 were assessed in reading and mathematics. In addition, grades 4 and 7 were assessed in writing, grades 5 and 8 were tested in science, and grades 6 and 9 were tested in social studies.

**MME:** The MME is the high school assessment exam. It assesses students in grade 11 and eligible students in grade 12 based on Michigan high school standards. It is administered each spring, and consists of three components:

- College Board SAT (ACT until Spring 2014)
- WorkKeys® job skills assessments in reading, mathematics, and "locating information"

- Michigan-developed Science and Social Studies M-STEP

*Note for longitudinal studies:* prior to Spring 2015 components of the ACT and WorkKeys were used in the creation of the MME composite score. As of Spring 2015 neither were used in the creation of the MME composite score.

### Alternative Assessments

**MI-Access:** **MI-Access** Michigan’s alternate assessment. It is designed for students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams have determined that it is not appropriate for them to participate in the state’s general education assessments (the M-STEP or the MME).

At this time, MI-Access assessments are available for three student populations:

- Participation (P) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, a severe cognitive impairment. These students may have both significant cognitive and physical impairments that limit their ability to generalize or transfer learning, and thus makes determining their actual abilities and skills difficult.
- Supported Independence (SI) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, moderate cognitive impairment. These students 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.
- Functional Independence (FI) assessments are for students who have, or function as if they have, mild cognitive impairment. These students typically can assess their personal strengths and limitations, and access resources, strategies, supports, and linkages to help them maximize their independence.

**MEAP-Access:** *No longer in use.* An alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards aligned to the state standards during the period of time it was administered.

### English Language Proficiency

**English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA):** The goal of the ELPA is to measure the English language proficiency levels of Michigan students acquiring English as a second language. Both oral and written language are included in the assessment of listening, reading, writing and speaking skills for academic and social settings. Comprehension is assessed through the Listening and Reading sections of the ELPA.

**WIDA Access:** Michigan’s summative assessment, federally required to assess students identified as English Learners (ELs) on a yearly basis, is the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. This assessment is designed to measure K–12 EL students on their progress in learning the English language, which includes a status of their development of Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking skills. WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is aligned to the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards that Michigan adopted in 2013.