

Fact Sheet on Benchmark and Early Literacy Assessment Reimbursement

Section 104d of the State School Aid Act (P.A. 265 of 2018) allocates a total of \$9.2 million to be available during the 2018-19 school year for reimbursement to districts:

1. that purchase a computer-adaptive test; **or**
2. that purchase 1 or more diagnostic tools or screening tools, for pupils in grades K to 3 that are intended to increase reading proficiency by grade 4; **or**
3. that purchase benchmark assessments for pupils in grades K-8.

Funding will be provided to districts as part of a per-pupil allocation, or formula grant, according to the available funding, based on the number of pupils for whom assessments were purchased. Reimbursement as per this section is formula based and awarded funds may exceed or be less than the cost of the assessment in which you applied for reimbursement. The per-pupil allocation cannot be determined until all applications have been submitted.

Criteria for Qualifying Assessments

In order to receive reimbursement under this section, a **computer-adaptive test** must provide for at least all of the following:

- Internet-delivered, standards-based assessment using a computer-adaptive model to target the instructional level of each pupil.
- Unlimited testing opportunities throughout the 2018-2019 school year.
- Valid and reliable diagnostic assessment data.
- Adjustment of testing difficulty based on previous answers to test questions.
- Immediate feedback to pupils and teachers.

In order to receive reimbursement under this section, **diagnostic tools or screening tools** must meet all of the following:

- Be reliable.
- Be valid.
- Be useful – (easy to administer and requires a short time to complete and that results are linked to intervention).

In order to receive funding under this section, **benchmark assessments for pupils in grades K to 8** must meet all of the following:

- Be aligned to Michigan's state content standards.
- Complement Michigan's summative assessment system.
- Be administered at least once a year before the administration of any summative assessment to monitor pupil progress.
- Provide information on pupil achievement with regard to learning the content required in a given year or grade span.

District Selection Process

Districts are free to choose any assessments which meet the above qualifying assessment criteria for reimbursement. For Grades K-3 these assessments need to be from the [MDE Initial and/or Extensive Assessment lists](#) in support of the legislation [MCL:380.1280f](#).

The new legislation in [Section 104d of P.A. 265 of 2018](#) requires districts to work directly with their chosen assessment vendor. Testing administration policies, procedures, and costs—including provided accommodation tools—of a chosen assessment tool will be determined by each vendor.

With regard to benchmark assessments, the legislation also requires districts seeking reimbursement to commit to using the *same* benchmark assessment for no less than three years. This legislative requirement does not apply to computer-adaptive tests, diagnostic tools or screening tools.

Reimbursement Application Process

The MDE Literacy Team is currently working on the 18-19 Section 104d Assessment Reimbursement grant application. We anticipate the Section 104d grant application will open by September 1, 2018 and close on November 9, 2018. Grant award funds will be disbursed starting in the December State Aid payment. Communication will go out via the [Superintendent's weekly eblast memo](#), the [MDE Early Literacy website](#), and through the General Education Leadership Network (GELN) and Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA).

Purchase Timeline and Proof of Purchase Requirements

Section 104d requires reimbursement to be made to eligible districts that complete their **purchase by October 15, 2018 for the 18-19 school year. Proof of Purchase must be submitted with the grant application in order to be eligible for reimbursement.** Reimbursement shall be made on an equal per-pupil basis according to the available funding, based on the number of pupils for whom assessments were purchased.

MDE Data and Reporting Requirements

Not later than **February 1, 2019**, the MDE shall compile the assessment purchase information provided by districts and report to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on School Aid and the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies the number of districts that purchased each test, tool, and assessment. The state will *not* be collecting any additional data as part of this state-reimbursement initiative.