



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** September 1, 2020

**TO:** Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents  
Public School Academy Directors

**FROM:** Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent *V. Keesler*  
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

**SUBJECT:** Contact Information for Michigan Department of Education-Approved  
Benchmark Providers under Michigan's Return to Learn Law (PA 149 of  
2020) - MEMO #COVID-19-101

On August 20, 2020, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed Public Act 149 into law, as part of Michigan's "Return to Learn" legislation. On August 21, 2020, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) shared information pertaining to benchmark assessments in a [memo](#) to local and intermediate school district superintendents and public school academy directors.

[Public Act 149](#) requires MDE to approve at least four but no more than five providers of benchmark assessments to meet the requirements of this legislation. The approved providers are:

- NWEA
- Curriculum Associates
- Renaissance Learning
- Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)

In addition, the law requires that MDE make one of the benchmark assessments available by a provider at no cost to districts. MDE will make available the Smarter Balanced interim assessments (administered through MDE's administration contract with DRC) at no additional cost to districts. MDE will also continue to provide MDE's early literacy assessments for grades K-2 at no cost to districts, as has been the case since 2017.

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Districts that want to learn more about the products that these vendors provide, and to receive information on ordering and administering these assessments to their students, can use the following contact information:

<b>Benchmark Provider</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
NWEA	<a href="mailto:michigan@nwea.org">michigan@nwea.org</a>
Curriculum Associates	Jeff Tompkins 313-316-0141 <a href="mailto:Jtompkins@cainc.com">Jtompkins@cainc.com</a> Genesee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne counties ----- Vikki Halstead 989-577-0305 <a href="mailto:Vhalstead@cainc.com">Vhalstead@cainc.com</a> Remaining counties in the state
Renaissance Learning	Aaron Hartman 586-533-1107 <a href="mailto:Aaron.Hartman@renaissance.com">Aaron.Hartman@renaissance.com</a>
Data Recognition Corporation*	Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments (grades 3-8) 877-560-8378 option 2 <a href="mailto:misupport@datarecognitioncorp.com">misupport@datarecognitioncorp.com</a>
*free option under Section 104(14)	Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments (grades K-2) 877-560-8378 option 3 <a href="mailto:mde-oeaa@michigan.gov">mde-oeaa@michigan.gov</a>

cc: Michigan Education Alliance  
 Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors