



Guiding  
Principles for  
Accountability

2018

# Guiding Principles for Accountability

## Overview

This document shares the core values of the accountability team at the Michigan Department of Education. These values shape the work and customer service that we aim to provide to our students, parents, communities, and governing bodies in the State of Michigan.

The guiding principles listed below strive to clearly lay out the model of governance among the accountability team while providing a framework for effective and fair decision making. These principles directly align with our business and policy objectives and help to facilitate the communication of those objectives to our various customers. Our guiding principles also align with the statewide plans to become a top 10 state in education in 10 years. For more information on the goals and strategies of the Top 10 in 10 Years plan, please visit: <http://mi.gov/top10in10>.

## Mission Statement

Improving outcomes through student-focused, useable, and understandable data tools and resources.



## Guiding Principles

Belief:	Action:
<p>The information systems that we develop and the informational products that we provide should help to facilitate equal access to a quality education for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the inclusion of subgroup achievement.</li> <li>• Do not provide special exceptions for certain types or demographics of students.</li> <li>• Communicate to parents and students as well as schools and other education stakeholders.</li> <li>• Conduct and publish “Light of Day” reporting to promote awareness.</li> <li>• Focus on <b>STUDENTS</b> over <b>ADULTS</b> within systems.</li> <li>• Build transparency in our systems and resources – not as a punitive measure, but as a key to identifying areas needing improvement.</li> </ul>
<p>All schools should be held to the same high standards, and these standards must be fair, transparent, and consistently applied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply standard measures to all students and schools.</li> <li>• Act to be as transparent and open as possible.</li> <li>• Document each policy, business rule, and decision.</li> <li>• Communicate accurately and clearly on a regular and timely basis to schools.</li> <li>• Adhere to our written documentation for policy and procedure.</li> <li>• Hold to state collected data sources (MSDS, REP, EEM, state assessments) as the sole source of accuracy in student and school data systems.</li> <li>• Hold to published deadlines and enforce them equally for all schools.</li> <li>• Do not grant exceptions as all schools must be provided the same opportunities.</li> <li>• Do not consider “who you know” or privilege insider knowledge.</li> </ul>
<p>The work of our teams should be above reproach, psychometrically sound, high-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always make corrections when the error was ours.</li> </ul>

<p>quality, and relentless toward improvement in process and content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan, strategize, and think carefully and conscientiously through all steps involved in each activity or initiative.</li> <li>• Each view ourselves as equally responsible for the team and our work quality, and hold ourselves accountable for our collective success.</li> <li>• Be open to constructive feedback and seek to integrate this feedback into our processes.</li> <li>• Be fair and truthful with each other about our work and ways to improve.</li> <li>• Focus on the “big picture” for each initiative and challenge ourselves to be innovative in thinking of possible connections with other areas/initiatives.</li> <li>• Communicate well within our team; within the office, and within the Department.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for mistakes, make no excuses for errors, and focus on continuous improvement</li> <li>• Undertake to be open, honest, and accountable in our relationships both within the office and external to it</li> <li>• Be nonpartisan nor beholden to special interests in our work. The positions we take will be based on sound objective and professional analysis of research.</li> <li>• Condemn bribery and corruption vigorously and courageously wherever it has been reliably identified.</li> </ul>
<p>We are a customer-focused team that shall provide high quality and timely customer service and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate through targeted and general channels to our stakeholders and customers.</li> <li>• Provide clear timelines.</li> <li>• Be as helpful as possible to stakeholders, but do not break our rules.</li> <li>• Hold conferences, webinars, etc. to aid in the dissemination of information.</li> <li>• Have a high-quality web presence.</li> <li>• Make all information easily available and accessible to all visitors.</li> <li>• Document and publish business rules for all systems.</li> <li>• Offer individuals technical assistance to understand and utilize their data.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to feedback and concerns from schools to identify core causes and proactive solutions for them where possible.</li> <li>• Work with stakeholders and other offices to reduce and eliminate burdens our systems can place on school users where possible.</li> <li>• Work cooperatively with all individuals and organizations.</li> <li>• Do not compromise our ability to address issues freely, thoroughly, and objectively.</li> </ul>
<p>We can help to drive improvement in student outcomes, educator effectiveness, and overall school effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentrate on providing data for information, improvement, and targeting resources.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance regarding assessment, accountability and other data.</li> <li>• Create positive opportunities for interaction with schools around their data and performance.</li> <li>• Ensure our work is highly skilled and seek to increase our skill levels through strategic professional development plans, learning opportunities, and internal discussions/efforts.</li> <li>• Hold a personal vision for the importance of our work, and be responsible for the high-quality implementation of our various initiatives.</li> <li>• Provide accurate and timely data and reports to our stakeholders.</li> <li>• Seek feedback from stakeholders on what and how to improve in our products and processes.</li> <li>• Conduct and use high-quality research and studies to improve methodologies for operational work, and to provide more reliable, valid, and useful data to stakeholders.</li> <li>• Strive for appropriate use of data by schools, researchers, and other customers.</li> <li>• Use research to help drive informed decisions and highlight effective and ineffective policies both internally and externally to MDE.</li> </ul>