



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 14, 2020

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

**FROM:** William A. Pearson, Ed.D., Interim Deputy Superintendent  
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports *WAP*

**SUBJECT:** Return to Learn Benchmark Assessment Data Collection Requirements  
MEMO #COVID-19-144

On August 20, 2020, Governor Whitmer signed into law Public Act 149, which took immediate effect as part of the Return to Learn package of laws. Public Act 149 (P.A. 149) of 2020 requires all districts to administer benchmark assessments to all students in grades K-8. It also requires the reporting of certain data to the Michigan regional data hubs.

P.A. 149 (MCL 388.1704 (8) through (16)) requires districts receiving state aid for the 2020-21 fiscal year to administer benchmark assessments and report data to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI).

P.A. 149 provides three options for benchmark assessments. Schools may choose from:

- One of four benchmark assessment providers approved by MDE (subsection (9))
- Benchmark assessments with progress monitoring tools (subsection (10))
- Local benchmark assessments (or any combination of those options) (subsection (10))

The reporting requirements for the last two options are the same.

The purpose of this memo is to further explain the reporting requirements and provide districts with the necessary information to comply with this law.

**Scenario 1: A school district chooses a benchmark assessment from the MDE-approved list of providers (NWEA, Renaissance Learning, Curriculum Associates/i-Ready, and DRC).**

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According to the law, by no later than June 30, 2021, a district choosing one of these benchmark assessments shall send aggregate-level data to a regional data hub that is part of the Michigan data hub (MiDataHub) network.

MiDataHub is designed to receive student-level data and districts should provide student-level data through existing MiDataHub connections. Aggregation will happen after the data collection rather than requiring districts and data hubs to develop aggregate reporting along with student-level reporting. The MiDataHub team will facilitate all necessary aggregations and send a final state-level data set to CEPI for use in generating the legislatively mandated report to the governor and the state legislature. Reporting must include at least fall ("within the first nine weeks") and spring ("by not later than the last day of the 2020-21 school year") assessment scores for all eligible students.

The MiDataHub team is working with the selected test vendors to identify the data structures used to gather and move test results to MiDataHub. Additionally, provisions are being made to allow districts that are using unsupported student information systems to load student data into MiDataHub so assessment data can be properly integrated.

The MiDataHub team will host webinars and provide documentation to assist both existing and new MiDataHub districts in accomplishing the reporting necessary to comply with this law. Look for these webinars and documentation beginning in early 2021 and running through the June 30, 2021 deadline for submission of data.

For more information about your district's status in connecting to MiDataHub, please contact the online help desk of your local intermediate school district (ISD)/regional educational service agency (RESA) or MiDataHub via email at [support@midatahub.org](mailto:support@midatahub.org) or by phone at 269-250-9240.

**Scenario 2: A school district chooses to use a local benchmark assessment or "another benchmark assessment with progress monitoring tools."**

If a local benchmark assessment or another benchmark assessment with progress monitoring tools is administered, the district shall report to MDE and CEPI the benchmark assessment(s) administered and how that assessment measures changes, including any losses, as applicable, in learning; and the district's plan for addressing any losses in learning (subsection (15)). Districts using these tools are not required per P.A. 149 to submit data to the Data Hub. Local benchmark assessment information will be collected through the state's GEMS/MARS system. The form will be made available in the first quarter of 2021.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance  
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors