



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 17, 2015

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

FROM:  Norma Jean Sass
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services

SUBJECT: 2015-16 School Year MTRAx Data Collection

The 2015-16 MTRAx data collection window is fast approaching. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE), through the Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant, is pleased to announce that this year's data collection will occur in a newly redesigned MTRAx application that offers significant improvements over the original version. MTRAx users throughout the State should be aware of several key items as we move into this year's data collection window.

KEY DATES

The overall timeline for the re-launch of MTRAx and this year's data collection window is detailed below:

- **September 15, 2015**
 - Launch of the new MTRAx application with base functionality
 - Training materials available
- **October 1, 2015**
 - 2015-16 data collection window opens
- **Mid-October**
 - Enhanced MTRAx functionality available
 - ISD, District, and Building Dashboards
 - Custom Reporting
- **November 25, 2015**
 - 2015-16 data collection window closes

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TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The new MTRAx application will continue to serve the purpose that it has fulfilled for the past several years: to serve as a data collection and reporting tool to help districts identify their readiness status for online testing as it relates to their technical infrastructure (school data networks and end user devices). While the data collected and reports provided will remain substantially the same in terms of content, the user interface, source code, and backend database have been significantly redesigned in order to improve the performance of the application as well as the user experience.

Given that users will be performing the same tasks for MTRAx as in previous years, and in an improved and more intuitive user interface, no live training sessions are planned. We will make several items available to assist in the transition to the new MTRAx:

- **Comprehensive User Guide:** Detailing the use of the application in all areas (data entry, reporting).
- **Short Training Videos:** Rather than a single webinar-based training session covering the entire functionality of the application, a number of short training videos on specific elements of functionality will be available. This will provide users with quick and efficient access to training assistance on specific areas of need.
- **MTRAx Support:** The MTRAx team remains available to assist users as they work in the new application at mtraxsupport@22itrig.org.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

As we prepare to launch the new MTRAx application, there are several items of which users of the site need to be made aware.

- **MTRAx Website:** The URL remains unchanged for MTRAx at www.mtrax.org.
- **Data Migration:** We will be migrating all existing data from the old application into the new environment. This migration will necessitate several tasks for users of the new site as detailed below.
- **Password Reset:** Because passwords were stored as encrypted data in the MTRAx database, we will not be able to migrate existing passwords to the new site. All user IDs will be migrated with their existing security privileges, however all users will need to reset their password when they login to the new MTRAx for the first time.
- **New Device Data Collection Methodology:** Changes have been made to the way we are collecting device data. In the past, users would be required to enter (or upload) data on devices at each building and testing location individually. This methodology led to a labor intensive process that resulted in significant duplication of data if a district was using devices of the same specification across multiple locations. The new system allows users to build Device Profiles at the district level for each specification. Device Profiles are then selected at each location and quantities are assigned.

- **Data Review:** While we will be migrating all existing data to the new site and have a high degree of confidence in the migration process, based on several structural changes to the database intended to improve data accuracy and application performance, we ask that all users **review their MTRAx data in its entirety to confirm its accuracy.** Particular attention should be paid to Testing Locations and Device Profiles.
- **Enhanced Functionality:** Several key pieces of enhanced functionality will not be available in the MTRAx on its initial launch on September 15th. Users will be able to access all data collection and reporting functionality immediately on launch, however the following items will be available in the coming weeks after launch (targeting no later than mid-October):
 - **Custom Reporting** will provide the ability for users to generate custom data exports of their MTRAx data on any field in the database.
 - **Dashboards** will be available at the ISD, District, and Building levels for at-a-glance intelligence into readiness status and reporting of historical trending data.

We thank you for your participation in this year's MTRAx data collection and are excited to offer you this improved application for the coming years. Please contact mtraxsupport@22itrig.org with any questions.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance