



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

March 1, 2007

To: LEA and ISD Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers
High School Principals

From: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D. *JMH*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

**SUBJ: Early College Credit Information and
Free Advanced Placement Tests**

I know all of you are well into the planning process for next year, and I want to thank you for your continued efforts in implementing the new Michigan Merit Curriculum high school graduation requirements. The most important goal of the Michigan Merit Curriculum is to ensure all students are prepared for postsecondary education, training or the workplace. One way to accomplish this is to offer students more Advanced Placement and other early college credit opportunities.

Introducing students to these opportunities can be a win/win for students, for educators and for schools. These options can increase student achievement and assessment scores; increase student engagement and decrease student dropouts; increase college readiness, enrollment and graduation; and save students time and money. College credit earning opportunities can also provide schools and districts with additional classroom scheduling and placement options, and maximize limited financial and human resources.

Last year, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) worked with the National Governor's Association Leadership Team to develop recommendations on Early College Credit Earning Opportunities. These recommendations were submitted and approved by the State Board of Education in June 2006 and include the following:

1. Expose all students to college success opportunities and preparation activities that will introduce them to the world of higher education.
2. Increase the number of students earning college credit while in high school through expanded college credit opportunities and school-based offerings.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

KATHLEEN N. STRAUS – PRESIDENT • JOHN C. AUSTIN – VICE PRESIDENT
CAROLYN L. CURTIN – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
NANCY DANHOF – NASBE DELEGATE • ELIZABETH W. BAUER
REGINALD M. TURNER • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

3. Double the number of students participating in dual enrollment, advanced placement, early/middle college high schools and/or other college credit opportunities and school-based programs by the end of the 2008-2009 school year as recommended by the Cherry Commission.

These recommendations may be found on the Agenda for the State Board of Education meeting in June 2006 or by following this hyperlink [Report on Early College/Dual Enrollment](#).

Michigan Merit Curriculum and Early College Credit Materials

To provide you with immediate access to high quality materials for educators, parents and students on both the Michigan Merit Curriculum and early college credit opportunities, the MDE has been developing a broad range of public information materials. Many of materials will be developed in multiple formats for you to be able to use or customize with your school and district information. Some of this information has already been sent to you, such as the High School Content Expectations notebooks and the DVD *Students Speak Out*, produced by students for students, on the high school graduation requirements. Other documents, such as the MDE's Michigan Merit Curriculum Frequently Asked Questions document; a parent/student brochure on the high school graduation requirements; and, a student brochure on early college credit options are now available for your download and use on the MDE high school web page at www.michigan.gov/highschool.

While I recognize that schools have an obligation to provide students with information on post secondary enrollment options by March 1st, I'm inviting you to visit the MDE high school web page regularly to access, to download and to use these materials to promote participation in these valuable programs throughout the school year.

Reminder of Student Eligibility for Free Advanced Placement Tests

To increase access to Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) tests for low-income students, the MDE applied for and received a federal grant.

Any of the following student eligibility criteria may be used by your school:

- The student is eligible for or receiving free or reduced price lunch.
- The student's family receives assistance under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act.
- The student is eligible to receive medical assistance under the Federal Medicaid program.
- The student is a member of a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the poverty level as established by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Actions to Capitalize on this Funding Opportunity

- Review and identify all eligible students for free tests.
- Fill in the "Option 1" oval on qualifying students' AP Exam answer sheets.

- In the Remittance section of the AP Shipping & Remittance form, enter the total number of exams (not students) that qualify for the fee reduction.
- AP Coordinators in Michigan will not collect AP Exam fees from students qualifying for a free exam.

The AP Coordinator must submit a copy of his or her remittance form to the Michigan Department of Education. The College Board will bill the state directly for qualifying students' AP exam fees.

If you have questions regarding the information materials, please contact Jan Ellis, (517) 373-9391. For questions regarding early college credit opportunities, contact Sam Sinicropi, Sinicropis@michigan.gov, (517) 241-1162; or Charlotte Koger @kogerc@michigan.gov, (517) 241-4466; at the Michigan Department of Education, 608 West Allegan Street, 2nd Floor, Hannah Building, Lansing, MI 48909.