

Spotlight



on Student Assessment and Accountability

Special Edition

February 9, 2015

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 The computer icon highlights Spotlight articles that contain information tech coordinators also need to know.

M-STEP UPDATE

In order to ensure a smooth, successful administration of the spring 2015 M-STEP, Michigan will delay the implementation of computer-adaptive testing (CAT) this spring and administer online “fixed form” assessments for the English language arts and mathematics M-STEP assessments. This means that students will still take the test online, but test items will not automatically adapt based on student responses throughout the test. This will allow us to take a step toward implementing computer adaptive testing in future years and will also allow us to deliver the best possible assessment for Michigan’s students this spring.

The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) still:

- Offer the same innovative, interactive item types;
- Offer the same online tools;
- Offer the same student accommodations;
- Offer a paper and pencil option, where needed; and
- Measures career and college readiness and Michigan’s content standards.

This change to the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) will not:

- Change any testing time recommendations;
- Require any change to test scheduling; or
- Negate any of the hard work that already has been done to prepare for this spring’s assessment.

MDE will release additional information on this change through future issues of the Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability Recently Asked Questions section.

► *Sign up for Spotlight at:* <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new>. Enter your email address and select Spotlight under Student Assessment.

Have Other Questions?

For assessment questions, please email BAA@michigan.gov.

For accountability questions, please email MDE-Accountability@michigan.gov.

For phone assistance with assessment or accountability issues, call 877-560-8378 and select the appropriate menu option.

Availability of the M-STEP Spring 2015 Student Supports and Accommodations Webinars

To better help Local Education Agency's (LEAs) prepare for the upcoming spring summative assessments, a series of webinars are being held in February and March to aid districts in better understanding the new supports and accommodations structure and to answer questions on this topic. Registration for these events has reached capacity with the exception of March 4, 2015. We understand the need for educators to have access to this information before the end of the initial order window.

To ensure that all those interested in this topic have access to the information, we are planning to record one of the first sessions being held on February 10th. This webinar recording will be posted on both the M-STEP web at www.mi.gov/mstep and MI-Access page at www.mi.gov/mi-access after February 10th. After viewing the documents and viewing the recorded session, questions can be submitted at any time to baa@michigan.gov with the phrase "Supports and Accommodations questions" in the subject line.

Registration is still available for March 4th for the morning session (8:00 – 9:00 AM) and afternoon session (2:00 – 3:00 PM). To register please send an e-mail to baa@michigan.gov with the subject line Student Supports and Accommodations Webinar and include the date/time you are attending. Interested participants may also call 877-560-8378. Registration confirmations will be sent prior to the session date.

Districts are strongly encouraged to read the following documents to become familiar with what supports and accommodations are offered for online and paper/pencil test takers across all M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA assessments prior to the webinar or viewing the recording.

- [Michigan Accommodations Manual for M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA](#)
- [Recommended Qualifications and Guidelines for](#)

[Use of Translators and Language Interpreters for the M-STEP and MI-Access Assessments](#)

- [M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA Student Supports and Accommodations Table](#) (Revised 1.29.15)
- [M-STEP and MI-Access Word-to-Word Bilingual Glossary List](#)
- [M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA Scribing Protocol](#)
- [M-STEP Mathematics and English Language Arts \(ELA\) Read-Aloud Guidelines](#)

If you have questions after reviewing the documents and recorded session, send your questions to baa@michigan.gov with the phrase "Supports and Accommodations questions" in the subject line. Questions can be submitted any time.

M-STEP Spanish Mathematics Translation Clarification

In an effort to increase the reliability of assessment scores for students needing a full Spanish translation for the M-STEP mathematics assessment, students needing this support should be provided with either the paper/pencil Spanish test booklet or the online stacked Spanish assessment. To support these students who may also be struggling readers, a school may provide an oral translation, or read-aloud, to these students using those full Spanish translations as a reader-script. A Spanish read-aloud support in small groups of no more than 5 students may be provided for the paper/pencil assessment only. Students utilizing the online stacked Spanish translation may also use the Spanish read-aloud but must have the assessment individually administered.

Schools should review the [Recommended Qualifications and Guidelines for Use of Translators and Language Interpreters for the M-STEP and MI-Access Assessments](#).

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District and Building Coordinators should ensure that translators review the [M-STEP Mathematics and English language arts \(ELA\) Read-Aloud Guidelines](#) to prepare for administering the assessment in this manner.

Designated Supports Clarification

Over the last month we have received numerous questions related to student supports listed as Designated Supports. Although the new concept of Michigan's accessibility framework is to increase flexibility, a school's decision to use Designated Supports must be made at an individual student level.

A defining feature of Designated Supports is to allow students who are not necessarily formally identified as English learners (EL) or as a student with a disability (with an IEP or 504) to use a support that meets their specific needs in accessing test content.

For example, a struggling reader who is receiving intensive interventions as a part of a school's multi-tiered system of support may need text read aloud and could thus have the text-to-speech option turned on for English language arts questions. Designated Supports are not intended to be utilized as Universal Tools.

A common misconception is that providing students with as many supports as possible during the test will increase their scores. However, research shows that providing unnecessary supports may actually cause significant levels of distraction which have negative impacts on performance.

When considering Designated Supports educators should ask themselves these questions:

1. Does providing this support meet a specific need for the student?
2. Does the student use this type of support on a regular basis in the classroom?
3. Is the need for the support identified as a need on the student's IEP or Section 504 plan? (If not, it does not necessarily mean that the support cannot be used.)
4. Does the support help level the playing field to access the information presented for the student? (It is not designed to offer an advantage.)



iPad Spring 2015 M-STEP assessment keyboard update

A change has been made to the upcoming release of the Insight software to support both wireless and wired keyboards. The restriction for Bluetooth only keyboards has been removed for 2015 and a wired keyboard, or wireless keyboard, must be used. As previously mentioned in last week's Spotlight, the imbedded iPad keyboard may not be used.