

Spotlight



on Student Assessment and Accountability

What's New

December 4, 2014

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Improving Michigan's Accountability System to Better Measure Student Growth

Michigan is moving forward to implement a new and better way to measure student academic growth in place of Performance Level Change (PLC). Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) are a well-established measurement of student learning, having been piloted and implemented in several states.

Student Growth Percentiles describe a student's learning over time, compared to other students with equivalent prior test scores. SGPs are a very useful and powerful way to understand student learning over time.

One major strength of SGPs is that they are fairer to students of all ability levels than many other growth measures. This is because SGPs describe the student growth compared to the growth of other students who had equivalent past test scores. Click the following link for more information on Student Growth Proficiency http://mi.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_59490---,00.html.

In order to calculate SGPs, students are grouped with other students throughout the state who had equivalent scores on the prior test. Students then are placed in an order in their group, based on their score on the current year test. Each student then receives a percentile rank based on their order in the group determined by the current year's test score.

SGPs calculations are valid, even if the tests change from year-to-year, as long as the old and new tests are highly-correlated and assess the same general content area.

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

► [Sign up for Spotlight at https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new). Under Student Assessment, select Spotlight.

Reminders

Recently Asked Questions

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.

School Accountability

MDE will be working with the United States Department of Education (USED) to update Michigan's school accountability model used in its flexibility waiver to the federal No Child Left Behind Act. These updates would recognize the changes in statewide assessments and improvements in identifying student academic growth and learning through the use of SGPs.

In these negotiations with USED, it will be the Michigan Department of Education's intent that there will be no consequences (Priority or Focus designations) based on assessment data except for those schools and districts who choose not to participate in all required assessments. At this time, MDE has not received USED peer review guidance regarding state assessments. Therefore, MDE recommends schools take part in the performance tasks and classroom activities as part of the high school assessments, however at this time, those components are not required to fulfill the 95% participation requirement.

Educator and Administrator Evaluations

Schools will be provided student-level growth data for use in teacher and administrator evaluations. Because these educator evaluations are still determined under current legislation by local school districts, how local districts choose to use the data in the evaluations is up to each district.

Look for various helpful documents on this new accountability measure in the near future.

M-STEP Spring 2015 Preview

The M-STEP Spring 2015 Preview is now available for Michigan students and teachers. The preview is intended to provide students and teachers with a brief look at the technology-enhanced item types they are likely to see for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Students will also have an opportunity to use the navigation tools and features of the online delivery engine. Students and teachers may log into the Spring 2015 Preview as often as they like.

Please note: The Spring 2015 Preview is just that, a preview of the item types and system tools. It does not represent all standards for ELA and mathematics, nor all grade levels. A more complete M-STEP sample will be released in early 2015.

The M-STEP Spring 2015 Preview **must** be used in Google Chrome. Copy and paste this link into Chrome <https://wbte.drctdirect.com/MI/portals/mi/ott1>. Click on the 2015 Preview Link, you will then need to click to sign on. Once on the sign in page, use the username and password displayed on the screen to log in.

M-STEP Mathematics Assessment

The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) in Mathematics is a comprehensive mathematics assessment that measures Michigan Mathematics Standards (concepts and procedures, problem solving, modeling and data analysis, and communicating reasoning) at ALL grade levels (3–8 and 11) located at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/K-12_MI_Math_Standards_REV_470033_7.pdf?20141030190029. The assessment includes Michigan-developed content, as well as content from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The test is comprised of a Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) component, a Classroom Activity, and a Performance Task (PT).

The Classroom Activity is a short, 30-minute scripted lesson presented to the students as close as possible, but no more than 3 days prior to the administration of the Performance Task (PT). It may occur on the same day as the PT. The Classroom Activity is delivered in class by the teacher, and is not an online activity. The purpose of the Classroom Activity is to introduce students to the vocabulary and the context of the Performance Task to follow.

The PT is a multi-item task administered online. Students are presented with several stimuli, and will respond to Technology Enhanced (TE) items, short Constructed Response (CR), and extended CR items. The paper/pencil administration will also include a PT. Administering the PT without first administering the Classroom Activity is considered a testing irregularity.

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Note: Performance Tasks (and their accompanying classroom activities) are recommended but not required for students in grade 11, as state law prohibits the requirement of more than one extended-response item on the Michigan Merit Examination. However, because a single extended-response item is likely insufficient to achieve alignment to Michigan's high school standards, it is unclear whether the U.S. Department of Education will allow results without Performance Tasks to count for accountability.

Similar information on other subjects was included in the [November 20th Spotlight](#).

NEW for Spring 2015—Alternate Assessment Options for Social Studies

An important factor that IEP Teams must keep in mind when selecting content-area assessments, is what social studies assessment should be taken at grades 5, 8, and 11.

For Students who are typically assessed in other content areas using MI-Access Functional Independence, IEP Teams have the option of designating the Social Studies M-STEP or the MI-Access Functional Independence Social Studies assessment.

Students who are typically assessed using the MI-Access Participation or Supported Independence assessments must take a locally determined social studies assessment.

The state requires districts to report detailed information for students taking a locally determined assessment. Districts must report this information in the secure site during the Accountable Students and Test Verification process.

Splitting MI-Access and M-STEP by Content Area

If students are eligible to take a MI-Access Functional Independence assessment, their Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams have the flexibility within Michigan's assessment system to have the student participate in the MI-Access Functional Independence or M-STEP for different content areas. For example, an IEP Team might decide that its fourth-grade student will take the M-STEP for mathematics and science and MI-Access Functional Independence for English Language Arts (ELA), or some other combination.

Before making a determination on the appropriate assessment for your student, please read the ELA and mathematics information in the M-STEP Spring 2015 Michigan Assessment Transition document dated November 2014 at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Assessment_Transition_FINAL_11-13-14_473989_7.pdf.

Please note the following:

- The ELA assessment consists of both reading and writing and cannot be split.
- The M-STEP ELA also includes listening items.
- Both the M-STEP ELA and mathematics tests include constructed response items.

Keep in mind that students taking MI-Access Participation or Supported Independence must do so for all content areas.

School Calendar Survey for Schools with Students Enrolled in Grades 3 and/or 6, and Year-Round Schools

Schools with students enrolled in Grades 3 and/or 6 that have an approved 2014-15 school calendar that ends before June 5 (last day of the test window for Grades 3 and 6) are asked to notify the MDE Division of Accountability Services (DAS) by completing a short online informational survey located at: <https://baameap.wufoo.com/forms/school-calendar-test-window-discrepancy-survey/>.

Likewise, year-round schools that have an extended scheduled break during one of more of the grade-specific test windows are asked to complete the same survey to notify the department of the schedule conflict.



2014-2015 Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant Deadline Extension

To better serve Michigan's school districts, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has extended the deadline for the 2015 Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant (TRIG) Michigan Electronic Grants System Plus (MEGS+) District Invitation and Consortia Membership Invitation from November 21, 2014, to December 22, 2014.

An extension of the deadline will allow both the MDE and the TRIG Operations Office the ability to provide additional technical assistance to districts to meet the eligibility requirements. The extension will delay the final TRIG grant award notifications. The MDE anticipates the final grant award notifications will be released at the end of January 2015.

For an updated district status report, visit www.22itrig.org. For questions regarding the TRIG MEGS+ applications, please contact Amanda Stoel at stoela@michigan.gov or (517) 241-3629.

Questions regarding MTRAx can be directed to <mailto:traxsupport@22itrig.org>.

Just a reminder...

Upcoming important dates, recent topics, etc.

In our last Spotlight prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, dated November 20, 2014, we included a tremendous amount of important new information on the following topics:

- Test Site Manager (TSM) 
- 1:1 Devices Can Be Used for Online Testing 
- M-STEP English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment
- M-STEP Science and Social Studies Assessments
- Spring 2015 MI-Access
- Would you be interested in serving on an assessment committee?
- WIDA Pre-ID and Initial Material Orders
- WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Test Exceptions
- The ACT Plus Writing and WorkKeys Pre-ID Window

While in most cases, we would repeat this valuable information in this week's *Just a reminder* section, in recognition of our reader's limited time, we have included a link http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Spotlight-November_20_2014_474772_7.pdf.

Important Dates

December 2014

- December 1, 2014: Student Pre-Identification is open for Spring 2015 ACT Plus Writing and WorkKeys. See instructions on page 7 of the [November 20 Spotlight](#).

- December 1, 2014: WIDA Pre-ID and Materials Order is open. See instructions on page 6 of the [November 20 Spotlight](#).
- December 9, 2014 – ACT Test Administration Q&A Session. Registration information was sent to ACT test coordinators the week of November 23rd. For questions, please contact ACT by phone at 800-553-6244 ext. 2800 or via the *Contact Us* page at <http://www.act.org/aap/state/contact.html>.
- Now – February 11, 2015 - Window for ACT to receive ACT- Approved Accommodations Late Consideration Form. For questions, please contact ACT by phone at 800-553-6244 ext.1788 or via email at ACTStateAccoms@act.org.

January 2015

- January 14, 2015 - ACT Test Administration Q&A Session. Registration information was sent to ACT test coordinators the week of November 23rd. For questions, please contact ACT by phone at 800-553-6244 ext. 2800 or via the Contact Us page at <http://www.act.org/aap/state/contact.html>.
- Student Pre-Identification opens for Spring 2015 M-STEP and MI-Access Assessments for students in Grades 3-8 and 11.
- Material orders for paper/pencil open for Spring 2015 M-STEP and MI-Access for students in grades 3–8 and 11.
- Material orders for ACT Plus Writing and Work Keys will be done through ACT – not the Secure Site.

Recently Asked Questions

What students are *required* to take the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) and are included in accountability calculations?

All grade 11 students are required to take the **complete** Michigan Merit Exam (ACT Plus Writing; WorkKeys; and the M-STEP ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies tests) **except** for those students previously included in Grade 11 accountability calculations.

Grade 12 students **who have not previously been included in Michigan's accountability calculations** are also required to take the **complete** Michigan Merit Exam.

Please see http://www.mi.gov/documents/mde/FAQ_HS_Grade_Assignment_for_Accountability_346186_7.pdf?20141202151018 for frequently asked questions regarding this policy.

What students are *eligible* to take/retake the complete Michigan Merit Exam, even if they are not included in accountability calculations?

Grade 11 students who do not have valid scores in all content areas (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies) are eligible to retake.

Grade 11 students who previously took the complete MME and have valid scores in all content areas are **NOT** eligible to retake the MME.

Grade 12 students who have never taken the MME, or who do not have valid scores in all content areas (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies) are eligible to take/retake the complete MME.

In the Assessment Transition Guide for M-STEP, the online Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) is listed first in the testing sequence. Is it possible to administer the CAT after the Performance Task, or does it have to be given first in the testing sequence, prior to the Classroom Activity?

For the **Online Administration** of M-STEP, DAS recommends following the testing sequence as provided on page 5 of the *Spring 2015 Michigan Statewide Assessment Transition* document (http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Assessment_Transition_FINAL_11-13-14_473989_7.pdf), which lists the CAT as being first in the testing sequence. However, in order to allow for scheduling flexibility, schools may administer the CAT **AFTER** the Performance Task. This alternate sequence would require the Classroom Activity be administered first in the sequence as the Classroom Activity must be administered before the Performance Task.

For **Paper/Pencil Administration** of M-STEP ELA and Mathematics, schools must follow the testing sequence as provided on page 8 of the *Spring 2015 Michigan Statewide Assessment Transition* document (http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Assessment_Transition_FINAL_11-13-14_473989_7.pdf) for Days 1 and 2 of each assessment.

Please be aware that the Classroom Activity **MUST** be administered **BEFORE** the Performance Task for both Online and Paper/Pencil. Any deviation from this sequence, or administering the Performance Task without the Classroom Activity, will be considered a testing irregularity and must be reported as such.

(Read more questions on the next page)

Recently Asked Questions



Is there a suggested limit on the number of concurrent testers per TSM for online testing in spring 2015?

For planning purposes, our online delivery vendor recommends a maximum of 150 concurrent testing devices per local caching server (known as the TSM or Testing Site Manager) to maximize the student testing experience. A school can have more than one TSM. Conversely, one TSM can serve multiple schools.

Additional information on the TSM will be available in the Technology Coordinator Manual.



Are microphones required for the Spring 2015 M-STEP assessment?

No, microphones are not required for the Spring 2015 M-STEP assessment.

► *Prior Recently Asked Questions can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Recently_Asked_Questions_470957_7.pdf.*