



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 11, 2021

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: Teacher Student Data Link

In 2015-16, in coordination with the state's Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) focused the data collection through the teacher student data link (TSDL) on categories of students required in other sections of state statute. These categories included:

- Migrant education participants (grades 9-12)
- Dual enrollment participants (grades 9-12)
- Early Middle College participants (Grades 9-12)
- Advanced and accelerated learning participants (all grades)
 - Advanced Placement (grades 9-12)
 - International Baccalaureate (all grades)
- Virtual/online learning participants (all grades)

This change to the data collection was done to reduce the reporting burden on local school districts and to ensure that all data collected were being used for legislative or other transparency reporting. In 2018, shared time programming participants were added as a specific statutory TSDL requirement.

Subsequently, an audit was performed by Michigan's auditor general around virtual learning. This audit found that MDE should be collecting TSDL data on all students, not only the subsets described above. MDE sought advice from the state attorney general's office and was advised that there is a statutory requirement for the collection of these data for all students.

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MDE continues to have concerns about the reporting burden on local districts and the usefulness of these data once collected and has lobbied and will continue to lobby the legislature for regulatory relief. This lobbying has taken place both individually and collectively with several of our education organization partners, including AFT Michigan, the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators, the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association, the Michigan School Business Officials, the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, the Michigan Education Association, the Middle Cities Association, and the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals. Nonetheless, MDE acknowledges both the audit finding and the advice of legal counsel and has begun planning with CEPI to expand this collection to include all students, beginning with the 2020-21 academic year.

Without legislative action to modify the requirement for the collection of TSDL data in accordance with MCL 388.1694a, and to reduce the reporting burden on local districts, MDE and CEPI are preparing to restart the TSDL collection during the [spring collection period](#) (May—July) in 2021 to be responsive to the auditor general findings and the will of the legislature.

If you have technical questions on the data collection process, please contact cepi@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors