

2022-23 Benchmark Assessments

[Public Act 144 of 2022 Section 104h](#)

Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions

November 3, 2022

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Purpose and Requirements of PA 144 of 2022 Section 104h

[Public Act \(P.A.\) 144 of 2022 Section 104h](#) requires districts to implement a benchmark assessment system for the 2022-23 school year for the purpose of measuring student proficiency in reading and mathematics in grades K-8.

In addition, [P.A. 144 of 2022 Sec. 98b](#) requires districts to establish educational goals for the school year that include an assurance to select a benchmark assessment or assessments that are aligned to state standards and are administered to determine whether students are making meaningful progress towards mastery of these standards. The educational goals for grades K-8 must be measurable through the benchmark assessment(s) mentioned above. Districts must publicly present the results from the benchmark assessments administered under section 104h on the district's transparency reporting link as well as to local boards in February and again before the last day of school.

Section 104h outlines that the system must meet all the following:

1. Within the first 9 weeks of school, districts must administer one or more benchmark assessments to all students in grades K to 8 to measure proficiency in reading and mathematics.
2. The district may choose to administer any combination of the following benchmark options:
 - a. a benchmark assessment or assessments from a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) approved provider list
 - b. a benchmark assessment or assessments that contain progress monitoring tools
 - c. a local benchmark assessment or assessments
3. The district must administer the benchmark assessment(s) again before the last day of the school year.

4. The district, to the extent practical, must administer the same benchmark assessment(s) that it administered to students in previous school years.
5. Within 30 days of administration, districts must provide student data from the benchmark assessment(s) to the student's parent or legal guardian.
6. Districts administering local benchmark assessments and assessments with progress monitoring tools must report the following to the MDE and the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI):
 - a. the assessment(s) administered
 - b. how the assessment(s) measure change, including any losses, as applicable, in learning
 - c. the district's plans for addressing any losses in learning
7. Within 30 days of test administration in both the fall and spring, districts administering one or more of the assessments from the MDE-approved provider list must send the following to MDE:
 - a. benchmark assessment data
 - b. mode of instruction data
 - c. if available, student growth data from fall 2022 to spring 2023 (this applies to the spring submission only)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will the results of the benchmark assessments be used for accountability purposes?

The current law does **not** require these data be used for accountability purposes.

2. Will the results of the benchmark assessments be used for teacher evaluation purposes?

There are no requirements in the current legislation to use the results for teacher evaluation purposes.

Districts could make the local decision to incorporate these results in teacher evaluations as part of Student Learning Objectives or other measurements.

3. Where can I find information on the benchmark provisions of the current legislation?

Information specific to the benchmark assessment provisions [P.A. 144 of 2022 Sec. 104h](#) is located on the [MDE Benchmark Assessment web page](#) (www.michigan.gov/mde-benchmarkassessments).

Benchmark Options Allowed

Keeping in mind the benchmark legislation specifies districts must, to the extent practical, administer benchmark assessments used in prior school years, districts have the flexibility to administer one or more of the following benchmark assessment options.

Benchmark Assessments from MDE Approved Providers

Provider	Products	Funding	Contact Information
Curriculum Associates	I-Ready	\$12.50 per membership student in grades K-8	<p>Vikki Halstead 989-577-0305 vhalstead@cainc.com</p> <p>Jeff Tompkins 313-316-0141 jtompkins@cainc.com</p>
Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarter Balance Interim Assessments (grades 3-8) • Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments (grades k-2) 	Available at no cost to districts	<p>Christi Linton 301-865-9859 clinton@datarecognitioncorp.com</p> <p>Ryan Nelson 763-268-2361 rnelson@datarecognitioncorp.com</p> <p>Smarter Interims 877-560-8378, option 2 misupport@datarecognitioncorp.com</p> <p>Early Literacy and Mathematics MDE Early Literacy and Mathematics web page 877-560-8378 option 3 mde-oeaa@michigan.gov.</p>
NWEA	MAP Suite	\$12.50 per membership student in grades K-8	<p>Pam Jones 971-361-9530 pam.jones@nwea.org</p>
Renaissance	Star	\$12.50 per membership student in grades K-8	<p>Ellen Kaye 715-295-4333 Ellen.Kaye@renaissance.com</p>

Districts providing any of these benchmark products from the MDE-approved provider list for students in grades K-8 are required to report assessment data to MDE through the Michigan Data Hub. See the **How to Report Benchmark Data** and the **How to Request Funding for the 3 Benchmark Assessments** sections of this document for more details.

Additional information provided by the approved benchmark assessment vendors is located on the [MDE Benchmark Assessment web page](#) [MDE Benchmark Assessment web page](http://www.michigan.gov/MDE-benchmarkassessments) (www.michigan.gov/MDE-benchmarkassessments).

Benchmark Assessments that Contain Progress

Monitoring Tools

Districts may administer:

- a benchmark assessment in reading for students in grades K-9 that contains progress monitoring tools and enhanced diagnostic assessments, and/or
- a benchmark assessment in math for students in grades K-8 that contains progress monitoring tools

There is no state funding available under the benchmark law for these assessments. Also, while administering a progress monitoring tool in reading to students in grade 9 is allowed, this is optional.

Benchmark assessment results that contain progress

monitoring tools do not need to be reported for students in grade 9. Information regarding these assessments for students in grades K-8 must be provided through the **Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Application** form in GEMS/MARS. See the **How to Report Benchmark Data** section for details.

Local Benchmark Assessments

Districts may administer a local benchmark assessment or assessments that measure proficiency in reading and/or mathematics. There is no state funding available under the benchmark law for these assessments. Information regarding these assessments for students in grades K-8 must be provided through the **Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Application** form in GEMS/MARS. See the **How to Report Benchmark Data** section for details.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do we have to choose an assessment from the MDE-approved list?

No; the law gives districts broad flexibility in making choices regarding the benchmark assessment or assessments they administer. These choices are:

- a benchmark assessment or assessments from an assessment provider on the MDE- approved provider list, or
- a benchmark assessment(s) or tool(s) that provide progress monitoring and enhanced diagnostics in reading and/or progress monitoring in mathematics, or
- a local benchmark assessment(s), or
- any combination of the above

2. Do we have to use the same assessment for all grades (K-8)?

No; the law does not require districts to use the same benchmark assessment in all grades.

Districts interested in monitoring progress in state academic standards across grades and years may find it easier to perform this comparison if they use a consistent benchmark assessment in all grades.

3. Do we have to use the same assessment for reading and mathematics?

No; the law does not require districts to use the same benchmark assessment in reading and mathematics.

4. Do we have to administer benchmark assessments, and progress monitor virtual students as well? Does this have to be the same for in-person students?

There is no exception in the law for students who are not receiving in-person instruction. The law does not stipulate that the same assessment must be administered to students learning at a distance and in-person students.

5. If our district is using a math assessment that is not provided by a vendor on the approved assessment provider list, but it addresses what we are teaching, can we use it for our benchmark assessment?

The law allows districts the option to choose which benchmark assessment(s) to administer, including local assessments. The chosen benchmark assessment(s) must measure proficiency in reading and mathematics for students in grades K-8.

In addition, under [P.A. 144 of 2022 sec. 98b](#), schools must establish academic goals, which for grades K-8 are aligned to [section 104h](#), to determine if meaningful progress is being made towards the state academic standards in mathematics. If the current assessment your district is using meets these requirements, then it is allowed.

6. Can we use <insert the name of your assessment>?

The law provides districts with options when selecting the benchmark assessment(s) to administer. These options include benchmark assessments from a vendor on the MDE-approved provider list, assessments that provide progress monitoring and enhanced diagnostics in reading and/or progress monitoring in mathematics, local assessments, or any combination thereof. The assessment(s) must be administered at least twice a year – at the start and at the end of the school year – and the assessment must allow districts to determine if meaningful progress is being made towards the state academic standards in reading and mathematics. If the assessment your district is using meets these requirements, then it is allowed.

7. If our district chooses to administer a benchmark assessment that provides progress monitoring and enhanced diagnostics in reading, do we have to administer it in grade 9?

No; while administering an assessment tool that provides progress monitoring in grade 9 is allowed under the current legislation, it is not required.

8. Is progress monitoring required?

Pursuant to the law, districts are required to administer a “benchmark assessment” in the first nine weeks of school and again before the end of the school year. A progress monitoring assessment, or tool that provides progress monitoring and enhanced diagnostics in reading and/or a progress monitoring assessment in mathematics, is one option districts may select to meet the benchmark assessment requirements in law.

9. If we do NWEA or iReady (or some other benchmark assessment), can we still use some of the Smarter Balanced tools that are available?

Yes, [Tools for Teachers](#) is available at no cost to all districts regardless of the benchmark assessment(s) they administer. Tools for Teachers is an easy-to-use website with lessons and activities created by educators to enhance instruction, save time, and prepare students for college or a career. For a quick overview, watch a demonstration on [YouTube](#) (<https://youtu.be/jJPAU1zOAp4>).

10. Can we do NWEA (or some other benchmark assessment) and some of the Focused Interim Blocks or Block-based assessments with Smarter Balanced?

Yes, but you will need to carefully consider your purpose and the type of information each assessment will provide. Districts should be thoughtful and careful when choosing and administering assessments and avoid administering multiple tests that provide similar information.

Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Learners (ELs)

The law states benchmark assessments must be administered to “all pupils in K to 8” and does not provide exceptions for Students with Disabilities or English learners.

Students with Disabilities

The current legislation does not address assessment requirements specific to Students with Disabilities. Nevertheless, districts must remain compliant with students’ Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

The law requires benchmark assessments be provided within the first nine weeks of school and again before the end of the school year, to measure progress in reading and mathematics. However, although the law uses the term “benchmark assessments”, districts have broad flexibility to select a benchmark assessment offered by an assessment provider on the MDE-approved Provider List, a progress monitoring tool, or a locally determined assessment.

MDE suggests districts contact the assessment providers on the approved provider list to determine if they have options for different student populations such as SWD and EL. For students for whom commercial benchmark assessments are not appropriate (such as a student with a significant cognitive disability or one who is not able to engage in an online assessment), the district should use the assessment(s) they typically use to monitor the student’s progress in reading and mathematics.

English Learners

The current law does not allow exceptions for English learners (ELs). If your district has ELs for whom commercial benchmark products are not appropriate because of their current level of language skills, there remains flexibility available to consider the current progress monitoring tools or local assessments you are currently using with this population of students for monitoring progress towards proficiency in reading and mathematics.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I find information on available supports and accommodations?

Available supports and accommodations will vary by benchmark assessment and provider. Contact your benchmark assessment provider directly for this information.

How to Report Benchmark Data

Districts are required to report information on all benchmark assessments they are administering in support of the benchmark assessment provisions in the law. Methods of reporting benchmark data differ based on the type of benchmark assessment(s) being utilized.

Reporting Data from the Approved Vendor List (Curriculum Associates, DRC, NWEA, Renaissance)

The law indicates that benchmark assessment results for these approved vendors must be reported within 30 days of test administration. Districts must give their chosen benchmark provider(s) permission to provide student level benchmark data to the Michigan Data Hub (MiDataHub). Permission will also need to be granted to allow MiDataHub to share these files with MDE's research partners the Michigan Education Data Center (MEDC) from the University of Michigan and the Educational Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC) from Michigan State University who will perform the aggregations and generate the legally required reports. The steps to complete this process are the same used by most districts since the 2020-21 school year to comply with the Return to Learn law.

Alternatively, districts using these assessments may also choose to perform the aggregations locally and submit the files directly through the MiDataHub. When choosing this option, the current [Benchmark Aggregation Rules and Templates spreadsheet](#) must be used.

In collaboration with MDE, the MiDataHub helped facilitate a webinar, held on September 22, 2022, to provide districts detailed information on the steps to complete for submitting benchmark data through MiDataHub. The slide deck, recordings, and an FAQ document related to this webinar will be posted to the [MiDataHub training page](#).

Reporting Student-level Data through the MiDataHub

If granted permission by the district, benchmark assessment vendors will securely provide the assessment data directly to MiDataHub. Districts using this approach must provide all necessary permissions to be in compliance with the law.

- 1) **NWEA and Star assessments** are reported through file-based integrations built by the MiDataHub team. Districts administering these assessments provide permission through data sharing agreements with NWEA and Renaissance. This permission allows MiDataHub to receive assessment results for processing.

Many districts already have these permissions and integrations in place but if your district does not it is imperative that your technology team begin this process as soon as possible. This step should be completed at least two weeks prior to the completion of your fall benchmark test administration. Information on how to complete the integration steps to allow data sharing are located at the following links:

- NWEA MAP
<https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/nwea-map/>
- Renaissance Star
<https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/star-assessments/>

I-Ready, the Smarter Balanced Interims, and the Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark assessments will be reported by Curriculum Associates and Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) respectively through an API (Application Programming Interface) integration. APIs create secure direct connections between processing partners.

Districts who have not already done so may create the API integration themselves and provide the credentials to the vendor, or they may request that MiDataHub complete those steps by sending an email to support@midatahub.org. This step should be completed at least two weeks prior to the completion of your fall benchmark test administration.

Additional information on completing this step can be found at the following links:

- Curriculum Associates i-Ready
<https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/i-ready-diagnostic-and-instruction/>
- DRC – Smarter Interim Assessments and MDE Early Literacy and mathematics Benchmark

assessments

<https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/drc-smarter-balanced-assessments/>

Important note: Make sure you used either the student’s Unique Identification Code (UIC) or the District Student Number as the identifier for students in all assessment systems when rostering. This will facilitate easier loading of assessment data to MiDataHub.

- 2) After the data is submitted to MiDataHub, research partners, MEDC and EPIC, will perform the aggregations that will inform the legislatively mandated reports. To complete the necessary aggregations, districts must create the aggregate API integration, or request one be created by MiDataHub support; this will allow the research partners to access the data. Information on how to complete this process is located at: <https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/medceplic-aggregation-api/>. If this was completed in a prior school year, and the RTL Aggregation is still active, this does not need to be completed again. The aggregation permission is in place if the line “Educational Analytics: Return to Learn Aggregation 1” is listed under API Integrations in the MiDataHub Cockpit Application.
- 3) The law requires benchmark results be disaggregated by “mode of instruction”. Mode of instruction data can be provided to MiDataHub in one of three ways:

- a) enter data into your district SIS (Edupoint Synergy, Infinite Campus, MISTAR-Q, PowerSchool, Skyward) and have that data transfer to MiDataHub
- b) use the Mode of instruction Import process in the MiDataHub cockpit to download a list of students into a spreadsheet, allowing an end user to manual enter the Mode of Instruction data, and last upload the updated spreadsheet back to your MiDataHub. Documentation is available on using this process and can be found at the following link: <https://www.midatahub.org/pub/stories/view/mode-of-instruction-import>
- c) run a maintenance script in the MiDataHub to mark all students as fully in-person. Note that this option can be used after steps a) and b) above to default all other students to fully in-person. This maintenance script is found in the MiDataHub Cockpit under the sub menu of **Utilities>Maintenance Scripts > RTL – Mode of Instruction – Update** and can be accessed by either a Technical Contact in your local district (typically a district technology lead) or the MiDataHub team. The effect of running this operation is that all students with assessments who do not already have a Mode of Instruction designation will be marked in MiDataHub as FULLY IN-PERSON for the aggregate. **Note: This process should only be run once!**

To summarize, districts must complete all steps in the table below to be in compliance with the law.

Reporting Student-level Data Through the Michigan Data Hub

Step	Task	When to Complete
1	Configure your district SIS to send student roster data to MiDataHub for the current school year. Currently Edupoint Synergy, Infinite Campus, MiSTAR-Q, Powerschool, and Skyward (SMS/Qmlativ) are able to publish data to MiDataHub. If your district is not using one of these SIS tools please defer to loading a file containing the minimum amount of data to run the Aggregate API found here: MSDS Roster Import	Start of school year (each year)
2	Provide permission to the assessment vendors to send benchmark assessment data to MiDataHub: a) NWEA follow the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/nwea-map/ b) Renaissance Star follow the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/star-assessments/ c) Curriculum Associates i-Ready follow the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/i-ready-diagnostic-and-instruction/ d) DRC Smarter Interims and MDE Early Literacy and Mathematics follow the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/drc-smarter-balanced-assessments/ Important note: Ensure only the UIC or District Student Number is used as the identifier for students in all assessment systems when rostering.	Start of school year (first year only) This step must be completed at least two weeks in advance of assessment administration to ensure the data flows to MiDataHub in a timely manner.
3	Provide permission to MiDataHub to share benchmark records with research partners, MEDC and EPIC for aggregation by following the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/Core/Stories/Permalink/medcepic-aggregation-api/	Start of school year (first year only)

Step	Task	When to Complete
4	<p>Provide “mode of instruction” data to the MiDataHub within 30 days of test administration using one of three options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) enter data into your district SIS (Edupoint Synergy, Infinite Campus, MISTAR-Q, PowerSchool, Skyward) and have that data transfer to MiDataHub. Please work directly with your SIS vendor for directions on how this data needs to be entered in your SIS. b) use the Mode of instruction Import process in the MiDataHub cockpit to download a list of students into a spreadsheet, allowing an end user to manual enter the Mode of Instruction data, and last upload the updated spreadsheet back to your MiDataHub. Documentation is available on using this process and can be found at the following link: (https://www.midatahub.org/pub/stories/view/mode-of-instruction-import) c) run a maintenance script in the MiDataHub to mark all students as fully in-person. Note that this option can be used after steps a) and b) above to default all other students to fully in-person. This maintenance script is found in the MiDataHub Cockpit under the sub menu of Utilities>Maintenance Scripts > RTL – Mode of Instruction – Update and can be accessed by either a Technical Contact in your local district (typically a district technology lead) or the MiDataHub team. The effect of running this operation is that all students with assessments who do not already have a Mode of Instruction designation will be marked in MiDataHub as FULLY IN-PERSON for the aggregate. Note: This process should only be run once! 	<p>Within 30 days of test administration (each fall and spring)</p>
5	<p>Verify the roster, assessment, and mode of instruction data are flowing to the MiDataHub within 30 days after assessments are delivered. This can be checked in the MiDataHub cockpit by navigating to the Return To Learn Dashboard Readiness tool. You will find this tool located under Features>Return to Learn.</p>	<p>Within 30 days of test administration (each fall and spring)</p>
6	<p>Complete the Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form available through the Grant Electronic Monitoring System/Michigan Administrative Review System (GEMS/MARS).</p>	<p>November 3 – December 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.</p>

Reporting Aggregated Data through MIDataHub

Districts choosing to generate the aggregate files themselves may do so. The following tasks must be completed to be in compliance with the benchmark law:

1. Download the [Benchmark Aggregation Rules and Template spreadsheet](#) from the [MDE Benchmark Assessment web page](#).

This schema must be followed to ensure the researchers have comparable data and a consistent layout from which to generate the legislative mandated reports. Only files following the schema will be accepted for processing and counted towards compliance under the current benchmark law.

Starting in the 2022-23 school year, there is one Benchmark Aggregation Rules and Template spreadsheet for both fall and spring testing. Be sure to check out the Business Rules tab as instructions will vary from fall to spring.

2. Submit the file to the MiDataHub as follows:

Districts must electronically sign the MiDataHub Hosting Agreement in the MiDataHub Cockpit. Most districts across the state have already completed this step but if your district has not the instructions for e-signing the agreement can be found at https://www.midatahub.org/downloads/data_integration/electronically_signing_the_data_hosting_agreement_5.pdf

- a. Log into the MiDataHub Launchpad at <https://milaunchpad.org>
- b. Choose the MiDataHub Cockpit icon from the Launchpad
- c. Click on your Intermediate School District name and then click to select your district. This will bring you to the Manage District page for your district.
- d. From the Manage District page, click on the District Folder link on the right-hand side of the screen next to the SFTP Password link.
- e. From the District SFTP Folder, click on the Upload button, choose the file to upload and then click on the Open button. The file will then open. Note: In the open file dialog box, you may need to change the dropdown next to the file name field from Custom Files to All Files to see the file you wish to send.
- f. Email support@midatahub.org to notify MiDataHub that the file has been uploaded. Files are automatically deleted after 7 days, so prompt notification will ensure the file is added to the list of aggregates created by districts. Uploading the file is considered permission to share it with the research team.

To summarize, districts must complete the steps in the table below to be in compliance with the law. These steps will need to be completed twice: once for the fall benchmark administration(s) and again for the spring benchmark administration(s).

Reporting Aggregate-level Data Through the Michigan Data Hub

Step	Task	When to Complete
1	If your district has not already done so please electronically sign the MiDataHub Hosting Agreement by following the instructions at: https://www.midatahub.org/downloads/data_integration/electronically_signing_the_data_hosting_agreement_5.pdf	Start of school year (first year only)
2	Generate the aggregated data file by following the instructions and layout in the appropriate Benchmark Aggregation Rules and Template spreadsheet located on the MDE Benchmark Assessment web page .	Within 30 days of test administration (each fall and spring)
3	Upload the aggregated data file to the District SFTP Folder by following steps 2b through 2f above.	Within 30 days of test administration (each fall and spring)

4	Notify the MiDataHub that the file has been uploaded by emailing support@midatahub.org .	Within 30 days of test administration (each fall and spring)
5	Complete the Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form available through the Grant Electronic Monitoring System/Michigan Administrative Review System (GEMS/MARS).	November 3 – December 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Frequently Asked Questions – Michigan Data Hub Reporting

1. Where do I go to get help with getting my data flowing through MiDataHub?

For assistance in establishing the necessary integrations and granting permissions to share data:

- Email: support@midatahub.org
- Call: 269-250-9240

2. What if I am not on the Michigan Data Hub?

Most districts are already on the Michigan Data Hub. If yours is not and you are using one of the integrated student information systems (SIS) – PowerSchool, Infinite Campus, MISTAR-Q, Skyward SMS and Skyward Qmalativ, and Synergy – then contact MiDataHub, at support@midatahub.org or 269-250-9240, for assistance in getting your benchmark assessment results loaded.

If you are not on an integrated SIS, the MiDataHub Team has developed an import process to populate a district in MiDataHub from an MSDS General Collection file. Once a district has populated data from the MSDS file, they will be able to follow the procedures to load one or more assessments as indicated above. Please follow this link ([MSDS Roster Import](#)) and contact support@midatahub.org or 269-250-9240 if assistance is needed.

3. When can we start posting our data to MiDataHub?

Once the integrations and permissions have been completed, the assessment data will flow automatically to MiDataHub. If you have not completed all steps, contact MiDataHub right away using the contact information in FAQ #1. Remember, the benchmark data must be provided

withing 30 days after the administration of these tests.

4. What is the deadline for reporting fall data through MiDataHub?

The law states benchmark data must be reported within 30 days of the administration of the benchmark assessment(s). To allow districts that will create an aggregated file locally time to incorporate student demographics from the certified fall MSDS collection, the final date data will be accepted through the Michigan Data Hub will be in late November/early December. The actual deadline will be provided through Spotlight.

5. The law says benchmark data for students in grades K-8 must be reported within 30 days of administration but the Benchmark Aggregation Rules and Templates requires students be assigned to the demographic subgroups as reporting in the fall certified MSDS collection but the collection is not certified until November 16, 2022.

In order to provide the legislature with the most complete, accurate, and comparable reports, it is important that the data assign students consistently to demographic subgroups. Self-aggregated data files will be accepted through Michigan Data Hub will be in late November/early December. The actual deadline will be provided through Spotlight.

6. If my district does not intend to apply for funding, do I have to report fall benchmark data through MiDataHub?

If your district administered an assessment product from the MDE-approved provider list (see page 4)

for students in grades K-8 then the results must be reported through the Michigan Data Hub.

7. Does my district need complete the Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form available through GEMS/MARS?

Yes, the form must be completed for **all** benchmark assessments administered to students in grades K-8, including assessments from the MDE-approved provider list. The form requests assurances that districts are meeting the requirements of the law related to implementing a benchmark assessment system and allows districts providing i-Ready, NWEA, or Star assessments the opportunity to apply for funding.

11/03/2022 Update

The [Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application](https://mde.state.mi.us/gems/public/QuestionnaireHome.aspx?code=i9d2tabb) can be assessed at: <https://mde.state.mi.us/gems/public/QuestionnaireHome.aspx?code=i9d2tabb>

The survey window is **November 3, 2022 through December 2, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.** All benchmark assessments must be identified within this timeframe.

8. When does my district have to have the MiDataHub integrations and permissions in place to ensure our benchmark data will be received by MiDataHub by the deadline?

All integrations and permissions must be in place by **two weeks prior** to test administration in order to ensure data is received by the reporting deadline.

9. How does my district verify all integrations and permissions have been set up in MiDataHub?

To verify the integrations and permissions are set up, districts may follow these three steps:

1. Ensure the [Return to Learn Aggregation](#) integration has been completed or is still active from a prior school year submission in the MiDataHub cockpit.
2. Verify one or more of the five MDE-approved assessments (i-Ready, NWEA Map, STAR, Smarter Interim Assessments, Early Literacy and Mathematics Assessments) have been configured in the MiDataHub cockpit.
3. Ensure current data has been published from the Student Information System (SIS). If your district uses a SIS not capable of integrating with MiDataHub please review the following information found at this [link](#) or contact support@midatahub.org for further assistance.

Contact the Michigan Data Hub at support@midatahub.org for assistance with any of the steps identified above.

Reporting Data from a Progress Monitoring Tool or a Local Benchmark Assessment

If a district uses a local benchmark assessment, including assessments providing progress monitoring tools, a survey related to those benchmark test choices must be completed on the [Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form](#) available through the Grant Electronic Monitoring System/Michigan Administrative Review System (GEMS/MARS). This survey pertains to all local benchmark or interim assessments as well as tools that provide progress monitoring that were administered by the district to comply with the law.

In this survey, districts must report the following:

1. the local assessments and assessments with progress monitoring they used
2. the grades in which the assessments were provided
3. how the assessment measures change, include any learning losses

4. how the district plans to address any losses in learning

If your district uses multiple local assessments for different grade spans, you will need to list each assessment and the grades served.

The survey will require districts to identify all benchmark assessments used to fulfill the law including NWEA MAP, i-Ready, Star, Smarter Interim, and Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark assessments. However, the results from these five assessments are reported through the Michigan Data Hub.

The survey is available from November 3 to December 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Frequently Asked Questions – Local or Other Benchmark Assessments

1. **If my district does not intend to apply for funding, do I have to report fall benchmark data through the GEMS/MARS form?**

Yes, all districts must provide benchmark information administered to students in grades K-8 through the **Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form** available through GEMS/MARS regardless of the type of assessment provided.

11/3/2022 Update:

The [Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application](#) can be assessed at: <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gems/public/QuestionnaireHome.aspx?code=i9d2tabb>

The survey window is **November 3, 2022 through December 2, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.** Information related to local benchmark assessments and benchmark assessments that include progress monitoring and must be reported within this timeframe.

How to Request Funding for Curriculum Associates, NWEA, and Renaissance

ISDs and LEAs may apply for benchmark assessment funding if they administer Curriculum Associates i-Ready, NWEA Map, or Renaissance Star benchmark assessments to students in any grade K-8. Districts are eligible for \$12.50 per membership student in grades K to 8 if they perform all of the following legislative requirements:

- administer one of the 3 assessments listed above (NWEA Map, i-Ready, Star) to students in grades K to 8 in reading and/or mathematics
- administer the same assessment in the first 9 weeks of the school year and again in the spring before the end of the school year
- report the benchmark data results within 30 days of test administration through the Michigan Data Hub as outlined in the **Reporting Data from the Approved Vendor List (Curriculum Associates, DRC, NWEA, Renaissance)** section of this document starting on page 8.
- report mode of instruction correctly to the MiDataHub within 30 days of test administration

Districts and ISDs must apply for funding through the [Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application form](#) which will be available in GEMS/MARS in November. The survey window is November 3, 2022 through December 2, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

Payments are planned for distribution by mid-February 2023.

Frequently Asked Questions – Funding

1. We are a private school; is there funding available?

No. Currently, there is no funding for benchmark assessments for private or other nonpublic schools.

2. New 11/3/2022 - Can my district offer one benchmark assessment in the fall and a different one in the spring and still be eligible for funding?

No, [Public Act 144 section 98b](#) requires MDE to report to the legislature a comparison of growth among students. In order to have a meaningful comparison, the same assessment must be administered in both the fall and spring.

3. New 11/3/2022 – How and when do I access the Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application in GEMS/MARS?

The [Benchmark Assessments Reporting and Funding Application](#) can be accessed at: <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gems/public/QuestionnaireHome.aspx?code=i9d2tabb>

The survey window is **November 3, 2022 through December 2, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.** All funding applications must be made within this timeframe.

Other Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can parents choose to opt their students out of the benchmark assessments?

The law requires districts to administer benchmark assessments in reading and mathematics to all students in grades K-8 at the beginning of the school year and again before the end of the school year to track students' progress in those two subjects. While MDE supports parents in making education choices for their students, the law does not allow for parental opt-out. Parents should be reminded that this type of progress monitoring is especially important as Michigan students continue to recover academically from the pandemic. In addition to tracking progress, many benchmark assessments provide valuable feedback to educators (and parents), which, when used with other classroom evidence, can help teachers quickly pinpoint the instructional needs of their individual students. Districts must make their best effort to comply with the law.

2. How does MDE apply the requirement for benchmark assessments to an ISD/RESA?

ISDs that directly educate students in K-8, must provide benchmark assessments and report results as outlined in the How to Report Benchmark Data section of this document. ISDs administering NWEA, i-Ready, or Star assessments are eligible to apply for funding.

3. What suggestions do you have for virtual learners and for ensuring a test is being proctored correctly?

Most, if not all, of the benchmark providers have issued guides on how to proctor their test from home. Work directly with your benchmark assessment provider.

4. How do the requirements to administer benchmark assessments in the first 9 weeks of the school year under the current legislation align with the RBG3 requirement to screen in the first 30 days of school?

The two laws are distinct, and the RBG3 screening requirements are not modified by the benchmarking requirements. The initial and extensive assessments required by RBG3 are administered to identify students in grades K-3 who need an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). The benchmark assessments required by current benchmark law are administered to students in grades K-8 to monitor progress towards mastery of state academic standards in reading and math. Where appropriate, the same assessment tool may meet the requirements of both laws.

5. Who do I contact for assistance or more information?

- a. For questions on the law or this document: Kate Cermak at cermakk@michigan.gov 517-599-9722
- b. For questions regarding the Michigan Data Hub: support@midatahub.org 269-250-9240
- c. For questions related to reporting the Local and Other Benchmark Assessments in GEMS/MARS: CEPI at cepi@michigan.gov
- d. For questions related to funding: Carol Skillings at skillingsc@michigan.gov
- e. For questions related to section 98b: Ann-Marie Mapes at mapesa@michigan.gov
- f. General support: mde-oeaa@michigan.gov

6. My district is not providing a benchmark assessment from the MDE-approved provider list. Is my district still required to publicly report data at a board meeting and on our website under 98b?

Yes - all Michigan LEAs, both traditional public school districts and public school academies are required to establish academic goals for the academic year for each school. Local benchmark assessment data can be used to demonstrate progress toward meeting the identified academic goals. All schools must have academic goals, not

just those serving grades K-8. By no later than the first board meeting in February and before the end of the academic year, the district must present the following to the local school board at a public meeting:

- For grades K-8, the results from benchmark assessments and local benchmark assessments administered under the benchmark law, disaggregated by grade level, student demographics, and mode of instruction.
- For each school in the district, the progress toward meeting the identified educational goals for the school year.

7. My district offers a Young-5's program. Am I required, under the Benchmark law, to assess these students with a benchmark assessment and report results?

No, as long as the young-5's (or pre-K, or beginergarden, or developmental kindergarten, and so on) program is a precursor program to kindergarten, you are not required to administer benchmark assessments or report results under the current benchmark assessment law.

8. How do I get last year's aggregated data files from the MiDataHub?

The Michigan Data Hub has provided the [MiDataHub – Accessing RTL Aggregate File document](#) to assist districts in retrieving their district aggregate file. Please contact support@midatahub.org with additional questions.

9. Can I get a file from the Michigan Data Hub to assist with the February and end of year reporting

school board and transparency reporting required under 98b?

The team at MiDataHub and MDE are working collaboratively on options to assist with this. Once the details are worked out this document will be updated along with it being shared via Spotlight, and the MiDataHub newsletter.