



The Path Forward Strategic Action Plan

We can, we must, we will do better for our children with disabilities and their families both in the short and long term.

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The Path Forward Strategic Action Plan

We can, we must, we will do better for our children with disabilities and their families both in the short and long term.

CALL TO ACTION

We can, we must, and we will do better for our children with disabilities and their families. Our system needs drastic improvement to support the state of Michigan, our educator workforce, and most importantly, our students. Understanding systems tend toward equilibrium and, as W. Edwards Deming noted, “every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets”, Michigan, at every level of the system, must challenge the status quo to ensure an equitable education for all. We must create a proactive system that honors the unique needs and civil rights of every learner. We must afford educators the flexibility to be creative in their approach to ensure successful post-school outcomes for all while capitalizing on and consistently implementing practices proven to be effective in meeting the needs of all. We must have an unwavering belief that every student deserves an education that yields a successful life, knowing that paths to success vary greatly. We, as citizens of Michigan, have a collective responsibility to make this happen.

If we let our current reality define our future reality...we'll end up creating the same things over and over again.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) seized an opportunity to address outcomes for students with disabilities following a 2018 Determination from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. For more information, please see “The Path Forward” document from November 2018.

This plan **is not** about making minor adjustments to the system to increase our reporting data and simply improve Michigan’s federal Determination status. This **is** an outcome-focused plan not to be admired but rather implemented to bring about transformative change to improve the entire system and support post-school success. The outcomes of this plan are not negotiable – the educational community has an obligation to do whatever it takes to support learners and address opportunity gaps throughout the system. In addition, extensive partnerships between the MDE, Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), Local Districts, Public School Academies, teachers, itinerant staff, para-professionals, principals, superintendents, Educational Associations, colleges/universities, the Michigan State Board of Education, legislators and many more will bring this plan to fruition. In addition, parent/family and student voice will be essential to moving this work forward. We must leverage successes and learn from failures, maintaining focus and sustaining efforts to actualize the recommendations, learning and adjusting along the way. Supporting each other, holding ourselves and each other accountable, and communicating effectively will be essential. For its part, the MDE is committed to ensuring implementation of the actions and activities in this plan using the authority it has under state and federal law, including Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE). When we are successful in implementing the plan, it is our belief this is a step toward an educational system better able to meet the needs of every student.

In response to the USED Determination, a Steering Committee representing diverse perspectives was formed. This Steering Committee, in response to the question, “What are features of an ideal system to ensure successful outcomes for students with disabilities in Michigan?”, generated 66 ideas. Through small group dialogue, they prioritized the ideas which were then categorized and are reflected in the graphic on the subsequent page. An elaboration of the process is noted in the “Approach to the Work” section of this document.



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Throughout this plan, specific roles are noted, with various levels of the system identified as “Lead” and/or “Primary Partner”. However, success requires a collective effort across the entire system - if an organization or perspective is not noted as either, this does not indicate they do not contribute to the achievement of the action or activity.

The content set forth in this document reflects the contributions of many stakeholders utilizing a rigorous process. When we are successful in implementing the plan, it is our belief this is a step toward an educational system better able to meet the needs of every student.



Advocate for a flexible, learner-focused system aligned with, but not unnecessarily constrained by, state & federal requirements



Provide a flexible, personalized learning environment to accommodate the needs of every learner



Provide high-quality ongoing professional learning opportunities & coaching to support the individual needs of every educator & administrator



Implement, with consistency, research & evidence-based practices



Demand a well-resourced consistent funding structure to support students with disabilities



Use data to assess growth & inform continuous improvements to the system



Believe every learner can have post-school success in college or career



Create a culture of collective ownership of every learners' educational needs, experiences, and outcomes across all levels of the system



Clearly define goals & objectives to address the system gaps



Expand the pool of highly skilled, certified & supportive educators & administrators who understand & honor the individual needs of diverse learners

IDENTIFIED FEATURES NECESSARY TO BRING ABOUT SYSTEMS CHANGE TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



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IMPROVED INSTRUCTION IN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

CREATE A CULTURE OF COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP OF EVERY LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, EXPERIENCES, & OUTCOMES ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM THROUGH A FLEXIBLE, LEARNER-FOCUSED SYSTEM.

With the majority of students with disabilities spending the majority of their school day in a general education setting, it is critical that supportive, equitable and tiered systems are in place in those environments to be able to meet the needs of every learner. Recognizing the diversity in capacity, MDE must prioritize resources to mitigate opportunity gaps.

ACTION(S)

1. IMPLEMENT DROPOUT PREVENTION AND PROACTIVE STRATEGIES.
2. IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES.
3. ESTABLISH, IMPLEMENT, AND SUSTAIN A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE SO STUDENTS WILL SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM (MMC) REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
4. GENERATE AND ANALYZE THE DATA (ISD LEVEL) ON TECHNOLOGY USE TO DETERMINE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT.
5. EXPLORE INNOVATIVE WAYS TO DELIVER MSTEP (I.E. CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE, REDUCED MULTIPLE CHOICE, QUESTIONS COMBINING SUBJECTS [READING/SCIENCE]).

Activities

- a. MDE, in partnership with MAISA and MAASE, will establish a collaborative network (i.e., GELN) focused on improved instructional practices in general education settings to increase results for students with disabilities while benefitting all students.
 - i. The newly established network will establish a communication campaign and provide training (face-to-face, online, etc.) to ensure ISDs and Districts can implement the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System (EWIMS)
- b. All districts shall use the EWIMS, integrating the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) with Michigan's Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP) utilizing training and support resources currently available through the Data Hubs. The Steering Committee anticipates most school districts and public agencies will implement EWIMS when given the appropriate training and support. The MDE will use the authority it has under state and federal law, including MARSE, to ensure all students at risk of dropout receive the benefits of early warning supports in any school districts that do not choose to implement EWIMS or equivalent measure. The MDE will also research the effectiveness of EWIMS and the districts using them and publish the findings.
- c. Capitalizing on the MDE definition of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), informed through work in the MDE Transformation Zone, the MDE distributes an MTSS system that includes an understanding of assessments with required professional development for Special Education coordinators, testing coordinators, etc., emphasizing Tier I instruction.



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- d. Implement MTSS with fidelity with specific emphasis on meeting the needs of students identified through EWIMS.
- e. Leveraging existing work at the MDE, develop a system inclusive of wrap-around agreements with community agencies to prevent students from dropping out of school. The system should be co-constructed by stakeholders inclusive of family- and youth-driven voices. Education partners should be identified by MDE, where Community Mental Health (CMH), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), courts or other community agencies work with schools for students identified on the EWIMS to ensure appropriate support and prevent drop-out. Strong coordination of outside agencies and special education Medicaid billing needs to occur.
- f. Integrate social/emotional learning (as articulated in General Education Leadership Network standards) through the utilization of a MTSS coupled with a Positive Behavior and Integrated Supports (PBIS) approach integrated throughout the curriculum, building on current efforts underway at the MDE.
- g. MDE will create a task force, inclusive of special education leadership, families, and teachers, to explore innovative ways to deliver MSTEP that can be flexible enough to meet the needs of our students with IEPs.
- h. MDE will review and update assessment itself in regards to instructional variables that are used across the state (i.e., pictures).
- i. Identify best practice (that is already in place in the state) and elicit teacher voice in designing future state assessments.
- j. Furthering current efforts underway at the MDE, implement programs to support improved school climate to better serve all students (i.e., caring adults serving as a mentor or advocate, peer mentoring programs across grade levels, anti-bullying programs, restorative practices, and increased counselors, nurses, para-educators, and social workers).
- k. MDE will generate a report on best practices to ensure utilization of technology throughout the year, identified inequities, and what actions will be taken regarding the use of technology for instruction and assessment.
 - i. Locals will provide information to the ISD regarding how technology is used for instructional delivery, class assessments, and student use.
 - ii. ISDs will provide the information to the MDE.
 - iii. The MDE will compile the information and look for equity among districts, including infrastructure, best practices, and student use of technology, to make the process consistent for all students. Resources from the MDE will be prioritized to mitigate inequities across districts and close opportunity gaps.
- l. MDE will reference the Michigan Roadmap: Transforming Education Through Technology, specifically goals:

Three: Assessment Learners and educators leverage technology to productively measure competency and provide meaningful feedback to support the personalization of learning for all students.

Five: Infrastructure Learners and educators will have access to a robust, secure, and comprehensive infrastructure to support everywhere, all-the-time learning.



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- m. Pending recommendation by the stakeholder group, specially designed instruction can be delivered by content experts who are not endorsed in special education through approval of an ISD plan.

ROLES

IMPROVED INSTRUCTION IN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

CREATE A CULTURE OF COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP OF EVERY LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, EXPERIENCES, & OUTCOMES ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM THROUGH A FLEXIBLE, LEARNER-FOCUSED SYSTEM.

ACTIONS

1. IMPLEMENT DROPOUT PREVENTION AND PROACTIVE STRATEGIES.
2. IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES.
3. ESTABLISH, IMPLEMENT, AND SUSTAIN A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE SO STUDENTS WILL SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM (MMC) REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
4. GENERATE AND ANALYZE THE DATA (ISD LEVEL) OF TECHNOLOGY USE TO DETERMINE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT.
5. EXPLORE INNOVATIVE WAYS TO DELIVER MSTEP (I.E. CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE, REDUCED MULTIPLE CHOICE, QUESTIONS COMBINING SUBJECTS [READING/SCIENCE]).

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
a. MDE, in partnership with MAISA and MAASE, will establish a collaborative network (i.e., GELN) focused on improved instructional practices in general education settings to increase results for students with disabilities while benefitting all students. i. The newly established network will establish a communication campaign and provide training (face-to-face, online, etc.) to ensure ISDs and Districts can implement the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System (EWIMS)	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner						Lead				

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
b. All districts shall use the EWIMS, integrating the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) with Michigan's Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP) utilizing training and support resources currently available through the Data Hubs. The Steering Committee anticipates most school districts and public agencies will implement EWIMS when given the appropriate training and support. The MDE will use the authority it has under state and federal law, including MARSE, to ensure all students at risk of dropout receive the benefits of early warning supports in any school districts that do not choose to implement EWIMS or equivalent measure. The MDE will also research the effectiveness of EWIMS and the districts using them and publish the findings.	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner								Primary Partner		
c. Capitalizing on the MDE definition of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), informed through work in the MDE Transformation Zone, the MDE distributes an MTSS system that includes an understanding of assessments with required professional development for Special Education coordinators, testing coordinators, etc., emphasizing Tier I instruction.	Lead	Primary Partner											
d. Implement MTSS with fidelity with specific emphasis on meeting the needs of students identified through EWIMS.	Primary Partner	Lead	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner		Primary Partner					
e. Leveraging existing work at the MDE, develop a system inclusive of wrap-around agreements with community agencies to prevent students from dropping out of school. The system should be co-constructed by stakeholders inclusive of family- and youth-driven voices. Education partners should be identified by MDE, where Community Mental Health (CMH), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), courts or other community agencies work with schools for students identified on the EWIMS to ensure appropriate support and prevent drop-out. Strong coordination of outside agencies and special education Medicaid billing needs to occur.	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner						Lead		Primary Partner		Primary Partner

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
f. Integrate social/emotional learning (as articulated in General Education Leadership Network standards) through the utilization of a MTSS coupled with a Positive Behavior and Integrated Supports (PBIS) approach integrated throughout the curriculum.	Primary Partner	Lead	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner							
g. MDE will create a task force, inclusive of special education leadership, families, and teachers, to explore innovative ways to deliver MSTEP that can be flexible enough to meet the needs of our students with IEPs.	Lead												
h. MDE will review and update assessment itself in regards to instructional variables that are used across the state (i.e., pictures)	Lead					Primary Partner							
i. Identify best practice (that is already in place in the state) and elicit teacher voice in designing future state assessments.	Lead												
j. Furthering current efforts underway at the MDE, implement programs to support improved school climate to better serve all students (i.e., caring adults serving as a mentor or advocate, peer mentoring programs across grade levels, anti-bullying programs, restorative practices, and increased counselors, nurses, para-educators, and social workers).	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner
k. MDE will generate a report on best practices to ensure utilization of technology throughout the year, identified inequities, and what actions will be taken regarding the use of technology for instruction and assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Locals will provide information to the ISD regarding how technology is used for instructional delivery, class assessments, and student use. ii. ISDs will provide technology use information to the MDE. iii. The MDE will compile the information and look for equity among districts, including infrastructure, best practices, and student use of technology, to make the process consistent for all students. 	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner						Primary Partner (MISEN)				

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
l. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three: Assessment Learners and educators leverage technology to productively measure competency and provide meaningful feedback to support the personalization of learning for all students. ▪ Five: Infrastructure Learners and educators will have access to a robust, secure, and comprehensive infrastructure to support everywhere, all-the-time learning 	Lead	Primary Partner							Primary Partner				
m. Pending recommendation by the stakeholder group and approval by state legislature, specially designed instruction can be delivered by content experts who are not endorsed in special education through approval of an ISD plan.	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner							



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MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION (DIPLOMA OPTIONS)

BELIEVE EVERY LEARNER CAN HAVE POST-SCHOOL SUCCESS IN COLLEGE OR CAREER.

Michigan is unique in that it currently offers a single path to graduation in Michigan – namely, the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC). The alternative is a certificate of completion, essentially a certificate of attendance that under-describes a student's exit skills and risks lowering post-school expectations. Increasing flexibility while maintaining high standards and expectations focusing on developing skills for every learner will improve post-school opportunities, lower dropout rates, and honor learner variability.

ACTION(S)

1. EXPLORE ADDITIONAL DIPLOMA OPTIONS (FOR ALL STUDENTS UNLESS NOTED) AND CONSIDER WHICH HAVE THE LARGEST POSITIVE INTENDED BENEFITS AND LOWEST UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES.

ACTIVITIES

- a. Study the implications of:
 - i. Increased utilization of a Personal Curriculum to make individualized adjustments and meet the requirement of the MMC.
 - ii. The expansion of options based on performance and skills in vocational technical education (e.g. Certificate of Performance)
 - Students would complete a vocational program and/or worksite based learning
 - Performance on associated vocational skills would be assessed
 - Performance on related skills (e.g. attendance, self-advocacy, social skills, etc.) would be assessed
 - iii. Certificate of Academic Achievement demonstrated via performance on a career readiness assessment (e.g., ACT WorkKeys)
 - iv. Passing the GED as an alternative path
 - v. IEP teams determining diploma requirements for students with disabilities
 - How will we ensure appropriate decisions are made, maintaining high standards & expectations?
 - Does it improve learning and is there a positive impact in terms of post-school outcomes?
 - Conduct an employer study to gauge the value of alternative diplomas or certificates.
- b. Implement the following recommendations from a Kent ISD joint report (June 26, 2014)
 - i. Reexamine general education course design and or instructional practices to minimize the occurrence of end of course credit deficits and the need for post-course credit recovery, by taking the following steps:
 1. Building in ongoing progress monitoring of student mastery of state standards necessary for credit acquisition;



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2. Re-teaching state standards when needed **during** the course (not waiting for end of course failure), including online or electronic learning supports as appropriate;
3. Using libraries of electronic learning assessment resources (ELARs), to reassess student proficiency on targeted non-mastered standards after the re-teaching described in #2;
4. Analyzing student performance data and reflecting on whether over-reliance on a particular model of instructional support (e.g., team-teaching, pull-out resource room, or teacher consultant) may contribute to lower graduation rates.
5. Consider the granting of partial credits and extended time to earn full credit.

ROLES

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION

BELIEVE EVERY LEARNER CAN HAVE POST-SCHOOL SUCCESS IN COLLEGE OR CAREER.

ACTIONS

1. EXPLORE ADDITIONAL DIPLOMA OPTIONS (FOR ALL STUDENTS UNLESS NOTED) AND CONSIDER WHICH HAVE THE LARGEST POSITIVE INTENDED BENEFITS AND LOWEST UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES.

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
<p>a. Study the implications of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increased utilization of a Personal Curriculum to make individualized adjustments and meet the requirement of the MMC. ii. The expansion of options based on performance and skills in vocation technical education (i.e., Certificate of Performance) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students would complete a vocational program &/or worksite-based learning ▪ Performance on associated vocational skills would be assessed ▪ Performance on related skills (i.e., attendance, self-advocacy, social skills, etc.) would be assessed iii. Certificate of Academic Achievement demonstrated via performance on a career readiness assessment (i.e., ACT WorkKeys) iv. Passing the GED as an alternative path v. IEP teams determining diploma requirements for students with disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How will we ensure appropriate decisions are made, maintaining high standards & expectations? ▪ Does it improve learning and is there a positive impact in terms of post-school outcomes? ▪ Conduct an employer study to gauge the value of alternative diplomas or certificates. 	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner					

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
<p>b. Implement the following recommendations from a Kent ISD joint report (June 26, 2014)</p> <p>i. Reexamine general education course design and or instructional practices to minimize the occurrence of end of course credit deficits and the need for post-course credit recovery, by taking the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building in ongoing progress monitoring of student mastery of state standards necessary for credit acquisition; 2. Re-teaching state standards when needed during the course (not waiting for end of course failure), including online or electronic learning supports as appropriate; 3. Using libraries of electronic learning assessment resources (ELARs), to reassess student proficiency on targeted non-mastered standards after the re-teaching described in #2; 4. Analyzing student performance data and reflecting on whether over-reliance on a particular model of instructional support (e.g., team-teaching, pull-out resource room, or teacher consultant) may contribute to lower graduation rates. 5. Consider the granting of partial credits and extended time to earn full credit. 	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner					Primary Partner		Primary Partner	Primary Partner	



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PERSONAL CURRICULUM

PROVIDE A FLEXIBLE, PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF EVERY LEARNER.

*There is clear evidence that struggling learners do better when given the opportunity to learn in a challenging curriculum. Many students with disabilities are able to complete the Michigan Merit Curriculum **if** instructional practices eliminate barriers that limit a student's opportunity to be engaged in a challenging curriculum. The intent of a Personal Curriculum is to individualize the rigor and relevance of the educational experience.*

ACTION(S)

1. INCREASE CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF THE PERSONAL CURRICULUM WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs).

Activities

- a. Develop and distribute consistent guidance regarding options to allow students to earn a diploma. This guidance plan includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Who can get a personal curriculum
 - ii. What is included in a personal curriculum
 - A sample of a completed personal curriculum
 - Suggestions on curriculum modifications/courses which will allow a student to continue to stay on a diploma track. For example, see [Kent ISD guidance document](#).
- b. Once the guidance document is updated by the MDE, MAISA (GELN) will engage with MDE on options for moving this work forward. Consideration could be given to grant funding to further develop specifics of ISD/district implementation.
- c. ISDs, upon release of the supporting documents by MAISA (GELN), will support local districts with training, coaching, and support for the use of personal curriculum. Ongoing professional development for administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents will take place at the ISD level.
- d. Establish a team representing diverse perspectives to develop, test, refine, and finalize fidelity measures for Personal Curriculum.
- e. Develop consistent training, utilizing an on-line platform, for ISDs and local districts
- f. Local districts, with MDE and ISD support, will implement, with fidelity, the personal curriculum. Students who have an IEP and who need a personal curriculum will be given one to keep students on track for a diploma. Ongoing professional development for teachers, support staff, and parents on personal curriculum and on the benefits of a personal curriculum will be provided by local districts, ISDs, and MDE.

ROLES

PERSONAL CURRICULUM

PROVIDE A FLEXIBLE, PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF EVERY LEARNER.

ACTIONS

1. INCREASE CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF THE PERSONAL CURRICULUM WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS (IEPs).

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
a. Develop and distribute consistent guidance regarding options to allow students to earn a diploma. This guidance plan includes but is not limited to: i. Who can get a personal curriculum ii. What a personal curriculum is ▪ A sample of a completed personal curriculum ▪ Suggestions on curriculum modifications/courses which will allow a student to continue to stay on a diploma track.	Lead	Primary Partner							Primary Partner				
b. Once the guidance document is updated by the MDE, MAISA (GELN) will engage with MDE on options for moving this work forward. Consideration could be given to grant funding to further develop specifics of ISD/district implementation.	Primary Partner	Primary Partner							Lead				
c. ISDs, upon release of the supporting documents by MAISA (GELN), will support local districts with training, coaching, and support for the use of personal curriculum. Ongoing professional development for administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents will take place at the ISD level.	Primary Partner	Lead							Primary Partner				
d. Establish a team representing diverse perspectives to develop, test, refine, and finalize fidelity measures for Personal Curriculum.	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner					
e. Develop consistent training, utilizing an on-line platform, for ISDs and local districts	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner						Primary Partner				

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
f. Local districts, with MDE and ISD support, will implement, with fidelity, the personal curriculum. Students who have an IEP and who need a personal curriculum will be given one to keep students on track for a diploma. Ongoing professional development for teachers, support staff, and parents on personal curriculum and on the benefits of a personal curriculum will be provided by local districts, ISDs, and MDE.	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Lead						Primary Partner				



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EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

EXPAND THE POOL OF HIGHLY SKILLED, CERTIFIED & SUPPORTIVE EDUCATORS.

The success of this plan is ultimately contingent on instructional practices that are equitable, individualized, and rigorously implemented. The status quo is not working. We must examine and align educator and administrator requirements to ensure the capacity to meet the needs of every learner. The urgency demands swift action with embedded feedback loops to support continuous improvement.

ACTION(S)

1. ESTABLISH A STAKEHOLDER GROUP TO EXPLORE:
 - A. POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO STAFF CERTIFICATION, TRAINING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES TO ENSURE ALL STAFF HAVE THE CERTIFICATION, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND TRAINING REQUIRED TO SUCCESSFULLY MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS.
 - B. THE IMPACT OF INCREASED FLEXIBILITY REGARDING CATEGORICAL ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS RELATED TO INCREASING THE CANDIDATE POOL FOR HARD TO FILL POSITIONS.

ACTIVITIES

- a. With consideration given to the amount of credits required for teacher ed program and administrator programs (potentially eliminating some current requirements), educator preparation institutions will prepare all general education teachers to work with students with disabilities.
- b. Make IDEA and Section 504 competency a requirement for school administrator certification.
- c. Leverage existing MDE efforts to revise methods courses to reflect better implementation of differentiation, interventions, and MTSS.
- d. Leverage existing MDE efforts to revise student teaching to be more like clinicals that address the needs of special education students.
- e. MDE will have a minimum requirement centering on research-based differentiation/multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), universal design for learning (UDL), and inclusion practices for students with IEPs for all special education and general educator training programs in the state.
- f. Conduct a review of literature regarding options, ideas, and implications for the removal of categorical endorsements in order to make informed recommendation regarding changes to Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).
- g. As appropriate pending recommendation by the stakeholder group, change
 - i. MARSE rule to create a special education teaching endorsement instead of categorical endorsements.
 - ii. School code change to clarify any language following the MARSE rule change. MCL School Code Act 451 of 1976 Part 22-Teacher Certification.
- h. Pending recommendation by the stakeholder group:
 - i. Potentially remove categorical course requirements and implement a special education endorsement following MARSE change.
 - ii. Consider granting college elective credit for peer to peer HS programs.



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- iii. Increase training after a teacher is placed with a specific group of students (portfolio).

ROLES

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

EXPAND THE POOL OF HIGHLY SKILLED, CERTIFIED & SUPPORTIVE EDUCATORS.

ACTIONS

1. ESTABLISH A STAKEHOLDER GROUP TO EXPLORE:

- a. POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO STAFF CERTIFICATION, TRAINING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES TO ENSURE ALL STAFF HAVE THE CERTIFICATION, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND TRAINING REQUIRED TO SUCCESSFULLY MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS.
- b. THE IMPACT OF INCREASED FLEXIBILITY REGARDING CATEGORICAL ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS RELATED TO INCREASING THE CANDIDATE POOL FOR HARD TO FILL POSITIONS.

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
a. With consideration given to the amount of credits required for teacher ed program and administrator programs (potentially eliminating some current requirements), educator preparation institutions will prepare all general education teachers to work with students with disabilities.	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner			Primary Partner			Primary Partner		Primary Partner	Lead	
b. Make IDEA and Section 504 competency a requirement for school administrator certification.	Lead								Primary Partner			Primary Partner	
c. Leverage existing MDE efforts to revise methods courses to reflect better implementation of differentiation, interventions, and MTSS.	Lead					Primary Partner			Primary Partner			Lead	
d. Leverage existing MDE efforts to revise student teaching to be more like clinicals that address the needs of special education students.	Lead					Primary Partner			Primary Partner			Lead	
e. MDE will have a minimum requirement centering on research-based differentiation/multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), universal design for learning (UDL), and inclusion practices for students with IEPs for all special education and general educator training programs in the state.	Lead					Primary Partner			Primary Partner			Lead	

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
f. Conduct a review of literature regarding options, ideas, and implications for the removal of categorical endorsements in order to make informed recommendation regarding changes to Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).	Lead					Primary Partner			Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner		
g. As appropriate pending recommendation by the stakeholder group, change i. MARSE rule to create a special education teaching endorsement instead of categorical endorsements. ii. School code change to clarify any language following the MARSE rule change. MCL School Code Act 451 of 1976 Part 22-Teacher Certification.	Primary Partner											Lead	
h. Pending recommendation by the stakeholder group: i. Potentially remove categorical course requirements and implement a special education endorsement following MARSE change. ii. Consider granting college elective credit for peer to peer HS programs. iii. Increase training after a teacher is placed with a specific group of students (portfolio).	Lead	Primary Partner				Primary Partner			Primary Partner		Primary Partner	Primary Partner	



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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY, ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES & COACHING TO SUPPORT THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF EVERY EDUCATOR & ADMINISTRATOR.

Michigan must fully support the educational workforce if we are to expect the change required to see improved outcomes for students with disabilities. Resources and support must account for opportunity gaps across Michigan and mitigate inequities that marginalize vulnerable areas.

ACTION(S)

1. ESTABLISH 1-5 PRIORITIES AND CONCENTRATE ALL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN SUPPORT OF THE PRIORITIES, CRAFTING A SUSTAINED, FOCUSED JOURNEY TO SUPPORT ALL RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS.
2. PROVIDE TRAINING TO ALL STAFF TO INCREASE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES WITH EMBEDDED SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND INTERACTION WITH THE CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS.
3. PROVIDE ONGOING COACHING TO EDUCATORS TO IMPROVE FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES.
4. PROVIDE CONSISTENT INFORMATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, SPECIFICALLY IEP TEAMS, REGARDING ASSESSMENT SELECTION, ACCOMMODATIONS, AND TESTING ENVIRONMENT.
5. CREATE MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR TRAINING (I.E., FACE-TO-FACE, VIRTUAL, MODULES, ETC.) TO IMPROVE CONSISTENCY AND ACCURACY OF DATA REPORTED BY ISDS, LOCAL DISTRICTS, AND PUBLIC SCHOOL ACADEMIES.

ACTIVITIES

- a. Authentic and flexible PD for classroom teachers and support staff on how to best meet the needs of students with disabilities:
 - i. Move back to 1098 hours with minimum days instead of 180 days.
 - ii. Time for teachers and funding to support staffing social/emotional.
- b. Enhance current MDE efforts to research effective professional development delivery models.
- c. Conduct a literature review regarding best practices related to coaching, building on the MDE work to date.
- d. Utilizing MDE Way of Work Professional Learning group, identify measures for quality professional development delivery.
- e. Augment existing MDE work focused on effective coaching model(s) to support across Michigan to determine appropriate enhancements.
- f. MDE, ISDs, Educational Associations, and other partners will provide ongoing, consistent professional development regarding coaching across the state.
- g. Provide training (via multiple modes) in large scale assessment and how it affects policy, schools, teachers, and students so there is a deeper knowledge of how these assessments work.
- h. Provide training regarding the submission of dropout data.



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- i. Develop common NAEP assessment training materials and technical assistance to be used across stakeholder groups for schools that have been selected.
- j. MDE will create and share a flow map of assessment selection, accommodations, and testing environment for use by ISDs and local districts.
 - i. A consortium of ISDs will provide professional learning, with participation of special education staff ensured by local districts, around the flow map and how to implement it with consistency.
 - ii. Local districts/public school academies/schools will ensure all staff members follow the flow map for students with disabilities.
- k. MDE will work with ISDs to identify districts who are following the process as outlined in the flow map and those who need technical assistance.
- l. All schools have access to professional learning. Encourage multiple models for delivering added supports (i.e., MIBLSI, instructional consultation teams). Increase grant dollars to expand offerings across the ISDs or expand the reach of the current grant funded ISDs.
- m. ISDs and local districts will be required to provide training for all staff centering on research-based strategies to improve inclusive practices to support the unique needs of every student.

ROLES

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY, ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES & COACHING TO SUPPORT THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF EVERY EDUCATOR & ADMINISTRATOR.

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3. PROVIDE ONGOING COACHING TO EDUCATORS TO IMPROVE FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES.
4. PROVIDE CONSISTENT INFORMATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ALL LOCALS, SPECIFICALLY IEP TEAMS, REGARDING ASSESSMENT SELECTION, ACCOMMODATIONS, AND TESTING ENVIRONMENT.
5. CREATE MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR TRAINING (I.E., FACE-TO-FACE, VIRTUAL, MODULES, ETC.) TO IMPROVE CONSISTENCY AND ACCURACY OF DATA REPORTED BY ISDS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND PUBLIC-SCHOOL ACADEMIES.

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
a. Authentic and flexible PD for classroom teachers and support staff on how to best meet the needs of students with disabilities. i. Move back to 1098 hours with minimum days instead of 180 days ii. Time for teachers and funding to support staffing social/ emotional.	Lead	Lead	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner				Primary Partner
b. Enhance current MDE efforts to research effective professional development delivery models.	Lead	Primary Partner											
c. Conduct a literature review regarding best practices related to coaching, building on the MDE work to date.	Lead	Primary Partner											

ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
d. Utilizing MDE Way of Work Professional Learning group, identify measures for quality professional development delivery.	Lead												
e. Augment existing MDE work focused on effective coaching model(s) to support across Michigan to determine appropriate enhancements.	Lead	Primary Partner							Lead				
f. MDE, ISDs, Educational Associations, and other partners will provide ongoing, consistent professional development regarding coaching across the state.	Lead	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner	Primary Partner				Lead			Primary Partner	
g. Provide training (via multiple modes) in large scale assessment and how it affects policy, schools, teachers, and students so there is a deeper knowledge of how these assessments work.	Lead	Lead							Lead				
h. Provide training regarding the submission of dropout data.	Lead	Lead											
i. Develop common NAEP assessment training materials and technical assistance to be used across stakeholder groups for schools that have been selected.	Lead	Primary Partner	Primary Partner						Primary Partner				
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ACTIVITIES	MDE	ISDS	Local Districts	Schools	Principals	Teachers	Itinerant Staff & Para-professionals	Parents & Families	Educational Associations	Advocacy Agencies	Legislators	Educator Preparation Institutions	Other Community Partners
i. All schools should have access to training. Encourage multiple models for delivering added supports (ie, MiBLISI, instructional consultation teams). Increase grant dollars to expand offerings across the ISDs or expand the reach of the current grant funded ISDs.	Lead	Primary Partner											
m. ISDs and local districts will be required to provide training for all staff centering on research-based strategies to improve inclusive practices to support the unique needs of every student.		Lead	Lead						Primary Partner				



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DATA

USE DATA TO ASSESS GROWTH AND INFORM CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SYSTEM.

Data does not provide the answers but rather the questions that must be supplemented with deep dialogue, analysis, and action to improve learner outcomes.

ACTION(S)

1. DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE ACCURATE AND TIMELY SYSTEM FOR REPORTING, TRACKING, AND COMMUNICATING DROPOUT DATA.
2. IMPROVE USE OF STATE ASSESSMENT DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION FOR SCHOOLS.

ACTIVITIES

- a. Expand dropout data code options to help track more specific reasons students are not in school.
- b. Verify student location, including virtual schools, alternative schools, and post-expulsion settings throughout the state.
- c. Record dropout data with consistency and more frequently across ISDs and LEAs. Districts need to report more specific reasons why a student leaves the district instead of marking “unknown”.
- d. Identify unenrolled, exited students who are considered dropouts more accurately and frequently so that each district can intervene.
- e. MDE will provide assessment results (including preliminary aggregates for participation and proficiency) and interpretations to local districts.
- f. Consortium of ISDs will provide training to local districts on item analysis and interpretation of the data.
- g. MDE will collect and use data on assessment participation across the board and work with underperforming schools/districts to improve their approach to assessment in general.

ROLES

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M-STEP/NAEP COMMUNICATION

INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM REGARDING THE INTENT AND BENEFIT OF FORMAL ASSESSMENTS.

Communication, inclusive of continuous feedback loops, is critical to understanding the importance of summative assessments in addressing opportunity gaps.

ACTION(S)

1. CREATE CONSISTENT, ONGOING COMMUNICATION PLAN WITH BUILT-IN FEEDBACK LOOPS FOR STAKEHOLDER INPUT (I.E., FAMILIES, EDUCATORS, LEGISLATORS, ETC.) REGARDING THE M-STEP.
2. IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF AND ULTIMATELY PARTICIPATION ON THE NAEP TEST, STATISTICAL SAMPLING, STANDARDIZED TESTING AND SCORING, AND HOW THE DATA FROM EACH OF THESE IS REPORTED AND USED AND THEIR IMPACT ON MICHIGAN.

ACTIVITIES

- a. MDE, in collaboration with Educational Associations, will create materials to better inform the public of the M-STEP, incorporating feedback loops that support continuous improvement.
- b. Redefine the communications roles and responsibilities of Higher Education Institutions, offices within MDE, ISDs, LEAs, PSAs, etc.
- c. MDE will implement a multi-language marketing campaign targeted to all students and families about the value of capturing their learning and knowledge and to improve perception of statewide assessments.
- d. MDE, ISDs and local districts will send current MDE guidelines and information out to all families, in multiple languages and via local communication tools, by October 1st, 2019.
- e. MDE will create and implement a proactive communication plan that informs all Michigan legislators about research-based whole child development as it relates to students with disabilities and standardized testing.

ROLES

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FUNDING

DEMAND A WELL-RESOURCED, CONSISTENT FUNDING STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

Funding alone will not yield the results we seek. We must be clear on why additional funding is necessary, what success looks like, and how we will know when we've achieved the goal(s).

ACTION(S)

1. SECURE FAIR AND EQUITABLE FUNDING SPECIFICALLY ALIGNED WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCHOOL FINANCE RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE TO ALLOW ALL DISTRICTS TO MEET THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF EVERY STUDENT.

ACTIVITIES

- a. Legislature must provide full and equitable funding specifically aligned with multiple task force recommendations including the School Finance Research Collaborative, former Governor Snyder's Educator Advisory Council, and former Lt. Governor Calley's Subcommittee on Special Education Funding.
- b. MDE, with the support of educational associations, will look at methods of funding that have better outcomes for special education students.
- c. MDE, with the support of educational associations, will put together recommendations for legislatures.

ROLES

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c. MDE, with the support of educational associations, will put together recommendations for legislatures.	Lead								Primary Partner				



WHAT OUTCOMES WILL WE EXPECT TO SEE?



A measurable increase in participation on the M-STEP for students with disabilities



A measurable increase in participation and performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for students with disabilities



A measurable increase in graduation rates for students with disabilities



A measurable reduction in dropout rates for students with disabilities



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CONTRIBUTORS

Many thanks to the individuals who dedicated significant time and energy over the course of several months. Their passion for improving outcomes for students with disabilities and the insights each provided from her/his perspective were essential to informing this plan. They will continue to be a crucial partner in moving this work forward.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Representative Julie Calley	Michigan House of Representatives
Laura Chang	Michigan Teacher of the Year (2018-2019)
Teri Chapman	Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
Jacqueline Goosen	American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
Venessa Keesler	Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
Scott Koenigsknecht	Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
Cara Lougheed	Michigan Teacher of the Year (2019-2020)
Paul Liabenow	Michigan Elementary & Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA)
Representative Frank Liberati	Michigan House of Representatives
Chandra Madafferri	Michigan Education Association (MEA)
Dave Manson	Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)
Mark McWilliams	Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service (MPAS)
William (Bill) Miller	Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA)
Lohren Nzoma	Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD)
Teri Pettit	Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA)
Chris Wigent	Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA)
Wendy Zdeb	Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)



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WORKGROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	REPRESENTING PRIMARY PERSPECTIVE
Bobbiesue Adams	Teacher, Fowlerville Community Schools
Bersheril Bailey	Great Lakes Comprehensive Center (Technical Assistance)
Ali Bazzi	Asst. Superintendent & Principal, Star International Academy
William (Bill) Brown	Superintendent, Allegan Area ESA
Pete Bush	Superintendent, Sparta Area Schools
Craig Carmoney	Superintendent, Meridian Public Schools
Jenny Cherry	Teacher, Lincoln Consolidated Schools
Abby Cypher	Director of Special Services, Walled Lake Consolidated Schools
Michelle DeJaeger	Director of Special Education, Detroit Public Schools Community District
Michelle Fecteau	Michigan State Board of Education member
Rachel Fuerer	Director of Special Education, EUPISD
Heather Gauck	Special Education Teacher, Grand Rapids Public Schools
Marlene Hunter-Armstrong	Director of Compliance, Detroit Public Schools Community District
John Jaquith	Test Development Manager, MDE
Deb Kadish	Superintendent, Bay-Arenac ISD
Kris Keranen	Disability Advocate, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service
Jacklyn Klotz	Teacher Consultant, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools
Matt Koekkoek	Special Education Supervisor, Newaygo County RESA
Craig McCalla	Principal, Dexter Community Schools
Amie McCaw	Principal, Vicksburg Community Schools
Laura Moellering	Superintendent, Choice Schools Associates Area
Teri Pettit	Michigan Association of Public School Academies
Heather Poirier	Teacher, Rochester Community Schools
Christine Robertson	Director of Specialized Instruction, Muskegon Public Schools
Jane Shank	Executive Director, Association of Children's Mental Health



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NAME	REPRESENTING PRIMARY PERSPECTIVE
Andrew Shaw	Superintendent, Pittsford Area Schools
Cindy Shinsky	Faculty, Grand Valley State University College of Education
Nancy Spanski	Member, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Paul Stemmer	NAEP State Coordinator, MDE
Peri Stone-Palmquist	Executive Director, Student Advocacy Center of Michigan
Gina Umpstead	Faculty, Central Michigan University Educational Leadership
Deb Veiht	Superintendent, Marquette-Alger RESA
Jeff Whittle	Para-professional, Macomb ISD

Additional support provided by:

- Great Lakes Comprehensive Center
- Public Sector Consultants



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ACRONYMS

CEPI	Center for Educational Performance & Information
CMH	Community Mental Health
DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services
EBP	Evidence-Based Practices
EWIMS	Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System
GED	General Education Development or General Education Diploma
GELN	General Education Leadership Network
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
ISD	Intermediate School Districts
LEA	Local Education Agency
MAASE	Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education
MAISA	Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators
MARSE	Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education
MASA	Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators
MCL	Michigan Compiled Laws
MDE	Michigan Department of Education
MIBLSI	Michigan’s Integrated Behavior & Learning Support Initiative
MICIP	Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process
M-STEP	Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
PBIS	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
PSA	Public School Academy
SPP	State Performance Plan
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
USED	United States Department of Education



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Catamaran

Catamaran is the system used by the state to promote positive outcomes and ensure compliance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) of 2004 and the *Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education*. Catamaran was designed to help locals analyze and interpret data and keep track of all monitoring activities in a single location. Catamaran reflects the priorities of the IDEA 2004 and the State Performance Plan (SPP) and is aligned with the School Improvement Framework.

Section 504

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act was the first disability civil rights law to be enacted in the United States. It prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in programs that receive federal financial assistance, and set the stage for enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

USED Status Determination

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services released State determinations on implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Status Determination evaluates the State's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of the IDEA, and describes how the State will improve its implementation. Indicators measure child and family results, and other indicators (including the State Systemic Improvement Plan) that measure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA. The determinations are part of the ongoing efforts to improve education for America's 7 million children with disabilities. IDEA details four categories for the Secretary's determinations. A State's determination may be:

- Meets the requirements and purposes of IDEA;
- Needs assistance in implementing the requirements of IDEA;
- Needs intervention in implementing the requirements of IDEA; or
- Needs substantial intervention in implementing the requirements of IDEA

WorkKeys

The WorkKeys system from ACT is designed to help you develop better workplace skills. Better skills mean better-paying jobs—in any career field. The WorkKeys system consists of job analysis (finding out which skills are needed on the job), assessments (the tests you'll be taking plus several others), reporting (telling you how your skills match job requirements), and instructional support (guidance to educators related to improving students' skill levels).



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APPROACH TO THE WORK

A Steering Committee, comprised of internal MDE and external educational agency perspectives (see "[Contributors](#)") was established. In December of 2018, they were provided an overview of the Determination, provided an opportunity to ask questions, and asked to provide input on the challenges related to:

- Graduation rates for students with disabilities
- Dropout rates for students with disabilities
- Participation on Statewide Assessments for students with disabilities
- Participation and proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for students with disabilities

In January 2019, the Steering Committee met for a second time to develop a vision for the work as well as establish features necessary to achieve the vision. The Steering Committee was also asked to identify up to three people to represent their organization/agency/perspective in Workgroups. This information was to guide the work of this broader group.

A series of presentations regarding the Determination occurred throughout the state, with opportunities to provide input. This included the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) conference, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Michigan Alliance for Families, and others.

All stakeholder input noted above was provided to the Workgroup members. The Workgroup met three full days between February – May 2019. The first meeting mirrored that of the Steering Committee.

The second focused on deepening understanding by looking at additional Michigan data as well as data and practices from other states in the Great Lakes region related to components of the Determination. The challenges generated during the first meeting were revised and, in the second half of the day, contributors were separated into four groups, reflecting the areas of the Determination (Graduation, Dropout, Statewide Assessment, NAEP), to generate actions in the context of the Steering Committee's vision and identified features. Consideration was given to the amount of effort the actions would take and the impact they would have. Actions were then prioritized and reported out to the entire Workgroup (all areas) for feedback and revisions.





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We can, we must, we will do better for our children with disabilities and their families both in the short and long term.



The third and final day focused on further prioritizing actions, narrowing it down to no more than six. Workgroups then established specific activities to support every action. Each Workgroup was asked to identify who (e.g. MDE, ISDs, Educational Organizations, etc.) would have a primary role in each activity, the anticipated outcomes, necessary resources, alignment to the identified features, and duration (short-, medium-, or long-term). Once established, affinity groups (Graduation/Dropout and Statewide Assessment/NAEP) were formed to share information, eliminate redundancies, and provide general feedback. Finally, all actions and activities were reported out to the entire group for feedback prior to being presented to the Steering Committee.

Workgroup recommendations were compiled and presented to the Steering Committee in June 2019. After each action and activity, the Steering Committee members were asked to indicate whether they could publicly support the recommendation. If any member could not publicly support, members would engage in further dialogue to deepen their understanding, challenge assumptions, and determine next steps. Steering Committee members were asked to document concerns and those were compiled for future dialogue. In August, a follow-up meeting with the Steering Committee occurred to review concerns and work toward consensus. [more following Aug. meeting]

The final recommendations were categorized by theme, aligned with the identified features necessary to bring about systems change. The reader of this plan should understand there are influential relationships amongst the actions and activities and addressing one action is likely to have a positive impact on addressing another. For instance, recommendations related to improving graduation rates will naturally impact dropout rates.

THE PATH FORWARD

We can, we must, and we will do better for our children with disabilities and their families. Our System is in need of drastic improvement to support the state of Michigan, our educator workforce, and most importantly, our students. Michigan, at every level of the system, must challenge the status quo to ensure an equitable education for all. We must create a proactive system that honors the unique needs and civil rights of every learner. We must afford educators the flexibility to be creative in their approach to ensure successful post-school outcomes for all while capitalizing on and consistently implementing practices proven to be effective in meeting the needs of all. We must have an unwavering belief that every student deserves an education that yields a successful life, knowing that paths to success vary greatly. We, as citizens of Michigan, have a collective responsibility to make this happen.

Identified Features Necessary to Bring About Systems Change

[Generated by Steering Committee]

If Students with Disabilities are to succeed in Michigan, we must...



- Believe every learner can have post-school success in college or career
- Create a culture of collective ownership of every learners' educational needs, experiences, and outcomes across all levels of the system
- Clearly define goals and objectives to address the system gaps
- Implement, with consistency, research and evidence-based practices
- Provide a flexible, personalized learning environment to accommodate the needs of every learner
- Advocate for a flexible, learner-focused system aligned with, but not unnecessarily constrained by, state and federal requirements
- Provide high-quality ongoing professional learning opportunities and coaching to support the individual needs of every educator and administrator
- Expand the pool of highly skilled, certified and supportive educators and administrators who understand and honor the individual needs of diverse learners
- Demand a well-resourced consistent funding structure to support students with disabilities
- Use data to assess growth and inform continuous improvements to the system

Recommendations

[Generated by Work Groups]

➤ Review Challenges & Wonders generated by Steering Committee

- Amend as necessary

➤ Additional Data Review

➤ Draft Specific Recommendations

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

➤ Consider Implications

➤ Factor Measurable Effect on:

- Participation Rates (M-STEP)
- NAEP Proficiency Rates
- Graduation Rates
- Dropout Rates

➤ Consider Wider, Long-Term Benefits if recommendations are adopted & implemented

- MDE will...
- ISDs will...
- Local Districts will...
- Schools will...
- Principals will...
- Teachers will...
- Itinerant staff will...
- Paraprofessionals will...
- Parents will...
- Ed. Associations will...
- Partners will...
- MDE Office of Special Education will develop a Strategic Plan informed by recommendations from Work Groups



PATH FORWARD STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE

PHASE ONE

- ▶ MAISA/MDE/MAASE partnership for an “all ed” network similar to GELN
- ▶ Alternative paths to diplomas for students with disabilities
- ▶ Personal curriculum 2.0
- ▶ M-STEP flow chart revisit for deciding proper state assessments for students with disabilities
- ▶ Statewide coordinated, aligned professional development for general and special educators around:
 - Personal curriculum
 - Quality Tier I instruction Inclusive practices
 - Early Warning systems through the data hubs
 - Data analysis to drive improvement & instruction
 - Dropout coding

PHASE TWO

- ▶ Additional supports for MTSS and PBIS
- ▶ M-STEP marketing and communications plan as it relates to students with disabilities
- ▶ Investigate alternative ways to test/assess knowledge on statewide assessments
- ▶ Teacher and administrator preparation workgroup
- ▶ Wrap-around system work aimed at the whole child

PHASE THREE

- ▶ Special Education Teacher Certification Workgroup
- ▶ NAEP workgroup (assessment training materials)
- ▶ Technology utilization inventory

DEC. 2019 -
JUNE 2021

JULY 2021 -
JUNE 2022

JULY 2022 -
JULY 2023



DRIVEN BY THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM OF PARTNERS ACROSS MICHIGAN

