State Board Update

New Goals – Re-Imaging education

The Michigan State Board of Education adopted as one of the four 2008-09 Goals and Priorities for itself and the Department of Education “re-imagining the pre-K – 12 educational system.” This means looking into what innovations and re-designing of Michigan’s K-12 education system need to be implemented to serve our students best in the this 21st Century.

The State Board’s other three goals continue to be:

- Review and improve Michigan’s teacher preparation system;
- Continue to advocate and promote high school reform; and
- Implement the “darkening the dotted lines” partnership between the MDE and the intermediate school districts (ISDs).

Steps needed to achieve the re-imagining goal will include public forums and input over the next year and working with the Midwest Regional Education Laboratory on a variety of research projects. The results of these initiatives are expected to be policy recommendations to the board by the end of the next school year.

You can view the State Board of Education’s Goals and Priorities at the State Board’s website: 2008-2009 MDE/SBE Strategic Plan, Strategic Goal, and Priorities.

Welcome to the debut edition of the Michigan Department of Education’s newsletter called Michigan Education Connection. The Michigan Department of Education feels it is essential to produce and deliver a publication that informs and offers the opportunity for educators and the public to ‘keep connected’ with news and information that is leading education in Michigan.

This publication will be produced monthly and will be filled with important information on State Board of Education and Department activities, policies, products, conferences and more. To sign up for the Education Connection distribution list, please visit www.michigan.gov/mdenewsletter.

I hope that you find the newsletter an informative instrument and a sincere effort to increase the levels of communication from the Michigan Department of Education. Please Enjoy!!

Mike Flanagan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

To sign up for Education Connection ListServ, please visit www.michigan.gov/mdenewsletter.
Michigan Merit Curriculum
Resources

Since the passage of the new state high school graduation requirements commonly referred to as the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has worked with hundreds of educators and representatives from professional organizations and higher education to develop documents and materials that outline what students should know and be able to do in required courses/credits during their high school experience.

Many of these resources are housed on the Michigan Department of Education’s High School website, which contains important information on Michigan’s graduation requirements and continues to support statewide professional development by providing access to documents, professional development modules, toolkit resources, Frequently Asked Questions and companion documents as they are developed and updated?

Don’t be left in the dark, check it out at www.mi.gov/highschool.

MDE Fall School Improvement Conference

The Michigan Department of Education, Office of School Improvement to announced the upcoming annual Fall School Improvement Conference. The conference will be Monday, November 24th from 4-7 and Tuesday, November 25th from 8-5. The theme of this conference will be “School Improvement Plan Development.”

Prior school improvement conferences have focused on the Gather Data and Study Data elements of the School Improvement Process. This conference will take that data and information and look at how it can be used to create a School Improvement Plan to address student academic achievement. The new electronic web site for the creation of the School Improvement Plan will be previewed at this conference.

The keynote speaker will be Deb Walstrom, a national speaker whom many of you have had the opportunity to hear and work with. Deb will be sharing Data Driven Decision Making, Planning for, and implementing change, and establishing effective School Improvement Teams.

Registration for this conference is available on line at: www.gomiem.org.
MEAP Testing to Begin

The 2008 Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test cycle is set to begin. And with the new round of testing comes a new testing schedule. The MEAP administration for each subject now will be on the same days across the state.

This new schedule has been developed in consultation with educational stakeholder groups across the state and is designed to balance the need for test security and flexibility in test administration.

Schools MUST administer subjects on dates specified. Schools are NOT authorized to deviate from this schedule unless prior written approval is obtained from Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability. Accommodated administrations may occur any day from the first specified day of testing for that assessment (Math, ELA part 1, ELA part 2, Science, or Social Studies) to the final make-up testing date.

Below is the new MEAP administration schedule:

Tuesday, October 14  Mathematics
Thursday, October 16  ELA Session 1
Tuesday, October 21  ELA Session 2
Thursday, October 23  Science or Social Studies

Make up dates:

Monday, October 20  Mathematics
Wednesday, October 22  ELA Session 1
Monday, October 27  ELA Session 2
Tuesday, October 28  Science or Social Studies
Wednesday, October 29  Make-up any subject as needed
Thursday, October 30  Make-up any subject as needed (NO TESTING AFTER TODAY)

We expect these changes to improve the security of the MEAP, as well as improve our ability to issue MEAP results in a timely fashion. If you have questions about any of these changes, please call 1-877-560-8378 or email oeea@michigan.gov.

Podcasts

Podcasting is becoming increasingly popular in education. It can be a tool for teachers or administrators to communicate curriculum, assignments and other information with parents and the community. This creative tool for delivering content in the classrooms is one of the many ways teaching is evolving in the 21st Century.

Did you know that the Department of Education has been using podcasts as an avenue for getting essential information out to the education field too? For over a year now, MDE has been sending out regularly recorded messages from Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan on a variety of educational topics and department updates. Previously podcasts include Re-imaging Education; Career and Technology Education; Education Budget; School Consolidation, and much more.

You can access Mike’s podcasts at the MDE website: www.michigan.gov/mde, click on the Orange right hand navigation button titled ‘Superintendent’s Podcast’. Superintendent Flanagan’s podcast is available on iTunes. To subscribe, go to the iTunes Store and search for Mike Flanagan. RSS feeds are also available for subscriptions to RSS readers and supported browsers.

National School Lunch Week
October 13-17, 2008

School districts throughout Michigan will celebrate National School Lunch Week from October 13-17, 2008, as adopted by the State Board of Education. This year’s theme for National School Lunch Week, entitled Vote for School Lunch 2008-Presidential Edition, presents an excellent opportunity to promote school lunch programs statewide and to emphasize the importance of child nutrition.

Within the federally funded National School Lunch Program, 95% of schools participate and 30 million children are served daily nationwide. Last school year, more than 850,000 school lunches were served daily to Michigan students at more than 3,800 sites.

National School Lunch Week serves as a fitting time to recognize and commend the men and women who accept and meet the daily challenge of providing school meals to school children and to urge all Michigan residents to become aware and concerned about their children’s and their own nutrition habits, in hope of achieving a more healthful citizenry for today and the future.
ANNOUNCING...

MI Learning on iTunes U is a gateway to educational audio, video, and pdf files submitted by organizations and individuals throughout Michigan. These resources can be accessed by computer, iPod, MP3 player, handhelds, and more – offering great learning opportunities for educators, students, and community!

MI Learning on iTunes U
www.macul.org >link to MI Learning

Phase 2 of development for the creation and posting of curriculum resources in specific subject areas has started. Educators who are creating audio/video lessons in a particular curriculum area based on Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks are encouraged to share on MI Learning! Access participation information at the above link. Watch for funding news for course content development at www.macul.org.

A project of the Michigan Department of Education and MACUL

FOCUS on Results Offers Guidance and Technical Assistance for Special Education Stakeholders

FOCUS on Results are guidance and technical assistance documents published by the Center for Educational Networking for the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services. FOCUS documents keep education stakeholders up-to-date on current changes in rules and regulations, dispute resolution, individualized education programs (IEP), alternate assessment, accountability, continuous improvement, early childhood, and other valuable and relevant topics.

Recently published FOCUS on Results documents include:

- Understanding Michigan’s State Performance Plan (SPP), Annual Performance Report (APR), and Public Reporting
- Quick Reference Guide: Tips for Developing a Quality and Compliant Transition Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Documents are available at no cost in print and electronic formats. If you would like to subscribe to FOCUS on Results or receive email updates when new issues are available, visit www.cenmi.org and click on “Services” then “Subscribe to Publications” or send a request to info@cenmi.org. Upcoming FOCUS on Results documents include:

- START Provides Training and Support to Schools Educating Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders
- AIM for Success: Accessible Instructional Materials and the National Instructional Accessibility Standards
- Standards-Based Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

For more information, contact the Center for Educational Networking at (800) 593-9146 or visit www.cenmi.org.
Superintendent’s Breakfast Challenge

We all know the importance of a healthy, well-rounded breakfast in the morning to give us the right start for our day. Unfortunately, too few of Michigan’s students arrive at school having benefited from this critical meal. That is why last spring, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan, proposed to all Michigan schools The Superintendent’s Breakfast Challenge. Superintendent Flanagan challenged all district and charter superintendents in Michigan to increase school breakfast participation 50% by May 2010. This challenge is an effort to ensure that our kids start the school day ready to learn and achieve in their studies.

While more than 140 million school lunches were served during the 2006-07 school year, only 39 million school breakfasts were served during this same time period. If Michigan’s districts meet the Challenge to increase breakfast participation by 50%, we will serve more than 58 million school breakfasts. Also, school breakfast can be used as a way to increase student achievement, attendance, and attentiveness. Research supports the link between breakfast and improved student readiness, academic success, and health.

Superintendents are encouraged to work in partnership with their food service directors to find innovative cost effective ways to increase breakfast participation. Examples of successful ways to serve breakfast include:

• Serve breakfast in the classroom;
• Serve breakfast as a mid-morning nutrition break;
• Serve breakfast in a grab n’ go bag in a location where students tend to congregate prior to school; or
• serve breakfast from carts as students enter the building.

We have great partners in Michigan, like the United Dairy Industry of Michigan that is underwriting the Breakfast Challenge. Since announcing this Challenge and mailing approximately 1900 Challenge Breakfast Cereal Boxes, many success stories have already been shared with MDE. We look forward to hearing more stories from across the state as more districts participate in the Challenge.

To learn more about this exciting initiative, please contact Gloria Zunker ZunkerG@michigan.gov.

Michigan Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit

We Are All In This Together: Sharing the Vision of High School Graduation for All Students

Join us for the Michigan Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit on Oct. 20 in Lansing. Educators, parents, students and community activists from across the state will be gathering to learn more about the dropout crisis, why graduating more students from high school is critical for every part of our society and economy, and how we can work together locally to keep students in school.

Community action is the hallmark of this summit, calling on a huge variety of attendees – from both in and out of school – to help more students graduate from high school. Together we can reduce Michigan’s 15 percent dropout rate, helping 21,000 youth per year realize a brighter future.

The Michigan Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit will be held October 20, 2008, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lansing Center in Lansing, Mich.

Visit www.midropoutsummit.org for more information about the summit, how to register yourself or a community team, and why it’s so critical that our communities come together to ensure more students graduate from high school.
ON THE HORIZON...

- Near Future

Michigan State Board of Education Meeting, October 14
National School Lunches Week, October 13-17
Michigan Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit, October 20
MDE/MSBO Workshop, October 21
Supt. Preparation Series (SUPES) Academy, November 6-7
NCA's 2008 Fall Conference, November 6-7
Data-Driven Dialogue, November 6, 2008 - January 30, 2009
State Board of Education Meeting, November 12
MAS/FPS Principals Boot Camp-Macomb ISD, November 14
National Quality Education Conference, November 16-18
Fall School Improvement Pre-Conference, November 24
Fall School Improvement Conference, November 25

- Distant Future

MEMSPA State Conference, December 1-3
MAS/FPS Principals Boot Camp, December 2
State Board of Education Meeting, December 9
Spring School Improvement ISD Workshop, March 23, 2009
Spring School Improvement Pre-Conference, April 21, 2009
Spring School Improvement Conference, April 22, 2009