How Does YOUR School Measure Up?

Michigan school districts can see how their local schools measure up academically with a new feature offered by the Michigan Department of Education.

The feature, called “How Does YOUR School Measure Up?” allows schools and the public to see how individual districts and schools compare to the statewide averages on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests and high school Michigan Merit Exam (MME).

As schools begin to receive the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, and use those funds to drive reform and innovation they first should know where they stand academically.

“This information will give school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members a clear understanding of how they measure up.

Downloadable data files show each school's student achievement scores compared to statewide averages; each school's academic growth from 2007-2008; and reveal what percentage of each district's high school students are considered "college ready."

To find “How Does YOUR School Measure Up,” log on to: www.michigan.gov/oeaa

Catch the Vision

“Attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students.”

—Michigan State Board of Education Goal

State Board of Education Favors Turn-Around School Legislation

The Michigan State Board of Education’s strategic goal focuses on academic achievement with emphasis on high priority students and schools. With legislation currently being discussed in the House of Representatives that concentrates on turn-around measures for the state’s lowest performing schools, the Board passed a motion during its May meeting that favors such legislation.

While the board didn’t endorse any specific failing school legislation in the House, it did support legislative action on the issue.

The board did approve the following motion: “As the Legislature considers turnaround school legislation, the State Board of Education endorses mandatory action to intervene in chronically failing schools, and welcomes thoughtful legislation informed by effective turnaround schools practice in states and communities around the country.”

From State Superintendent Mike Flanagan:

I Can Do What?

This past year I approved “seat-time waivers” to allow schools to be innovative in reaching out to non-traditional students and taking their schoolwork through on-line classes. I’ve approved fourteen proposals – they offer great promise on not only looking at educating in a different way, but finding ways to educate ALL kids.

The thing is, districts can be offering students many choices without a waiver. During these challenging financial times, I encourage districts to be forward-looking in innovative and pioneering ideas to drive achievement. Districts can be offering students options without a waiver that:

• Allow any high school student to take one or two online courses at any self-scheduled time and place.
• Allow any high school student to dual enroll.
• Allow any high school student to take one or two independent study courses per semester.
• Offer college courses on the high school campus or secondary credits;
• Offer flexible scheduling to high school students.

It’s about foregoing excuses and the old, static beliefs we’ve held onto for too long and Re-Imagine Michigan’s education system. Schools looking to transform teaching and learning are encouraged to visit the Project Re-Imagine website to apply and surge forward. The website is:

www.michigan.gov/mdereimagine.
MI3-Michigan’s Integrated Improvement Initiatives

“A systems approach to program improvement”

The Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (MDE-OSE/EIS) has developed a system of integrated improvement initiatives to advance effective, research based practices in the field of education to effectively support diverse learners. Recent changes to federal education legislation have increased the focus on both student performance and system accountability. These changes, reflected in both the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), have created a climate of increased focus on scientifically based research to enhance and improve instructional delivery.

Aligned with these changes comes an increased focus on fiscal expenditures and cost-to-value assessments. As a result, it becomes increasingly more important that activities supported by federal funds result in increased system efficiencies and effectiveness and improved student performance. The need to coordinate, integrate and evaluate these activities demands a new approach. Thus the need for Michigan’s Integrated Improvement Initiatives (MI3) was conceptualized.

The design of MI3 is predicated upon:
- The use of evidence based practices,
- Effective implementation of those practices,
- Development of system capacity to sustain improved results over time and,
- The efficient use of resources to reach across the entire state.

“MI3 is a systems framework that offers a well organized approach to systems change,” said Dr. Jacquelyn Thompson, Director of OSE/EIS. “We are looking for a better way to connect the fix with the need for improved services and better outcomes for students.”

This is a graphic representation of the MI3 Community of State Initiative Partners and is intended to create a visual representation of an integrated system of supports and improvement activities.

For additional information about MI3 please call or email:
Beth A Steenwyk, Director-Michigan’s Integrated Improvement Initiatives-MI3
Business Cell #231-288-4001 or Business Phone # 517-908-3914
Email Addresses: beth.a.steenwyk@mac.com or bsteenwyk@mi3-se.org
**New Testing Dates for MME**

New testing dates have been established for the Spring 2011 MME. With the help of ACT, Inc., the OEAA was able to move MME testing to one week sooner. Please note the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Dates</th>
<th>Spring 2011</th>
<th>Spring 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>March 1</strong></td>
<td>ACT Plus Writing®</td>
<td>ACT Plus Writing®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March 2</strong></td>
<td>WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information</td>
<td>WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make-up Dates</th>
<th>March 15 - ACT Plus Writing®</th>
<th>March 20 - ACT Plus Writing®</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>March 16</strong></td>
<td>WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information</td>
<td>WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spring 2010 MME testing dates remain unchanged (March 9-11 and 23-25).

For the revised MME testing schedule, visit [www.michigan.gov/mme](http://www.michigan.gov/mme), and click on “MME Testing Schedule.” You will also find a link to a new document that describes the process taken by the OEAA when establishing MME testing dates.

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**Two Michigan Teachers Receive $25,000 Awards**

Erik Cliff, a teacher at Central Woodlands School in the Forest Hills Public School District, and Leah Einhaus, a third grade teacher at Collins Elementary School in the Utica Community School District, recently received $25,000 Milken Educator Awards. Recognized as two of the seventy top elementary teachers in America, both received one of the nation’s most prestigious honors, the $25,000 Milken Educator Award. Awarded April 18, 2009, at a spectacular gala in Los Angeles, the event is hailed as the “Oscars of Teaching” by Teacher Magazine.

First presented in 1987, the Milken Educator Awards represent the largest teacher recognition program in the U.S., having bestowed more than 2,300 exceptional educations with $60 million in unrestricted cash awards. For more information about the Milken Educator Awards, and the surprise notification events held throughout the United States, please access the Milken Family Foundation website at [www.mff.org](http://www.mff.org) or contact them at 310-570-4775.
Save the Dates!!!
The 2009 Michigan Teaching for Learning Institute
Igniting the Sparks of Genius

August 18, 19, and 20, 2009

The 2009 Michigan Teaching for Learning Institute is designed to accelerate the achievement of all students through exploring educators’ beliefs and practice. Through examination of comprehensive sets of data and the current research on instructional practice, participants will analyze school and student performance to learn and apply strategies that will directly impact the teaching and learning process. The Institute will explicitly address the multiple risk factors of students in schools. School teams will define and plan the implementation of a system of instructional support that will align with their school improvement plan to accelerate the progress of every student.

Districts and schools are encouraged to have teams (e.g. an administrator, coach, and teacher from the same school) attend the institute together. Each individual will be able to attend sessions focused on their role in improving student achievement. At the end of each day, teams will be able to work together in facilitated discussions to plan for maintaining and expanding rigorous programs.

Strand Topics:

- Algorithms for All
- Cultivating a Community of Collaboration
- Cultivating Rich and Growing Vocabularies: A Key to Deep Understanding and Meaning
- Developing Powerful Measurers
- Differentiated Instruction
- Effective Instruction for All Learners: Moving Beyond Equity of Access to Equity of Outcome
- English Language Learners
- From Wide-Eyed Observation to Visualization
- Imaginative Thinking Tools and Classroom Practice
- Introduction to Scaling-up and Implementation
- Mathematics in the Real World
- Phonics: Make & Break with Magnetic Letters
- Practical Approach to Using Data to Improve Student Achievement
- Social Studies: Creating Genius in 21st Century Learners
- Spark the Imagination of Adolescents to Become 21st Century Literate
- Sparking Genius through Writing
- The Power of Words
- Unlocking the Secrets of Text
- Writing as a Cross-Curricular Spark to Catalyze Genius

SB-CEUs will be offered for three days of institute attendance. Look for registration at: http://www.gomiem.org/.

2009 MDE Assessment & Accountability Conferences

Registration will be available by May 29 for the 2009 MDE Educational Assessment & Accountability Conferences at www.gomiem.org. Conference dates and sites are listed below. Please mark your calendars and watch for more details in the coming months.

- August 25 – Marquette
- September 21 – Grand Rapids
- September 28 – Novi
Launch of MEAP-Access for Fall 2009

The new MEAP-Access assessments in reading and mathematics will be administered for the first time this fall. Schools will want to consider administering MEAP-Access to their eligible students for the following reasons:

- MEAP-Access is more appropriate for eligible students than MEAP or MI-Access.
- MEAP-Access is shorter than MEAP, with fewer questions for students to answer.
- MEAP-Access multiple choice items have fewer options to choose from than on MEAP.
- MEAP-Access will have new cut scores appropriate for the MEAP-Access population.
- MEAP-Access scores will be used in calculating AYP (up to 2% of a district’s students can be considered proficient based on MEAP-Access).

Schools should also be aware of the following about MEAP-Access:

- MEAP-Access will be administered during the same window as MEAP.
- MEAP-Access can only be taken by students that meet all eligibility requirements identified at http://www.michigan.gov/meap-access.
- MEAP-Access in Fall 2009 will be different than the pilot administered in Winter 2009 because multiple formats were piloted.
- Based on feedback from stakeholders, the Fall 2009 MEAP-Access will include new item types in both reading and writing designed specifically for MEAP-Access in grades 4 and 7 on the date reserved for writing.

For more complete information about the MEAP-Access, a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/meap-access.
On May 8, 2009, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of School Improvement released updated guidance documents to assist intermediate and local school districts in the implementation of the personal curriculum, as outlined in section 380.1278b of the Revised School Code. The updated guidance includes Guidelines, Frequently Asked Questions, Parent Guides, and supporting documents. These documents can be downloaded and printed for local use at www.michigan.gov/highschool.

In order to transform the processes associated with the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) Personal Curriculum (PC) into clear, consistent, accurate step-by-step procedures for stakeholders to follow, MDE partnered with TransACT Communications, Inc., to develop an automated, self-service decision-tree application. These MMC PC ActPoint™ RoadMaps were also released on May 8 and made available to local education agencies (LEAs) through the intermediate school districts (ISDs) that have opted to implement the ActPoint™ RoadMaps (currently all ISDs except Macomb ISD and Oakland Schools). All licensing fees for use of the ActPoint™ RoadMaps by participating ISDs are being paid by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) for the first year of implementation. Non-traditional public schools and institutions serving adjudicated youth that grant Michigan high school diplomas may access the ActPoint™ RoadMaps through the ISD in which they reside.

ActPoint™ is a next-generation, automated, self-service decision tree solution that lets school systems extend decision-making authority to non-technical teams while maintaining accuracy, quality and consistency of action. The MMC PC ActPoint™ RoadMaps are intended to be utilized by school personnel to assist them with implementing the PC process by providing RoadMaps at critical decision-making points, including the following:

- Requesting a personal curriculum (RoadMap, also available for parents/legal guardians and emancipated students)
- Determining personal curriculum eligibility
- Making Algebra II and additional content modifications
- Making modifications available only to students with an individualized education program
- Making modifications available only to transfer students
- Finalizing and implementing a personal curriculum
- Determining whether a PC will lead to a diploma

By utilizing the RoadMaps, LEAs will be able to achieve consistent MMC PC decisions, aligned with legislative requirements and MDE’s guidance, across the state of Michigan.

For more information regarding the updated PC guidance documents, please visit www.michigan.gov/highschool or contact Mary Head in the Office of School Improvement at headm1@michigan.gov or 517.335.3442.

For more information regarding the ActPoint™ RoadMaps, please visit http://www.actpoint.com/mi or contact your local ISD.

FREEBIES FOR TEACHERS

The National Museum of Education is excited to announce FREEBIES FOR TEACHERS (K-12) on innovation, invention, problem-solving, and design. These materials meet state and national standards in science, technology, social studies and more.

They offer classroom sets of 8 high-quality glossy posters with 35 heavy postcards to spark the interest of your students - absolutely FREE (+ S&H)! Additionally, there are free resources available for an extensive innovation unit including:
- free original downloads for classroom use;
- online database of student inventors;
- technology integration ideas including problem-solving activities, invention research, more
- student competitions for great prizes and opportunities.

Check out the FREEBIES section of www.nmoe.org/giftshop for exciting details!
MDE Announces Michigan Teacher and School Support Person of the Year

In two surprise school visits by State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan, the Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY) and Michigan School Support Person of the Year (MSSPOY) were announced. Both announcements were secret to students and staff attending school-wide assemblies at both schools, and as the secret came out, both candidates were treated to deserved and animated applause.

Robert Stephenson, a third grade teacher at Wardcliff Elementary School with 15 years of classroom experience, was selected from 20 regional semi-finalists statewide. Stephenson’s self-defined mission as an educator is, “…to treat each child with respect and dignity, to accept each child with understanding, and to have faith in his/her abilities…to help … students learn to value themselves, value others, and develop a love and enthusiasm for learning…to attain their full potential, while striving for their personal goals.” As Michigan Teacher of the Year, he plans to work to broaden the number of school/business partnerships working toward relevant contextual investigations for students, as well as conducting trainings on the hands-on integration of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) content areas.

Deb Nihart, named the 2008-2009 Michigan School Support Person of the Year, is an educational assistant in the media center at Eastside Elementary School in the Constantine Public Schools. “Outstanding school employees like Deb are the lifeblood of good schools around the state of Michigan,” Flanagan said. “This award focuses positive attention on the tens of thousands of dedicated school support personnel across the state who rarely receive public recognition for their work.”

The purpose of the Michigan School Support Person of the Year Award is to honor outstanding support personnel for their contributions to the success of the learning community, as well as focusing public attention on the tireless work undertaken by school support personnel on a daily basis. This is the sixth year of the program.

A corporate support agreement between the Michigan Department of Education and MEEMIC Insurance Company also includes a monetary award to be presented to the schools of each of the MTOY & SSPOY finalists.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH DEB & ROB!!!!

School Improvement Conference Re-cap

Over 600 educators attended the 2009 MDE/NCA School Improvement Conference. This year’s conference was held on April 22nd in Novi. Participants had the opportunity to learn about effective school improvement practices. The conference offered real tools, solutions and advice from national experts, along with teachers and educators from throughout Michigan to assist schools and districts with their school improvement efforts and initiatives. Dr. Harold Hodgkinson, the keynote speaker, addressed participants on “How Future Trends Impact K-12 Education in Michigan.” There also were more than 40 different break out sessions offered. Conference materials can be viewed and downloaded from the School Improvement website at http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753_38959---,00.html.

Please SAVE THE DATE for the MDE Fall School Improvement Conference on December 1-2, 2009 at the Lansing Center. Dr. Michael Fullan, recognized as an international authority on educational reform, will be the keynote speaker. This summer a postcard will be mailed to every school system in Michigan outlining future MDE/NCA conferences and key dates to remember related to school improvement.
Michigan Receives International Recognition for Reading Legislation

Michigan will receive the International Reading Association’s (IRA) Five Star Policy Recognition Award for adopting policies that support effective literacy instruction for all children. The program is a two-stage, two-year process:

**Stage 1: Promises Made**
Michigan began the process by completing nomination forms in collaboration with the Michigan Reading Association that described legislation and policy supporting five star areas in the International Reading Association’s policy document, *Making A Difference Means Making It Different: Honoring Children’s Rights to Excellent Reading Instruction*:

1. Students have the right to be taught reading by certified teachers who have taken two or more courses in the teaching of reading and/or who have demonstrated their proficiency in the teaching of reading.
2. Students who struggle as readers have the right to receive additional help from qualified reading specialists.
3. Students have a right to access to a wide variety of books and other reading materials in classrooms and school library media centers.
4. Students have the right to be taught beginning reading through methods chosen on the basis of their needs as learners.
5. Students have the right to reading assessment with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making decisions about their own learning, and lead to clear implications for instruction.

**Stage 2: Promises Kept**
The state will work with government officials and representatives of the International Reading Association to determine if the promising policies are being implemented.

Michigan was acknowledged at the International Reading Association’s Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 3rd. Lynn Bigelman, MRA President, and Lynnette Van Dyke, English Language Arts Consultant for the Michigan Department of Education, attended and received the award at the IRA’s Annual Council Awards Celebration.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Lynnette Van Dyke at vandykel@michigan.gov or visit the IRA web site at http://www.reading.org.

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**K-8 Mathematics**

In order to incorporate the future Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) into the Fall 2009 MEAP assessments and score them as part of the AYP, yet at the same time shorten the test to accommodate the one-day window for assessment, MDE, working with the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM), has decided to reorganize the core and extended designations using the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) 2006 Focal Points (www.nctm.org) as a guide. The NCTM Focal Points identified key mathematical content that should be the focus of instruction at each grade level (K-8).

What resulted are Michigan Focal Points, which represent the focus of instruction that should surround the GLCE. Core GLCE are now those GLCE linked to a Michigan Focal Point and as such will be tested with two items on the MEAP. Extended core GLCE will be tested with one item and are those expectations either not linked to a Focal Point at that grade level or are a subset of a core expectation so two items are not needed.

None of the GLCE were changed or eliminated. The GLCE always have represented the measurable skills and concepts that result from a good curriculum. The Michigan Focal Points represent the organization of curriculum and instruction; they identify those big mathematical ideas that should be considered when planning instruction at each grade level. Thus the assessment should be weighted toward those expectations linked to an important mathematical idea. More information on Michigan’s Focal Points can be found at www.michigan.gov/glce; click on “2-7 Core and Extended Designations.”
Changes to Special Education State Complaint Procedures

Recent changes to the special education state complaint procedures are now available from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). A document entitled Resolving Special Education Disputes, April 2009, describes the new MDE dispute resolution options, including informal and formal resolution. The MDE encourages resolution of disputes through dispute resolution processes. The document explains formal and informal processes and provides the procedures for filing and investigating state complaints as required by the regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).

Some recent changes include:

- The state complaint must be filed with the MDE and a copy given to the local educational agency (LEA)/district.
- The MDE encourages informal resolution of state complaints. The new procedures include a resolution period before the formal investigation begins.
- Only special education complaint allegations are investigated, and the MDE will dismiss allegations that do not meet the definition of a special education complaint.
- The LEA/district can offer corrective action or resolution immediately.
- The state complaint investigation and final report are a collaborative effort between the intermediate school district (ISD) and the MDE.
- A request for reconsideration may be submitted by the complainant or LEA/district if new information/documentation is available.

The Michigan Special Education Mediation Project (MSEMP) provides mediation and other alternative dispute resolution services at no cost to the parent.

To download a copy of the state complaint procedures and related due process forms, visit www.michigan.gov/ose-eis and click on “Compliance, Monitoring, and Due Process.” To learn more, look for the upcoming issue of FOCUS on Results summarizing the state complaint procedures. Visit www.cenmi.org to subscribe to receive email notifications of electronic availability or to receive a print copy.

2009 National Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy

Four Michigan teachers have been selected to attend the 2009 National Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy. The four 3rd-through-5th grade teachers heading to Jersey City, N.J. are:

- Mary Ackerson, Glerum Elementary, West Olive
- Martha Kazmierczak, Central Elementary, Sturgis
- Lauren Paquette, Burton Elementary, Ferndale
- Vickie Weiss, City School, Grand Blanc

In 2005, Phil Mickelson and wife Amy, partnered with ExxonMobil to establish this Academy. A five-day, all-expenses-paid, professional development program for third-through-fifth grade teachers. The Academy is designed to help teachers bolster their math and science teaching skills to engage students in math and science at an early age in order to prepare the next generation of science-savvy citizens. The teachers will be able to share the lessons learned at the Academy with both fellow teachers and students in their districts and help create a vibrant learning community for years to come.

To date, the Academy has helped hone the teaching skills of more than 1,400 teachers, affecting more than 30,000 students nationwide. You may find out more about the Academy by visiting www.sendmyteacher.com.

MDE would like to thank the Mickelson’s and ExxonMobil for this tremendous program, professional development opportunity, and dedication to our nation’s students.
ON THE HORIZON...

- Near Future

Michigan After-school Collaborative Summer Summit, May 29
State Board of Education Meeting, June 9, 2009
MAISA Summer Conference, June 17-19, 2009
Educational Technology Leadership Conference, June 22-23
Autism Across the Lifespan: Emerging Practices, June 30, 2009

- Distant Future

2009 MCTM Annual Conference & Institute, August 6-7, 2009
State Board of Education Meeting, August 11, 2009
Michigan Teaching for Learning Institute, August 18-20, 2009
MASA Fall Conference, September 23-25, 2009
MDE/MSBO Workshop, October 20, 2009
MI Association of School Boards Fall Conference, Oct 22-25
MI Assn of Non-public Schools Conference, Oct 29-30, 2009
Early On Conference, November 5-6, 2009
School Improvement Conference, December 1-2, 2009