



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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Honorable Michael P. Flanagan
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Michigan Department of Education
608 West Allegan Street, 4th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Superintendent Flanagan:

Thank you for submitting additional assessment materials for peer review under the standards and assessment requirements of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended. We appreciate the efforts that were required to prepare for the latest peer review that occurred in August-September 2011 regarding Michigan's general science assessments and alternate science assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards.

In a letter to you on September 13, 2006, we approved Michigan's standards and assessment system in reading and mathematics. However, since that time, you implemented Michigan's science assessments and alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, evidence of which you were obligated to submit for peer review. In a letter to you on August 10, 2010, we enumerated the evidence still required for Michigan's standards and assessments in science to be fully approved and designated Michigan's system *In Process*.

In August-September 2011, outside peer reviewers and U.S. Department of Education (Department) staff evaluated Michigan's additional science submission. I have determined that, based on the evidence, Michigan's science and alternate science assessments are fully compliant with the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. Accordingly, Michigan's standards and assessment system warrants *Full Approval*. I have also enclosed detailed comments from the peer review team that evaluated Michigan's submission.

Please be aware that approval of Michigan's standards and assessment system under the ESEA is not a determination that the system complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, and requirements under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Finally, please remember that, if Michigan makes significant changes to its standards and assessment system, Michigan must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

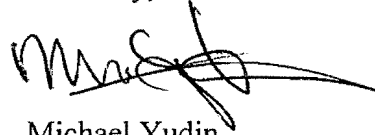
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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

We have found it a pleasure working with your staff on this review. Please accept my congratulations for Michigan's approved standards and assessment system in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science. I wish you well in your continued efforts to improve student achievement in Michigan. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact David J. Harmon of my staff at (david.harmon@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Yudin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Yudin
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Governor Rick Snyder
Mary Alice Galloway
Joseph Martineau
Vincent Dean

PEER REVIEW NOTES

Michigan Science

September 1, 2011

EVIDENCE OF SCIENCE ASSESSMENTS

UNDER TITLE I OF THE
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT



United States Department of Education

NCLB Assessment System Review

Critical Elements	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
2. Description of the results of any empirical analyses of scale comparability for translated versions of the MEAP and MME.	<p>Document I3 suggests that the translated and non-translated forms perform similarly when subjected to Differential Person Functioning analysis, although the mean scores are substantially different.</p> <p>The TAC Agenda for 3/24/11 (Doc I6) and 6/24/11 (Doc I5) suggest DPF was discussed, but minutes are not provided.</p>	The peers note that the two indices the state is using are both test-level statistics calculated for persons. It is recommended that an item-level statistic for DIF also be calculated when sample sizes justify it.
3. Alignment study report showing the depth of knowledge measured by items on the MME science test and a plan for follow up if necessary.	<p>Document J1, particularly Table 4.5, shows that DoK is acceptable for all standards except science principles. J1 also notes other alignment weaknesses, but they are outside the specific requirement of this Critical Element (i.e., DoK).</p> <p>In Document J3 (p. 5), the State contends that adding DoK Level 3 items to address the noted deficiency (R1.1 and R.1.2) would be too expensive even if it is possible. Consequently, they have decided to add Level 2 items but not Level 3.</p>	The Peers commend the State for undertaking a comprehensive alignment review that goes beyond the specific requirements of this Critical Element and instead addresses the needs of the testing program, and for implementing most of the recommendations. The Science Principles standard DoK deficiency apparently remains unresolved. The peers believe that Level 3 items for R1.1 and R1.2 are feasible. However, the tests as a whole appear to meet the DoK alignment requirements (see Doc J1, Table 4.2, p. 14). Consequently, this Critical Element has been met.
SECTION 3: STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM Summary statement		
The State has satisfied the requirements of Section 3.		

SECTION 5: ALIGNMENT

Critical Elements	Description of State policy and practice (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Questions Regarding State Materials
1. MME alignment study report based on the new HSCEs in science and a plan for follow up if necessary.	Documents J1, J2, and J3 appear to satisfy this Critical Element.	This element has been satisfied.
SECTION 5: ALIGNMENT Summary statement		
The State appears to have met the requirements of Section 5.		