

# *The Assist*

Helping Students Access and Make Progress in the General Curriculum

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## **Michigan Merit Examination Update**

In Spring 2007, the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) is scheduled to replace the current MEAP High School Test (HST). The MME, however, will only be administered if it is approved by the U.S. Education Department (USED) by November 1, 2006. As noted in “Peer Review Update” in this issue of *The Assist*, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has submitted its application to the USED and is awaiting its decision.

As with other state-level assessments, Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams need to consider whether the MME is appropriate for their student and, if so, what assessment accommodations may be needed. To help IEP Teams in the decision-making process, this article describes the components of the MME, identifies opportunities to participate in training activities sponsored by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA), and discusses some of the issues related to assessment accommodations.

### ***Components of the MME***

The following table lists the various components of the MME in addition to assessment dates, the number of parts per component, the number of items per part, the actual testing times per part, and estimated overall administration times.

Spring 2007 Test Organization						
Day*	Assessment	Subject Session	Number of Parts	Total Items	Testing Time (minutes)	Estimated Time Required for Administration
Day 1 March 13 (Makeup March 27)	ACT Plus Writing	English	5	75 MC Items	45	Total test time including check in, instructions, breaks, and collection of materials - 5 hours
		Mathematics		60 MC items	60	
		Reading		40 MC items	35	
		Science		40 MC items	35	
		Writing		1 Prompt	30	
Day 1 Standard Testing Time: 205 minutes (3 hrs and 25 minutes)						
Day 2 March 14 (Makeup March 28)	WorkKeys	Reading for Info	3	33 MC Items	45	Total test time including check in, instructions, breaks, and collection of materials - 3 hours
		Applied Mathematics		33 MC Items	45	
	Michigan	Mathematics		14 MC items	20	
Day 2 Standard Testing Time: 110 minutes (1 hour and 50 minutes)						
Day 2, 3, or 4 March 14, 15, 16 (Makeup March 28, 29, 30)	Michigan	Science	3	52 MC items	50	Total test time including check in, instruction, breaks and collection of materials - 3.5 hours
		Social Studies		31 MC items and 1 prompt	50	
				26 MC items and 1 prompt	50	
One additional test session during Days 2, 3, or 4 Standard Testing Time: 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes)						
*More detailed information about this schedule and the MME program is available on the MME Web page at <a href="http://www.mi.gov/mme">www.mi.gov/mme</a> .				TOTAL minutes	465	
				TOTAL hours	7.75	

### Professional Development Opportunities

Staff from the OEAA and the assessment contractor will conduct a statewide video conference on Tuesday, September 12 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm. The purpose of the video conference is to review the test center establishment process, review the applications sent out in late August, and remind high schools of the procedures that must be followed when preparing to administer the MME.

Major topics of the video conference include:

- administration of the MME,
- applications for site approval,
- the assessment schedule,
- required school personnel roles,
- applications for accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners, and
- preparing schools and students for the MME.

The video conference can be viewed live at [www.mistreamnet.com](http://www.mistreamnet.com). Click on the “Live Stream” link at the time noted above or view the “Archived Event” any time after the

conference concludes. If you have questions about accessing the video conference, contact the MIstreamnet Help Desk at 1-888-570-6212. Videotapes and DVDs will be available for purchase from Wayne RESA by contacting Brenda Hose at 734-334-1437 or at [hoseb@resa.net](mailto:hoseb@resa.net).

In October, teams from each high school—which must include a Test Supervisor, a Back-up Test Supervisor, and a Test Accommodations Coordinator—will be asked to sign up for a full-day test administration training session, which will be held in late November or early December. It is required that all team members attend the same session on the same day so they can work together to plan for the appropriate administration of the MME back in their own schools. Invitations for the training session will be sent in early October and will be due back by October 20. The Test Supervisor, Back-up Test Supervisor, and Test Accommodations Coordinator team will be notified shortly thereafter of the session to which they have been assigned.

### ***Accommodations on the MME***

The MME has two categories of assessment accommodations: ACT-approved assessment accommodations and state-allowed assessment accommodations. ACT-approved accommodations can only be used by students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan and will result in college reportable ACT scores. State-allowed assessment accommodations, however, may be used by students with an IEP, a Section 504 Plan, and by English language learners, but will not result in college reportable ACT scores. They will, however, result in MME scores that can be used for accountability purposes (Education YES! and NCLB).

- **MME Assessment Accommodations Summary Table**

In order to facilitate the use of appropriate assessment accommodations, the OEAA has worked closely with ACT to develop the *Spring 2007 Michigan Merit Examination (MME) Accommodations Summary Table*. This helpful document contains information on the MME component scores. For example, it lists all the pieces of the MME that contribute to the overall score for mathematics. The table also contains directions for reading the table, directions for requesting accommodations from ACT, a summary of the ACT review process, and information about local decisions for WorkKeys and the Michigan assessment components. The table then lists all the accommodations from the *State Board-approved Assessment Accommodations Summary Table* from June 2005, which covers the MEAP and MI-Access. Each accommodation contains comments from ACT and fields indicating whether they (1) are standard or nonstandard for Michigan components and MME scores, (2) may be requested for use on the ACT and WorkKeys components, and (3) will result in college reportable ACT scores. The table can be downloaded from <http://www.michigan.gov/mme> (look under “Assessment Accommodations”).

- **Requesting Accommodations**

If it is determined that a student will need accommodations on the MME, they

must be officially requested. Each district is responsible for assigning a Test Accommodations Coordinator (TAC) to work with ACT to ensure that all accommodations decisions and approvals are resolved before the assessment window opens. The TAC is responsible for identifying which students need which type of accommodations and submitting supporting documentation for ACT-approved assessment accommodations. The type of accommodation (ACT-approved versus state-allowed) is important as students receiving one type will have different materials and be tested in a different location than students receiving the other type. In addition, it is important because it determines whether the student's ACT score is college reportable.

- **Application Forms**

ACT has developed custom application forms that must be used when submitting requests for assessment accommodations for Day 1 of the MME, which involves the ACT assessments. (The application that is posted on the ACT Web site may *not* be used.) Applications will be accepted by ACT from September through November 2006. Applications for all students who need an assessment accommodation (students with an IEP, a Section 504 Plan, or who are English language learners) will need to be completed and submitted to ACT. Applications for ACT-approved accommodations are due no later than December 1, 2006 while applications for state-allowed accommodations are due no later than January 10, 2007. The later due date for state-allowed accommodations will enable students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan to appeal any ACT-denied assessment accommodations or allow them time to provide additional information as requested by ACT. If a student with an IEP or Section 504 Plan does not get approved for ACT-approved accommodations, the later deadline will provide sufficient time to submit a state-allowed accommodation application.

Each district's TAC (or school principal if no TAC has been designated) should have received assessment accommodation application information in the packets that were mailed to high schools in late August. The deadlines for accommodations applications are set well before the assessment window to ensure that enough time exists for each TAC to appeal any accommodations requests denied by ACT, and to apply for state-allowed accommodations if the appeal is denied. Along with any denial, ACT will send information indicating why the application was turned down. Reasons for denial include insufficient documentation, no justification for the accommodation documented in the student's IEP, or no history of the accommodation being used prior to planning for the ACT. Specific requirements for ACT-approved accommodations include documentation of initial diagnosis, reconfirmation of disability within the last three years, and a copy of the accommodations page from the student's current IEP or Section 504 Plan.

### ***Training Opportunities***

The OEAA and ACT will provide Webcast training for all MME TACs and other interested stakeholders from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. on October 18, 2006. The training program can be viewed live at Wayne RESA or viewed in real time on the live Webcast at [www.Mistreamnet.com](http://www.Mistreamnet.com). In addition, it will be archived for later viewing at the same Web site. Videotapes and DVDs of the training program will also be available from Wayne RESA by contacting Brenda Hose at 734-334-1437 or at [hoseb@resa.net](mailto:hoseb@resa.net).

In addition to the October 18 Webcast, the OEAA is in the process of developing an online learning program related to MME assessment accommodations. The program is expected to be available by October 18, or shortly thereafter, at the MI-Access Information Center ([www.mi-access.info](http://www.mi-access.info)). The program can be completed individually or in groups.

### **Resources**

To assist high schools as they plan and prepare for the implementation of the MME, the OEAA staff and the MME contractor have prepared a number of resources, all of which can be found on the MME Web page ([www.michigan.gov/mme](http://www.michigan.gov/mme)). Additional resources will be added as they are developed, so check the Web page periodically for updates.