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## **MI-Access Reaches Five-Year Milestone**

Dear Readers,

Congratulations and thanks are in order to educators across Michigan for helping MI-Access achieve a significant milestone—five years of statewide implementation! Each year MI-Access has made improvements and tackled new challenges, and this year was no exception. We successfully managed two assessment windows (fall and spring) and administered new MI-Access assessments. It has been a momentous, if somewhat challenging, year for us all.

This issue of *The Assist* is designed to (1) update you on recent MI-Access activities, (2) help you prepare for the Fall 2006 assessment window, (3) provide information on where MI-Access is headed, and (4) inform you about some valuable resources designed to help with curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

### ***Recent MI-Access Activities***

After the spring 2006 assessment window closed, standard setting took place for the grade 11 MI-Access assessments. The article, titled “Successful Standard Setting for Grade 11 MI-Access,” provides detailed information on how this interesting and important process was conducted. Thank you to all those who participated in the effort! Your assistance was invaluable.

### ***Preparing for Fall 2006***

While summer break has just begun, the fall 2006 assessment window is right around the corner. To help you prepare, we have included several tables with next year’s assessment windows and another table showing the content areas that are assessed at each grade level.

We have also included a brief article called “MI-Access Online System vs. the OEAA Secure Site,” which compares and contrasts the functions of the two systems. They both play an important, but different, role in helping districts prepare for assessment administration.

Finally, “Notes from the Contractor to MI-Access Coordinators” includes valuable information on fall timelines and materials handling procedures that are critical for ensuring smooth assessment and reporting cycles. It is imperative that all those involved with MI-Access understand and comply with these timelines and procedures.

### ***Where is MI-Access Headed?***

As you know by now, there is never a dull moment with MI-Access. Changes continue to be made to ensure that our alternate assessments meet state expectations and federal guidelines. The article, titled “MI-Access Assessment Development Update,” provides information on the MI-Access development process, including details on the Participation and Supported Independence Version 1.5 assessments and the progress that has been made on the MI-Access science assessments.

Another excellent source of information on the future of MI-Access is the Fall OEAA Conferences, which are fast approaching. See the article called “Mark Your Calendars for the Fall OEAA Conferences!” for details on dates, locations, and the topics that will be covered.

### ***Resources***

While the primary focus of *The Assist* is state assessment, we also strive to inform readers about new tools and resources that can help in the classroom. To that end, we have included three articles—one that describes a new Web site offering a variety of information and professional development materials for districts and educators to apply in the classroom (see “New Office of School Improvement Web Site”), another that describes a tool kit to help students with disabilities access the general education curriculum and state assessments (see “Office of Special Education Programs Provides Tool Kit”), and a third that provides information on a new technical assistance program designed to aid students with disabilities (see “The Access Center: Enhancing Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities”). We hope you find these articles of interest and use.

Again, thank you for your assistance in helping MI-Access achieve its fifth year of successful statewide administration. We couldn’t do it without your dedication, persistence, and professionalism. Have a wonderful summer, and we look forward to working with you in the 2006/2007 school year.

Sincerely,  
Peggy Dutcher  
Manager, Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program  
[dutcherp@mi.gov](mailto:dutcherp@mi.gov)

## Successful Standard Setting for Grade 11 MI-Access

In May 2006, standard-setting meetings took place for the Grade 11 MI-Access assessments that were administered in spring 2006. Standard setting is the process used to determine the criteria for calculating student performance in each of the content areas or performance expectations covered by the assessment. The standard-setting process was conducted by BETA/TASA, the MI-Access contractor, and included more than 70 teachers, ancillary staff, parents, and administrators.

Separate panels were formed for each of the four MI-Access assessments that were administered—Functional Independence English Language Arts, Functional Independence Mathematics, Supported Independence, and Participation. The charge to each panel was to recommend “cut scores” to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The cut scores indicate the minimum number of points needed on each MI-Access assessment to obtain one of three achievement categories—Surpassed, Attained, or Emerging Toward the Performance Standard. These categories are used on MI-Access reports to help explain student performance. In 2005/2006, they also will be used to determine whether or not each Functional Independence student scored in the proficient range for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) calculations.

After the standard-setting panels made their recommendations, BETA/TASA calculated descriptive statistics, such as the mean, median, and standard error, for the recommended cut scores. These statistics were reviewed by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) and the OEAA’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a group of nationally known assessment and measurement experts. Following this review, the OEAA made cut score recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who then made recommendations to the State Board of Education for consideration and approval.

The approved cut scores will appear on the Spring 2006 MI-Access Grade 11 reports. Additional information on how to interpret the cut scores and other student performance data can be found in the 2005/2006 Handbook: How to Understand, Interpret, and Use MI-Access Results. The MDE would like to thank all those involved with the standard-setting process.

## Preparing for State Assessment in 2006/2007

As educators prepare for state assessment in the upcoming school year, the following tables may be of assistance. Table 1 includes the fall and spring assessment windows for MI-Access. Table 2 includes the fall and spring assessment windows for the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Table 3 includes the MEAP and the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) spring assessment windows, which will be used if the MME is approved by the U.S. Education Department (USED) by November 1, 2006. Table 4 shows the spring 2007 assessment dates for the MEAP if the MME is NOT approved by the November deadline. And, the fifth table indicates the content areas that are assessed at each grade level in the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS).

Table 1 Fall 2006/Spring 2007 MI-Access Assessment Windows	
Fall 2006	Spring 2007
October 9 - November 17	February 19 - April 6

Table 2 Fall 2006/Spring 2007 Assessment Windows for MEAP, MI-Access, ELPA, and NAEP			
	<i>MEAP Window</i>	<i>ELPA Window</i>	<i>NAEP Window</i>
Fall 2006	<b>Fall Grades 3-9</b> October 9 – October 27  <b>Fall High School</b> Grade 12 (all as needed) October 23 - November 3 (retest)		
Spring 2007	<b>SEE TABLE 4</b> (The dates in Table 4 are the dates the MEAP will be administered if USED approval of the MME is NOT received by November 1, 2006.)	<b>Grades K-12</b> April 2 - April 27	<b>Mathematics and Reading (Grades 4 and 8)</b> January 30 - March 9  <b>Writing (Grades 8 and 12)</b> January 30 - March 9

If USED approval of the MME is received by November 1, 2006, the MEAP and the MME assessment dates will be those shown in Table 3. If not, the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) will continue administration of the MEAP and postpone initial MME administration. The MEAP assessment window dates in that situation will be those shown in Table 4.

Table 3 Spring 2007 MEAP and MME Assessment Schedule				
Window	Dates	Assessments Administered	Students Tested	
Spring 2007	<b>MEAP</b>			
	Mon., March 12 through Fri., March 30	Reading, Writing (ELA) Mathematics Science Social Studies	Grade 12 as needed	
	<b>MME</b>			
	<i>Operational Assessments</i>			
	Tues., March 13	ACT Plus Writing®	All Grade 11	
	Wed., March 14	WorkKeys® (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Michigan Mathematics)		
	<i>School may select ONE testing day (but not on a weekend):</i>			
	Wed., March 14 through Wed., March 21	Michigan Science Michigan Social Studies		
	<i>Make-up Assessments</i>			
	Tues., March 27	ACT Plus Writing®		
Wed., March 28	WorkKeys® (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Michigan Mathematics)			
<i>School may select ONE testing day (but not on a weekend):</i>				
Wed., March 28 through Wed., April 4	Michigan Science Michigan Social Studies			

Table 4 Spring 2007 MEAP Assessment Windows (if USED approval of the MME is NOT received by November 1, 2006)		
Dates	Assessments Administered	Students Tested
Cycle 1: March 12 – March 23 or Cycle 2: March 19 – March 30 or Cycle 3: March 26 – April 6	ELA (Reading and Writing) Mathematics Science Social Studies	All grade 11 plus grade 12* as needed
* To qualify for the Michigan Merit Award or to improve scores for any subject.		

**Table 5  
Grades and Content Areas Assessed at the State Level**

Content Areas	Grades							
	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	11th
English Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Mathematics	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Science			X			X		X
Social Studies				X			X	X

At this time, there are no state-level alternate assessments for science or social studies. Therefore, Individualized Education Program Teams will need to determine how their students will be assessed in these content areas.

## MI-Access Online System vs. OEAA Secure Site



The OEAA Secure Site and the MI-Access Online System were developed to help increase the accuracy of data and improve the efficiency of procedures related to state assessment. As the two password-protected systems continue to evolve, there most likely will be confusion about which system to use to perform which critical assessment functions. The following table was developed to help alleviate the confusion for District MI-Access Coordinators who need to enter and/or monitor information in both systems.

System/Site Functionality Reference Table		
Functions	OEAASecure System	MI-Access Online System
Submit Teacher/Student Counts (which determines how many and what types of assessment materials are shipped)	NO	YES
Pre-ID Students	YES	NO
Locally Print Pre-ID Barcode Labels	YES	NO
Update Student Demographics	YES	NO
Review Tested Roster	YES	NO
Order Additional Materials	NO	YES
View Shipment History	NO	YES
Update MI-Access Coordinator Information	NO	YES
Access Electronic Reports	YES	NO
Access Data Files for Districts/Schools	YES	NO

Any questions regarding the MI-Access functions should be directed to the MI-Access Hotline at 1-888-382-4246 or the MI-Access e-mail address at [mi-access@tasa.com](mailto:mi-access@tasa.com).

## Notes from the Contractor to MI-Access Coordinators

Hello from BETA/TASA, the MI-Access contractor. As the school year comes to an end, there are several important ongoing processes we would like to discuss with District MI-Access coordinators.

### **Spring 2006 Grade 11 MI-Access Results**

First, thank you for coordinating the Spring 2006 Grade 11 MI-Access Participation, Supported Independence, and Functional Independence assessments. Hard copies of results for these assessments should arrive in districts in late June. If you are missing a report or believe you have received one in error, please call the MI-Access Toll-free Hotline immediately at 1-888-382-4246 or send an e-mail message to [mi-access@tasa.com](mailto:mi-access@tasa.com). If you would like additional copies of a report, districts may print them directly from the OEAA Secure Site ([www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure](http://www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure)).

Following is a list of reports and associated materials that will be shipped by the MI-Access contractor, as well as an indication of which ones should be passed along to others.

District MI-Access Coordinators will receive

- a District Results Inventory,
- one or more District Results Folders,
- School and Classroom Results Folders (for distribution), and
- *2005/2006 MI-Access Handbooks* (one to keep and others for distribution).

School MI-Access Coordinators will receive

- School Results Folders,
- Classroom Results Folders (for distribution), and
- *2005/2006 MI-Access Handbooks* (one to keep and others for distribution).

MI-Access assessment administrators/teachers will receive

- individual student results, and
- one *2005/2006 MI-Access Handbook*.

The table below shows the reports that may be included in the folders just mentioned. Keep in mind that summary reports are provided only when ten or more students in a particular grade take part in the same assessment.

Spring 2006 MI-Access Grade 11 Reports			
MI-Access Participation, Supported Independence, and/or Functional Independence Reports*	District Results Folder (Gold)	School Results Folder (Purple)	Classroom Results Folder (White)
Summary Reports	X	X	
Demographic Reports	X	X	
Item Analysis Reports	X	X	
Rosters	X	X	X
Student Labels		X	
Individual Student Reports			X
Parent Reports		X	

*\*For more information on these reports, see the 2005/2006 MI-Access Handbook.*

Please note that MI-Access has an established process for making inquiries and/or conveying concerns regarding results. If questions arise, assessment administrators/teachers should contact their School MI-Access Coordinator. If the School MI-Access Coordinator cannot answer them, he or she is advised to consult with the District MI-Access Coordinator. If the District MI-Access Coordinator needs assistance answering them, he or she should call the MI-Access Toll-free Hotline at 1-888-382-4246.

As in fall 2005, no hard copies of state results will be distributed to districts. Instead, electronic copies will be posted on the MI-Access Web page ([www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)), at the MI-Access Information Center ([www.mi-access.info](http://www.mi-access.info)), and on the OEAA Secure Site ([www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure](http://www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure)). In addition, Intermediate School District (ISD) reports will be available in electronic form on the OEAA Secure Site. District MI-Access Coordinators will be notified when the results are available. If you are a District MI-Access Coordinator, please share the steps for accessing district and state results with your School MI-Access Coordinators and assessment administrators/teachers.

### ***Updating District MI-Access Coordinator Information***

Second, although it is always important to ensure that District MI-Access Coordinator information is up-to-date in the MI-Access Online System, it is particularly important at this time so that BETA/TASA knows who to contact over the summer, if necessary. Many of you have already reviewed and updated this critically important information as part of entering Fall 2006 MI-Access teacher, student, and manual counts. If, however, you have not yet updated your

information, please log onto the MI-Access Online System and do so. You may follow the same steps for updating School MI-Access Coordinator information.

Current District MI-Access Coordinators who will not hold the position in the future (either permanently or due to an extended leave) should provide the new District MI-Access Coordinator with the district's link and password so that he or she can update the MI-Access Online System with his or her own contact information. If a new District MI-Access Coordinator is not yet designated, an interim coordinator must be assigned. If you have any questions on this process, current District MI-Access Coordinators are encouraged to call the MI-Access Toll-free Hotline at 1-888-382-4246 or send an e-mail message to [mi-access@tasa.com](mailto:mi-access@tasa.com).

### **Fall 2006 Teacher/Student/Manual Counts**

Third, June 14 was the deadline for district to enter projected teacher, student, and manual counts in the MI-Access Online System. While the deadline has passed, there is some important information to understand about entering and submitting counts, how the counts affect the assessment materials districts receive, and factors to keep in mind for submitting counts in the future.

#### ➤ **Teacher and Student Counts**

Teacher and student counts must be submitted for each type of MI-Access assessment (Participation, Supported Independence, Functional Independence English Language Arts, and Functional Independence Mathematics) that will be administered. The projected counts are used to determine the number of standard print assessment booklets, accommodated versions of assessment booklets, and supplementary documents that must be produced. Although there are unforeseeable circumstances that might affect teacher and student counts—such as students moving into or out of a district, changes in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and so forth—it is important to enter counts that are as accurate as possible. To assist districts with collecting counts, BETA/TASA created and posted a "Projected Teacher/Student/Manual Counts Worksheet" on the MI-Access Web page ([www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)), at the MI-Access Information Center ([www.mi-access.info](http://www.mi-access.info)), and in the MI-Access Online System.

#### ➤ **Manual Counts**

In order to provide each district with a more accurate number of *Coordinator and Assessment Administrator Manuals*, District MI-Access Coordinators were asked to also submit manual counts. Please note that two separate manuals will be produced this year—one for the Participation and Supported Independence assessments and another for the Functional Independence assessments.

➤ **Not Participating in MI-Access**

If your district does not have any MI-Access students and, therefore, will NOT administer MI-Access assessments, you must still log onto the system and click “No Schools Participating.” Doing so enables the contractor to differentiate between districts that are participating but have not yet submitted counts and those that do not need assessment materials.

➤ **Submission**

Remember that if you do not click on the “Submit Counts” button after you enter teacher, student, and manual counts in the MI-Access Online System, the counts will not be received by BETA/TASA.

**Fall 2006 Pre-Identification (Pre-ID)**

The pre-identification (Pre-ID) process for students in grades 3 through 8 who are participating in MI-Access this fall will once again be completed entirely in the password protected OEAA Secure Site ([www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure](http://www.mi.gov/oeaa-secure)). District MI-Access Coordinators are encouraged to work cooperatively with MEAP Coordinators in order to complete this process. It is important for District MI-Access Coordinators to note that the time at which the Pre-ID process is completed determines the type of pre-identified materials that are provided.

- If the District MI-Access Coordinator (1) enters the OEAA Secure Site between May 23 and September 15, 2006, (2) assigns each student to the Fall 2006 MI-Access test cycle, *and* (3) indicates which type of MI-Access assessment each student will take, then the district will receive preprinted student scan documents. The only exception is for the Functional Independence English Language Arts (ELA) student answer documents, which cannot be preprinted because of their booklet format. For these answer documents, ELA-specific preprinted barcode labels will be provided.
- If the District MI-Access Coordinator (1) enters the OEAA Secure Site between May 23 and September 15, 2006, (2) assigns each student to the Fall 2006 MI-Access test cycle, but (3) does *not* record which MI-Access assessment each student will take, then the district will receive generic preprinted student barcode labels (two per student) to affix to the blank student scan documents.
- If the District MI-Access Coordinator does NOT enter the OEAA Secure Site to pre-identify students between May 23 and September 15, 2006, then the district will only receive blank student scan documents. Districts do, however, have the option of printing Pre-ID labels themselves from the OEAA Secure Site. The district-printed labels can be affixed to the blank

student scan documents. It is recommended that districts use laser printers for this process, as some scanning equipment used by the contractor does not detect labels printed from inkjet or similar printers. **Also, be sure to print labels from the MI-Access test cycle to avoid mistakenly generating MEAP labels. The latter cannot be used on MI-Access scan documents.**

Please note that pre-identifying students in the OEAA Secure Site does NOT take the place of entering student/teacher/manual counts in the MI-Access Online System. These are entirely separate processes. Students who are pre-identified in the OEAA Secure Site will NOT receive MI-Access assessment materials unless student counts have also been submitted in the MI-Access Online System. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the MI-Access Pre-ID process, please call the MI-Access Toll-free Hotline at 1-888-382-4246 or send an e-mail message to [mi-access@tasa.com](mailto:mi-access@tasa.com).

Thank you for your attention to these important MI-Access issues. We at BETA/TASA wish you a restful and enjoyable summer break.

## **MI-Access Assessment Development Update**

Throughout the 2005/2006 school year, the MI-Access team has continued to engage in the assessment development process first described in the August 2005 issue of *The Assist*. Presented below are the three main areas of development—(1) science assessments for all three MI-Access populations, (2) English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments for Participation and Supported Independence populations, and (3) new MI-Access Modified Full Independence assessments.

### ***MI-Access Science***

As reported in the April 2006 issue of *The Assist*, draft sets of extended science benchmarks (EBs) have been completed for Functional Independence (FI), Supported Independence (SI), and Participation (P) populations. The EBs, for all three MI-Access populations, are organized by grade cluster (elementary, middle school, and high school) to correspond with the three grades in which science is assessed at the state level (grades 5, 8, and 11).

During its March meeting, the Science Assessment Plan Writing Team (APWT) made certain that each set of benchmark strands (Constructing New Scientific Knowledge, Reflecting on Scientific Knowledge, Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science) were appropriate in terms depth, breath, and

complexity of content for each of the MI-Access populations. In addition, it recommended appropriate item formats and scoring rubrics. (For more information on the latter components, see the April 2006 issue of *The Assist*.)

Following the completion of those tasks, item writing commenced. To date, BETA/TASA, the MI-Access contractor, and Michigan educators—using sample items and draft item specifications developed with input from the Science APWT—have written hundreds of items that span all five science benchmark strands and all three MI-Access populations. The initial pool of items will be reviewed internally by MI-Access and BETA/TASA staff, and then, in July 2006, will be reviewed externally by Sensitivity Review Committees (SRCs) and Content Advisory Committees (CACs). The charge to these committees will be to ensure that the APWT's recommendations for items—such as length of multiple-choice item stem and answer choices, artwork, and language—were followed and consistently applied, as well as to reduce any biasing elements. In addition, the CACs will review the items for content accuracy and to ensure that each item assesses the extended benchmark to which it was assigned.

### ***MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence: English Language Arts and Mathematics***

As many of you know, the U.S. Education Department (USED) ruled that the P and SI assessments that were administered during the 2005/2006 school year did not meet all of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) criteria for alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards. Specifically the P/SI assessments were (1) not explicitly linked to the state's English language arts (ELA) and mathematics content standards, and (2) their scores were not reported separately by ELA and mathematics. This necessitated the development of P/SI v1.5 instruments to be used until the P and SI v2.0 assessments for ELA and mathematics are fully developed (see the article on the development of P/SI v2.0 in the April 2006 issue of *The Assist*.)

To develop the P/SI v1.5 assessments, Michigan educators and MI-Access staff are using the original P and SI activities that have been eligible for use on the operational assessments for the past five years and more clearly showing how students are engaging in English language arts or mathematics as they complete the activities. In addition, they are using the Draft English Language Arts and Mathematics Extended Grade Level Content Expectations (EGLCEs) and Extended Benchmarks (EBs) that the APWT drafted. (NOTE: These EGLCEs and EBs are in the process of being prepared for field review.)

The original P and SI assessment activities are being used as a performance context for assessing ELA or mathematics content because the MI-Access Team knows that P and SI students are routinely involved with these types of activities. In addition, the scoring rubric initially developed by the Science APWT, will replace the current P and SI scoring guides. Professional development related to

the new scoring rubric will be created over the summer and will be available prior to the first administration of P/SI v1.5.

The P/SI v1.5 assessment activities will be field-tested throughout the state to gain teacher feedback on such things as whether or not the activities are easy to understand in relation to (1) the academic content being assessed, (2) what should be observed, and (3) using the scoring rubric.

The MI-Access team is putting together a packet of information on the P/SI v1.5 assessments, which will be sent to the USED for review to determine whether this version meets the NCLB alternate assessment criteria. These new assessments will be administered in 2006/2007 *only if* the USED approves them. The hope is that the USED will be able to make its determination in time to administer the P/SI grade 3 through 8 assessments during the fall 2006 MI-Access assessment window. If, however, the USED does not make its decision quickly enough, the P/SI v1.5 assessments will be administered during the spring 2007 MI-Access assessment window, along with the grade 11 MI-Access assessments. Please note that the MI-Access grade 3 through 8 Functional Independence assessments will be administered during the fall 2006 assessment window, regardless of whether the P/SI v1.5 assessments get the “go ahead to administer” from the USED in time for Fall 2006.

### ***MI-Access Modified Full Independence***

The USED released a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) giving states the option of developing and administering alternate assessments based on “modified achievement standards.” Up to 2 percent of the scores from these alternate assessments (at the state level) could be included in the calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). (The proposed regulation did not mention a cap at the District Level.)

The proposed 2 percent regulation is posted on the MI-Access Web page ([www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)), along with Michigan’s comments on the proposed regulation. The Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) has been discussing how Michigan might develop alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards and who might be eligible to take them according to the proposed regulation. If developed, these assessments would be called MI-Access Modified Full Independence (MFI) assessments.

One of the requirements of the proposed regulation is that the assessments must reflect the regular content standards, not extended content standards. It also states that for students to qualify to take the assessments, they must be receiving grade-level instruction for the grade in which they are enrolled. For example, a student who is enrolled in fourth grade but is receiving instruction in English language arts at the second-grade level would NOT be eligible.

One of the issues Michigan raised in its comments to the USED on the proposed regulation was that while Michigan was grateful for the additional flexibility for counting alternate assessment proficient scores when calculating AYP, it felt that the population addressed in the proposed 2 percent regulation was not the population that should be eligible for the new alternate assessments. Following is an excerpt from Michigan's comments on the proposed regulation.

Unfortunately, this NPRM is limited to students with mild disabilities who can and should be working at grade level and who, with appropriate instruction, would likely be able to take the regular assessment with appropriate accommodations.

The NPRM as written addresses students working on grade level, but who may not complete all of the grade-level material in the course of a school year. The MDE has concerns about how assessment participation decisions will be made for students who have not mastered the previous year's material. Under the proposed regulation, in order to take advantage of this flexibility, they would have to move into the next school year without mastering the content of the previous year. This sets up students for academic failure or prevents Local Education Agencies (LEAs) from utilizing this flexibility for more than one year for these students. At best, this allows for only one year of flexibility to participate in a modified assessment. In an even less palatable scenario, in order to take advantage of this flexibility, students would be assessed on material that is instructionally inappropriate for them. This is an unintended consequence that may result in the inappropriate assessment of many students.

The USED has indicated to states that it received more than 450 comments on the proposed 2 percent regulation and, therefore, does not anticipate finalizing it until late November 2006. It is more likely, however, that it will not be finalized after the first of the year. Unfortunately, one of the requirements for states to be approved to use the interim 2 percent flexibility, which Michigan is using when calculating AYP for 2006, is that the state must have an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards in place for the 2006/2007 school year, which starts in September before the regulation will be finalized. As a result, the OEAA discussed with its national Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) possible ways in which Michigan could quickly develop a technically sound assessment that would meet the criteria described in the proposed 2 percent regulation. Since the regulation allows states to develop assessments that have reduced depth and breadth, the TAC suggested that, perhaps, the OEAA could take the existing MEAP ELA and mathematics assessments and modify their blueprints to reduce the depth and breadth of the assessments for grades 3 through 8. Following are the current MEAP blueprints for the ELA and

mathematics assessments and the blueprints tentatively proposed by the TAC for the MI-Access MFL assessments.

Current Blueprint MEAP Mathematics Assessments Grades 3 - 8							
Grade	Core	Extended	Future	Linking	Field Test	Total # of Items	Constructed Response Items
3	60	2	1	0	8	71	0
4	58	4	1	7	9	79	2
5	57	3	2	7	10	79	2
6	56	2	4	7	9	78	3
7	60	2	2	7	8	79	0
8	54	0	1	13	7	75	1
Proposed Blueprint MI-Access Modified Full Independence Mathematics Assessments Grades 3 - 8							
Grade	Core	Extended	Future	Linking	Field Test	Total # of Items	Constructed Response Items
3	60	0	0	0	4	64	0
4	58	0	0	0	4	62	0
5	57	0	0	0	5	62	0
6	56	0	0	0	5	61	0
7	60	0	0	0	4	64	0
8	54	0	0	0	4	58	0
<i>All Grade Level Content Expectations will be assessed, but there will only be two items per GLCE.</i>							

Current Blueprint Fall 2005 MEAP English Language Arts Assessment Grades 3 - 8									
Grd	Part 1 - Reading (1A) Paired Passages			Part 1- Reading (1B)	Part 2- Reading		Field Test	Part 4-Writing	
	Passage 1	Passage 2	Cross-Text Items	Response to the Paired Reading Selections	Passage 3	Linking Text	Passage 4	4A Writing from Knowledge	4B Student Writing Samples and Peer Response
3	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
4	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
5	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
6	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
7	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
8	8 MC	8 MC	5 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	8 MC	8 MC	8 MC	1 prompt (6 pt)	5 MC & 1 prompt (4 pt)
Proposed Blueprint MI-Access Modified Full Independence English Language Arts Assessment Grades 3 - 8									
Grd	Part 1 - Reading (1A) Paired Passages			Part 1- Reading (1B)	Part 2- Reading		Field Test	Part 4-Writing	
	Passage 1	Passage 2	Cross-Text Items	Response to the Paired Reading Selections	Passage 3	Linking Text	Passage 4	4A Writing from Knowledge	4B Student Writing Samples and Peer Response
3	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)
4	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)
5	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)
6	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)
7	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)
8	8 MC	8 MC	0	0	8 MC	0	0	1 prompt (6 pt)	1 prompt (4 pt)

If the proposed 2 percent regulation changes the population of students eligible for alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards—as Michigan suggested—then the OEAA will have to review the final regulation and develop assessments that meet the criteria stated in the final regulation.

The OEAA will keep districts informed of what is going on with the development of the MI-Access MFL assessments in the content areas of ELA and mathematics. Stay tuned.

### Status of MI-Access Assessment Development

The table below shows where the MI-Access program is currently and what assessments are on the horizon. It is organized by the grade level at which the assessments are or will be administered. The column labeled “Currently Administered” lists the MI-Access assessments that are operational at this time; the column labeled “Under Development” includes the English language arts, mathematics, and science assessments that are in the process of being created; and the column labeled “Future Development” indicates the assessments that will need to be constructed at some point down the road.

**MI-Access Assessment Development Table**

Grade	Currently Administered				Under Development								Future Development				
	P	SI	FI-ELA	FI-M	SI-ELA	SI-M	P-ELA	P-M	P-SC	SI-SC	FI-SC	P-SS	SI-SS	FI-SS	MFL-ELA	MFL-M	
3	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U							F	F	
4	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U							F	F	
5	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U	U	U	U				F	F	
6	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U				F	F	F	F	F	
7	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U							F	F	
8	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U	U	U	U				F	F	
9												F	F	F	F	F	
11	X	X	X	X	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	F	F	F	F	F	

**KEY**

P - Participation

SI - Supported Independence

FI - Functional Independence

MFI - Modified Full Independence

ELA - English Language Arts

M - Mathematics

SC - Science

SS - Social Studies

X - Currently Administered

U - Under Development

F - Future Development

Look for additional assessment development updates in future issues of *The Assist*.

## Mark Your Calendars for the Fall OEAA Conferences!

As was the case last year, all the programs housed within the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) will hold joint, two-day conferences across the state in November and December. Holding the conferences jointly was successful last year because it allowed people who were both MEAP and MI-Access Coordinators to attend all sessions in one location. The combined conferences also enabled the OEAA to address those issues of accountability and participation that increasingly cut across all state assessment programs.

The first day of each conference will be devoted primarily to the MEAP, the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), the Michigan Merit Exam (MME), and accountability (including Adequate Yearly Progress and Education YES! school performance indicators). The second day will be dedicated to issues related to state assessment for students with disabilities, which includes MI-Access, MEAP, and ELPA. Attendees may sign up for one or both days of a particular conference, depending on their roles and interests. Below is the conference schedule.

Fall 2006 OEAA Conferences	
Dates	Locations
November 28 & 29	Marquette – Northern Michigan University
November 30 & December 1	Grayling – Holiday Inn
December 4 & 5	Grand Rapids – Crowne Plaza on 28 <sup>th</sup> Street
December 7 & 8	Novi – Sheraton Detroit Novi
December 11 & 12	Lansing – Lansing Center
December 13 & 14	Sterling Heights – Sterling Inn

On the second day of the conference, session topics will include updates on the operational assessments; updates on the MI-Access assessments under development (including science, Participation and Supported Independence English language arts and mathematics, and Modified Full Independence); understanding and using assessment results (including progress scores); students with disabilities and the Michigan Merit Examination; accommodations; and No Child Left Behind/Education YES!. Each of these topics, and numerous others, were identified as being of great interest to educators and will provide participants with valuable information that can be used in school improvement efforts and for improving student performance on and participation in state assessment.

## New Office of School Improvement Web Site

In 2003, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) established the Office of School Improvement (OSI) to promote student learning and achievement by providing statewide leadership, guidance, and support for a wide range of programs that directly impact teaching and learning, school leadership, and continuous school improvement. Since that time, the OSI, in conjunction with school improvement specialists and educators across the state, has developed a nationally recognized "School Improvement Framework" based on current research and best practices to support school and district continuous improvement efforts.

A new, comprehensive Web site ([www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement](http://www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement)) has been created to share the information generated by the OSI. This Web site is filled with general school improvement planning tools, information, promising practices, research, and links to school improvement sites across the nation. In addition, it includes the School Improvement framework's five strands (shown in the table below) and unique resources to specifically support each strand.

Office of School Improvement Framework Strands
Strand 1 – Teaching for Learning
Strand 2 – Leadership
Strand 3 – Personnel & Professional Learning
Strand 4 – School & Community Relations
Strand 5 – Data & Info Management

In addition, the Web site contains information about OSI conferences, Michigan's Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs), and specific school improvement planning and research tools. For additional information on the Framework, please contact OSI Director Yvonne Caamal Canul at [canuly@michigan.gov](mailto:canuly@michigan.gov) or Linda Forward at [forwardl@michigan.gov](mailto:forwardl@michigan.gov).

## Office of Special Education Programs Provides Tool Kit

The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has developed a new resource called "Tool Kit on Teaching and Assessing Students with Disabilities." The kit includes information that should prove helpful to State Education Agencies (SEAs) as they work to (1) develop valid and reliable assessments for students with disabilities, (2) establish guidelines for participation in state assessment, (3) conduct professional development on large-scale assessments, and (4) ensure the appropriate use of assessment accommodations. The kit also should prove useful to (1) educators as they plan and implement classroom instructional practices, and (2) parents looking for information on such topics as early literacy development and positive behavioral support. The tool kit can be accessed at <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/index.asp>.

## The Access Center: Enhancing Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

The Access Center is a national technical assistance (TA) center focused on providing services primarily for students with disabilities in grades K through 8. Funded by the U.S. Education Department's Office of Special Education Programs, the center's primary directive is to build the capacity of TA systems, states, districts, and schools, so they can help students with disabilities learn from the general education curriculum. To accomplish this directive, The Access Center has concentrated its efforts on

- increasing awareness of research-based programs, practices, and tools;
- strengthening the ability of educators to be informed consumers of programs, practices, and tools ; and
- assisting educators with implementing and evaluating programs, practices, and tools.

Housed within the American Institutes for Research in Washington, D.C., The Access Center can be found online at <http://www.k8accesscenter.org>. The Web site contains interactive Web-based seminars and discussion rooms, information about Universal Design for Learning, and a large database of resources that includes curriculum guides, educational videotapes, strategies, Individualized Education Program (IEP) guides, and useful Web links. In addition, results from a survey conducted in 2005 yielded a database comprised of responses from many states about what they are doing to enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities in such areas as standards-based IEPs and assessment.



## Important MI-Access Dates



### Fall 2006 Pre-ID (OEAA Secure Site)

May 19, 2006 – September 15, 2006

### Fall 2005 MI-Access Assessment Window (Grades 3-8)

October 9, 2006-November 17, 2006

### 2006 OEAA Fall Conferences

November 28 & 29	Marquette, Northern Michigan University
November 30 & December 1	Grayling, Holiday Inn
December 4 & 5	Grand Rapids, Crowne Plaza, 28 <sup>th</sup> Street
December 7 & 8	Novi, Sheraton Detroit Novi
December 11 & 12	Lansing, Lansing Center
December 13 & 14	Sterling Heights, Sterling Inn

## GLOSSARY

**Cut Score:** A specified point on a score scale, such that scores at or above that point are interpreted or acted upon differently from scores below that point. (Standards for Educational & Psychological Testing, 1999.)

**MI-Access Online System:** The BETA/TASA password-protected Web site used to collect and store information for MI-Access assessment administration. The system—which can be accessed only by District MI-Access Coordinators using the district’s individualized link and password—contains the most up-to-date information on coordinators and is used to (1) enter estimated student and teacher counts for assessment materials, (2) order additional assessment materials, (3) obtain shipping histories, and (4) access additional resources.

**OEAA Secure Site:** Formerly referred to as the MEAP Secure Site, this password-protected Web site is used, in part, to pre-identify and update demographic information on students participating in the state’s assessment system.

**Office of School Improvement:** An office established in 2003 within the Michigan Department of Education to promote student learning and achievement by providing statewide leadership, guidance, and support for a wide range of programs that directly impact teaching and learning, school leadership, and continuous school improvement.

**Standard Setting:** The process of determining the criteria for calculating a student’s performance on an assessment.

## Bookmark These Web Sites



[www.mi.gov/mi-access](http://www.mi.gov/mi-access)

MI-Access

[www.mi-access.info](http://www.mi-access.info)

MI-Access Information Center

[www.cenmi.org/matr](http://www.cenmi.org/matr)

Michigan Assistive Technology Resource

[www.mi.gov/meap](http://www.mi.gov/meap)

MEAP

[www.mi.gov/elpa](http://www.mi.gov/elpa)

Michigan English Language Proficiency Assessment

[www.mi.gov/mme](http://www.mi.gov/mme)

Michigan Merit Examination

[www.mi.gov/naep](http://www.mi.gov/naep)

National Assessment of Educational Progress

[www.mi.gov/oeaa](http://www.mi.gov/oeaa)

Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability

[www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement](http://www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement)

Office of School Improvement

<http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/index.asp>

OSEP Tool Kit

<http://www.k8accesscenter.org>

The Access Center

[www.nochildleftbehind.gov](http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov)

US Education Department