

## **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,  
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