

The Assist

Helping Students Access and Make Progress in the General Curriculum

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MI-Access Assessment Development Update

The MI-Access team has continued to engage in the assessment development process throughout the 2006/2007 school year. A major step forward for all three content areas (English language arts, mathematics, and science) was the statewide field review of the Draft Extended Grade Level Content Expectations (EGLCEs) and Extended Benchmarks (EBs). The Draft EGLCE and EB documents were posted on the MI-Access Web page from October 2, 2006 through January 17, 2007. During that window, many educators and other stakeholders downloaded them and provided the MI-Access team with valuable comments. The field input will be considered in the compilation of the final EGLCE/EB documents, which should be available late this spring. (The EGLCE/EB documents for Functional Independence can also be downloaded from the MI-Access Web page.) Following are additional updates on the two main areas of development—science for all three MI-Access populations, and English language arts and mathematics for the Participation and Supported Independence (P/SI) populations.

MI-Access Science

According to plan, the MI-Access science pilot assessments for Functional Independence (FI), Supported Independence (SI), and Participation (P) were ready for administration in spring 2007. The FI pilot assessments use a traditional multiple-choice item format with three answer choices; the SI assessments use a multiple-choice item format with three picture answer choices; and the P assessments use both a multiple-choice item format with two picture answer choices and an activity-based observation item format. Examples of each format are presented in Figures 4 and 5 below.

When reviewing item types, keep in mind that the items for each population are presented quite differently. The *Spring 2007 MI-Access Science Pilot Coordinator and Assessment Administrator Manual*, and Module 6 of the *MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence Scoring Rubrics Online Learning Program* (www.mi-access.info) contain detailed instructions on and examples of how to present each item type.

Figure 4






FI Science Pilot Item	SI Science Pilot Item	P Science Pilot Item
Which object is attracted by a magnet?	Which animal is a reptile?	Which animal lives in water?
A plastic ruler	 turtle	 frog
B steel needle	 frog	 mouse
C rubber ball	 mouse	

Figure 5

Participation Science Pilot Item (Activity Format)
<p>Activity: The student will correctly identify or indicate where to put paper for recycling following a familiar instructional routine using newspaper when given directions, such as “Show me where we put old newspapers,” or “Tell me what we do to save paper.”</p>
<p>Scoring Focus: Conserving resources</p>

Piloting assessment items is a crucial step in the assessment development process because it yields valuable data on how actual students perform on them. Following the science pilot, Content Advisory Committees (CACs) and Sensitivity Review Committees (SRCs) will meet to review the items in light of the data and will recommend which items (1) are viable to appear on operational forms, (2) need revision, or (3) should not be used.

Pilot Administration Input Needed!

If you would like to provide feedback on the MI-Access science assessment development process, please complete the MI-Access Science Pilot Online Assessment Feedback Survey at www.michigan.gov/mi-access (under “Survey Information”). The MDE will use the results of this survey to help with the statewide implementation of the operational science assessments in fall 2007.

MI-Access P/SI English Language Arts and Mathematics

After a great deal of work, the Participation and Supported Independence Version 1.5 (P/SI v1.5) English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments are up and running! To get the assessments ready, two important activities took place during fall 2006. First, while the pilot assessments were being administered, the P/SI ELA and Mathematics Assessment Plan Writing Team (APWT) was

reconvened, in part, to develop Draft Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), which explain what students need to do to achieve each MI-Access performance level (Emerging, Attained, and Surpassed the Performance Standard). The APWT was divided into several groups, each of which was responsible for developing specific draft PLDs (e.g., elementary mathematics or middle school ELA) for the P/SI populations. Following is an example of a draft PLD from a MI-Access Functional Independence ELA group. It lists what a fourth grade student needs to demonstrate on the Word Recognition portion of the assessment in order to “Attain the Performance Standard.”

Grade 4: Attained the Performance Standard

Word Recognition/Vocabulary

Use context clues and word analysis skills to identify **most** common vocabulary words, including

- frequently encountered words, and
- functional words

The draft PLDs will be reviewed and finalized by standard-setting panels this spring. In addition to being used on the P/SI v1.5 reports, the PLDs can be used by educators and parents to help them better understand what to focus on during instruction.

Second, immediately following the pilot administration, CACs and SRCs were brought together to review all of the P/SI v1.5 pilot assessment items in light of the data showing how students performed. A presentation by the MI-Access contractor informed committee members about how to use data in their analysis and its implications for each item. The CACs and SRCs then made recommendations for the items, which were considered when assembling the spring 2007 operational booklets.

Based on feedback received after the fall 2006 pilot administration, the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) and Michigan educators revised many of the activities, made a slight modification to the scoring rubric, and added examples to several items before they were made available for inclusion in the spring operational assessments. The OEAA will continue to look at additional item formats and make necessary adjustments as it works with Michigan educators to develop the new P/SI v2.0 ELA and mathematics assessments, which will replace the v1.5 assessments in about three years.

Remember: The **operational** P/SI v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments are being administered to students in grades 3 through 8 AND 11 during the spring assessment window (February 19-April 6, 2007). These assessment results will be the official ones used for accountability purposes (Education YES! and NCLB).

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