February 9, 2015

Spring 2015 Michigan Statewide Assessment Transition

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Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress

OVERVIEW

This document is the next in a series of communications designed to support Michigan districts and schools with the transition to the state's new assessment system. As mentioned in prior communications, our assessments will be moving online, will be given in the spring, and will measure current versus previous year student knowledge.

This communication will focus specifically on the summative assessments which will be given in the spring of 2015.

In June 2014 the Michigan Legislature required the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to develop a new test for spring 2015, creating a need to reduce a normal three-year test development process to nine months. We have been working hard to accomplish this and are excited to announce our new assessment system called the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress, or M-STEP.

The M-STEP will include our summative assessments designed to measure student growth effectively for today's students. English language arts and mathematics will be assessed in grades 3–8, science in grades 4 and 7, and social studies in grades 5 and 8. It also includes the Michigan Merit Examination in 11th grade which consists of the ACT Plus Writing, WorkKeys, and M-STEP summative in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

When MDE was asked to develop a new test to our current state standards (www.Michigan.gov/academicstandards) it was necessary for us to

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Key Take Aways:

- *The M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress) test replaces the 44-year-old MEAP test.*
- *The Spring 2015 assessment will include Michigan-developed content as well as content from the multi-state Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.*
- *Michigan continues to offer paper/pencil waivers for schools through a deadline of November 21, 2014. Information on the waiver process can be found here: http://www.mi.gov/documents/mde/Paper_Pencil_Request_470321_7.pdf*

Table of Contents

Overview 1
Test Session Timings (w/chart) 4
Online Assessment Sequence 5
Classroom Activity. 6
Online Testing Technical Information. 7
iPad and Chromebook 7
Additional Online Test Session Information 8
Paper/Pencil Test Session Information 8
Paper/Pencil Test Dates 9

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investigate all possible solutions to include content that has been properly field-tested in Michigan for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, as MDE's current item pool does not contain items in mathematics and ELA aligned to our current standards.

MDE discussed options internally and with our assessment partners to identify possible sources of content for this year's test. The only solution found for ELA and mathematics was to use content from Smarter Balanced as it was the only resource that could truly measure Michigan's standards in terms of content and nature, was available through existing contracts, and was field-tested in Michigan. In addition, Michigan educators participated in writing and reviewing the test questions.

Michigan also launched an effort to begin developing new items written by Michigan educators, to be included as field-test items in the spring of 2015. These items cannot be counted in the operational pool, prior to field-test information; however, it demonstrates our continued commitment to involve and include Michigan's educators in our test development process as much as possible moving forward.

Spring 2015 M-STEP summative tests for grades 3–8 and 11 will include:

- English Language Arts (Grades 3–8): Smarter Balanced content plus Michigan-developed field-test items. This will include an Online Test Session, a Classroom Activity, and a Performance Task.
- Mathematics (Grades 3–8): Smarter Balanced content plus Michigan-developed field-test items. This will include an Online Test Session, a Classroom Activity, and a Performance Task.
- Science (Grades 4 and 7): Michigan-developed assessment of online, fixed-form, multiple-choice based items.
- Social Studies (Grades 5 and 8): Michigan-developed assessment of online, fixed-form, multiple-choice based items.
- Michigan Merit Examination (Grade 11): ACT Plus Writing, WorkKeys, and M-STEP summative assessments in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. The ELA and mathematics tests are comprised of Smarter Balanced content plus Michigan-developed field-test items that will include an Online Test Session (CAT), a Classroom Activity, and a Performance Task*. The science and social studies tests are comprised of Michigan-developed online, fixed-form, multiple-choice based items.

* Due to time concerns and restrictions for the 11th grade assessment (which includes the ACT Plus Writing and WorkKeys) the Performance Tasks (PTs) and their accompanying Classroom Activities (CAs) will not be required for 11th graders. State law prohibits the requirement of more than one extended response item on the Michigan Merit Examination, which is already part of the ACT Plus Writing. However, if schools choose to administer the PTs, the accompanying CAs must also be administered.

(Continued on next page)

Assessment Transition

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Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress

The addition of Performance Tasks play a key role in the M-STEP to measure Michigan's standards. Performance Tasks contain collections of questions and activities that are coherently connected to a single theme or scenario. These activities are designed to measure capacities such as depth of understanding, writing and research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with traditional test questions. The Performance Tasks will be taken on a computer (but will not be computer-adaptive) and will take one to two class periods to complete.

As described, the M-STEP will be used to deliver a valid, reliable summative assessment measuring Michigan's standards for the 2014–15 school year.

During the summer of 2014 the Michigan Legislature also required MDE to develop a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for an assessment system beginning with the 2015–16 school year. This RFP includes 9th and 10th grade assessment for the first time in Michigan as well as (if appropriated) K-12 interim assessments. While this new RFP creates a possibility for another new assessment beginning in 2015–16 you can rest assured that it will still be an online assessment, will continue to measure Michigan's standards, will include item types that we will be using this spring, and will still be called the M-STEP.

MDE will soon begin negotiations with the U.S. Department of Education for revisions to the accountability system. In negotiating with USED, it is MDE's intent to use the test data from this transitional year for a trial run of a revised accountability system. It is the intent of the Department that the results of the trial run of accountability would be shared with schools and districts for local decision making, but that no consequences would be applied.

MDE wants to assure educators that all the efforts you have put into preparing for the new assessment can be applied to this year's assessment and will remain useful in future years.

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Test Session Timing

The spring 2015 test sessions are **not** timed (with the exception of College Entrance and Work Skills Tests). The following table indicates recommended times for the online test sessions in each content area and grade. All times are *estimates*. Students should be allowed extra time if they need it.

NOTE: For scheduling **online** sessions:

- schools have flexibility to schedule test sessions anywhere within the 3-week test window (8-week test window for grade 11)
- not all students need to be administered the same assessment at the same time, nor on the same day
- headphones are required for the ELA Online Test Session
- estimated times below do not include scheduled breaks; please plan accordingly
- the Classroom Activity is not an online activity and does not require scheduling of computer labs

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Spring 2015 Test Session Timings (in hours and minutes)

	Grades →	3	4	5	6	7	8	11
ELA	Online Test Session	1:30	1:30	1:30	1:30	1:30	1:30	2:00
	Classroom Activity	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30*
	Performance Task	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00*
Math	Online Test Session	1:30	1:30	1:30	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00
	Classroom Activity	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30*
	Performance Task	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:30*
Science	Part 1		0:50			0:50		:50
	Part 2		0:50			0:50		
Social Studies	Part 1			0:50			0:50	0:50
	Part 2			0:50			0:50	
College Entrance								3:25**
Work Skills								2:15**
Total Time Required		7:00	8:40	8:40	7:30	9:10	9:10	11:20
Total Time including Recommended Sessions								15:50

* Performance Tasks (PTs) and their accompanying Classroom Activities (CAs) are not required for high school. However, if schools choose to administer the PTs, the accompanying CAs must also be administered.

** Timed test—paper/pencil only

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Online Assessment Sequence

The English language arts and mathematics assessments each consist of three parts:

1. Online Test Session – administered online
2. Classroom Activity (CA) – NOT online
3. Performance Task (PT) – administered online

Online Assessment Sequence - English Language Arts (ELA)

ELA	Online Test Session	Classroom Activity	Performance Task (PT)
Number and Duration of Sessions	• 1 session with a scheduled break not to exceed 20 minutes • Or may be scheduled as 2 separate 45 minute sessions **on the same day** (grade 11 would be 2 separate 60 minute sessions)	• Administer in one session • Approximate session duration: 30 minutes • Should occur one to three days prior to Performance Task	The PT is presented in two parts. • May be administered in two sessions corresponding to Parts 1 and 2, each part duration is approximately 60 minutes (Parts 1 and 2 may be administered **on separate days**) • Or 1 session with scheduled break in between parts
Breaks within Sessions	Breaks can be provided during the test sessions using the software's pause feature.	NA	Students can take breaks within Parts 1 and 2; however, once a student moves to Part 2, he or she will not be able to review or revise items in Part 1.

Online Assessment Sequence - Mathematics

Mathematics	Online Test Session	Classroom Activity	Performance Task (PT)
Number and Duration of Sessions	• 1 session with a scheduled break not to exceed 20 minutes • Or may be scheduled as 2 separate 45-60 minute sessions (depending on grade level) **on the same day**	• Administer in one session • Approximate session duration: 30 minutes • Should occur as close to the PT as possible, and no more than three days prior to the PT • MAY occur **on the same day** as the PT	The PT is presented in one part. • Administered in one session • Session duration is approximately 60 minutes for grades 3-8 • Session duration is approximately 90 minutes for grade 11
Breaks within Sessions	Breaks can be provided during the test sessions using the software's pause feature.	NA	Students can take breaks during PT session. Following a break, the student will have access to all items on the PT.

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Classroom Activity

The purpose of the Classroom Activity is to introduce students to the context of a Performance Task so they are not disadvantaged in demonstrating the skills the task intends to assess. Classroom Activities do not address content information; instead, they focus on vocabulary and key contextual topics. The Classroom Activity is designed to be an introduction and not an assessment.

Guidelines for administering the Classroom Activity for ELA or mathematics are as follows:

- Classroom Activities should be administered by a teacher. It is preferable—but not essential—that the teacher administering the Classroom Activity has content knowledge in the area of assessment.
- The teacher should be able to record information—including any tables, graphs, formulas, or other information contained in the Classroom Activity materials—for students to see, such as on a chalkboard or dry-erase board. Computers, projectors, and other technology are allowed but not required for the Classroom Activity. When the Performance Task is being administered, content and recorded information from the Classroom Activity should not be available (i.e., do not put any content from the Classroom Activity on the board, in handouts, etc.).
- The Classroom Activity is a scripted document that will be made available to schools.
- Students may take notes during the Classroom Activity, but the notes may not be used during the PT. Notes must be collected before proceeding to the PT and stored in a secure location until securely shredded.
- The Classroom Activity must be administered **before** the Performance Task; there should be no more than a **three-day lapse** between the Classroom Activity and the PT administration. Inadvertently administering the PT before or without the Classroom Activity constitutes a ***testing irregularity***.
- Classroom Activities should only be administered to students once and are designed to be completed in approximately thirty minutes.
- The Classroom Activity is nonsecure; however, it should **not** be supplemented with any other content that the teacher may think is helpful. Supplementing the Classroom Activity may detract from the intended purpose of the Classroom Activity and is not advised.
- In the event a student is absent during the Classroom Activity, a **make-up session** of the Classroom Activity *must* be scheduled and provided before the PT is administered.

Online Testing Technical Information

The online testing software that will be used by schools and districts in Michigan for spring 2015 M-STEP Assessments and MI-Access (Grades 3-8 and 11) will be Data Recognition Corporation's (DRC) INSIGHT secure web browser testing software. The INSIGHT online testing software was used to administer the MDE Interim Assessment Field Test in Michigan schools.

The DRC INSIGHT software utilizes a local caching server called the Testing Site Manager (TSM). The TSM is used to securely cache test content and student responses. Schools in Michigan are required to use a TSM for the spring 2015 M-STEP Assessments and MI-Access (Grades 3-8 and 11). At test time when students log in, the TSM content caching software sends its cached test items (including any accompanying multimedia content) to the testing devices. The TSM software must be up-to-date in order for students to test. Once students have begun testing, if the internet connection on the testing device is interrupted, the TSM stores the student test responses. This will allow the student to 1) resume their CAT session once connectivity is restored, and 2) complete their fixed form test session uninterrupted. When the internet access is restored to the TSM, the cached student responses are automatically uploaded to the DRC testing servers.

For planning purposes, our online delivery vendor recommends a maximum of 150 concurrent testing devices per TSM to maximize the student testing experience. A school can have more than one TSM. Conversely, one TSM can serve multiple schools. Additional information on the TSM will be available in the Technology Coordinator Manual.

Schools and districts should begin planning for the ideal deployment of the TSM software *when it becomes available*. MDE will continue to provide information on technical details.

iPads and Chromebooks

The use of iPads and Chromebooks is allowed for spring 2015 summative testing. These devices were pilot tested in schools during fall 2014 Interim online testing. Instructions for installing and configuring the software on these devices will be provided.

The device requirements for online testing are located at http://mtrax.org/files/Michigan Testing Device Requirements 11-13-14.pdf.

Please note the requirement for external keyboards (paragraph 3 of the Device Requirements document). Without the external keyboard, the virtual keyboard that pops-up on the display screen will restrict the visibility of the item to which the student is responding. This could cause the student to overlook a portion of the item.

Additional Online Test Session Information

- There is no set ratio of proctors to students. The number of students per proctor should allow for proctors to respond in a timely manner to student questions as they arise. If students are introduced to the tools available on the testing platform using a practice test, the need to answer questions will be minimal. Practice tests will be available soon.
- It may be beneficial to have additional proctors available during the student log-in process.

Paper/Pencil Test Session Information

- Estimated times for paper/pencil sessions are the same as online. (See the online timing chart on page 4.)
- Day 1 for paper/pencil will be a fixed-form instead of the CAT.
- Paper/pencil tests will follow the same test blueprint as the Online Test Sessions—meaning the same content areas and skills will be assessed.
- **The Classroom Activity must be completed prior to administration of the PT. Inadvertently administering the PT before the Classroom Activity is considered a testing irregularity.**

English language arts

- Day 1 ELA paper/pencil test will include parts 1 and 2 (fixed-form plus a listening part).
- Day 2 ELA paper/pencil test will be the Performance Task.
- The 30-minute ELA Classroom Activity for paper/pencil may be administered the Monday before testing, on Day 1 (before or after testing), or on Day 2 (before the Performance Task).

Mathematics

- Day 1 mathematics paper/pencil test will include one part (fixed-form).
- Day 2 mathematics paper/pencil test will include the 30-minute Classroom Activity and the Performance Task.

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Paper/Pencil Test Dates

Grades 3 and 6

May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 ELA Day 1	20 ELA Day 2	21 Makeup - ELA	22 Makeup - ELA	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26 Makeup ELA	27 MATH Day 1	28 MATH Day 2	29 Makeup any content area	30
31						

June 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Makeup - any content area	2 Makeup - any content area	3 Makeup - any content area	4 Makeup - any content area	5 Makeup - any content area	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Grades 4 and 7

April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 ELA Day 1	29 ELA Day 2	30 Makeup ELA	1	

May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Makeup ELA	2
3	4 Makeup ELA	5 MATH Day 1	6 MATH Day 2	7 SCIENCE	8 Makeup any content area	9
10	11 Makeup - any content area	12 Makeup - any content area	13 Makeup - any content area	14 Makeup - any content area	15 Makeup - any content area	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23

Grades 5 and 8

April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 ELA Day 1	15 ELA Day 2	16 Makeup - ELA	17 Makeup - ELA	18
19	20 Makeup ELA	21 MATH Day 1	22 MATH Day 2	23 SOCIAL STUDIES	24 Makeup any content area	25
26	27 Makeup - any content area	28 Makeup - any content area	29 Makeup - any content area	30 Makeup - any content area	1	

Grade 11

April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 ELA Day 1	15 ELA Day 2	16 SCIENCE	17 Makeup ELA/Science	18
19	20 Makeup ELA/Science	21 MATH Day 1	22 MATH Day 2	23 SOCIAL STUDIES	24 Makeup any content area	25
26	27 Makeup - any content area	28 Makeup - any content area	29 Makeup - any content area	30 Makeup - any content area	1	

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