

FACTS ABOUT MICHIGAN’S NEW “CUT SCORES” and Changes Coming with the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Assessment System

[Current Michigan Assessments System:](#)

Why is Michigan Changing the MEAP and MME Cut Scores?

Michigan’s previous cut scores for these state tests were set at a very basic level for success based on an industry model. Raising the cut scores will give Michigan parents and students a much better sense of whether students are adequately prepared to compete in the global economy. For more specific information see State Superintendent Flanagan’s podcast. (HYPERLINK "<http://www.mistreamnet.com/vidflv.php?who=mike102811>" [Link](#))

What are the MEAP and MME Tests?

Each year, public school students in grades 3-9 are required to take the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test. Students are assessed annually in Mathematics, Reading, Writing, Science and Social Studies. Eleventh graders take the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). The MME assesses students in English Language Arts (reading and writing), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

What are MEAP and MME “Cut Scores”?

Cut scores (or cutoff scores) separate test takers into performance categories, such as advanced, proficient, partially proficient and not proficient. MEAP and MME cut scores and categories are set by Michigan Department of Education and approved by the Michigan State Board of Education.

How Were the New Cut Scores Determined?

The state started the cut score study process by using the ACT college readiness benchmarks and worked backward toward grade three, matching students from current grades to previous grades. The state received information from the Michigan universities that they tied to MME scores to create college ready (CCR) benchmarks on an assessment fully aligned to the HSCEs in all subject areas. The identified cut scores have approximately equal rigor across all grade levels based on the subject area. However, due to the manner in which MDE determined the cut score changes (see the MDE PowerPoint (HYPERLINK "http://mymassp.com/files/Cut_Score_ppt.pptx" [Link](#)) for details) different subject areas at different grade levels were up against different cut score changes based on the level of the college and career readiness standards.

How Do the New Scores Compare to Last Year’s Scores?

While every school in Michigan will see an initial decline in the number of students reported as “proficient,” we are confident this setback will be temporary. The new cut scores represent a significantly higher standard for student achievement and are intended to more accurately reflect whether students are on track and prepared to be career and college ready.

[Frequently Asked Questions by Parents:](#)

Should Parents be Concerned if their Child’s Proficiency Level Drops?

Parents may notice their child is not at the same proficiency level as previous years. A lower score does not mean that a child has not made academic gains or is failing to make progress, rather it is a reflection of higher cut score standards being implemented during the 2011-2012 school year. If a child does not score at or above the proficient level on any of the assessments, this is an indication that on the day of the test, the child has not yet demonstrated the skills or knowledge expected for his or her grade level. Parents may wish to talk to their child's teacher(s) about the test results, as well as the supports and resources that can help ensure consistent learning progression is occurring with the higher state expectations.

What is Our District/School Doing to Help All Students Become Career and College Ready?

Our school, is already in the process of transitioning to the Common Core State Standards. The goal of the Common Core is to define the knowledge and skills students should achieve in order to graduate from high school ready to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. These standards are the base for the common Next Generation Assessment that will begin for approximately 45 states beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

What can parents do to help their child become college and career ready?

One of the best ways to keep track of your child's school progress is to speak with his or her teacher and the school on a regular basis. Parents are always encouraged to work with their child(ren) on homework, encourage reading at all levels, and take an active role in the school community.

[Collaborative State Level Initiative: Transition to the Common Core State Standards and The Next Generation Assessment System:](#)

What are the Common Core State Standards?

The aim of the Common Core State Standards is to define the knowledge and skills students should achieve in order to graduate from high school ready to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010a). See the PTA Guides outlining grade level Common Core State Standards expectations. (HYPERLINK "<http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>"[Link](#))

What does the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Assessment System have to do with the Changes in the Cut Scores?

“Next Generation Assessment system is being developed to ensure educators have valid assessments that support and inform instruction, provide accurate information about what students know and can do, and measure student achievement against standards designed to ensure that all students gain the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and the workplace. The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium will strategically “balance” summative, interim, and formative assessment through an integrated system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and teacher development, while providing accurate year-to-year indicators of students’ progress toward college and career readiness.” *Coming Together to Raise Achievement, New Assessment for the Common Core State Standards, July 2011, Pg. pg. 13*

Thirty states to date have joined the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, which is

developing a set of comprehensive and innovative assessments for grades 3-8 and high school in English language arts and mathematics; aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The assessments will be administered through an online system and will embed performance-based assessment beginning in 2014-2015. The balanced assessment system created through the consortium will replace the ELA and Math portion of the MEAP and MME in the 2014-2015 school year.

“This initiative is about much more than just “better tests.” The adoption of a common set of college- and career readiness standards by all but five states, to date, means that more than 80 percent of our nation’s public school students and teachers will be focused on the same content standards for their students. This is a fundamental shift in the education marketplace.” *Coming Together to Raise Achievement, New Assessment for the Common Core State Standards, July 2011, Pg. pg. 1*

Gathered and Adapted from State Wide Resources