

## Achieving Success with the Michigan Merit Exam

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is implementing a number of updated measures to more clearly align the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) and the High School Content Expectations (HSCE) and to begin alignment with anticipated common state standards and assessments (through the federal Race to the Top initiative).

In accordance with state law, MDE identified high school course content expectations that may be tested on the MME and thus reflect what students should be taught by the time the MME is administered in the spring of each student's junior year. MDE has also revised the list of content expectations that define the required Algebra II credit as described below.

While ALL content expectations that define required credits are to be taught and tested at the classroom, building, and/or district levels, NOT ALL content expectations are assessed on the MME. The MME assesses a high percentage of Michigan's High School Standards, requiring students to demonstrate knowledge and skill aligned with content expectations designated as MME-assessable.

Beginning in the spring of 2010, the following HSCE will be eligible for inclusion on the MME. We have included some explanatory comments.

### MATHEMATICS

The content expectations that MAY be assessed on the MME were selected based on ACT's college readiness standards, Achieve's American Diploma Project benchmarks, and the proposed Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards Michigan plans to adopt. The MME assesses 117 of 161 (73%) of the Mathematics HSCE and 10 of 13 (77%) Michigan High School Mathematics Standards.

- 100% of Algebra I HSCE
- 100% of Geometry HSCE
- 67% of the Algebra II HSCE (26 MME-assessable of 39 Algebra II HSCE included in the revised 9/09 Algebra II Course Credit Requirements)

### SOCIAL STUDIES

Districts are free to determine the order in which they offer opportunities for earning required social studies credits; 137 of 230 (60%) Social Studies HSCE are eligible for inclusion on the MME. The MME assesses 45 of 50 (90%) Michigan High School Social Studies Standards. The High School Social Studies Curriculum-Assessment Alignment Documents available October 2009, provide detailed information about the scope of the expectations and assessment classification.

- 83% of U.S. History and Geography HSCE
- 76% of World History and Geography HSCE
- 52% of Economics HSCE
- 45% of Civics HSCE

### SCIENCE

The Essential Science HSCE represents 60% of required Science HSCE, including the content expectations assessed on the ACT. Students begin earning HS science credit in 8<sup>th</sup> grade because there are no 8<sup>th</sup> grade-specific content expectations.

- 100% of Essential Science HSCE

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

100% of Michigan High School ELA Standards are eligible for inclusion on the MME (ACT English, Reading, Writing, or WorkKeys assessments). Within these Standards, 41 ELA HSCE have been assessed or identified by ACT and the MDE as eligible for inclusion on the MME, representing 45% of the 91 ELA expectations. Items appearing on ACT's assessments measure different content expectations every year.

- 45% of ELA HSCE

The designation of which content expectations are eligible for inclusion on the MME is included in a document titled **Expectations for Success with the MME** posted on MDE's web site at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool). Expectations that define required credits but are not assessed on the MME, are still required to be taught and assessed by Secondary Credit Assessments or local district assessments. The updated alignments ensure that districts know which HSCE will be assessed on the MME so they offer opportunities for students to meet those expectations before taking the MME.

Michigan has joined a consortium with 47 other states to develop common core state standards for mathematics and English language arts. These common standards are expected to define the rigorous skills and knowledge needed for students to be college and career ready. The updated alignments are designed to support Michigan's adoption of the common core state standards.

MDE will offer webinars on the changes to the Mathematics Course/Credit Requirements document from October 19 – 23, 2009. Webinar specifics will be posted to the MDE web site at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool).

If you have questions about the updated alignments, please contact MaryAlice Galloway at 517-241-3232 or Joseph Martineau at 517-241-4710.