



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

NOV 1 2006

The Honorable Michael P. Flanagan  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Michigan Department of Education  
608 W. Allegan Street  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Superintendent Flanagan:

Thank you for submitting Michigan's new assessment materials for review under the standards and assessment requirements of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB). As you know, the Michigan assessment system, as implemented in 2005-06, received *Full Approval* by meeting all statutory requirements for assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics. My approval letter, dated September 13, 2006, noted that, if Michigan makes significant changes in its assessment system, the State must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

During August and October, Michigan provided evidence regarding the new alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards and a new high school assessment, the Michigan Merit Examination (MME), for review and approval. I appreciate the efforts required to prepare for the peer review and hope that the process provides useful feedback that will support Michigan's efforts to continue to improve its standards and assessment system.

External peer reviewers and U.S. Department of Education (ED) staff evaluated Michigan's submission and the evidence provided suggests that the assessment system proposed for 2006-07, including the MME, is likely to be fully compliant with the statutory and regulatory requirements. However, additional evidence is needed to show how Michigan's new assessments meet the standards and assessment requirements under ESEA. The remaining documentation that Michigan must provide is listed as an attachment to this letter. I am unable to approve the revised assessment system prior to receipt and review of all required documentation, as there are certain elements that have not been completed due to the nature of assessment development. When the required additional evidence has been submitted, it will be subject to peer and/or ED staff review. Approval of the revised assessment system as implemented in 2006-07 is contingent on satisfactory peer review of the final materials.

The Department remains committed to working with Michigan to continue to improve its standards and assessment system and to raise the performance of all children. If you have

any additional questions, would like to discuss this further, or want to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call Sue Rigney (202-260-0931) or Abby Potts (202-260-2465) of my staff.

Sincerely,



Henry L. Johnson

cc: Governor Jennifer M. Granholm  
Jeremy Hughes  
Edward Roeber

**Summary of Additional Evidence that Michigan Must Submit to Meet ESEA Requirements for the Michigan Assessment System as implemented in 2006-07**

**2.0 – ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS**

1. Description of standard setting procedures and participants for the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence, and evidence of Board adoption.
2. Evidence of Board adoption of achievement standards for the MME.

**4.0 – TECHNICAL QUALITY**

1. Documentation of technical quality indicators, except standard setting and materials previously submitted, as listed in the Peer Review Guidance for the MME as administered in spring 2007.
2. Final technical manuals for the 2006-07 MME and MI-Access assessments.

**5.0 - ALIGNMENT**

1. Evidence of alignment of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence with grade-level content standards.

**7.0 – REPORTS**

1. Sample MME Assessment Reports at the student, classroom, school and State levels.