



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 24, 2017

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Sheila A. Alles *Sheila A. Alles*
Chief Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: MCL: 380.1280f Third-Grade Reading Law Revised Initial and Extensive Assessment Lists and Update Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has been engaged with a group of stakeholders for the past seven months reviewing the requirements of the "Third-Grade Reading" Law (MCL: 380.1280f). These stakeholders represent many areas of the state and hold positions ranging from classroom teachers to support specialists to faculty at institutes of higher education. This external team has been diligently working with department staff to determine assessments that would support the implementation of the legislation and maintain a level of flexibility for all schools during the 2017-2018 academic year.

This work resulted in the creation of two lists of assessments: Initial (including benchmark and screener assessments) and Extensive (primarily diagnostic assessments, but including tools with screener, benchmark, and progress monitoring characteristics). Used together, an Initial and an Extensive assessment work to build both a cursory and diagnostic understanding of how a student is progressing toward mastery of English Language Arts (ELA) standards. Lists of these assessments were originally released through a [Superintendent's eBlast](#) and partnering educational organizations on June 8, 2017. The eBlast message indicates that assessments on this list (1) were approved for the 2017-2018 academic year for districts to gain an understanding of how students are performing in ELA, and (2) were reviewed based on materials submitted by the vendor and are not intended to be used with students with significant cognitive impairments. It also stated that

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – CO-PRESIDENT • RICHARD ZEILE – CO-PRESIDENT
MICHELLE FECTEAU – SECRETARY • TOM MCMILLIN – TREASURER
NIKKI SNYDER – NASBE DELEGATE • PAMELA PUGH
LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • 517-373-3324

districts were advised to perform additional reviews on these tools to make appropriate assessment decisions.

Since the June 8 release of these lists, team members have conducted an additional review of newly submitted assessment information to gain a deeper understanding of the assessments and their capacity to measure student literacy proficiency. This review included areas of validity, reliability, construct, efficiency of administration, and timeliness of reporting. Because of the intensity of this work and the need to release additional information before the start of the 2017-2018 academic year, a focus was placed on the construct component, which addresses the skills, standards, and content being assessed by the assessment tool.

This secondary review has resulted in updated lists for both Initial and Extensive assessments for use in the 2017-2018 school year. In this updated list, the MDE has identified the primary role of these assessments with respect to the groups of standards that these tools assess. MDE recognizes that this may not address the entire range and scope of the assessments. Also, the department has identified possible areas to supplement based on the review of submitted documents. While some of the assessments may be appropriate for grades beyond K-3; the focus on these lists is grades K-3. Updated lists can be found at the [Early Literacy MCL: 380.1280f Assessments website](#).

Further review will be conducted which may result in revised assessment lists in years to come. Currently, no additional adjustments to these lists are anticipated to be made for the 2017-2018 year. The MDE wishes to make clear that all information used to create the 2017-2018 lists are based on submission of documents by vendors, assessment creators, and assessment supporters. In the future, a list of approved assessments for subsequent academic years may utilize an independent, third-party review process with a more comprehensive review effort. The work on comprehensive assessment systems will be continuing and the department anticipates providing additional guidance in March 2018.

Additional information about the assessments and assessment systems as required by MCL 380.1280f or other legislation are available in the [Frequently Asked Questions document](#).

If you have questions regarding assessment requirements for the 2017-2018 academic year, please visit the [Early Literacy MCL: 380.1280f Assessments website](#) or email MDE-EarlyLiteracy@michigan.gov. Your questions will be reviewed and a response will be returned to you as soon as possible.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance