

Self-Contained Classroom Guide

Ensuring that an appropriately prepared and endorsed teacher is assigned to teach in Michigan's classrooms is critical to student achievement. The State Board of Education (SBE) has [approved standards](#) for preparing teachers in each endorsement area.

Michigan has offered a variety of elementary education endorsement, including [Elementary K-5 All Subjects \(K-8 All Subjects Self-Contained Classrooms\) \(ZG\)](#) and Elementary K-8 All Subjects (ZC). Districts should use this guidance when assigning teachers who hold one of these elementary endorsements.

A "self-contained classroom" is a classroom in which one teacher provides instruction to the same pupils for the majority of the instructional day. A majority of the instructional day is a number equaling more than 50% of the total instructional time in a day. This is typically found in elementary assignments where multiple subjects are taught by the same teacher.

Any other scenario in which a teacher provides instruction to the same group of students for less than 50% and/or where the teacher is the sole provider of instruction in a single subject area is considered "departmentalized." To be assigned to a departmentalized course, a teacher must hold the [appropriate endorsement](#) for the subject and grade level of the course. When staffing a departmentalized assignment, a district may refer to the [Proper Placement Considerations](#) guidance document.

Michigan districts provide 180 days of instruction, with a minimum of 1,098 instructional hours. The [Pupil Accounting Manual](#) (PAM) can be used to identify hours or minutes from the teacher's assignment that qualify as instructional time.

Instructional time typically **would** include:

- pupils and certified teachers are present and engaged in instruction.
- instruction is scheduled and available to all pupils.
- classes that are offered for credit or grade progression.

Instructional time typically **would not** include:

- passing time to first period and from last period.
- lunch period.
- time passing from and to buses.

The basic formula for determining self-contained is as follows:

1. Add up the total amount of instructional time per day (as defined above) that this teacher has with the same group of students.
2. Divide by the total amount of instructional time in the school day.
3. If the answer is over 0.5, the teacher's assignment can be considered self-contained.

Permits:

For positions where a district is unable to find a Michigan certified and endorsed teacher who is available for the assignment, a [permit](#) may be applied for. MDE offers a system of permits, approvals and authorizations to expand flexibility and assist districts in covering needs, including immediate and long-term options.