



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

House Office Building, 9 South
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

**REVISE MEAP & MERIT AWARD
PROGRAMS; CREATE PORTFOLIO
ASSESSMENTS**

House Bills 6050-6052

Sponsor: Rep. Paul Gieleghem

Committee: Education

Complete to 8-27-02

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 6050 - 6052 AS INTRODUCED 5-9-02

The bills would amend the Revised School Code, the State School Aid Act, and the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Program, respectively, to require portfolio assessments, and also revise and relocate the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), and the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Program. House Bill 6050 is tie-barred to House Bills 6051 and 6052, and the reverse, so that none of the bills could become law unless all were enacted.

House Bill 6050 would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1279 et al.) to add Part 20c, entitled Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP). The new section of the code specifies that the Department of Education would administer the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, and promulgate necessary rules, although the rules already in effect when the bill was enacted would remain in effect until they were rescinded, as provided for under the Administrative Procedures Act. The rules would address at least assessment test administration and cheating on assessment tests.

Annual comprehensive exams. The bill specifies that the MEAP would consist of assessments administered to all public school students in grades 4 to 11 at the end of each school year in the subject areas of communication skills, mathematics, science, and social studies. The assessments would be objective-oriented and consistent with the model core academic content standards objectives. Each assessment would serve as an annual comprehensive examination in the particular subject area, to measure a student's progress in meeting the objectives for that subject area and that grade level. The bill would prohibit education officials from using the tests to measure students' values and attitudes.

Assessment advisory committee. Under the bill, the Department of Education would be required to maintain an 11-member assessment administration advisory committee to advise the State Board of Education on the MEAP tests, on the assessments used for state endorsements under section 1279 (which concerns the high school test), and any other state assessments. The department could use the advisory committee previously appointed under section 1279 for this purpose. The advisory committee would be composed of representatives of school districts, intermediate school districts, school administrators, teachers, and parents, with the appointments reflecting the geographic and population diversity of school districts within the state. The bill specifies that the representatives from the school districts and the intermediate school districts would be experts in testing or test administration. The advisory committee would evaluate the tests and assessments, and make recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Department of Education on issues related to administration, scoring, and reporting and use of results of the tests and assessments, including but not limited to length of the tests and

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assessment; the time of the testing period during the school years; feedback provided to students, parents, and schools; accurate and relevant reporting of results to the general public; the selection of a re-testing period and procedures and arrangements for repeating tests or assessments; local scoring and other general issues regarding scoring of tests and assessments; categories of scoring on the MEAP tests and categories of state endorsement under section 1279; and professional development for teachers to assist in preparing students to have the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed on the tests and assessments.

School district responsibilities. The bill would require that the board of each school district and public school academy (more customarily called a charter school) ensure that the MEAP assessments were administered to all students in grades 4 to 11.

Annual individual academic progress. The bill specifies that the results of the MEAP assessments are to be used primarily to assess each individual student's progress from school year to school year, rather than as a comparative measure with other students.

School assistance. The bill also specifies that the MEAP scores could be used by the Department of Education to identify individual school districts, schools, or academic departments that had an average score less than 70 percent of the statewide average score on one or more of the assessments, and could recommend additional professional development for the school district, school, or department. Further, the department could publish an annual or other periodic report about the improvement or decline in MEAP scores within particular school districts, measured in terms of percentage improvement or decline by grade level.

Student portfolios. House Bill 6050 would require that, beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, the board of a school district or charter school ensure that each student in grades four through 12 develop a student portfolio with the assistance of his or her parent (or person in parental relation), school personnel, and other interested people. A student portfolio would contain information about a student's academic and nonacademic goals, accomplishments, and experiences. School officials would ensure that the student portfolio was given to the student or parent when the student left the school district or charter school.

A student's portfolio would contain at least the following four chapters: a) a record of plans, including but not limited to annual academic and nonacademic plans that the student intends to follow during the next few years; b) a record of academic achievement, including academic transcripts, MEAP test results, career and technical education transcripts, examples of the student's schoolwork, and if applicable, the results of any other statewide subject matter assessment test, and nationally normed achievement test that the student has taken; c) a record of job preparation and community involvement; and d) a record of recognitions.

Under the bill, the board of a school district or charter school would determine the chapters and contents of the portfolio, taking into consideration the requirements noted above. The board could appoint a student portfolio advisory committee (made-up of classroom teachers, school guidance counselors, students, parents, and community members) to make recommendations. After determining the chapters and contents, the board would be required to forward an outline of the portfolio requirements to the Department of Education.

The bill specifies that a board would have to ensure all of the following: a) that a copy of a student's portfolio be maintained in a portable format, such as a computer disk or CD-ROM; b) that, if a student transfers to another school district or public school in the state, a copy of the portfolio be transferred; and c) that a tamper-proof copy of the student portfolio be made available to the student upon graduation from high school.

Under the bill, the legislature would be required to appropriate additional funding to compensate schools for portfolio development, if the Department of Education determined that there were additional implementation costs for the portfolio program. Further, upon request, the department would be required to provide school districts and charter schools with models of and assistance in developing student portfolios.

Annual tests in grades 1 to 3. Currently under the law, the board of a school district or charter school must administer, each school year to all students in grades 1 to 5, a nationally recognized, norm-referenced test or another assessment (which may include a locally-adopted assessment) approved by the superintendent of public instruction. The law also specifies that a school district can use the Michigan Literacy Profile in grades 1 to 3 as part of its compliance with this requirement. Under the bill, these provisions would be retained except that the board of a school district or charter school would be required to administer the annual test in grades 1 to 3, and the literacy profile could be used as part of compliance in any grade.

High school test. Under the law the board of a school district or charter school must administer state assessments to high school students in the subject areas of communication skills, mathematics, science, and social studies. The student's scores on the high school tests are included on his or her transcript, as well as whether he or she has achieved state endorsement for that subject area, and his or her attendance record. The bill would retain these provisions, and it specifies that if the department determined that it would be consistent with the purposes of this section, it could designate the grade 11 MEAP tests as the assessments to be used to meet this requirement.

The bill would eliminate two outdated provisions in this section of the law, one that required a comprehensive report to the legislature on the status of the assessment program until the year 2000, and a second that allowed students who graduated in 1998 to repeat the high school assessments they took during the 1996-97 school year.

The bill also would eliminate a provision that requires the State Board of Education to appoint an 11-member assessment administration advisory committee to advise the board about the MEAP tests.

Repealers. Under the bill, Section 1279c (which prohibits the use of the MEAP test to measure students' values and attitudes) of the Revised School Code would be repealed. [However, similar language would be included in the new Part 20c.] Further, the bill would repeal Public Act 38 of 1970 (MCL 388.1081 to 388.1086), the act that created the original assessment of educational progress and remedial assistance program.

House Bill 6051 would amend the State School Aid Act (388.1704a) to specify that the Department of Education could designate the grade 11 MEAP tests as the assessments that would qualify a school district to receive state aid. Currently under the law, in order to receive state aid a school district must administer state assessments to high school students in the subject areas of communication skills, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The bill would eliminate an outdated provision in the act that required a comprehensive report to the legislature on the status of the assessment program until the year 2000.

House Bill 6052 would amend the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Act (390.1452 et al.) to refer to the Michigan Merit Award Trust Fund (rather than the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Trust Fund), and the Michigan Merit Award Board (rather than the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Board). Under the bill, the board would be established within the Department of Education, all administrative functions would be performed under the direction and supervision of the superintendent of public instruction, and the chairperson of the board would be the superintendent. Currently the board is located in the Department of Treasury, it operates under the direction and supervision of the state treasurer, and the board chairperson is the state treasurer.

The bill would add a new definition to the act in order to define "qualifying improvement." That term would mean "a pattern of assessment test results, scores, or ranges of scores, determined by the board to demonstrate a student's consistent academic improvement prior to grade 12, that qualify the student for a Michigan Merit Award Scholarship."

Currently students become eligible for the Merit Award Scholarship when they earn "qualifying results" on the grade 11 MEAP tests (offered in the subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science). Under the bill, a student could earn the scholarship if he or she demonstrated "qualifying results" *or* "qualifying improvement."

In addition, the law currently specifies that a student can qualify for Merit Award Scholarships of various amounts (either \$250, \$375, or \$500) in grades 7 and 8, depending on the results he or she earns on the MEAP tests (offered in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science). The bill would retain these provisions, however it specifies that students would qualify only while in grade 8.

Analyst: J. Hunault

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.