



THE CENTER  
FOR  
CHARTER SCHOOLS  
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

# CAPITOL COMMENTS

KEY MESSAGES REGARDING CURRENT  
EDUCATION POLICY ISSUES IN MICHIGAN

## UNDERSTANDING TESTING AND ASSESSMENTS

Policymakers and educators across the country are requiring more information to help guide decisions on issues such as educator effectiveness and school quality incentives. With these high stakes decisions, it's important to examine the tools available to assess student performance, proficiency and growth.

The testing instruments used to determine if students are learning, if teachers are effective, and if districts are performing is one of the hottest issues in public education today.

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) was developed in 1969 and was designed to measure how well a student understands grade level content for grades 3-8. The MEAP has been a reliable tool to measure student proficiency on a given day.

Modern computer adaptive testing, however, provides real-time information allowing teachers to adjust classroom instruction and can accurately measure both proficiency and individual student growth over time.

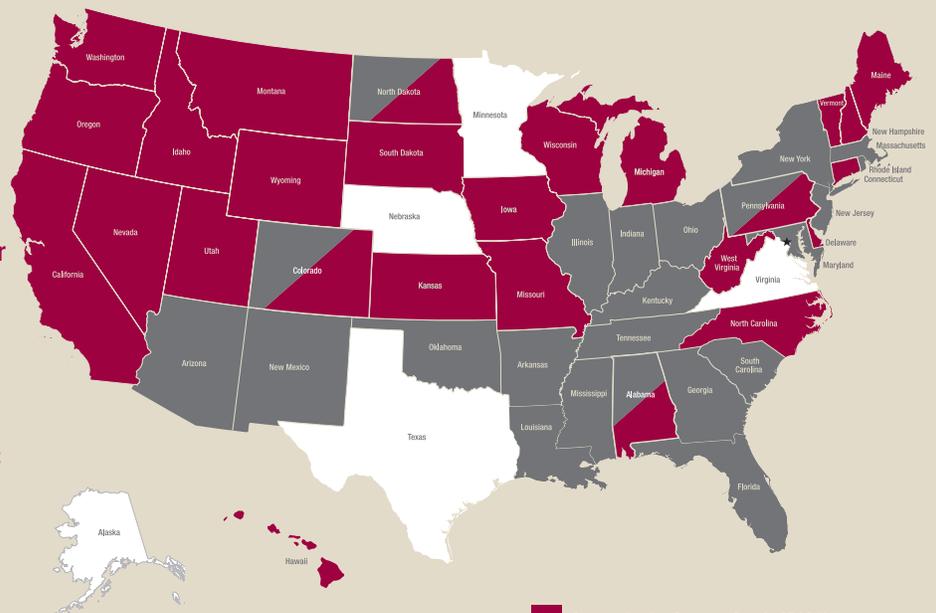
COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TESTING PROVIDES REAL-TIME INFORMATION AND CAN ACCURATELY MEASURE BOTH PROFICIENCY AND INDIVIDUAL STUDENT GROWTH.

## NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Forty-five states, including Michigan, have adopted the Common Core State Standards, which are content expectations for Math and English Language Arts for grades K-12.

States adopting the Common Core are members of either the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). These two groups received \$361 million in federal grants to develop and design the next generation of testing assessments that are aligned with the Common Core. PARCC is developing a computer **administered** test, while SBAC is developing a computer **adaptive** test.

Michigan and 30 other states are members of SBAC, which will begin implementing new computer adaptive tests in the 2014-2015 school year.



## COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TESTING

- Provides an individualized test with questions adjusted for difficulty based on each response.
- Testing generally takes place in the fall and spring, plus a mid-year assessment, which reliably measures individual student growth and isolates the school's contribution by eliminating summer gains or losses.
- Comprehensive assessment reports and real-time feedback allow teachers to immediately tailor classroom instruction.
- Levels of reports range from individual student performance to district-wide results, with demographic and group filtering.
- Results are tracked by student, fall-to-spring, year-to-year, by teacher assignment, by class, by building and by district.
- Many states and large school districts require all students to take computer adaptive tests.
- In Michigan, computer adaptive testing will soon be used by nearly 200,000 students in university-authorized charter public schools, Detroit Public Schools and schools within the Education Achievement Authority.

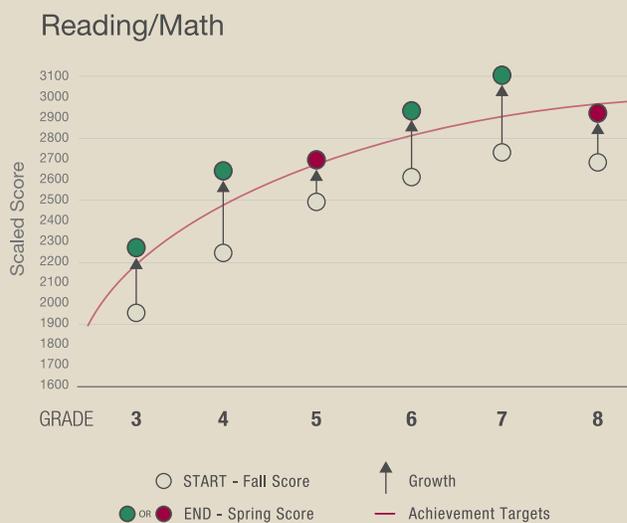
**50**  
Number of States

**9,500+**  
Number of Districts

**7.9** million  
Number of Students

## ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AT CMU

- All charter public schools administer the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and the Michigan Merit Exam (MME), as required by law.
- CMU has been assessing school performance using student growth measurements – in addition to proficiency measurements – for 10 years in our authorized charter public schools.
- Students in grades 2-8 in CMU-authorized schools began taking one of two computer adaptive tests in 2002:
  - Performance Series by **Scantron**; or
  - Measures of Academic Progress by **NWEA**.
- Since 2008, CMU has also required high school students to take the EXPLORE (8/9), PLAN (10) and ACT (11) tests in order to measure growth and college readiness. MDE has recently adopted a pilot program for EXPLORE & PLAN tests.
- Using this data and a sophisticated student growth model, CMU is able to project an individual student's expected 11th grade ACT score and start benchmarking their progress as early as second grade.



## ADDITIONAL FACTS ABOUT COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TESTING

- Student and grade level reports for computer adaptive tests are available that align to the Common Core State Standards and Michigan grade level content expectations.
- Tests in a given subject area take about an hour to complete, which in an average-sized school can be completed without difficulty using a single computer lab of 30 computers.
- Schools with a computer lab, or mobile laptop cart, and broadband internet access are able to administer the tests.
- The cost of computer adaptive testing is roughly \$10-\$15 per pupil per year.