



News Release

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2014 MICHIGAN MERIT EXAM RESULTS SHOW LONG- AND SHORT-TERM GAINS IN ALL SUBJECTS

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LANSING – Gains in all subjects, led by big jumps from 2013 to 2014 in both social studies and reading scores of 5.3 and 5.2 respectively highlight 2014 high school assessment results released today by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Amid advances in all subjects, student reading scores posted both short- and long-term increases of more than 5 percentage points, while math, writing and science results continued to show progress, social studies broke new ground in reversing a downward trend of several years, according to results of the spring Michigan Merit Exam (MME). The MME is administered annually in the spring to high school juniors.

“Michigan students are making progress,” Governor Rick Snyder said. “These improved scores reflect the hard work of the students, and also the great effort of teachers and others in our state’s schools dedicated to improvement. Our mission is to keep that focus on our students, making sure they have the rigorous education they need to be successful.”

Much of this success is rooted in the continued implementation of the Michigan Merit Curriculum in Michigan classrooms that has students learning rigorous math, science, social studies, English language arts concepts, as well as visual and performing arts, and a world language.

“The continued improvements over time show the value of requiring Michigan students taking rigorous coursework,” said State Superintendent Mike Flanagan. “Whether they learn the higher-level concepts in a traditional classroom or in a career-tech course, students are learning.”

Reading proficiency scores increased 5.2 points from 53.5 to 58.7 percent between 2013 and 2014, and 6 points and in the four years since 2010 – representing the largest long-term gain of all subjects and students tested.

Social studies scores gained over 5 points from 2013 to 2014, reversing several years of declining scores. Science scores were up nearly 3 points this year from 25.7 to 28.4 percent and a similar amount during the past four years. Writing scores increased from 49.3 to 50.8 percent in the past year and almost 4 points since 2011.

Mathematic scores showed a four year gain of 1.5 points and small increase of .2 points from 2013 to 2014.

Another positive development in the 2014 MME results were the one- and four-year gains posted in most subjects by nearly all demographic groups. African American student proficiency scores during the past four years in reading showed a 6-point gain from 23.7 to 31.3 percent.

Flanagan said, “We still have heavy lifting to do, particularly on further reducing the achievement gap, but these results show that we now are headed in the right direction among high school students who are graduating soon.”

Included in the MME each year is a free college-entrance exam for all juniors. The ACT results showed four-year proficiency gains for all students tested and 2013-2014 gains ranging from .4 to .8 points in all subjects except mathematics, which fell 1.1 points.

The slight drop in Michigan juniors meeting proficiency in ACT math impacts this year’s overall “College Readiness” score included on Governor Snyder’s Education Dashboard. The College Readiness score is the percentage of students meeting the ACT college-ready benchmarks in **all** ACT-tested subjects (English, reading, mathematics, and science).

Prior to this year, the percentage of students meeting the benchmark in all subjects had continued to rise steadily over the past four years (from 16.2 percent in 2010 to 18.1 percent in 2013).

The MME is comprised of the ACT Plus Writing® college entrance exam; WorkKeys® job skills assessments in reading, mathematics and “locating information;” and Michigan-developed assessments in mathematics, science and social students. MME subject scores are determined based upon student responses to test items from each of the individual assessments.

Parent Reports, outlining individual student achievement on the MME, have been provided to schools for each student tested. Local schools distribute this state-developed report to parents and guardians.

Career- and college-ready cut scores are used to define a student’s performance level (i.e., Advanced, Proficient, Partially Proficient, or Not Proficient).

While most high school students in Michigan participated in the MME, it was not appropriate for some students with disabilities. Michigan’s alternate assessment program, MI-Access, was given to those students.

MME Results Overview:

2011-14 Percent Proficient on Each MME Subject				
Subject/Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Reading	52.7	55.9	53.5	58.7
Writing	46.9	49.4	49.3	50.8
Social Studies	41.2	40.5	38.6	43.9
Mathematics	27.3	29.1	28.6	28.8
Science	25.5	25.8	25.7	28.4

2011-14 Percent Meeting/Exceeding ACT College Readiness Benchmarks per Subject				
Subject/Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
English	53.0	54.3	56.3	56.8
Reading	39.6	40.6	41.2	42
Mathematics	31.8	33.2	33.2	32.1
Science	22.7	23.5	23.1	23.5
College and Career Readiness (All Subjects)	17.3	17.7	18.1	17.8

MME results are available online by visiting www.michigan.gov/mme and selecting “Assessment Results.” Results by state, district, and school can be found there.

The public can find the information by school at www.mischooldata.org and selecting “Student Testing.”

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