

## **Midland County Superintendents**

Tuesday, November 25, 2025 8:00 AM

Coleman Board Office, 4823 N. Coleman Schools Drive, Coleman, MI 48618

### **I. 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.**

- **Judge Cole**

### **II. 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.**

- **Grant Murschel, Career and Technical Education Update**
- **Mark Orihel, Dave Smith, Finance Update**
- **Greg Crider, Special Education Update**
  - **Dyslexia discussion**

### **III. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

- **Other**
  - **31aa**
  - **Calendar Discussion**
  - **Lobbying Discussion**
  - **Launch Michigan's MEG (Michigan Education Guarantee)**
  - **Derecho Exercise**

### **IV. 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- **Coleman Point of Pride**

Colleagues,

Launch Michigan has released a proposal to replace the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) with a new competency-based framework called the **Michigan Education Guarantee (MEG)**. While this represents a significant shift in how we structure high school graduation requirements, it also presents major opportunities for districts to modernize pathways, increase relevance, and align learning with the needs of today's students and workforce.

## *1. Overview: MMC vs. MEG*

### **Current Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)**

- Based on **seat time** and **18 required course credits**
- Rigid sequence of mandated courses
- Limited flexibility for **CTE**, **work-based learning**, and alternative pathways
- Completion of coursework = credit
- Transcript reflects **courses taken**, not skills demonstrated

### **Proposed Michigan Education Guarantee (MEG)**

- **Competency-based**: credit awarded when students **demonstrate mastery**, not when they log hours
- Flexible pathways driven by each student's **Educational Development Plan (EDP)**
- Emphasis on **durable skills**, academics, career readiness, financial literacy, AI/data literacy, and civic engagement
- Requires:
  - Career-focused experiences in grades 6–12
  - FAFSA completion
  - Professional résumé
  - A senior **capstone project**
- Allows credit through courses **or** work-based learning, CTE, dual enrollment, portfolios, projects, assessments, etc.
- Strong alignment for **students with disabilities**, including adapted mastery demonstrations and diploma pathways valid statewide

## *2. Why This Matters: Potential Benefits for Districts*

### **A. Increased Local Control**

MEG returns authority to districts to determine:

- How mastery is demonstrated
- What counts as credit
- How pathways are structured



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## **B. Strong Workforce Alignment**

MEG elevates:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Collaboration
- Adaptability
- Digital/AI literacy
- Financial and entrepreneurial skills

## **C. Greater Relevance and Engagement for Students**

Students earn credit by **showing what they know**, not by-passing time in a seat. This supports:

- Alternative education
- CTE expansion
- Work-based learning
- Real-world application
- Personalized pacing and pathways

## **D. Significant Improvements for Students with Disabilities**

The proposal allows:

- Mastery aligned with IEP goals
- Adapted assessments and performance tasks
- Valid diploma options through age 26
- Better preparation for postsecondary employment or training

# **3. Key Challenges and Roadblocks**

## **A. Implementation Capacity**

Shifting from seat-time to mastery requires:

- Teacher training
- New assessment systems
- Rubrics and scoring calibration
- Time for performance tasks and portfolio review

## **B. Funding Needs**

Districts will need resources for:

- Local assessment design
- Professional learning
- Technology and portfolio platforms
- Transportation for CTE and work-based learning
- Career-focused staffing



### C. Accountability Redesign

The state will need to define:

- How mastery is measured statewide
- How we ensure reliability across districts
- How federal testing requirements intersect with competency-based learning

### D. Communication With Families and Postsecondary Institutions

Parents and colleges will need clarity around:

- What transcripts look like
- How GPAs, credits, and mastery demonstrations translate
- How MEG diplomas are recognized (other states have successfully navigated this)

## 4. Practical Steps for Superintendents

If MEG moves forward, districts should begin to:

1. **Review local Portrait of a Graduate frameworks**—these map directly to MEG competencies.
2. **Strengthen EDP processes** beginning in middle school.
3. **Expand career exposure and work-based learning opportunities.**
4. **Build teacher capacity** around performance assessment and evidence of mastery.
5. **Evaluate schedules** to increase flexibility for nontraditional learning experiences.
6. **Advocate collectively** for:
  - a. Adequate funding
  - b. Clear guidance – *(especially in pupil accounting and teacher certification)*
  - c. Streamlined accountability

## 5. Bottom Line

The transition from MMC to MEG is significant, but it aligns with what many of us have been advocating for years: **greater relevance, increased flexibility, stronger career alignment, and more meaningful ways for students to demonstrate what they know and can do.**

For the first time in nearly two decades, Michigan has an opportunity to move from a compliance-driven graduation system to one built around **true learning, authentic mastery, and individual pathways.**

As district leaders, our role is to:

- Evaluate the proposal honestly
- Prepare our systems
- Support our staff
- Lift up the voices of our communities
- Ensure this shift—if adopted—is implemented well and funded appropriately



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## DRAFT MICHIGAN EDUCATION GUARANTEE LEGISLATION

A bill to amend 1976 PA 451, entitled “The Revised School Code,” by amending sections 1278a and 1278b (MCL 380.1278a and 380.1278b), to create the Michigan Education Guarantee Graduation Standard, establish an oversight committee, and to repeal requirements inconsistent with the new standard.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

### Sec. 1278a. Michigan Education Guarantee Graduation Standard

1. Applicability.
  - a. Beginning with pupils entering grade 9 in the 2028–2029 school year, a pupil must meet the requirements of the Michigan Education Guarantee (MEG) Graduation Standard established under this section to receive a high school diploma from a school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy.
2. Replacement of the Michigan Merit Curriculum.
  - a. The MEG Graduation Standard shall replace the Michigan Merit Curriculum and shall be based on the demonstration of mastery of skills and competencies.
3. Skills and Competencies.
  - a. Each pupil must have a program of study that includes core academic content and career-focused education.
  - b. Each district shall determine the form and manner in which it awards credit to students for the mastery of skills and competencies.
  - c. “Credit” means verified demonstration of competency in the knowledge and skills required by the Michigan Education Guarantee, as certified by the district through approved assessments, projects, or portfolios. Credit shall not be contingent on seat time or course duration.
  - d. Each pupil must demonstrate mastery of the following skills and competencies, as established by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the concurrence of the Legislature through resolution or statute.

[THESE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE A PLACEHOLDER; THEY BORROW FROM MDE’S PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE, DEFINITIONS OF FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS, AND FRAMEWORKS FROM OTHER STATES/ORGANIZATIONS (LIKE THE DURABLE SKILLS FRAMEWORK FROM AMERICA SUCCEEDS). LAUNCH MICHIGAN IS CONVENING A WORKGROUP IMMEDIATELY TO REFINE THIS SECTION.]

- i. Academic Mastery.
  1. Students must demonstrate mastery of foundational academic skills [to be defined; recommend a baseline of reading/writing and mathematical reasoning].

2. Additionally, students must engage in a program of study that includes disciplinary literacies in science, social studies/civics, finance/economics, health and wellness, languages, and the arts (fine, performing, visual) as defined in their Educational Development Plan.
  - ii. Core Skills.
    1. Communication
    2. Collaboration and teamwork
    3. Leadership
    4. Problem solving and creative thinking
    5. Perseverance and adaptability
    6. Executive function
    7. Innovation
    8. Curiosity
    9. Self-regulation
    10. Stress management
    11. Resilience
    12. Growth mindset
    13. Metacognition
    14. Mindfulness.
  - iii. Digital and Data Literacy, Technology, and Computer Science.
    1. Privacy and security
    2. Data analysis, interpretation, and communication (including AI).
  - iv. Financial Acumen and Entrepreneurial Skills.
  - v. Civic Engagement and Leadership.
    1. Global and cultural competence
    2. Environmental stewardship
    3. Interpersonal skills.
4. Demonstrations of Mastery.
  - a. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Graduation Standard Oversight Committee created under section 1278c, shall prescribe the approved measures by which a pupil may demonstrate mastery of the skills and competencies described in subsection (3).
  - b. Demonstrations may include project-based assessments, performance tasks, portfolios, industry-recognized credentials, and other authentic demonstrations of learning. Standardized tests may be used as one measure, but shall not be the sole demonstration of competency.
  - c. For students with disabilities, demonstration of mastery shall be determined through individualized, standards-based, and accessible measures aligned with the student's individualized education program (IEP) goals or identified

supplementary aids and services. Alternate demonstrations may include modified performance tasks, portfolios, or adaptive technologies.

- d. Each pupil must demonstrate mastery of the required skills and competencies through a combination of academic courses, performance tasks, and applied learning experiences. Local districts may determine the most appropriate structure for enabling students to demonstrate mastery; course completion may serve as one method but is not required.

5. Delivery of Competencies.

- a. Each school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy shall determine how to integrate the skills and competencies into coursework and experiences that align to the state academic content standards and that allow students to obtain the skills and competencies prescribed in subsection (3). The State Superintendent, in consultation with the Graduation Standard Oversight Committee, shall provide templates and technical assistance to districts.
- b. Each pupil must have at least one experience specifically aligned to the pupil's identified future career goals, as documented in the pupil's Educational Development Plan (EDP), and for students with disabilities, in alignment with the postsecondary goals and transition plan outlined in the student's IEP.
- c. Community-Based Instruction shall be recognized as a valid form of experiential or career-focused learning under this section.
- d. For purposes of pupil accounting membership, students must be present on count day as prescribed in the pupil accounting manual, and the district must demonstrate, in a form and manner prescribed by the Department, that students are receiving a full educational program consistent with this statute. The Superintendent shall revise the pupil accounting manual to streamline pupil accounting.

6. Career-Focused Education.

- a. Each pupil must complete a sequence of career-focused education experiences during grades 9–12, which may include career and technical education (CTE) programs, dual enrollment, early/middle college, work-based learning, apprenticeships, extracurriculars, electives, or individualized project-based experiences. Each pupil must also complete at least one career-focused education experience in middle school. These experiences shall be created and tracked in the pupil's Educational Development Plan.
- b. All schools shall develop and sustain a school-wide culture of career-focused education that embeds career development and exposure into existing curriculum, connects academics to students' career interests, emphasizes transferable skills, and equips educators with strategies to integrate real-world relevance into instruction.

- c. Career-focused education experiences may include job shadows, work-based learning, CTE, dual enrollment, apprenticeships, project-based learning, classroom-embedded career connections, simulations, virtual or community-based experiences, or other applied learning opportunities that develop transferable skills and connect classroom instruction to real-world contexts.
  - d. Each pupil shall also:
    - i. Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or successor form, or an allowable exemption.
    - ii. Prepare and submit a professional résumé.
7. Educational Development Plan.
- a. Beginning in grade 7, each pupil shall develop and annually update an EDP with input from the pupil, parent or guardian, and school personnel. The plan shall be signed annually by the parent or guardian and the pupil.
  - b. The EDP shall identify the pupil's goals, career interests, and pathways, and shall guide course selection, competency demonstrations, and career experiences.
  - c. The EDP shall serve as the student's individualized learning plan and pathway to demonstrate competencies. All requirements under this section shall be tied to, and evidenced through, the EDP and Talent Portfolio.
  - d. For students with disabilities, the EDP shall be developed in alignment with the transition plan required under IDEA, ensuring coordinated goals for postsecondary education, training, or employment.
8. Senior Capstone Project.
- a. Each pupil must successfully complete a capstone experience in grade 12, aligned to the pupil's EDP. The capstone must include a portfolio of work and a culminating demonstration of readiness for postsecondary education, training, or employment.
9. Flexibility.
- a. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit a pupil's choice of pathway. A pupil may satisfy requirements through any combination of academic courses, project-based experiences, dual enrollment, CTE, work-based learning, or equivalent opportunities, provided that the pupil demonstrates required competencies.
10. On-Time Graduation.
- a. Pupils may complete these requirements in up to five years, consistent with existing state and federal graduation rate definitions. Extended graduation rates (up to six years) shall continue to apply for students requiring additional time, including those enrolled in early/middle college or alternative programs. Any

expansion of the expected graduation timeframe shall be accompanied by clear funding provisions for districts to avoid unfunded mandates.

- b. The time a student remains in high school shall be determined by the pupil's EDP and should reflect the pupil's future career goals.
  - c. Students with disabilities are eligible to earn a high school diploma upon completion of the required competencies, which may occur during high school or at any time through age 26, consistent with IDEA provisions allowing continued enrollment and services through age 26.
  - d. The Department shall develop a tiered, standards-based diploma pathway for students with disabilities that is explicitly aligned to technical, career, and employment outcomes. This pathway shall:
    - i. (i) Be aligned with the student's transition plan and postsecondary goals as defined in the IEP
    - ii. (ii) Provide alternate or adapted coursework and assessments focused on occupational readiness, applied learning, and community-based employment.
    - iii. (iii) Lead to a diploma recognized by the state as equivalent in status to the regular diploma for employment and postsecondary entry purposes.
11. Implementation and Support.
- a. The State Superintendent, in coordination with the Graduation Oversight Committee, shall issue guidance and technical assistance to support districts in implementing the MEG Graduation Standard, including:
    - i. Competency and skills toolkits with performance descriptors, calibrated rubrics, annotated student work, and teacher guides.
    - ii. A statewide moderation network to assist with measures of mastery, including cross-district scoring sessions, training, and reliability briefings.
    - iii. Definition of quality senior capstone requirements, scoring guides, and professional development modules.
    - iv. A state-supported evidence platform integrating with CEPI, MAISA, and MI Learner Wallet.
    - v. Professional learning and resources on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated assessment, and inclusive instructional practices.
  - b. The Superintendent and the Michigan Department of Education shall define "appropriate placement and certification" of educators as determined by each district to best match teacher certification and endorsements with learning experiences.
  - c. The Superintendent shall partner with business, higher education, and community organizations to expand career-focused opportunities statewide and ensure skills are aligned with career demands across all fields.

- d. The Legislature shall ensure adequate and equitable funding is provided so that all pupils, regardless of district or community, can access required experiences.
  - i. The Legislature shall establish a clear formula or appropriation mechanism to fulfill this requirement, including resources for local assessment systems, professional learning, and equity-based supports.
- 12. Effective Date.
  - a. The requirements of this section apply beginning with pupils entering grade 9 in the 2028–2029 school year. Pupils enrolled in grade 9 prior to that year remain subject to the Michigan Merit Curriculum.
- 13. Evaluation and Review Cycle.
  - a. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the Graduation Standard Oversight Committee, shall conduct a formal review of the Michigan Education Guarantee Graduation Standard and related policies at least once every five years. The review shall assess student outcomes, district implementation, and resource adequacy, and shall include consultation with the Legislature and the Governor. Following each review, the Superintendent shall submit a report and any recommended statutory or administrative updates to the appropriate legislative committees.

#### **Sec. 1278b. Rulemaking, Accountability, and Reporting**

- 1. The State Superintendent shall promulgate rules, consistent with section 1278a, to:
  - a. Define “demonstration of mastery” in collaboration with the Oversight Committee
  - b. Approve and monitor assessment and measurement systems used by districts.
  - c. Convene experts and stakeholders to develop a system of reciprocal accountability that holds all actors accountable for their role in ensuring students achieve mastery of the skills outlined in section 1278a. This system must include:
    - i. Measures at each level (state, ISD, district, and school) demonstrating student mastery of skills and completion of career-focused experiences
    - ii. [• More here.]
  - d. Modify all federal plans in accordance with state statute.
  - e. The Oversight Committee and accountability framework shall include explicit representation of special education leaders to ensure equitable implementation and evaluation across all student populations.
- 2. Districts shall annually report to the Superintendent the data required for the reciprocal accountability system once defined.
- 3. The Superintendent shall publish statewide MEG metrics, disaggregated by student subgroup, as part of the accountability system.

## **Sec. 1278c. Graduation Standard Oversight Committee**

1. Establishment.
  - a. The Graduation Standard Oversight Committee is created within the Department of Education to advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Governor, and the Legislature on the implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of the Michigan Education Guarantee (MEG) Graduation Standard.
2. Purpose.
  - a. The Committee shall serve as the primary advisory body on the development, implementation, and evaluation of the MEG Graduation Standard. Its purpose is to:
    - i. Ensure statewide coherence and fidelity of implementation across districts;
    - ii. Support reciprocal accountability among the state, intermediate school districts, and local districts;
    - iii. Promote alignment of the MEG with workforce, postsecondary, and community expectations; and
    - iv. Recommend adjustments to statute, rule, or guidance based on evidence from implementation and evaluation.
3. Membership.
  - a. The Committee shall consist of the following members:
    - i. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the Superintendent's designee, who shall serve as chairperson.
    - ii. Two members appointed by the Governor representing Michigan employers and the business community.
    - iii. Four members appointed by the State Superintendent representing teachers, school administrators, and instructional leaders.
    - iv. Two members representing intermediate school districts or regional education service agencies (ISDs/RESAs), appointed by the Governor.
    - v. Two members representing higher education institutions, appointed by the Governor.
    - vi. Two members representing parents and students, appointed by the Governor.
    - vii. One member representing special education leadership, appointed by the State Superintendent.
    - viii. One member representing the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, appointed by the Director of that department.
    - ix. One member representing the Department of Treasury or another agency responsible for postsecondary access and financial aid.

[Other representation?]

- b. In making appointments, the appointing authorities shall, to the greatest extent practicable, ensure diversity of geography, student population, and educational setting, including representation from rural, urban, and suburban districts.
  - c. Members shall serve staggered three-year terms and may be reappointed. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.
4. Meetings.
- a. The Committee shall convene its first meeting no later than January 1, 2027, and shall meet at least quarterly thereafter.
  - b. The Committee shall operate in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275, and shall make meeting materials and reports publicly available.
5. Duties and Responsibilities. The Committee shall:
- a. Advise the State Superintendent on the development of competency definitions, rubrics, and performance descriptors aligned to the MEG Graduation Standard.
  - b. Recommend processes for statewide moderation, reliability calibration, and continuous improvement of mastery determinations.
  - c. Review and make recommendations on implementation supports, including professional learning, data systems, and equity-based resource allocation.
  - d. Monitor statewide implementation of the MEG Graduation Standard, including impacts on student outcomes, equity, and local flexibility.
  - e. Issue an annual report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the State Superintendent summarizing progress, challenges, and policy recommendations.
  - f. Participate in the evaluation and review cycle under section 1278a(13) and assist in developing recommendations for statutory or administrative updates.
  - g. Identify and recommend removal of duplicative or outdated policies that conflict with competency-based implementation.
  - h. Serve as a conduit between the Department of Education and stakeholder groups to ensure two-way communication and shared ownership of the MEG Graduation Standard.

[The Committee may establish subcommittees or workgroups on assessment, career readiness, equity, or other topics as needed.]

- 6. Support.
  - a. The Department of Education shall provide administrative and staff support for the Committee and may contract for research, facilitation, or technical assistance as necessary to fulfill its duties.
- 7. Compensation.

- a. Members of the Committee shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

**Sec. 1278d. Competency-Based Education Pilot Program**

1. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall establish a Competency-Based Education Pilot Program to support early implementation of the Michigan Education Guarantee Graduation Standard.
2. The Pilot Program shall allow participating districts to apply for waivers from seat-time, course-count, or other traditional requirements as necessary to implement competency-based pathways consistent with section 1278a.
3. Pilot districts shall receive targeted technical assistance, professional learning, and additional funding to develop local assessment systems, learner evidence portfolios, and data reporting tools that align with state expectations for mastery verification.
4. During the pilot phase, participating districts may report parallel data for both the Michigan Merit Curriculum and the Michigan Education Guarantee to ensure continuity in graduation reporting and accountability.
5. The Department of Education shall identify and eliminate duplicative reporting or accountability requirements that conflict with or duplicate the Michigan Education Guarantee framework.
6. The State Superintendent shall provide an annual summary report to the Oversight Committee and the Legislature detailing pilot district participation, findings, challenges, and recommendations for statewide implementation.

**REPEALER**

Sections of MCL 380.1278a and 380.1278b inconsistent with this amendatory act are repealed.