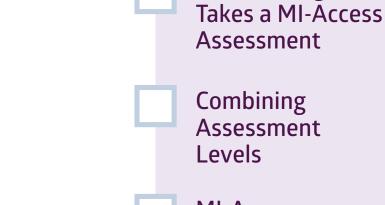# MI-Access: Who Takes an Alternate Assessment?

Relevant assessments:

- **MI-Access**
  - » MI-Access Functional Independence (FI)
  - » MI-Access Supported Independence (SI)
  - » MI-Access Participation (P)

☐ Alternate Assessment Overview

☐ Determining Who Takes a MI-Access Assessment

☐ Combining Assessment Levels

☐ MI-Access Resources

Assessment Coordinator Training Guide

Updated: September 4, 2019

MICHIGAN
Department of
Education

NOTE to Reader:

The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is comprised of a series of documents published by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to provide information to District and Building Assessment Coordinators regarding their assessment-related roles and responsibilities. This guide provides the resources and knowledge base necessary to establish sound test administration practices and procedures that will allow for the reporting of valid and reliable test results. It will introduce you to Michigan's state assessment systems in general and will link you to the people, trainings, materials, tools, and resources needed throughout the process of coordinating state-provided assessments in your district.

This document is one chapter of the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** series. The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is not meant to replace assessment-specific testing manuals, guides, training resources, or other documentation associated with each assessment program.

The web pages referenced in this document are active links. For the full URLs to these pages, please see the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide Quick Reference** chapter. In that resource you will find an interactive list, along with the full URLs, of the assessment-related web pages you will need to access, as well as:

- A preface for the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide,** which includes information on how to use the guide

- An interactive **Table of Contents** for the training guide

- A reference list of acronym definitions, and

- Important contact information

It is recommended that you keep the **Assessment Coordinator Quick Reference** readily available for future use.

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Regardless of the test being administered, MDE requires that ALL testing staff read the **Assessment Integrity Guide** and sign the **OEAA Assessment Security Compliance Form**. A signed **Assessment Security Compliance Form**, testing schedules, and training materials should be kept on file for any staff member who participates in the administration of a state assessment or handles secure test materials. A link to the **OEAA Assessment Security Compliance Form** is also provided in the **Assessment Coordinator Quick Reference** chapter of this Training Guide.

Intro

This chapter discusses the MI-Access assessment, and provides an overview on how students are selected to participate in a MI-Access assessment, by answering the following questions:

► What is the alternate assessment?

► What is the process for determining who should take a MI-Access assessment and, specifically, which one?

► Can students take both a M-STEP and a MI-Access assessment if it is appropriate?

► Where can I find MI-Access Assessment Coordinator resources?

What is the Alternate Assessment?

MI-Access is Michigan's alternate assessment program, and is based on alternate content standards. It is designed for students with the most significant cognitive impairments, for whom it has been determined that it is not appropriate for them to participate in the state's general education assessments, and whose instruction is primarily based on Michigan's alternate content standards.

What is the process for determining who should take a MI-Access assessment and, specifically, which one?

Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams determine which students should take an alternate assessment. IEP teams must use the state guidelines for participation in an alternate assessment to make this determination.

MI-Access offers three levels of assessment. IEP teams should select the level that matches the student's instructional experience. All of these levels should be considered for students who have or function as if they have a significant cognitive impairment.

■ **Functional Independence (FI)** – for students whose instructional approach places them in a Higher range of complexity of the alternate content standards and who require some basic supports to function independently but cannot work toward general content standards.

■ **Supported Independence (SI)** – for students whose instructional approach places them in a Medium range of complexity of the alternate content standards and who need ongoing supports for many major life roles.

■ **Participation (P)** – for students whose instructional approach places them in a Low range of complexity of the alternate content standards and who will require extensive ongoing support for much of their life.

Multiple guidance resources for participation in MI-Access are available on the MI-Access web page, including an **Interactive Decision-Making Tool** and an **Assessment Selection Guidelines Training** video. These resources discuss state guidelines and include a flowchart matrix for use in deciding:

» whether or not a student should take a MI-Access assessment, and, if so

» which specific MI-Access assessment type should be used to assess the student.

Another document supporting the decision-making process, also located on the MI-Access web page, is the **Guide to State Assessments**, which provides overall guidance on all the available Michigan assessments to help teams understand the full array of state assessments.

Can students take both a M-STEP and a MI-Access assessment if it is appropriate?

Yes! IEP teams may determine that a student should be assessed with the general assessment (M-STEP) in some content areas and an alternate assessment (MI-Access) in others, based on decisions made using state guidelines.

Beginning with the 2018–2019 school year, this assessment program flexibility was expanded to include adjacent levels of the MI-Access assessments. Based on a student's instructional needs, an IEP team may determine that a student take MI-Access assessments at different levels, provided the student is not taking more than a total of two levels, and provided those levels are adjacent to one another. In other words, **only** the following assessment combinations are permitted:

» M-STEP/MME + MI-Access FI

» MI-Access FI + MI-Access SI

» MI-Access SI + MI-Access P

There are several policy requirements to be aware of:

» An M-STEP assessment cannot be combined with any level of a MI-Access assessment other than the Functional Independence (FI) level.

» A student may only take adjacent levels of any assessments, or in other words, any combination of assessments other than the three previously listed,

is not permitted.

» Students may only be assessed with one type of assessment per content area.

» In grade 8, ELA and mathematics cannot be split between PSAT™ 8/9 and MI-Access FI, as the PSAT 8/9 ELA and mathematics tests are considered to be a set. Students must be administered both content areas with either the PSAT 8/9 or the MI-Access FI.

» In grade 11, ELA and mathematics cannot be split between SAT® with Essay and the MI-Access FI. Students must be administered both content areas with either the SAT with Essay or the MI-Access FI.

» Students must not be pre-identified for multiple assessment programs and/or levels in the same content area. Review the **Pre-Identification of Students for State Assessments** chapter of this training guide for more information.

For further details, see the **Assessment Flexibility** section of the **MI-Access Test Administration Manuals (TAMs)**. Be sure to review the weekly MDE **Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability** newsletter for notifications regarding when the manuals will be available.

Where can I find MI-Access Coordinator resources?

The MI-Access web page provides a comprehensive range of resources designed to assist in every facet of the assessment. The resources are listed by category to simplify your search for materials including the following:

- What's New

- Current Assessment Window

- Student Supports and Accommodations

- Participation, Supported Independence, and Functional Independence

- Reporting

- Professional Development.

- General Information

- Parent/Student