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## **Position Statement on the Michigan School Accreditation and Accountability System (MiSAAS) – Fall 2010**

On behalf of area superintendents in Barry, Branch and Calhoun ISDs and area constituent school districts, we have expressed our concerns with the development of an accountability system that replaces the current EdYES system. While the expectation of MDE staff, in the design of an accountability system, is to align a state accountability system with federal guidelines and accountability measures, the current design effort (MiSAAS) actually would precede the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that expired in 2007 and is presently receiving Congressional review. Michigan will also necessarily have to design an accountability system that meets with recent state legislative efforts enacted for school reform primarily as they apply to persistently low performing schools. Finally, the state, ISDs and local school districts are at a critical time where resources – both financial and human – are at their lowest levels in some time which significantly diminishes our capacity to implement the continuous new reform requirements. In addition, these reforms come with significant, new reporting requirements further taxing our capacity for compliance.

We have identified some specific issues of concern re: the proposed MiSAAS system:

### **Inclusion of AYP in the calculation for determining state accreditation:**

We strongly support the MASA/MAISA position that states: federal and state accountability must include multiple measures to determine accreditation. Their recommendation for the reauthorization of ESEA is to “distinguish between schools that miss one or two benchmarks as compared to schools that miss multiple targets”. If our primary goal is to improve teacher practice and student performance, we must recognize schools that are implementing significant reforms while missing one or two accountability measures as juxtaposed against schools that are neither reforming their systems nor improving results. Further, any state or federal sanctions should be applied to and in support of such reform measures. While such targets as attendance and assessment participation are important actions that we expect to improve student achievement, any state accountability system should clearly differentiate between these measures and proficiency, teacher quality and student achievement.

MDE staff state, in their rationale for the proposed MiSAAS system, that this accountability system will help parents, stakeholders and businesses better understand school improvement efforts, we strongly believe the opposite to be the case. When schools making dramatically different efforts to improve their curriculum, instruction and achievement are essentially judged the same with only one criteria – making AYP – the community is deprived from an understanding of the true reform efforts undertaken.

The Barry, Branch and Calhoun ISD schools have several examples where districts are not making AYP based on one sub-group (e.g. special education or economically disadvantaged).

performance and moves upward to meet higher benchmarks. We strongly believe it is these reform efforts and not a static measure that should determine the accreditation status of a school and/or district. If our goal in Michigan is school improvement, we should never measure solely where we are devoid of the efforts being undertaken to take us to higher goals. Michigan needs to build an accountability and accreditation system that measures some of these other, critical components of school improvement:

- Qualitative impact of professional development on teacher practice based on data
- Quantification of teachers engaged in professional development
- Support programs or scaffolding taking place to assist students in mastery learning
- Quality and quantity of parent involvement and engagement
- Recognition of other accreditation systems (AdvancED, College Boards, Coalition of Essential Schools, etc.)
- Outside resources brought to bear on reform initiatives (expertise, funding, etc.)
- Number of students that have dual-enrollment opportunities; success rate of such students in post-secondary education opportunities
- Number of students that have access to Advanced Placement courses; success rate of such students in AP offerings
- Recognition of reform efforts based on evidence-based best practices (e.g.: data coaches, instructional / content coaches, leadership PD and/or coaches, etc.); measurable impact that such reforms have on teacher practice and student performance

The above information would be much more beneficial to educators, evaluators, and our public stakeholders to measure the effort being undertaken to help our children reach their and our future goals and expectations. We support using a growth model because it would more adequately measure such improvements and reforms.

**In summary:**

- Michigan is well advised to delay implementation of a new accreditation and accountability system, beyond what has already been enacted, until the reauthorization of ESEA in Congress. We must remember that Michigan is unique among states in our implementation of NCLB through our Workbook (one of the lowest “n” sizes as well as other factors impacting the determination of AYP). Finally, until Michigan knows the expectations of the reauthorization, we could put schools in double jeopardy between the two, different accountability systems.
- Districts and school educators expect Michigan to delay such implementation until all questions have been adequately addressed and answered and when a systemic implementation plan has been developed including roles, responsibilities and sanctions/rewards.
- That MDE follow Michigan statute and create an accountability and accreditation system that does not rely solely or disproportionately on a single measure – making AYP but that distinguishes among and between schools based on their School Improvement plans and actions as well as performance.

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Determination of Accreditation Status in MI-SAAS

Not On

| Statewide Percentile Rank | PLA List | Made AYP | Met Target on Nine Additional Factors | Accreditation Result |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| High                      | Y        | Y        | Y                                     | Accredited           |
| High                      | Y        | N        | Y                                     | Interim              |
| High                      | Y        | Y        | N                                     | Interim              |
| Mid                       | Y        | N        | Y                                     | Interim              |
| Mid                       | Y        | Y        | Y                                     | Interim              |
| High                      | N        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| High                      | N        | N        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| High                      | N        | Y        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| High                      | N        | Y        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| High                      | Y        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | N        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | N        | N        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | N        | Y        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | N        | Y        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | Y        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | Y        | N        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | Y        | Y        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Low                       | Y        | Y        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | N        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | N        | N        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | N        | Y        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | N        | Y        | Y                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | Y        | N        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |
| Mid                       | Y        | Y        | N                                     | Unaccredited         |

Low = ranking less than 5th percentile

Mid = ranking greater than or equal to 5th percentile, but less than 20th percentile

High = ranking greater than or equal to 20th percentile

