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Using the MAEIA Assessments to Determine Educator Effectiveness

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Overview of the MAEIA Project – The Michigan Arts Education Instruction and Assessment (MAEIA) project has been developed by the Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC) in conjunction with Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) for the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in partnership with Michigan arts educators. The goal of the MAEIA project is to support Michigan school districts, school buildings, educators, and the public in implementing a high quality arts education program in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts for all kindergarten through grade 12 students.

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The use of these resources by educators is voluntary.

The MAEIA project has created a number of resources that will be of assistance to schools seeking to improve their instructional and assessment efforts in the arts. The resources that have been produced in the MAEIA project include:

- **Michigan Blueprint of a Quality Arts Education Program** is a goal-setting document for arts education program and school improvement purposes. The Blueprint describes the highest standards of successful arts education programs in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, along seven criteria that are aligned with the Michigan School Improvement Framework. The Blueprint is intended for use by district-level decision-makers, generalists, specialists, parents, and the community working together to improve the arts education program as part of an on-going school improvement process. The statements are aspirational in nature and provide broad descriptions of what the best available research and recommendations indicate are necessary for all students to be career and college- ready.

- **Michigan Arts Education Blueprint Research and Recommendations** is a MAEIA companion document; it provides users with supporting research documentation for each criterion and indicator in each arts discipline. It can serve as a resource to those working to improve the arts education program as part of the district and building school improvement process.

- **Michigan Arts Education Program Review Tool** is a self-study tool that educators and others can use to analyze and reflect upon the status of their districts' and schools' arts education program. Based on Blueprint criteria and indicators, the Program Review Tool can provide useful information about the nature of the arts education program and can become the basis for enhancing the arts education program in the context of school improvement.

- **Michigan Arts Education Assessment Specifications and Prototype Assessments** is a set of recommendations and models for the creation of appropriate assessments in the arts based on the Michigan Merit Curriculum and aligned to state and national standards. The Assessment Specifications communicates to a wide variety of audiences what is the important content to be assessed, as well as how that content can be assessed. The Assessment Specifications document helps all potential users understand the purposes and uses of assessment in the arts, as well as provides more specific information on how to accurately read and interpret MAEIA arts education assessments. The document also served as a model for the MAEIA model assessments at the high school level.

- **MAEIA Model High School Assessments** are a set of 139 performance events and performance tasks have been developed and are being field tested in Michigan's classrooms. The goal of these assessments is to provide teachers with standardized measures of students' performances in the arts for their use to document the achievement of students on assessments related to the teachers' instruction. The performance events are one-day on-demand performance.

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The MAEIA assessment design is that arts educators will select a few of these rich, in- course, curriculum or instructionally embedded assessments to use to document student performance periodically throughout the school year. The MAEIA assessments are designed for three levels of students—first year, second year, and third-fourth year students in each discipline, in order to provide access to beginning students while challenging the more experienced students. (See the paper from Measured Progress attached on the value and use of curriculum-embedded performance assessments.)

It is anticipated that the Model High School Assessments will be available for statewide use in the 2015-16 school year.

- **MAEIA Model K-8 Assessments** are under development during 2014-15 school year. The assessments are for use with students in grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 in each of the four disciplines. Just as with the MAEIA Model High School assessments, these assessments are being designed for arts educators' use as instruction is occurring to document the growth in learning of students. It is anticipated that about 200 performance events and performance tasks will be

"All MAEIA documents are available at: mi-arts.wikispaces.com."

created this school year. It is anticipated that the Model K-8 Assessments will be field tested in the 2015-16 school year, and made available for statewide use during the following school year.

Benefits and Uses of the MAEIA Arts Education Resources

There are several benefits and uses of the MAEIA resources:

Benefits of MAEIA Resources–Research and opinion polls of administrators, employers, parents, and students support the significant impact of an arts-rich education on the whole child, i.e. their academic, social, and civic development. The arts engage students' higher order cognitive as well as psychomotor skills. Study of the arts prepares students by providing them daily opportunities to develop and practice important skills in engaging ways:

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication and collaboration

District and school leaders can use MAEIA Resources to:

- Support district policy as well as develop district and building practices that ensure adequate time, staff, and resources for high quality arts programming for all students.
- Support implementation of sequential arts instruction, for all students, delivered by certified arts educators.
- Support the use of assessment practices and measures that yield accurate student and program information and ensure data are communicated effectively.
- Support the sustained, discipline-based, job-embedded professional learning for staff delivering arts education.
- Inform program planning, review, and improvement.

Administrators, certified arts and non-arts educators, as well as supplemental arts providers can use the MAEIA Resources to:

- Measure student achievement to gather individual student as well as summary program information
- Assist the students assessed to improve their learning and achievement in the arts.
- Use the achievement data to reflect on and improve the school and district arts programs.
- Develop awareness of the research that links increased student achievement to learning in and with the arts.
- Develop shared language and goals for arts education programs in the school, district, community, and state.
- To advance students' individual education goals ad differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Parents and families, community and cultural organizations, higher education, business and industry can use the MAEIA Resources to:

- Develop a shared understanding of the components of a high-quality arts education.
- Provide support for the continuous improvement of a district's arts education program.

Students are the ultimate beneficiaries of a high-quality arts education program. The arts develop in students' unique and essential ways of knowing and interpreting the world. Through the arts students have opportunities to share their unique expressions with others in ways that effectively mirror the real world. Students provided a high- quality arts education program are poised to be "world class" and globally competitive in college, careers, and life.

Purposes and Intended Uses for the Arts Education Assessments

The function of assessment is to measure and monitor student achievement, ideally promoting growth in achievement. These purposes are accomplished through the use of a variety of standardized and non-standardized methods. Assessment experiences take on multiple styles, address multiple modalities, domains, and areas of knowledge, as well as depths of knowledge.

"The function of assessment is to measure and monitor student achievement, ideally promoting growth in achievement."

The rationale and potential purposes of assessments for the education experience may include, but are not limited to, the following purposes, listed in no particular order:

- Determine current levels of achievement
- Serve as a basis for improving instruction for individual students and groups of students
- Use to grade students. If the teacher felt that students were able to carry out the activity without any issues about the assessment activity itself, then using students' responses for grading would make sense. If students were confused, off-target, or did not complete the activity, the item should not be used for grading.
- Create tools to frame critical discussion between stakeholders (including school administration, teachers, parents and students, as well as the community)Inform professional
- development needs
- Serve as tools for advocacy of programs and classroom needs
- Use as methods for demonstrating educator effectiveness for guiding professional learning and educator evaluation
- Motivate stakeholders
- Create a badge of honor for student and stakeholder achievements
- Encourage enduring understandings
- Demonstrate the value of using alternate methods for assessing authentic achievement

The assessments that have been developed in the MAEIA project serve several primary purposes:

"These assessments measure individual student performance for use in improving instruction and learning, as well as for potential evaluation of educators."

- Individual and Small Group Student Performance-MAEIA has provided individual and small group performance assessments intended to be used periodically throughout the school year, not just at the start and the end of the school year. Student achievement items are being developed within four grade spans- K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12. These assessments measure individual student performance for use in improving instruction and learning, as well as for the potential evaluation of educators.

- Measure Arts Educator Effectiveness-MAEIA assessments also have the potential for use in the evaluation of educators. In this case, it is recommended that the MAEIA achievement information be combined with information about educators (e.g., observational data) to comply with state laws and district policies that require growth in student achievement as a major factor in the evaluation of the performance of Michigan educators.

If all (or a representative sample) of the students taught by the educator take part in the relevant assessments, the results might be used as part of the process of gauging educator effectiveness. Of course, any important decision should use multiple sources of information, and judging educator effectiveness is no exception.

Performance information from students should be retained by educators in order to demonstrate what students have learned. Educators may wish to both select exemplars of students' performance, as well as to summarize the information and include both in an overall collection of evidence or portfolio demonstrating the impact of their instruction. This will permit them to efficiently demonstrate what their students have been able to achieve during the school year.

It is recommended that the MAEIA achievement information be combined with other information about educators (e.g., observational data) to comply with state laws and district policies that require growth in student achievement as a major factor in the evaluation of the performance of Michigan educators.

- Arts Education Program Improvement Activities – Create a source of assessment data to inform arts educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders about the status of districts' and schools' arts education programs and assist them to improve the instructional opportunities offered to students.

To determine program improvement needs, the model assessments described in this document should be used in this document should be used in conjunction with the MAEIA Blueprint and the Program Review Tool for both broad and detailed insights into how well a program is able to deliver high quality arts education to its students. The model assessments should be used with all students in grades 9-12. In larger schools or districts, a carefully drawn random sample of students at one or more grade levels can be used to obtain an estimate of overall student performance for program improvement purposes, since only an overall level of student performance at one or more points of time is necessary.

There are several considerations for educators considering the use of the MAEIA assessments for educator evaluation:

Educators should match locally determined student learner objectives (SLOs) to the state and national content standards that form the basis of the MAEIA measures. Identify the overlaps between local SLOs and the state and national content standards.

Educators should review the MAEIA measures that best match locally determined SLOs to select the MEAIA assessment that fit best with the planned instruction for students.

Using the MAEIA Arts Education Assessments for Educator Evaluation

The MAEIA assessments represent a "new, old-fashioned method for judging student growth" (and thus, can serve as one means of gauging educator effectiveness).

"The MAEIA assessments represent a "new, old-fashioned method for judging student growth."

The MAEIA assessments represent a pool of potential topics that arts educators may be addressing in their classrooms. This approach to assessment is different than the traditional survey test in that it is not expected that all teachers will teach all of the skills assessed by the pool of MAEIA measures in a discipline. Instead, teachers will select from the pool the assessments that match their instruction and use them when instruction occurs at different points during the school year. It is anticipated that teachers might select three, four, five, six, seven, or perhaps even eight from among the 35 available performance measures (events and tasks).

Also, unlike traditional tests, teachers will not spend inordinate time and effort in "test preparation" activities. Instead, they will teach the skills measured by the assessments, and then use each performance measure during or following that instruction. There will be no pre-testing and post-testing, since these are performance measures for which such a model would make little sense. The presumption is that without instruction, students would not be able to perform well on the assessments, so that if they perform well at the conclusion of the assessment, it is due to effective instruction and meaningful achievement.

Unlike traditional tests, where the only "record" of student performance is a set of multiple-choice test answers, in these cases, the records of student achievement are actual performances—singing/playing, composing, creating, movement, acting, and drawing/painting. The performances will be audio recorded, video recorded, or viewed through actual samples of student artwork. Thus, the extent of their achievement will be readily viewable and discernable.

How to Use the Results for Educator Effectiveness

Determine when during the school year to use each planned measure, so as to appropriately embed the MAEIA measures within the planned instruction for use in documenting student learning and achievement.

Review the assessment results that are collected to determine if and how the results can be used to document growth in student achievement and learning. The following are some suggested steps:

1. If an educator feels that an assessment represents a good assessment of students (that is, that students understood what to do and were able to respond to the assessment), then the assessment results may be good measures of the current achievement of students. This is essential in the 2014-15 school year for the MAEIA high school assessments because these measures are being field- tested and may need to be revised based on field test information.

2. Assuming that the MAEIA assessments seemed to work, teachers can select students' responses to represent their work within the class in order to show what the class as a whole as well as individual students were able to do. For example, teachers can select examples of student work from each marking period to illustrate changes in students' work over the school year. The teacher might select students who:

    - Performed at an exceptional level
    - Once performed marginally in the Fall, who later did exceptional work
    - Struggled initially to perform who are now doing acceptable (or better) work Struggled but were still able to complete the assessment
    - Who still need help and how the teacher is working with them

3. Use other sources of achievement data (e.g., other measures or indicators of achievement) as well:

    - Performance on traditional tests and quizzes
    - Student self-reports and reflections on their performances
    - Student performance in external arts-related activities, such as band or orchestra festivals, drama, dance recitals, or visual arts exhibitions
    - Student participation and performance in community arts-related activities outside of school
    - Student post-secondary arts education participation
    - Student course enrollments
    - Student effort

- Collect instructional practices information that correlates with student achievement information:

    - Teacher-developed narratives to show teacher practice to accompany the student assessment results described above, to show how instructors worked or are working with different groups of students to help them achieve the performances that the MAEIA assessments have documented.

"For more information on SLOs, examine this website which contains resources: http://www.gtlcenter.org/search/node/student/learning objectives."

These narratives might be enhanced with video of the teacher working with the entire class, sub-groups of students, and/or individual students. Thus, the achievement results could represent "proof of concept" for educator assertions of effectiveness to show what they did to help students achieve at the levels shown by the MAEIA measures Video or audio recordings of the teacher providing instruction—to the entire classroom, to groups of students, and to individual students

- Documentation by the teacher of the remedial assistance and support provided to groups and individual students.
- Observation of the teacher providing instruction, conducted by observers who understand how the arts are to be taught, and how arts educator effectiveness can best be documented. Schools should be able to demonstrate the preparation of observers (e.g., building-level administrators) to understand and appropriately observe arts instruction.
- Instructional or lesson plans
- The teacher and the school administrator can use this work as one piece of evidence of student learning and achievement. These achievement data along with appropriate observational data should be used in the overall evaluation of an educator.
- The goal of such educator evaluation should be primarily improvement of educator practice.

"Collect instructions practices information that correlates with student achievement information."

Cautions in the Use of the MAEIA Arts Education Assessments

There are several important things to keep in mind about the MAEIA assessments:

- For the 2014-15 school year-Remember, this is the first time the MAEIA Model High School assessments have been used with students. The assessments may have issues that prevent students from showing what they have learned and can do (it is the purpose of field testing to uncover and correct these issues).
- The assessments as written may not fit well with the instruction planned and implemented by the educator
- Even if the assessment item worked well and fits with the educator's instruction, no single MAEIA assessment should be used to make important decisions about educators or students. This is why so many measures are provided for each discipline.
- No one measure should be used as the sole basis for any important decision about students, educators or educational programs. If the MAEIA assessments are used for determination of educator effectiveness, only the students taught by that educator should participate in the assessment and the assessment should focus only on knowledge and skills being taught by the educator. This means that the educator should select assessments that match instruction, and use them when instruction has taken place.

"Even if the assessment item worked well and fits with the educator's instruction, no single MAEIA assessment should be used to make important decisions about educators or students."

- If the assessments are being used for educator effectiveness, the MAEIA arts education assessment information should be supplemented with additional measures of student performance such as student portfolios, student-reported accomplishments, observations of classroom teaching, and group and individual student performance, Each type of information should be examined together to reveal a more accurate level of the student's achievement.
    - The MAEIA Program Review Tool results can be an important determiner of whether the arts education program that is in place in a school or district provides a strong enough backdrop for quality instruction to occur. If arts educators are teaching in a grade level where important resources are not present (nor were present in previous grades), students have not been exposed to high quality arts education in prior grade levels, class loads are very high, or levels of student participate in arts education experiences on a limited basis, it may not be appropriate to use the MAEIA arts education assessment results to judge educator effectiveness.
        - For example, it is not fair to expect a sixth grade music educator—the first trained music educator that a group of students has experienced in their grade K-6 education—to be able to accomplish as much with their students in sixth grade as a sixth grade music educator teaching in another school district where such music education specialists are employed at each grade Kindergarten through grade 5. This is no different than would be the case for content areas such as mathematics or reading.

Summary

There are many aspects to gauging educator effectiveness in any content area, but especially in the arts. While the resources created by the MAEIA project can assist in this effort (such as the Blueprint, the Program Review Tool, and the Model Assessments), it is essential that these resources be used in a thoughtful manner so that they contribute to improving instruction and increase student achievement, thereby improving the achievement of students. To assure that students achieve important knowledge and skills, and that educators are most effective, requires a high-quality arts education program staffed with skilled arts educators and provided to students in appropriately equipped classrooms with adequate materials and supplies. The MAEIA resources will help Michigan schools assure that students have these experiences and are able to learn at desired levels.

Glossary

Growth measures – Achievement measures capable of showing changes in student performance.

In-course assessment – These are assessments that a teacher can use in with instruction already planned to collect student performance information related to the instruction provided by the teacher, also called curriculum-embedded performance measures or instructionally-embedded assessments.

Learner – The individual whose growth in achievement is being monitored. This usually refers to students, although in the context of educator evaluation, it may also include a teacher or administrator seeking to improve their practice.

Model assessments – These are assessments that users can use as is, or can be modified to better fit the needs of the educators using them. For example, the works of art used in a MAEIA arts assessment might be changed to better fit the instructional plans and course content of the teachers who selected the assessments, without affecting the overall technical quality and utility of the assessments.

Standardized assessment – These are measures of student performance with a pre- defined set of assessment administration procedures, a defined set of student products, to be evaluated using a pre-defined set of teacher scoring rubrics. These assessments have been field tested and refined, based on this field testing and scoring processes used.

Curriculum-Embedded Performance Assessment for Deeper Learning and Accountability December 2013

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The focus on college and career readiness in K-12 education represents a tremendous opportunity – and a comparable challenge – to adopt curricula, instructional practices, and assessment systems that promote deeper learning and higher---order cognitive and non---cognitive skills. More than ever, the time is ripe for curriculum---embedded performance assessment.

Rather than requiring students to select a response from two or more options, performance assessment asks students to apply their knowledge and skills in creating some form of product, presentation, or demonstration focused on key aspects of academic learning. In the context of 21st century skills the term "performance assessment" commonly refers to substantive activities—either short---term, on--- demand tasks or curriculum---embedded, project---based tasks that yield reliable and valid scores. Products can be extended writing, research reports, presentations, and works of art, performances, and more.

Performance assessment can measure proficiency and mastery in accountability testing, competency--- based instructional programs, and badging. When curriculum---embedded—as part of discrete lessons/units or whole project---based programs—it can promote/gauge deeper learning, which is where we see the greatest potential for transforming education and student outcomes. Models range from application for selected standards, as in Ohio's Performance Assessment Pilot Project (OPAPP), to immersive, school-wide programs throughout the year, as practiced by several networks, such as schools using Quality Performance Assessment, a program of the Boston---based Center for Collaborative Education. Of course, project---based learning would logically make use of such assessment approaches.

We envision curriculum---embedded assessments (CEPAs) as instructional units that include multiple learning and evidence---gathering activities, some of which may lead to products or performances that are evaluated for formative purposes and some that are scored for summative purposes. There is growing belief that accountability assessment systems must be broadened to include such locally administered, curriculum---embedded performance assessments. While much of what is considered "core knowledge" can be assessed by traditional summative tests, they address higher---order skills either inadequately or not at all. Fortunately, curriculum---embedded performance assessment can address these skills and are catching on, as they are now practiced in a growing number of schools across the country.

Here is a list of possible steps a state could follow to promote performance assessment that is both curriculum---embedded and a local component of accountability testing. The approach capitalizes on the valuable lessons from the past. Full implementation could take three to five years.

The state posts models online, tried and true CEPAs, each calling for multiple, individual, scorable products closely aligned to standards, with a total summative score range of at least 20 points for each CEPA. The CEPAs use materials and other resources readily available in schools, homes, or online. The posting also includes the posting also includes sample student work, scoring rubrics, and specifications for the CEPAs.

Districts or schools decide the extent to which they want to embed performance assessment in their instructional programs (from selective to immersive) and implement accordingly.

3. Teachers use the state-provided CEPAs in their own instruction and as models for ones they develop themselves to submit to the state for review. The state also conducts professional development training sessions to build teacher capacity in performance-based instruction and assessment, using online and train-the-trainer or coaching models
4. The state reviews, selects, rejects, and revises the teachers' CEPAs and/or provides teachers with feedback on their submissions.
5. The state selects high-quality CEPAs for pilot testing, collects associated student work, and then posts the CEPAs, rubrics, development, vetting, field testing, and posting sequence is ongoing.
6. After a large number of tried-and-true CEPAs have been made available to the field over a period of a year or so, the state conducts a pilot of a CEPA component of its state-testing program. It asks each school to select and implement a CEPA of its choice at a particular grade.
7. Teachers score the resulting student work and submit the scores to the state. (An alternative approach would have the state holding back some CEPAs, not posting them, and releasing them just before they are to be administered. However, coordinating their administration with instructional sequences in schools would able to avoid such security measures.)
8. Each school identifies a low-, mid-, and high-performing student for each CEPA and submits the work of those students to the state via an electronic portfolio platform. The teachers' scoring for those Students is audited (i.e., the student work is rescored by content specialists.
9. Audit scores are sent back to the schools, and local personnel adjust scores of their students to be consistent with the "benchmarks" obtained through the audit process. Additional auditing can be accomplished by evaluating the consistency between student performance on CEPAs and other accountability measures.
10. The next year, while the state continues to build teacher capacity and provide supporting resources, it requires schools to administer three CEPA units and follow the same audit procedures.
11. The results of the performance component (the three CEPA units) are combined with those of the on-demand assessment component, thereby contributing to both student- and school-level results.
12. On an ongoing basis, states support and supply resources for creating learning networks that build and spread educator capacity to strengthen instructional practice by creating and using elective performance assessments.

Despite the substantive benefits offered by curriculum-embedded performance assessment, substantial challenges exist, perhaps the foremost of which is the need for professional development to build teacher capacity. Unfortunately, this need arises at a time when resources to help educator transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are stretched thin. Moreover, CCSS-driven professional development focuses on content and instruction, not assessment. Nevertheless, as illustrated by OPAPP's and CCE's work, it is possible to implement effective CEPA-related professional development.

Other challenges relate to all-too-commonly held misperceptions that curriculum-embedded performance assessment (1) is too time consuming, (2) represents an additional commitment disconnected from the required curriculum, (3) is less reliable than multiple-choice testing, and (4) cannot depend upon what is considered too-subjective human scoring for data-driven decision making. These are, indeed, misperceptions that can be readily addressed through professional development and communications citing measurement principles and relevant evidence.

The outcome of curriculum-embedded performance assessment as described above would be greatly enhanced classroom instruction and assessment and a far richer performance component to accountability assessments than those currently being implemented or developed. Additionally, all-important student engagement would dramatically improve.