

Opening Thoughts



Ron Rizzo, Ph.D.
Director

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! January holds special significance for us as we celebrate *School Board Appreciation Month*. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those Board members who serve on behalf of the families and children who attend their schools. The week of January 22 is also *National School Choice Week* and we celebrate the opportunity to choose the school that best fits the needs of our children. The 300+ charter schools in the State of Michigan attest to the fact that parents DO want choice, and they are exercising that right on a daily basis.

The middle of January is also significant because it marks the mid-way point in the school year. NWEA-MAP winter testing is in full swing, and the State M-STEP testing will begin in a few short months. This newsletter contains valuable information and guidance on assessment as well as an invitation to a special workshop to be held in February.

Sincerely,

Ronald S. Rizzo, Ph.D.
Director



Questions? Contact Ron Rizzo at RonaldRizzo@ferris.edu or (231) 591-5807

16th Annual Spring Briefing



Mark Your Calendar!

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

**Your Attendance
is Requested**

Please join us for our **16th Annual Spring Briefing** as we celebrate 20 years as a public school academy authorizer!

Wednesday, March 7, 2018
Crowne Plaza Lansing West
Lansing, Michigan

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Lunch Provided

Morning Session: Numerous topics relative to FSU charter schools

Afternoon Pullout Sessions:

- The Performance Center (Epicenter) Target: Board Members/ESP Members
- State Accountability Target: Administrators/ESP Members

Who Should Attend?

Board members, School Leaders, Epicenter users, Assessment Coordinators, Curriculum Directors, and management company representatives are encouraged to attend.

Note: Board members who attend will receive one (1) Professional Development Credit on behalf of their board.

Who Should Attend?

- Board Members
- All School Leaders
- Epicenter Users
- Assessment Coordinators
- Curriculum Directors
- Management Company Representatives

Look for an Invitation Coming Soon!



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Questions? Contact Ron Rizzo at RonaldRizzo@ferris.edu or (231) 591-5807

Greetings from the Associate Director



Ron Schneider
Associate Director

Changes in ACT WorkKeys Assessments

Greetings!

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and are back to having a positive impact on our students' educational experiences.

I want to make sure that everyone understands the changes in this year's ACT WorkKeys Assessments. WorkKeys remains a required State of Michigan assessment for 11th grade students. Even if you do not work with high school students, it is helpful to keep in mind the skills assessed on WorkKeys. In the past, Michigan 11th grade students took three WorkKeys assessments: Applied Math, Locating Information and Reading for Information. Beginning this spring, on April 11, 2018, Michigan 11th grade students will take these three WorkKeys assessments: Workplace Documents, Applied Math and Graphic Literacy. These are paper/pencil tests that take 55 minutes for each assessment. Schools will need to schedule three hours that will include a 15-minute break.

The Applied Math assessment measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning and problem-solving techniques for situations that actually occur in today's workplace. When I work with teachers at all levels the skills and activities we focus on mirror those areas. All teachers need to be creating and utilizing activities that include real-life scenarios and prompts connected to student-created answers and deliverables that solve relevant problems, predict results, and indicate whether a student can demonstrate mastery of the skills the activity focused on.

Workplace Documents is a new assessment that measures the skills people use when they read and use written text like memos, letters, directions, policies, regulations, etc. Preparation for this assessment must focus on informational reading, students creating summaries, how to prioritize concepts and information, presentations, research, etc. It is important to emphasize all of the skills that are addressed in your overall writing process instruction, writing across the curriculum, and students teaching students.

Graphic Literacy will measure the skills needed to locate, understand, and use the information related to workplace graphics. Students need to practice using charts, graphs, diagrams, floor plans, etc. so they understand, and can share the information gathered through workplace graphics. Teachers need to intertwine these skills into classroom activities.

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Questions? Contact Ron Schneider at RonaldSchneider@ferris.edu or (231) 591-5803

Continued – Changes in ACT WorkKeys Assessments

Students are given Level Scores from <3-7 that is based on their accuracy of answers converted into a Scale Score for each assessment. That means students will be given three separate Level Scores. Students with all three Level Scores of “6” or higher are awarded Platinum status on their National Career Readiness Certificate. Scores of Level 5 = Gold, Level 4 = Silver and Level 3 Scores earn the student a Bronze Certificate.

ACT WorkKeys is a career readiness instrument and results should not be confused with the SAT, which is a college readiness assessment. Both tests need to be promoted and students need to practice questions and activities that not only address the tested skills but are also presented in similar formats. This practice begins in elementary school grades and must carry through all students’ high school careers on a regular basis. Schools should be reviewing their ACT WorkKeys data to locate areas that need to be addressed with curricular or instructional modifications.

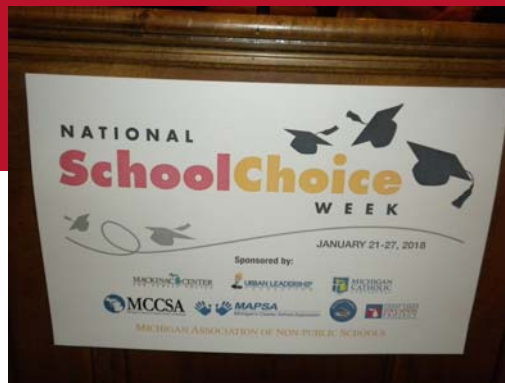
Good luck on all of your Spring 2018 assessments!

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Schneider,
Associate Director

Michigan Collegiate High School Recognized at the State Capitol

Photo Gallery at the State Capitol



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Continued – Photo Gallery at the State Capitol



Assessment Newsletter

Happy 2018!

I hope the start of the new year has been uneventful and a reminder that fresh starts are always exciting and full of life. Here's to a great 2nd half of the 2017-2018 school year!

Assessment Information:

NWEA mapGROWTH

The winter window is in full swing, and I am hoping that we will not have the same technical difficulties that we had last fall. If all goes smoothly, the window will close on February 7, and I should be able to distribute winter assessment summaries by the end of the month.

A couple of reminders for the winter window:

***Scores:** If you are transitioning 2nd graders from the MPG to the mapGROWTH, do not be discouraged if there is a dip in scores. That is quite common (think what happened to your fall 2nd grade scores). I am working with NWEA closely to make sure a switch will not adversely affect your overall growth scores in the spring.

***Accommodations:** The rule of thumb is to use and provide the same accommodations for students that you would for the M-STEP. However, please use the human read aloud option **sparingly and only in extreme cases**. This is actually the one accommodation NWEA cautions against because of the high risk of introducing bias. The text to speech option was made available for this testing window, and that should be utilized for those students that may benefit from that accommodation.



Upcoming Events

January 8

NWEA mapGROWTH Winter Window Opens

February 7

NWEA mapGROWTH Winter Window Closes

Applying Reports 2.0: NWEA Professional Development at the Crowne Plaza Lansing West

NWEA™ mapGROWTH™ Testing Windows

Fall:

September 9 – October 11, 2017 **DONE. GREAT JOB!**

Winter:

January 8 – February 7, 2018

Spring:

April 9 – June 8, 2018

M-STEP

The time for preparing for the Spring M-STEP testing is upon us. Please make sure you are reading the Spotlight regularly (see side bar 📖) as important dates will start coming up quickly.

Initial Material Orders and Pre-ID of students opened on January 8th. Initial orders will be filled based on students pre-identified on the secure site as of **5:00 pm on February 13**. The instructions for how to go through that process were in the [December 14th Spotlight](#).

Important Note for 2018: Students in grades 5 and 8 with an IEP that requires a **MI-Access science test should not take the 2018 M-STEP Science Field Test. These students will not be administered a science test in 2018.** Unassign these students from the M-STEP in the Secure Site. During the Verification of Not Tested window, a Not Tested reason must be entered for these students in order to ensure they do not count against your school's participation rate in accountability.

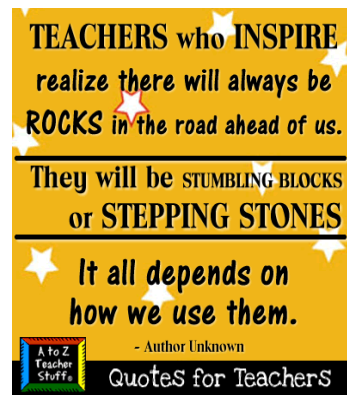
Professional Development

SAVE THE DATE: Registration is open for the NWEA™mapGROWTH™ Professional Development Session at the Crowne Plaza Lansing West on February 7, 2018. This session will focus on the reports available, with special emphasis on the newest report: Student Profile Report. This will be a hands-on session, using your own data and focusing on taking that data and applying it in your classroom. The targeted audience will be teachers and instructional coaches.

Don't forget about our partnership with the Grand Valley State University Charter Schools Office to allow educators employed at Ferris-authorized academies to attend events free of charge. I will be forwarding their twice-a-month update, so please be on the lookout. Their current list of offerings is live on their website: <http://www.gvsu.edu/cso/professional-learning-96.htm>.

EdYes!/School-District Self-Assessment Update

As you know, the yearly completion of the EdYes!/School-District Self-Assessment is no longer required by the State of Michigan. However, this has become an integral part of our Mid-Contract Review Process, as well as our Reauthorization Process. Therefore, from 2018 on, only schools **that will be undergoing a Mid-Contract or Reauthorization Review will be required to submit this document in Epicenter**. We hope that this will still allow us to use a valuable tool for systems improvement, but take some burden off your plate as well. We will be updating those tasks in Epicenter shortly.



Notes

Please make sure you are **critically** reading the Spotlight each week. There are constant tips, tricks, and updates to next springs testing gauntlet each week. You can find the most recent, as well as archived issues [here](#).