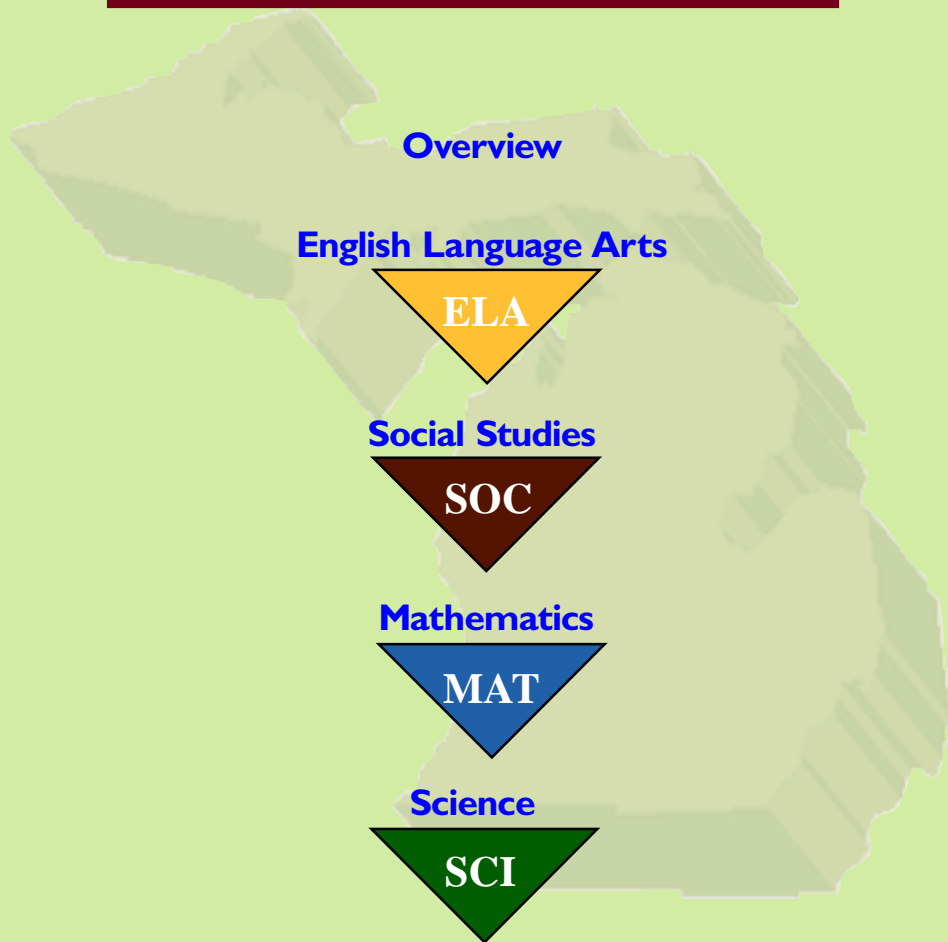
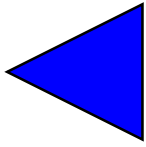


Content Standards & Draft Benchmarks

Content Areas





CONTENT STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS

At its July 19, 1995, meeting, the Michigan State Board of Education unanimously adopted the model content standards for curriculum. The content standards provide descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in the subject areas of English language arts, social studies, mathematics and science. In addition, benchmarks in each of the content areas were drafted to further clarify the content standards. The standards and benchmarks are not a state curriculum, but are specifically designed to be used by local districts as they develop their curricula.

The model content standards for curriculum and accompanying draft benchmarks will assist in the development of quality comprehensive local curricula, foster local diversity in establishing high quality learning expectations, and give parents, as customers within an education marketplace, an accountability tool. In addition, they will serve as a basis for revisions and new test development for the MEAP and High School Proficiency Tests. They will provide a common denominator to determine how well students are performing and will assure that all students are measured on the same knowledge and skills using the same method of assessment.

Model Content Standards for Curriculum

The model content standards for curriculum were revised, based upon public input, by writing teams in each of the content areas. The Curriculum Framework Joint Steering Committee which includes representatives from business, education, government, professional organizations, and labor was extensively consulted in the development and revision of the standards. The State Board also made revisions to the standards during its July 19, 1995, meeting.

Benchmarks

The draft benchmarks provide indicators of student expectations at various developmental levels including elementary, middle school, and high school. The working draft benchmarks are the most current versions and represent the efforts made by teams of subject area specialists with input from over 2,000 Michigan citizens.

Field reviews on the benchmarks were held to gather comments from teachers, parents, administrators, and community members. Additionally, the benchmarks have been reviewed for consistency with the model content standards for curriculum. The department continues the process of field testing the benchmarks at the Curriculum Framework projects' school demonstration sites.

SOC.II.1.LE.1

SOC. Social Studies
(Subject Area)

II. Geographic Perspective
(Content Strand)

1. All students will describe, compare, and explain the locations and characteristics of places, cultures, and settlements. (People, Places and Cultures) (Content Standard)

LE. Later Elementary

1. Locate and describe cultures and compare the similarities and differences among the roles of women, men and families. (Later Elementary Benchmark)

Because the benchmarks are continuously being revised to further clarify the standards and reflect the learning needs of Michigan's students, districts should consult electronic versions in order to ensure that they are working with the most current revisions. The model content standards for curriculum and the working draft benchmarks are available through the Internet on the Department of Education's gopher server (gopher://gopher.mde.state.mi.us), and through the World Wide Web (<http://cdp.mde.state.mi.us>).

Please note: The standards and benchmarks have been coded so that districts can more easily refer to them in their curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development activities. The numbering system will be useful as districts conduct discrepancy analyses as part of the continuous school improvement decision-making process. One system for numbering has been applied to all of the content standards and benchmarks in an attempt to provide consistency and facilitate curriculum alignment.

The numbering system begins with the subject area. English language arts is assigned the code of [ELA](#); Mathematics, [MAT](#); Social Studies, [SOC](#); and Science, [SCI](#). The first numeral in the code is a Roman numeral; it identifies the content area strand. The second numeral is an Arabic numeral; it identifies a content standard. The letters that follow the content standard signify cluster levels such as: E (elementary), EE (early elementary), LE (later elementary), MS (middle school), and HS (high school). The third numeral is another Arabic numeral; it identifies a benchmark.

The coding system has been used to identify standards and benchmarks in the sections on assessment and teaching and learning. Please note that although one coding system is used, each set of content areas and benchmarks has some unique characteristics. For instance, the English language arts standards and benchmarks do not identify strands. It is very important to study the standards and benchmarks carefully so they can be used to their full advantage.