



MASSP

Michigan Association of
Secondary School Principals

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MASSP Board of Directors Position regarding proposed Michigan Merit Core (December 1, 2005)

On December 1st, the MASSP Board of Directors voted to support the recommendations of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for a Michigan Merit Core **in concept**. We understand that these recommendations are just the starting point in a legislative process that will go well into 2006. As the recommendations go into the legislative process the Board of Directors of MASSP directed staff to communicate to legislators there are some things that we feel are nonnegotiable.

MASSP strongly believes that the majority of high school students should be required to take four years of language arts instruction ensuring they have skills to read informational materials as well as classic literature and have the ability to communicate in writing. We also believe the majority of students should be required to complete four years of mathematics giving them skills in reasoning and abstract thinking. We insist that the Department of Education move quickly to define the content of the named courses in their Michigan Merit Core recommendations so there is a clear understanding of terms and expectations within the named required course. With these definitions, meaningful discussions can take place regarding the integration of these content standards into other subject areas allowing for a variety of instructional options.

We fear that the tyranny of the exception will drive this discussion and erode the effort to increase academic expectations for the majority of our students. It is time expectations are put in place for the majority of our students.

We support the Superintendent's recommendation that students should be required to take a math content course during their senior year. There is a concern by our Board for financial support for this senior year expectation.

We support the recommendation that each and every student be required to complete the Michigan Merit Curriculum to compulsory school age, currently age 16.

It is the belief of the Association, by Board action, for our children and our state to thrive in the future, we must encourage all graduating high school students to strive for a technical certificate or 2 year/4year college diploma. The Board of Directors believes there is a sense of urgency for Michigan to mandate expectations for our students in the areas of language arts and mathematics. We realize the Legislative process shall determine the extent of these and other requirements.