



Letter from Supporting Organizations

More than 10 years ago, Michigan adopted the nation’s first online learning requirement for high school graduation. This policy recognizes the importance of teaching students how to learn effectively in new environments, a skill that is essential for future lifelong learning.

As the choices have continued to grow, online course enrollments in Michigan have increased exponentially. Online learning can be a powerful option to help students address a variety of needs, but a large number of schools appear to use this innovative delivery model only for low-achieving students. Others have not yet developed sufficient internal systems to support students enrolled in online courses adequately. Thus, academic success hasn’t always kept pace, and too many students are failing their online courses. In fact, performance rates are declining. We hope this guide will help turn that trend around.

The *Administrator Guide to Online Learning* is intended to help administrators at all levels plan and make practical decisions, regardless of their online program’s course provider. The subject matter was compiled to support administrators in building and maintaining successful online learning options to meet the needs of their students and enrich the learning culture of their school or district. The contents include discussion of legislative requirements, financial considerations, and pros and cons for online learners. Topics such as implementation issues, the administrator’s role, instructional leadership, and student supports are fortified with best practices. A robust collection of free, research-based resources is provided as well.

We hope you find this guide beneficial in answering a range of questions about online learning and helpful when you need additional resources and references for a more in-depth study of how to develop and maintain successful online programs. As a collective library, our series of guides inform stakeholders about best practices and, ultimately, increase the number of students who succeed when taking online courses.



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