Michigan Virtual Plans and Benchmarks for the 2019-20 School Year

This report is being submitted in fulfillment of the following legislative directive:

The Michigan Virtual University shall provide a report to the legislature not later than November 1 of each year that includes its mission, its plans, and proposed benchmarks it must meet, including a plan to achieve the organizational priorities identified in this section, in order to receive full funding for 2020-2021.

Mission: Advance K-12 digital learning and teaching through research, practice, and partnerships.

Test, Evaluate Tools

Organizational Priority
2(a)(i) - Test, evaluate, and recommend as appropriate new technology-based instructional tools and resources.

Plan
Building upon the efforts from 2018-19, *Michigan Virtual* will develop a mobile application that serves to help students become successful online learners by providing useful content for students, mentors, and parents. Student content will be focused on helping students understand the behaviors and attitudes necessary to be successful online learners. Content available to mentors through the application will provide information to help these individuals better serve the online students with whom they are working. The content available to parents will provide useful guidance on how to help support their children and how to collaborate with mentors in support of their children. The mobile application will be made available for use on mobile platforms such as smartphones and tablet computers as well as being available for use through a website interface.

With the advent of new tools for creating immersive virtual and augmented reality experiences for K-12 education, *Michigan Virtual* will explore options to deliver these types of experiences to both student and professional learning audiences. Creating 3D environments and the delivery through new cost effective tools will provide an opportunity for schools to bring unique experiences to a broad range of students and teachers.

Working with students and teachers, *Michigan Virtual* will explore opportunities to capture co-curricular activities for out-of-school work in a comprehensive learner record. A comprehensive learner record can record the recognition of standards, competencies, badges, and micro-credentials, among other recognitions of learning. This will allow students and educators to share artifacts of learning, such as work done outside of the classroom, or alternative learning models such as delivery through online or blended, with both their schools and future employers.

To better serve educators looking for quality educational tools to meet all their needs, *Michigan Virtua*l will publish a blog series focused on educators who are utilizing technology in the classroom to serve the needs of their students. This series will showcase how teachers are using various tools in their classrooms and their recommendations on what they are finding useful.

Michigan Virtual will also host a podcast series designed to explore topics in educational innovation, digital learning, educational technology, and instructional design. The podcasts will include guest interviews with classroom teachers, K-12 thought leaders and researchers, educators engaged with *Michigan Virtual* through different partnerships, and *Michigan Virtual* instructional designers.

Benchmarks

1. Develop and pilot a mobile application that can be used by students, parents, and mentors to help educate and support online learners by June 2020.
2. Explore and test VR technologies and produce written recommendations for how these technologies may be applied to K-12 settings.
3. Participate in IMS Global's technical project group around comprehensive learner record systems.
4. Host a series of at least 12 blog posts, approximately three per quarter, from educators highlighting their use of technology tools in the classroom.
5. Produce four digital learning podcasts by April 30, 2020 and four additional podcasts by September 30, 2020.

Research, Design, Recommend Virtual Delivery Models

Organizational Priority
2(a)(ii) - Research, design, and recommend virtual education delivery models for use by pupils and teachers that include age-appropriate multimedia instructional content.

Plan
Over the past few years, *Michigan Virtual* conducted research that focused on various aspects of online learning. While the resulting reports of these studies have value standing alone, there is a need to distill the essential findings of these studies and make them available to education practitioners throughout the state of Michigan. *Michigan Virtual* will conduct a comprehensive review of research from the past six years and produce resources in various formats (recorded webinars, presentations, blog posts, videos, etc.) that present the essential findings of past research in a way that can be put into action by school leaders, teachers, mentors, and students.

Michigan Virtual will also continue a collaboration with researchers from Boise State University, Dr. Kerry Rice and Dr. Andy Hung, on using course data to develop early warning predictive models to accurately identify students at-risk of falling behind in their online courses. The year of collaboration will include a pilot study intended to test the model developed by Dr. Rice and Dr. Hung.

Michigan Virtual will introduce a new study that is focused on the degree to which Michigan schools and districts are leveraging technology to provide student-centered learning experiences for students. The study will attempt to provide a snapshot of the ways in which schools and districts are personalizing learning for students, and specifically, how the use of online and blended learning are facilitating this type of learning model. In addition, the study will include active investigation into specific best practices related to student-centered learning employed by teachers and school leaders.

As the need for resources related to social emotional learning continues to grow, *Michigan Virtual* will continue its partnership with Evolution Labs to provide the Suite360 digital character development and behavior intervention program to Michigan schools and districts. A formal research study focused on the degrees of usage of Suite360 as well as the best practices and impacts of components of the program will be conducted by *Michigan Virtual*. Specific recommendations for school leaders and teachers relative to the implementation of best practices discovered will be made by *Michigan Virtual*.

Michigan Virtual will explore the feasibility of conducting a pilot study that focuses primarily on the effectiveness of the use of micro-credentials in teacher professional development. This study being considered would focus on gathering descriptive data that examine the design of micro-credentials, the variety of ways they can support professional learning experiences, and the experience of teachers, schools, and districts implementing them with the overarching goal of determining whether the use of micro-credentials for professional learning could be effectively scaled within existing school and district structures.

As *Michigan Virtual* explores more ways in which online learning can meet the unique needs of all students, a team of staff members within the organization will investigate how online learning programs can be structured to accommodate the concept of flexible start and end dates for student enrollment in online courses. This process will involve conducting a review of research that currently exists around this topic throughout the United States as well as individual and focus group interviews with appropriate schools and organizations in Michigan. This approach will enable the *Michigan Virtual* team to understand how such an enrollment option is being addressed beyond the state of Michigan while also analyzing Michigan-specific factors that may facilitate or hinder the adoption of this enrollment practice.

Benchmarks
1. Publish a report of the essential findings of the last six years of *Michigan Virtual* research by summer 2020.
2. Continue the collaboration with Dr. Kerry Rice and Dr. Andy Hung on a study focused on early warning predictive models, including a pilot study in Spring 2020.
3. Publish a report in summer 2020 on the degree to which student-centered learning is being implemented in Michigan and how online and blended learning are facilitating this type of learning model.
4. Publish the findings related to best practices of the use of Suite360 by schools and districts in the form of a recorded webinar or presentation by April 2020.

5. Conduct a feasibility study by February 2020 to determine whether a professional learning micro-credentialing pilot should be conducted.
6. By May 2020, publish a written brief that provides insights to schools and districts on strategies to implement flexible start and end dates for online course enrollments.

Recommend Evaluation Criteria for Cyber and Online Providers

Organizational Priority
2(a)(iii) - Research, develop, and recommend annually to the department criteria by which cyber schools and virtual course providers should be monitored and evaluated to ensure a quality education for their pupils.

Plans
Michigan Virtual has been part of a national effort to update standards for quality online learning. This effort led to the release of the National Standards for Quality Online Learning (https://www.nsqol.org/) which include quality standards for programs, teaching, and courses. *Michigan Virtual* will share with the department its efforts around the quality standards and raise familiarity with the standards. Additionally, *Michigan Virtual* will create and share a resource with the department on how best to apply these standards for quality improvement. With the release of these standards, *Michigan Virtual* will be reshaping its existing program reviews to align with these new standards and will offer to conduct reviews using these standards.

Benchmarks
1. Share NSQOL standards for Programs, Teaching, and Courses with the Department.
2. Create and share a resource on how best to apply these standards for quality improvement.
3. Offer to conduct program reviews using the NSQOL standards to Michigan schools at no cost.

Effectiveness Report

Organizational Priority
2(a)(iv) - Based on pupil completion and performance data reported to the department or the center from cyber schools and other virtual course providers operating in this state, analyze the effectiveness of virtual learning delivery models in preparing pupils to be college- and career-ready and publish a report that highlights enrollment totals, completion rates, and the overall impact on pupils. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall submit the report to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, the house and senate fiscal agencies, the department, districts, and intermediate districts not later than March 31 of each year.

Plan
By March 31, 2020, *Michigan Virtual* will produce the Effectiveness Report in a form and method consistent with the past version as it has been generally well received and represents the most in-depth, state-level analysis of virtual course enrollments in the country. Like last year's report, *Michigan Virtual* will also create an at-a-glance infographic summarizing key findings from the report. This at-a-glance

infographic along with a cover letter detailing where to download the report and other related resources will be mailed to superintendents and high school and middle school principals (approximately 2,000 people) no later than April 30, 2020. A video presentation of the report's highlights will also be posted online and made available on-demand through the *Michigan Virtual* website.

Benchmarks

1. Report published on MVLRI website by March 31st deadline with physical copies sent to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the department postmarked March 31, 2020.
2. At-a-Glance Report Infographic and cover letter detailing the online report and resources mailed to superintendents and high school and middle school principals (approximately 2,000 people) no later than April 30, 2020.
3. Post a video presentation highlighting report content and available for on-demand viewing on the *Michigan Virtual* website no later than April 30, 2020.

Deliver PD and Submit PD Report

Organizational Priority

2(a)(v) - Provide an extensive professional development program to at least 30,000 educational personnel, including teachers, school administrators, and school board members, that focuses on the effective integration of virtual learning into curricula and instruction. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute is encouraged to work with the MiSTEM advisory council created under section 99s to coordinate professional development of teachers in applicable fields. In addition, the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute and external stakeholders are encouraged to coordinate with the department for professional development in this state. Not later than December 1 of each year, the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall submit a report to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the department on the number of teachers, school administrators, and school board members who have received professional development services from the Michigan Virtual University. The report must also identify barriers and other opportunities to encourage the adoption of virtual learning in the public education system.

Plans

Michigan Virtual currently offers an extensive and wide variety of virtual learning experiences for educational personnel. With key stakeholders, this suite of services has grown to meet a growing number of teachers, school administrators, and school board members through virtual, blended, and face-to-face professional learning experiences.

In terms of online professional learning, *Michigan Virtual* offers a robust catalog of professional learning options to schools. During this year, *Michigan Virtual* will offer hundreds of course titles where educators can earn SCECH credits as well as non-SCECH offerings such as compliance courses to satisfy

requirements. Examples of SCECH courses include the Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy K-3, Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy Pre-K, Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy School and Center-wide professional learning modules, and the Early Literacy District Coaches Online Network. Examples of compliance topics include bloodborne pathogens, emergency response, basic first aid, FERPA, and fire safety.

In the 2019-20 year, *Michigan Virtual* will continue to grow its partnerships with other educational entities around the state. These partnerships provide the course content and hosts the course in its Learning Management System (LMS) while the district provides the certified Michigan teacher. An integral part of this partnership has been *Michigan Virtual*'s training of district teachers, which consists of a face-to-face day-long event as well as enrollment in an online Instructor Onboarding course.

Michigan Virtual is currently partnering with statewide education workgroups to facilitate design sprints and design thinking sessions to help them approach problem-solving and the prototyping of solutions to better serve their audiences. The MiSTEM Network has requested these facilitation services to help with the creation of toolkits and playbooks that MiSTEM Network directors can use with district leadership in building out STEM programs. *Michigan Virtual* will additionally offer capacity to help with the production of the resources after the initial planning.

Michigan Virtual also puts on an annual event called Collaboration of the Minds (COM). COM is an annual professional development conference that serves as an opportunity to bring the large remote teaching staff of *Michigan Virtual*, many of whom have full-time teaching positions in local school districts, together to learn, explore and collaborate with each other. It is the only opportunity throughout the year for all instructors to meet face-to-face and provides time for like-content instructors to explore best practices and strategies for supporting students. The event introduces new learning in the virtual environment, training in best practices, and collaboration time to explore with fellow instructors. The event has also been expanded to include a mentor workshop to support the needs of this unique group.

Michigan Virtual will continue to fulfill the requirement of the PD report through the publication of its annual report.

Benchmarks
1. Offer over 200 online professional learning courses through the Professional Learning Portal.
2. Provide a minimum of 30,000 professional learning enrollments.
3. Offer *Michigan Virtual* Online Instructor Onboarding Courses for districts using MV content but using their own district teachers for instruction.
4. By Fall of 2019, facilitate a face-to-face design session with representatives of the MiSTEM Network to create a plan for STEM program resource production.
5. Host the 2020 Collaboration of the Minds professional learning conference.
6. Submit the 2019 PD report as part of a combined annual report that also includes *Michigan Virtual's* annual Institute report specified under 2(b)(xiii) and the annual report required under

subsection 7 for the *Michigan Virtual School* no later than December 1, 2019. This is a requirement from the previous fiscal year that crosses over fiscal years.

7. Submit the 2020 Professional Development report detailing *Michigan Virtual's* professional learning services and the identification of barriers and opportunities report by December 1, 2020.

Identify/Share Best Practices

Organizational Priority
2(a)(vi) - Identify and share best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating virtual and blended education delivery models with intermediate districts, districts, and public school academies to accelerate the adoption of innovative education delivery models statewide.

Plans
Michigan Virtual published a series of guides related to online learning, which are made available to students, parents, teachers, mentors, school administrators, and school board members. These guides are used by schools and districts within and beyond Michigan and are used to help them develop their own online learning programs. *Michigan Virtual* will update the content of the guides that are specific to student, parent, and mentor audiences and make this content available to the public through the *Michigan Virtual* website. Additionally, alternate versions of this updated content will be available through a mobile app that will be piloted by a few schools and/or districts. Existing content from the guides that are specific to teacher, school administrator, and school board audiences will be converted from a printed medium to the *Michigan Virtual* website for global public access.

Throughout the duration of fiscal year 2020, *Michigan Virtual* will publish a monthly blog that is specific to helping schools realize success within their online learning programs. A minimum of 12 blog posts will be published on the *Michigan Virtual* website and will provide information to school and district practitioners on how to successfully design, implement, and maintain online learning programs that support students, teachers, and mentors.

An additional blog series that focuses on student-centered learning will also be published by *Michigan Virtual*. This series is designed to educate school leaders on the nature of student-centered learning, how such programs may be implemented, and the role that online and blended learning plays in an effective student-centered learning environment. The blog series will be comprised of a minimum of 12 blog posts that will be published on the *Michigan Virtual* website.

Michigan Virtual will continue to conduct voluntary online learning program reviews for schools and districts throughout the state. Through these reviews, which are based on the recently released National Standards for Quality Online Learning (NSQOL), best practices relating to the design and operation of online programs will be provided to participating schools.

Michigan laws regarding count day requirements are important for schools to understand to secure state per pupil funding for their virtual learners. Those who support students taking virtual courses play

a crucial role in their districts. In collaboration with the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan's Pupil Attendance and Accounting Association, *Michigan Virtual* will share best practices and examples from schools on how to prepare their virtual programs for count day, the first of which occurs in early October shortly after the start of a school year.

Michigan Virtual is committed to sharing findings and best practices gleaned from both formal and informal research. Valuable information such as this will be shared by *Michigan Virtual* through presentations delivered at local, state, and national conferences and symposia. A minimum of five presentations will be delivered at conferences such as MACUL, MANS, MASA, MASB, MASSP, and MEMSPA.

Michigan Virtual will continue its efforts to recommend and train district personnel in blended and personalized delivery models that leverage the power of technology to provide student-centered learning options. *Michigan Virtual* Professional Learning Specialists will continue to provide on-site and online training, support and make recommendations to educators, schools and districts statewide on how to implement personalized learning models.

As more and more schools throughout the state are adopting the use of digital content to support their online and blended programs, schools and districts are raising the selection and implementation of an appropriate learning management system/platform as a top priority. *Michigan Virtual* will investigate best practices associated with identifying and evaluating learning management systems/platforms that can meet the customized needs of schools and districts. In addition, *Michigan Virtual* will collect data from research, literature, and practical experiences from schools and districts within and beyond the state of Michigan to understand the challenges and opportunities experienced by schools and districts regarding the implementation and maintenance of such systems/platforms. The findings from this work will be shared with the Michigan education community through the publication of a written brief.

Benchmarks
1. Update content for the student, parent, and mentor guides by March 2020.
2. Convert the content of all guides from the existing printed medium to the *Michigan Virtual* website by August 2020.
3. Publish a minimum of 12 blog posts related to designing, implementing, and maintaining school-level online learning programs by September 2020.
4. Publish a minimum of 12 blog posts related to student-centered learning and how online and blended learning programs facilitate such a learning model by September 2020.
5. On an ongoing basis, provide written recommendations for online program design and maintenance that are aligned with best practices per NSQOL to each Michigan school or district participating in the voluntary online program review process.
6. By September 2020, publish a minimum of two briefs (formatted as blog posts or recorded presentations) that share best practices with schools and districts related to Count Day activities.

7. Present at a minimum of five Michigan conferences on topics relevant to online, blended learning, or student-centered learning.
8. Offer a minimum of three on-site trainings to educators on how to implement personalized learning models.
9. By September 2020, publish a written brief that shares best practices with schools and districts related to the evaluation, implementation, and maintenance of a learning management system/platform.

Policy Recommendations to Gov./Legislature

Organizational Priority
2(b)(i) - Develop and report policy recommendations to the governor and the legislature that accelerate the expansion of effective virtual learning in this state's schools.

Plans
Michigan Virtual will provide feedback on current virtual learning policies and make recommendations that will accelerate the use of effective virtual learning in the state.

Benchmarks
1. Before December 31, 2019, submit virtual learning policy recommendations to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the Department.

Research Clearinghouse

Organizational Priority
2(b)(ii) - Provide a clearinghouse for research reports, academic studies, evaluations, and other information related to virtual learning.

Plans
Maintain the existing clearinghouse website (http://k12onlineresearch.org/) and add additional resources to the website throughout the fiscal year. The nationally-recognized clearinghouse acts as an aggregator of K-12 online and blended research and key publications. To date, there are over 1,000 resources cataloged in the clearinghouse. On a quarterly basis, *Michigan Virtual* will email a clearinghouse newsletter to the MVLRI mailing list that highlight a few of the new resources added during that time period.

Michigan Virtual will also write and publish a series of blog posts that highlight research that is relevant to the K-12 online learning space. These blog posts will provide a high-level summary of the purpose and findings of recent studies, and they will also serve to promote the Research Clearinghouse to the online learning research community and school practitioners.

1. Maintain the clearinghouse website and add relevant additional resources to the over 1,000 resources currently aggregated.
2. Send quarterly newsletters highlighting a few new resources added during that time period.
3. Publish a minimum of six blog posts related to recent research that is specific to online or digital learning at the K-12 level by September 2020.

Promote/Distribute Instructional Design Guidelines and Standards

Organizational Priority

2(b)(iii) - Promote and distribute the most current instructional design standards and guidelines for virtual teaching.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will maintain and update the instructional design guidelines and standards tagged in the clearinghouse. *Michigan Virtual* will also promote the National Quality Standards for Online Teaching, Quality Standards for Online Programs, and Quality Standards for Online Courses, which will all help to inform Michigan-based work in the area of online and blended learning. *Michigan Virtual* will also offer an online course on instructional design through its Professional Learning Portal, as well as create a second course in this series. This work is timely as more and more schools are beginning to think about creating their own online content and courses. We are also proposing a session on instructional design best practices at the annual MACUL conference.

Benchmarks

1. Include links to instructional design guidelines and standards in the clearinghouse tagged under the keywords "instructional design" and "standards."
2. Promote the National Standards for Quality Online Learning on our website.
3. Offer a course on instructional design through the Professional Learning Portal.
4. Develop and offer a second course on instructional design through the Professional Learning Portal.
5. Propose a session focused on instructional design best practices at MACUL.

Work with Teacher Preparation Institutions on Digital Learning

Organizational Priority

2(b)(iv) - In collaboration with the department and interested colleges and universities in this state, support implementation and improvements related to effective virtual learning instruction.

Plans

A variety of online resources and courses will continue to be made available to institutions that operate teacher preparation programs. These resources, which include digital content related to early literacy, online and blended learning, and the use of open educational resources, will be available to colleges and

universities through *Michigan Virtual*-hosted environments. In some cases, these resources may be made available in university-hosted environments.

Michigan Virtual is interested in exploring partnership opportunities with colleges and universities for the execution of the planned research study focused on student-centered learning. Personnel at various colleges and universities that have a teacher or administrator preparation program will be contacted by the *Michigan Virtual* research team to discuss options related to being a research partner. Partner responsibilities may include such tasks as assistance with the development of data collection instruments, the collection of data through an online questionnaire and school interviews, data analysis, and/or report writing.

Benchmarks
1. Communicate with Michigan teacher preparation institutions about *Michigan Virtual's* suite of online resources and courses on topics such as early literacy, blended and online learning, and open educational resources by spring 2020.
2. Work with interested Michigan teacher preparation institutions to coordinate access to the *Michigan Virtual-hosted content*, or where applicable, provide technical support for materials made available for self-hosting by the college or university.
3. Provide opportunity for interested colleges and universities to collaborate and participate in a student-centered research study.

Public/Private Partnerships

Organizational Priority
2(b)(v)- Pursue public/private partnerships that include districts to study and implement competency-based technology-rich virtual learning models.

Plans
Michigan Virtual will continue its statewide efforts to create an environment for competency-based professional learning. This work will focus on surfacing the features and functionalities necessary for managing micro-credentials statewide. To help facilitate an effort of this size, *Michigan Virtual* will seek to continue partnerships with MASA, MEMSPA, and MAC.

As part of a statewide research study on student-centered learning being conducted by *Michigan Virtual*, the research team will be exploring competency-based progression of students. Competency-based progression is one component of student-centered learning models, and the team will be collecting data from schools and districts regarding the degree to which such progression is being implemented. In order to conduct this study statewide, *Michigan Virtual* will be seeking participation from schools and districts to provide data specific to the degree of implementation as well as the opportunities and challenges related to implementing and maintaining this particular component of student-centered learning. In addition, partnerships with other education-related entities will be sought in order to conduct a comprehensive study that will serve as a scan of the scope of student-centered learning across the state.

Michigan Virtual will also be conducting a research study that investigates the degree of implementation of and best practices related to the use of the Suite360 digital character development and behavior intervention program. This study will require participation from schools and districts that have implemented the program. *Michigan Virtual* researchers will interview personnel from these schools and districts as part of the study's data collection process.

Benchmarks

1. Interview a minimum of 15 Michigan schools or districts to collect data related to competency-based student progression by June 2020.
2. Partner with at least one education-related organization to assist with the collection of data for the student-centered learning study by March 2020.
3. Continue partnerships with MASA, MEMSPA, and MAC to help support the professional learning micro-credentialing effort.
4. Interview a minimum of 10 Michigan schools or districts to collect data related to implementation and impact of the use of Suite360 by December 2020.

Mentor Network

Organizational Priority

2(b)(vi) - Create a statewide network of school-based mentors serving as liaisons between pupils, virtual instructors, parents, and school staff, as provided by the department or the center, and provide mentors with research-based training and technical assistance designed to help more pupils be successful virtual learners.

Plans

Michigan Virtual partners with ISDs and local districts throughout the state to conduct face-to-face trainings for mentors of online learners and raise awareness of the Online Mentor Network and other resources available to them. *Michigan Virtual* will use a list provided by CEPI with over 2,000 names of people who likely served as mentors the prior year to communicate these opportunities. The face-to-face trainings allow mentors to connect with one another to share details about their online learning programs and build expertise in the area of mentoring. The focus for this year will include reformatting the face-to-face training experience, refreshing mentor training content including testing a mobile application for mentor content, and presenting to school-level decision makers about the importance of mentoring in online learning programs.

As an additional support to the face-to-face trainings explained above, *Michigan Virtual* will also write and publish a series of blog posts designed to help mentors of online students share best practices in an asynchronous manner. These blog posts will contain examples of processes, procedures, and actions that mentor practitioners are implementing in an effort to increase the success rate of virtual learners.

Benchmarks
1. Hold four face-to-face "Mentor Meet-Up" trainings.

2. Refresh existing mentor content in the Online Mentor Network including testing content within a mobile application to raise engagement and draw new participants.
3. Present at three Michigan conferences targeting administrators, counselors, or other decision-makers on the importance of successful online mentoring.
4. By September 2020, publish a minimum of 6 blog posts that share best practices of mentors supporting online learners.

Focus Groups /Annual Surveys

Organizational Priority
2(b)(vii) - Convene focus groups and conduct annual surveys of teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, and others to identify barriers and opportunities related to virtual learning.

Plans
In an effort to identify specific success factors related to online student success, *Michigan Virtual* will convene focus groups comprised of mentors of online students as well as school-level administrators who are involved with their school's or district's online learning program. The purpose of engaging with the mentor focus groups will be twofold: to identify student-related factors that impact student success and to identify school- or program-related factors that impact student success. The purpose of interacting with the school-level administrator focus groups is to identify administrative factors (e.g., staff scheduling, financial matters, state policy, etc.) that impact both student and mentor success.

Michigan Virtual will also conduct a statewide survey of the degree to which schools and districts are implementing student-centered learning as well as the ways that online and blended learning are facilitating this type of learning model. As part of the survey process, *Michigan Virtual* will distribute an online questionnaire to schools as part of the data collection process of this study.

Michigan Virtual will undertake surveying and conducting focus groups to gather important feedback from our core user groups, including students, mentors, and school personnel. End of course surveys will be offered to all of our student and professional learners. These will be available online at the end of courses to gather information on the user experience. *Michigan Virtual* will also conduct at least three focus groups with students who are taking, or have taken, one or more online courses. These will be done at different schools in Michigan.

Michigan Virtual will also conduct surveys and focus groups in partnership with two or more educational organizations. Similar survey work was conducted in 2016 to identify views and attitudes towards online learning and opportunities for improving online courses and materials.

Benchmarks
1. Convene a minimum of two focus groups comprised of mentors of online students, and an additional two focus groups of school-level administrators, by June 2020 related to online student success.

2. Distribute access to an online questionnaire to all schools and districts statewide by April 2020.
3. Convene a minimum of three focus groups comprised of online students by June 2020.
4. Distribute an end of course survey to students and professional learners taking courses through our Student Learning Portal and our Professional Learning Portal.
5. Distribute an end-of-year survey to mentors with students in *Michigan Virtual* courses.
6. Conduct at least one focus group with educational organization partner memberships, as well as at least two surveys of educational organization partner memberships.

Consumer Awareness Report

Organizational Priority
2(b)(viii) - Produce an annual consumer awareness report for schools and parents about effective virtual education providers and education delivery models, performance data, cost structures, and research trends.

Plans
The consumer awareness report is available as an important link on the Micourses.org homepage, with sections devoted to background, providers, delivery models, performance data, cost structures, research trends, conclusions, and resources. Including this resource as part of the Micourses website provides high visibility for parents, students, and schools exploring 21f options. Data on areas such as the school districts that are putting courses in the catalog, the distribution of courses by ISD, PSA, LEA, and the *Michigan Virtual School*, and disaggregation by key variables such as who is providing the content or the instructor, are updated once in the fall and once in the spring to reflect the changes in those two enrollment windows. Other data throughout the report are also updated on an ongoing basis with a particular emphasis on the fall and spring updates.

Benchmarks
1. Update the consumer awareness report twice annually (fall and spring).

Internet-based Platform
Organizational Priority
2(b)(ix) - Provide an internet-based platform that educators can use to create student-centric learning tools and resources for sharing in the state's open educational resource repository and facilitate a user network that assists educators in using the content creation platform and state repository for open educational resources. As part of this initiative, the Michigan Virtual University shall work collaboratively with districts and intermediate districts to establish a plan to make available virtual resources that align to Michigan's K-12 curriculum standards for use by students, educators, and parents.

Plans

Michigan Virtual acts as a close partner with the Michigan Department of Education and the #GoOpen Michigan Strategy Team to make available a common Open Educational Resources system (https://goopenmichigan.org/) throughout the state. At the GoOpenMichigan website, educators can access open educational resources for modification and use in the classroom. In addition to providing leadership on the platform, *Michigan Virtual* also creates free learning objects for the platform, having contributed over 1,000 learning objects to the platform to date.

Michigan Virtual also supports educators in the creation and sharing of digital learning objects by providing courses on its Professional Learning Portal. These courses provide training to educators on how to develop their own learning objects as well as learning more about open educational resources, including how GoOpenMichigan can be leveraged for their classrooms.

Benchmarks

1. Provide leadership to the state's GoOpen initiative by contributing staff members who serve on the GoOpen strategy teams and subteams.
2. Make available modules on the Professional Learning Portal that address open educational resources, including the state's GoOpen initiative.
3. Make available modules on the Professional Learning Portal that support educators in developing their own digital learning objects.
4. Add at least 500 free learning objects to the GoOpenMichigan website by September 30, 2020.

Maintain Statewide Catalog of Online Courses

Organizational Priority

2(b)(x) - Create and maintain a public statewide catalog of virtual learning courses being offered by all public schools and community colleges in this state. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall identify and develop a list of nationally recognized best practices for virtual learning and use this list to support reviews of virtual course vendors, courses, and instructional practices. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall also provide a mechanism for intermediate districts to use the identified best practices to review content offered by constituent districts. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall review the virtual course offerings of the Michigan Virtual University, and make the results from these reviews available to the public as part of the statewide catalog. The Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute shall ensure that the statewide catalog is made available to the public on the Michigan Virtual University website and shall allow the ability to link it to each district's website as provided for in section 21f. The statewide catalog shall also contain all of the following:
(A) The number of enrollments in each virtual course in the immediately preceding school year.
(B) The number of enrollments that earned 60% or more of the total course points for each virtual course in the immediately preceding school year.
(C) The pass rate for each virtual course.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will continue to maintain the statewide course catalog (https://micourses.org/) including a mechanism for schools to include the results of their course reviews in the catalog as well as their course completion data.

Michigan Virtual was part of a national effort to update the national standards for online learning in 2019. Known as the *National Standards for Quality Online Courses* (https://www.nsqol.org/the-standards/quality-online-courses/), these standards reflect an update to the current iNACOL standards which are used by the statewide catalog. *Michigan Virtual* plans to add these new standards as an option for schools to use when reporting their course reviews.

Michigan Virtual is also working on an update to the catalog's search functionality. The expected solution will not only improve user experience, but is also being undertaken to improve web accessibility issues.

Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute will cover the expense associated with having Quality Matters, a nationally-recognized third-party for quality assurance, and conduct reviews of newly-developed *MVS* semester-length courses.

Benchmarks

1. Maintain statewide catalog, including the ability for schools to record their course reviews and course completion data.
2. Add the ability for schools to use the 2019 National Standards for Quality Online Course when reporting their course reviews.
3. Update the catalog's search functionality to improve user experience and web accessibility. The update will be completed by spring 2020.
4. Submit a minimum of 10 MVS semester-length courses to Quality Matters for independent course quality reviews.

Support Registration, Payment Services, and Transcript Functionality to Statewide Catalog

Organizational Priority

2(b)(xi) - Support registration, payment services, and transcript functionality for the statewide catalog and train key stakeholders on how to use new features.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will continue to support the registration, payment services, and transcript functionality of the catalog. This includes providing technical and customer support for users of the statewide catalog. *Michigan Virtual* will also continue to maintain a public facing knowledge base allowing catalog users to browse for instant help.

1. Provide technical and customer support for users of the statewide catalog.
2. Based on customer feedback and help-desk tickets, update help documentation to assist users to promptly resolve common issues.

Examine District-Level Accountability and Teacher Effectiveness Related to Virtual Learning

Organizational Priority

2(b)(xii) - Collaborate with key stakeholders to examine district level accountability and teacher effectiveness issues related to virtual learning under section 21f and make findings and recommendations publicly available.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will continue to implement the modified Danielson evaluation rubric with all instructors both full- and part-time (a minimum of 150 instructors). This effort allows *Michigan Virtual* to continue its effort to support district level accountability and teacher effectiveness issues.

As it pertains to Teacher Effectiveness, CEPI and *Michigan Virtual* have identified an existing challenge with online teachers and effectiveness rating reporting. The specific challenge arises with online teachers who have students in multiple districts -- a common occurrence for online providers. Interpretation of current requirements is that each school needs to report an effectiveness rating for the online instructor; therefore, some online instructors have 20, 30, 40 or more effectiveness ratings for a given year. While such overreporting is in and of itself less than optimal, it is of particular concern when rating discrepancies occur. *Michigan Virtual* plans to work with CEPI and MDE to continue to seek a resolution to this ongoing issue.

Benchmarks

1. Continue evaluations of *Michigan Virtual* teachers using the modified Danielson rubric.
2. Work with CEPI to produce recommendations for dealing with Teacher Effectiveness reporting requirements for online instructors.

Institute Annual Report

Organizational Priority

2(b)(xiii) - Provide a report on the activities of the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute.

Plans

Submit the combined Annual Report for the 2018-19 year.

Benchmarks

1. December 1, 2019 submit the combined Annual Report for the 2018-19 year.
2. December 1, 2020 submit the combined Annual Report for the 2019-20 year.

Operate the *Michigan Virtual School*

Organizational Priority

(3) To further enhance its expertise and leadership in virtual learning, the Michigan Virtual University shall continue to operate the Michigan Virtual School as a statewide laboratory and quality model of instruction by implementing virtual and blended learning solutions for Michigan schools in accordance with the following parameters:
(a) The Michigan Virtual School must maintain its accreditation status from recognized national and international accrediting entities.

Plans

Michigan Virtual is accredited through AdvancED. AdvancED and Measured Progress recently merged into a new organization called Cognia. *Michigan Virtual* will complete any necessary requirements from Cognia to maintain its accreditation.

Benchmarks

1. Maintain accreditation for the 2019-20 school year.

Restricted Use of Appropriation for MVS

Organizational Priority

(b) The Michigan Virtual University shall use no more than $1,000,000.00 of the amount allocated under this section to subsidize the cost paid by districts for virtual courses.

Plans

Pass board-approved budget that caps appropriation spending for MVS to no more than $1M.

Benchmarks

1. Adopt fiscal year budget which allocates no more than $1M to subsidize the virtual school.
   a. On October 4, 2019, *Michigan Virtual*'s board approved the FY20 budget fulfilling this benchmark.
2. Based on audited figures from the prior year, demonstrate that no more than $1M of the state allocation was used to subsidize the virtual school.

Background Checks for MVS

Organizational Priority

(c) In providing educators responsible for the teaching of virtual courses as provided for in this section, the Michigan Virtual School shall follow the requirements to request and assess, and the department of state police shall provide, a criminal history check and criminal records check under sections 1230 and 1230a of the revised school code, MCL 380.1230 and 380.1230a, in the same manner as if the Michigan Virtual School were a school district under those sections.

Plans

Michigan Virtual conducts background checks through the State Police and the FBI's LiveScan fingerprinting processes to comply with these requirements.

Benchmarks

1. Conduct criminal background checks on *Michigan Virtual* staff and maintain appropriate documentation.

Appropriation for Expanding Online and Blended Professional Development Programs

Organizational Priority

(4) From the funds allocated under subsection (1), the Michigan Virtual University shall allocate up to $500,000.00 to support the expansion of new online and blended educator professional development programs.

Plans

Michigan Virtual employs a team consisting of four Instructional Designers, an assistant director and a content developer who are focused on the design and development of new online and blended professional development programs. These programs cover a variety of learning models and formats including self-directed and facilitated online courses, micro-credentials, scenario-based learning, and compliance training as well as more informal learning opportunities such as learning communities and resource courses. These PD resources are created in partnership with several different education groups such as MASA, MASSP, and MAC to name a few.

Benchmarks

1. Design, develop and launch a minimum of 3 new professional learning courses on *Michigan Virtual*'s Professional Learning Portal by September 30, 2020 through partnerships.
2. Work with Michigan partners to support the development and delivery of at least two new micro-credentials.

MVS Catalog

Organizational Priority

(5) If the course offerings are included in the statewide catalog of virtual courses under subsection (2)(b)(x), the Michigan Virtual School operated by the Michigan Virtual University may offer virtual course offerings, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(a) Information technology courses.

(b) College level equivalent courses, as defined in section 1471 of the revised school code, MCL 380.1471.

(c) Courses and dual enrollment opportunities.

(d) Programs and services for at‑risk pupils.

(e) High school equivalency test preparation courses for adjudicated youth.

(f) Special interest courses.

(g) Professional development programs for teachers, school administrators, other school employees, and school board members.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will update select course content to ensure that courses are compatible with modern web browsers and will expand its course offerings to both introduce an additional Advanced Placement course as well as new dual enrollment offerings consistent with the aim of providing online opportunities to Michigan high school students to fulfill Michigan Transfer Agreement requirements among postsecondary institutions.

Michigan Virtual will also be conducting a search process for a new Learning Management System (LMS). Selection of the new LMS will occur this year as well as migrating courses over to the new platform. This is an extremely heavy lift given the over 200 courses that need to be migrated, but we believe the new platform will provide users with an improved learning experience.

Benchmarks

1. Remove or replace identified flash-based media assets in courses through a combination of product development efforts and vendor course licensing.
2. Develop a new Advanced Placement course aligned to the College Board's new AP World History: Modern course and exam description.
3. Introduce a minimum of three new dual enrollment courses offered online in partnership with St. Clair County Community College, ensuring that the full suite of dual enrollment courses offered provide for the opportunity to fulfill Michigan Transfer Agreement requirements through online dual enrollment.
4. Select a new LMS and migrate courses to the new platform.

Home-Schooled and Non-public Students

Organizational Priority

(6) If a home-schooled or nonpublic school student is a resident of a district that subscribes to services provided by the Michigan Virtual School, the student may use the services provided by the Michigan Virtual School to the district without charge to the student beyond what is charged to a district pupil using the same services.

Plans

Michigan Virtual will continue to adhere to this requirement. *Michigan Virtual* makes available its courses to Michigan home-schooled or nonpublic students at the advertised base rate. *Michigan Virtual* pricing is available at https://michiganvirtual.org/students/pricing/.

Benchmarks

1. Produce 2019-20 pricing with no additional charges for a home-school or nonpublic school student.

MVS Annual Report

Organizational Priority

(7) Not later than December 1 of each fiscal year, the Michigan Virtual University shall provide a report to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the department that includes at least all of the following information related to the Michigan Virtual School for the preceding state fiscal year:
(a) A list of the districts served by the Michigan Virtual School.
(b) A list of virtual course titles available to districts.
(c) The total number of virtual course enrollments and information on registrations and completions by course.
(d) The overall course completion rate percentage.

Plans

Submit the report detailing *Michigan Virtual School* activities for 2018-19 school year as part of an annual report that also includes the *Michigan Virtual*'s professional development report specified under 2(a)(v) and the Institute annual report required under 2(b)(xiii) no later than December 1, 2019.

Benchmarks

1. Publish report no later than December 1, 2019.

MVS Schools Served

Organizational Priority

(8) In addition to the information listed in subsection (7), the report under subsection (7) shall also include a plan to serve at least 600 schools with courses from the Michigan Virtual School or with content available through the internet-based platform identified in subsection (2)(b)(ix).

Plans

Michigan Virtual plans to serve over 500 schools with courses from the *Michigan Virtual School*, with the remaining balance of schools using the free learning objects created by *Michigan Virtual* and made available through the state's GoOpenMichigan website (https://goopenmichigan.org/). *Michigan Virtual* currently maintains over 1,000 *Michigan Virtual*-created learning objects on the GoOpen website. Currently, there are over 1,700 users of the platform. The content is also available to website visitors without a registered account.

Benchmarks

1. Serve at least 500 Michigan schools with online courses through the *Michigan Virtual School*.
2. Add at least 250 free learning objects to the GoOpenMichigan website by March 2020.
3. Add at least 250 free learning objects to the GoOpenMichigan website by October 2020.

Advisory Board

Organizational Priority

(9) The governor may appoint an advisory group for the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute established under subsection (2). The members of the advisory group shall serve at the pleasure of the governor and without compensation. The purpose of the advisory group is to make recommendations to the governor, the legislature, and the president and board of the Michigan Virtual University that will accelerate innovation in this state's education system in a manner that will prepare elementary and secondary students to be career and college ready and that will promote the goal of increasing the percentage of citizens of this state with high-quality degrees and credentials to at least 60% by 2025.

Plans

Since this section pertains to the actions of the Governor's office rather than *Michigan Virtual*, no plan has been created by *Michigan Virtual*.

MVS Budget Costs

Organizational Priority

(10) Not later than November 1 of each year, the Michigan Virtual University shall submit to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, and the house and senate fiscal agencies a detailed budget for that fiscal year that includes a breakdown on its projected costs to deliver virtual educational services to districts and a summary of the anticipated fees to be paid by districts for those services. Not later than March 1 each year, the Michigan Virtual University shall submit to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on state school aid, the state budget director, and the house and senate fiscal agencies a breakdown on its actual costs to deliver virtual educational services to districts and a summary of the actual fees paid by districts for those services based on audited financial statements for the immediately preceding fiscal year.

Plans

Continue to submit the required materials in accordance with the deadlines.

Benchmarks

1. No later than November 1, 2019, submit a detailed budget for 2019-20 fiscal year that includes a breakdown on its projected costs to deliver virtual educational services to districts and a summary of the anticipated fees to be paid by districts for those services.
2. No later than March 1, 2020, submit a breakdown on *Michigan Virtual*'s actual costs to deliver virtual educational services to districts and a summary of the actual fees paid by districts for those services based on audited financial statements for the immediately preceding fiscal year.