

EDP Fundamentals

Guidelines for the Use of Educational Development Plans

Rev. 2025



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The Importance of Starting Early

Before You Begin

Understanding the Michigan Legislation

This guidance is designed to provide all districts information on the requirements and importance of the Education Development Plan (EDP) for all students. This document is a companion document to the [Michigan Career Development Model](#) which will assist districts in providing career and college readiness activities for all students.

The Revised School Code, PA 451 of 1976, defines specific requirements of an EDP and talent portfolio.

Revised School Code Act 451 of 1976. [380.1278b](#) amended and [380.1277](#) amended

Statute	Description
380.1278b amended Award of high school diploma; credit requirements; personal curriculum; annual report (modify requirements of EDP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to develop an EDP during grade 7, review EDP during grade 8 and revise before HS• Update EDP annually• EDP process to be carried out under supervision of counselor or other qualified designee, such as a case manager• Advise students that curriculum requirements can be met through career and technical education• Identify career development goals as related to academic requirements• Information on various types of careers, current/projected job openings in MI, and actual/projected wages• Opportunity to explore careers based on interests, identify career pathways and goals for achieving success, include education necessary to achieve goals• Opportunity to develop a Talent Portfolio during EDP process, which includes experiences, proficiencies, certifications, or accomplishments that demonstrate talents or marketable skills
380.1277 amended School Improvement Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals centered on student learning• Strategies to accomplish goals• Evaluation of the plan• Develop alternative measures of assessment that will provide authentic assessment of pupil's achievements, skills, and competencies• Methods for effective use of technology as a way of improving learning and delivery of services and for integration of evolving technology and curriculum• Make available opportunities for on-the-job learning, such as apprenticeships and internships combined with classroom instruction. Apprenticeships and internships would involve active, direct, hands-on learning, and classroom instruction relating to

Statute	Description
	<p>problem solving, personal management, organizational and negotiation skills, and teamwork.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide pupils in grades 6 – 12 Work Based Learning activities that make connections with professionals in a variety of fields • Ensure every pupil in grade 12 develops a resume, letter of reference, school record and talent portfolio • Provide a variety of age-appropriate career informational resources in grades K – 12 • At appropriate grade levels (determined by the district), complete one or more experiences in a field of pupil's interests or aptitude and participate in a reflection process based on the experience • During grades K-12, discuss career interests, options, and preparations, with a school counselor or, another designee as considered appropriate by the school board

Chart developed and shared by Oakland Schools

The Michigan Career Development Model

The [Michigan Career Development Model](#) (MCDM) is designed to provide all students in Michigan with the necessary knowledge and skills for success in a career of their choice and lifelong learning. The MCDM, organized by grade band, provides required targets and suggested instructional strategies to help districts incorporate grade-level career development within their P-20 educational delivery system.

The Importance of Starting Early

EDPs start in Grade 7. Many schools develop EDPs with students beginning in Grade 8. However, the statute clearly states that students should be provided the opportunity to develop an EDP in Grade 7. Beginning the process a year earlier gives students additional time to think about career and education goals. It gives each student time to prepare for the rigor demanded at the high school level.

Career Awareness, Career Exploration, and Career Preparation

To be effective, EDPs are dependent upon a larger career development and planning process. Career Awareness occurs during the elementary grades and is designed to familiarize students with various types of careers, including career and technical education and non-traditional careers. In the middle school grades, Career Exploration helps students explore and investigate all 17 career clusters so that they can align them to their career interests. High School students will refine their career and/or educational aspirations through various Career Preparation activities that provide advanced/real-world experiences through educational and hands-on opportunities.

Connecting the EDP to a variety of other career development activities is critical to its meaning and success for students. EDPs do not stand by themselves. They are a component of a career development pathway model and representative of an individual's decisions and plans at various intervals in their educational experience. The EDP documents a student's accomplishments at any given time in an overall

career development and planning process. A link to the Michigan Career Development Model is included in the resources page.

Developing a Local Self-Assessment

Districts are encouraged to begin the EDP process by conducting a local self-assessment to determine which practices are currently in place, what local structures may easily support necessary changes, and where growth or improvement is necessary. Districts can use the data set templates provided on the [EDP webpage](#) to evaluate the effectiveness of the current EDP system as a part of their continuous improvement process.

The Essential Elements of an Educational Development Plan (EDP)

What Do I Need to Know?

Who Is Required to Have an Educational Development Plan (EDP)?

All students are required to develop an EDP with guidance from school advisors. When applicable, parents and community contacts should also be included. EDPs are “living” documents and are updated as student interests and abilities become more obvious and focused.

Why Do Students Need an EDP?

An EDP is an individualized approach to learning that documents an ongoing process in which a learner identifies both career goals and a plan of action to achieve them. It is a combination of tools and coursework that help students understand and appreciate their strengths and interests. The EDP does not take the place of either an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Personal Curriculum (PC).

According to the Revised School Code Act 451 of 1976, an educational development plan shall be developed, reviewed, and revised by the pupil under the supervision of the pupil’s school counselor or another designee qualified to act in a counseling role under section 1233 or 1233a selected by the school principal and shall be based on high school readiness scores and a career pathways program or similar career exploration program. An educational development plan shall be designed to assist pupils to identify career development goals as they relate to academic requirements.

Developing an EDP

State law requires local schools to provide an opportunity for students to begin developing an EDP in Grade 7 and review their educational development plan during Grade 8; however, it is recommended that districts begin the EDP process even earlier by issuing interest surveys to young learners. Revisions to the student’s EDP shall be completed before they begin high school.

Students explore and investigate Michigan’s 17 Career Clusters to discover which pathway and careers best align with their interests. Career information and postsecondary education data are included within the planning process. During Career Exploration, course selections, investigation of multiple pathways, and refining of the EDP occurs. A table of Michigan’s seventeen clusters can be found on pages 14 and 15 of this document and on the [Michigan Career Development Model webpage](#).

Schools have several options on how to implement EDPs such as paper versions, computerized entries, or utilizing Web-based tools to help students write their education and career goals, including strategies and high school classes that will help them reach these goals.

Before You Begin

The primary emphasis of the EDP is to develop a student’s statement of career goals and a plan of action for reaching them.

- Through the EDP process, each student becomes more aware of the connection between a career goal and the requirements for attaining that goal.
- The EDP provides opportunities for a student to learn about himself or herself, to understand career pathway options, and to explore postsecondary education and training.
- The EDP engages each student to think about the credits he or she needs to take in middle school and high school, and how those credits coordinate with his or her career pathway so that an understanding of the relevance between high school and preparation for entering college or the workforce is enhanced.
- Each student should be aware of the basic requirements for college and employment, disability supports, and traditional or alternative pathways for meeting the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) (e.g., community college, trade schools, technical college, apprenticeship program, career and technical education, or an interdisciplinary course sequence).

Grade	Before You Begin	Required Elements	Desirable/Optional Elements
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic requirements for graduation • Support services or disability supports • Traditional or alternative pathways for meeting MMC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin EDP documentation • Personal Information • Career Goals • Educational Training Goals • Projected job openings in MI • Career-related assessment and inventory results • Plan of action • Investigation of educational options • Parent endorsement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Based Learning (WBL) options for middle school • Leadership opportunities in middle school
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of student EDP • Talent Portfolio platform • Local talent portfolio requirements • Updated career-related assessment and inventory results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated career and education and training goals • New career-related assessment and inventory results • Progress toward plan of action • Transcript of earned credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBL opportunities available • WBL experiences completed • Leadership opportunities available • Leadership opportunities available

Grade	Before You Begin	Required Elements	Desirable/Optional Elements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated graduation requirements and options 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence or examples of career-related skills mastered

Note: An EDP is a living document that each student develops with the school district. The document may not contain all components listed above, depending on the age of the pupil and the time of the school year. The district shall maintain a copy of the plan on file and shall provide the plan to the pupil membership auditor on request.

Academic Credit Options

During the process of developing and reviewing the EDP, pupils must be advised by school personnel that credits toward graduation may be fulfilled through career and technical education. Pupils may replace some credit requirements by completing a formal, department approved CTE program or they may earn academic credit through integrated academic content within CTE instructional programs. For more information, refer to the flexibility options described in the [Leveraging CTE to Support Implementation of the Michigan Merit Curriculum](#) guide.

What Happens After the EDP Is Written?

A student's EDP should be reviewed and updated on at least an annual basis. An EDP process could also include yearly work samples that document the student's progress toward anticipated goals and accomplishments. The school must establish times to annually review EDPs and update them as students choose and change high school courses or career pathways.

An example of EDP updates at each grade level is included in the chart below.

Grade	Before You Begin	Required Elements	Desirable/Optional Elements
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of student EDP Local talent portfolio requirements Updated career-related assessment and inventory results Updated graduation requirements and options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated career and education and training goals New career-related assessment and inventory results Progress toward plan of action Transcript of earned credits Creation of Talent Portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WBL opportunities available WBL experiences completed Leadership opportunities available Leadership opportunities available Evidence or examples of career-related skills mastered

Grade	Before You Begin	Required Elements	Desirable/Optional Elements
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript of earned credits • Updated graduation requirements and flexibility options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career research and refinement of goals • Postsecondary education research and plans • Refine and select courses for grades 11 and 12 • Plan for CTE, dual enrollment, EMC, or other focused coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted WBL experiences in the exploration or preparation categories • Volunteer or community service plans • Club and activity options related to career goals
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript of earned credits • Updated graduation requirements and flexibility options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin resume • Create list of references • Postsecondary preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted WBL experiences in the preparation and training categories • Volunteer or community service plans • Club and activity options related to career goals
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript of earned credits • Updated graduation requirements and flexibility options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume updated • References updated; letters obtained • Certifications and credentials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal statement to be used for scholarships and postsecondary applications • Targeted WBL experiences in the career preparation and training categories • Specific leadership opportunities that connect to career ready professional and employability practices

IEP and EDP Alignment: Transition

- The Michigan Merit Curriculum established a requirement for schools to assist students with the development of an EDP in Grades 7 and 8. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students eligible for special education programs and services have an IEP. Visit the [IDEA webpage](#) for more information.
- Additionally, transition services must be in place for students with disabilities who reach the age of 16. The transition services may be included in the IEP at an earlier age, when appropriate. The EDP and the IEP are distinct documents. However, as students move into high school, the documents share a common goal of improved postsecondary outcomes for students.
- The EDP should contain results from an assessment process designed to assist students in identifying educational and career interests and aspirations. The IDEA requires educators to gather information about a student's interests and strengths through an age-appropriate transition assessment and to develop measurable postsecondary goals in the areas of education, training, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living skills. Information gathered during the EDP process could prove valuable in developing areas of the transition IEP.
- The EDP should identify a student's career pathway and goals for achieving success, as well as the level of educational preparation that will be needed to meet the career goals. This supports and encourages students to think beyond high school graduation and set long-range goals. When the transition services in an IEP are being developed, information related to the required education, training, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living skills may be drawn from the EDP helping to create alignment between general and special education.
- The EDP should include high school course selections, projected high school completion date, desired degree, certificate, or other credential, and employment opportunities. The plan may also identify resources and support needed for the student's success, such as a personal literacy plan or a prevention plan for students at risk of dropping out of high school. Activities may include volunteer or work-related experiences, including job shadowing, mentorship programs in community businesses, or part-time employment in areas related to the career goal(s).
- Transition services are defined as a coordinated set of activities that focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities. The transition IEP contains the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching their postsecondary goals. The EDP outlines the course of study in a way the IEP typically does not. The EDP may document courses and course sequence where specific content will be learned while the IEP speaks specifically to the programs, accommodations and modifications, and services that are necessary to support the student's success. Together, these two documents complement each other in supporting the student toward the EDP goals.

If the EDP structure recommended in this document is followed, the gathering and documentation of information related to key areas of student development will be well underway long before federal requirements begin (transition services must be in place for the IEP that will be in effect when the student turns 16).

The EDP drives the development of a Personal Curriculum (PC) and can help to provide support and documentation for a PC modification. If a student requests a PC, the EDP must be in place first before the PC can be completed. Students with a disability requesting a PC may need a modification aligned to their EDP. The student may be granted a PC modification not otherwise allowable if the modification is consistent with both the student's EDP and the student's IEP.

The link between the EDP and the transition IEP may be more clearly understood by thinking about universal elements of quality planning:

- Development of postsecondary goals in education, training, employment, and, when appropriate, adult living.
- Identification of student preferences, interests, strengths, and needs.
- Review of academic performance, learning style, and effective support strategies for students in grades K-8.
- Identification and coordination of course(s) and support and possible consideration of a Personal Curriculum (PC).
- Annual review.

Talent Portfolios

What They Are and Why They Are Important

What are Talent Portfolios?

A talent portfolio is a vehicle for gathering and recording information that can be used to showcase the diverse skills and talents of the student. It gives the student a competitive advantage by showcasing their technical skills, highlighting career ready practices, and creating a lasting impression to a prospective employer or admissions committee.

Michigan legislation gives broad guidance around the specific requirements of the talent portfolio, leaving room for districts to add other criteria and make local decisions about implementation. The law requires that:

- Each student initiate in Grade 7 the development of a Talent Portfolio which will be revised annually through the student's EDP
- The Talent Portfolio shall include a record of the student's experiences, proficiencies, certifications, digital badges, and accomplishments that demonstrate talents or marketable skills

Talent Portfolios vs Scrapbooks

Because of the flexibility provided in the law to make local decisions about implementation and contents of the talent portfolio, districts should be cautious that this does not simply become a glorified resume or a few certificates in a file folder. Each element of the talent portfolio should link back to the student's EDP, career goals, professional career ready practices, technical skills, and unique abilities. In addition, students must be taught how to use these elements to provide examples to admission application questions, write scholarship essays, and showcase their skills in a job interview.

An example of this is provided below. The sample student has participated in band all four years in high school. The graphic shows how the student might use this experience to highlight professional career ready practices, demonstrate leadership experience, and use the experience as an example when answering interview questions.



Preparing Career Readiness Students

Once students begin assembling their talent portfolio, they must be taught *how to use it*. The greatest value of the talent portfolio is its use as a supplemental tool for demonstration and verification of student career readiness. As students add materials to the talent portfolio, teachers must help them when and how each item can provide the most benefit in showcasing their skills. Students should also be taught how to differentiate which elements fit with particular career fields, as students may find that their skills and interests cross multiple career clusters.

Michigan's 17 Career Clusters

How to use this guide:

Click on the Cluster name to link to more detailed information on each cluster, including job titles. Visit the Michigan Department of Education – Office of Career and Technical Education to see what career and technical education programs are offered in each cluster in Michigan. District staff and students can use [ONet](#) to access specific information on each job title.

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources

- ☐ Agribusiness Systems
- ☐ Animal Systems
- ☐ Environmental Service Systems
- ☐ Food Products and Processing Systems
- ☐ Natural Resources Systems
- ☐ Plant Systems
- ☐ Power, Structural and Technical Systems

Architecture and Construction

- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Design/Pre-Construction
- ☐ Maintenance/Operations

Arts, A/V Technology and Communications

- ☐ A/V Technology and Film
- ☐ Journalism and Broadcasting
- ☐ Performing Arts
- ☐ Printing Technology
- ☐ Telecommunications
- ☐ Visual Arts

Business Management and Administration

- ☐ Administrative Support
- ☐ Business Information Management
- ☐ General Management
- ☐ Human Resources Management
- ☐ Operations Management

Education and Training

- ☐ Administration and Administrative Support
- ☐ Professional Support Services
- ☐ Teaching/Training

Energy

- ☐ Energy Efficiency
- ☐ Utilities
- ☐ Wholesale, Extraction and Manufacturing

Finance

- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Banking Services
- ☐ Business Finance
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Securities and Investments

Government and Public Administration

- ☐ Foreign Service
- ☐ Governance
- ☐ National Security
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Public Management & Administration
- ☐ Regulation
- ☐ Revenue and Taxation

Health Sciences

- ☐ Biotechnology Research and Development
- ☐ Diagnostic Services
- ☐ Health Informatics
- ☐ Support Services
- ☐ Therapeutic Services

Hospitality and Tourism

- ☐ Lodging
- ☐ Recreation, Amusements and Attractions
- ☐ Restaurants and Food/Beverage Services
- ☐ Travel and Tourism

Human Services

- ☐ Consumer Services
- ☐ Counseling and Mental Health Services
- ☐ Early Childhood Development and Services
- ☐ Family and Community Services
- ☐ Personal Care Services

Information Technology

- ☐ Cybersecurity
- ☐ Information Support and Services
- ☐ Network Systems
- ☐ Programming and Software Development
- ☐ Web and Digital Communications

Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security

- ☐ Correction Services
- ☐ Emergency and Fire Management Services
- ☐ Law Enforcement Services
- ☐ Legal Services
- ☐ Security and Protective Services

Manufacturing

- ☐ Health, Safety and Environmental Assurance
- ☐ Logistics and Inventory Control
- ☐ Maintenance, Installation and Repair
- ☐ Manufacturing Production Process Development
- ☐ Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations
- ☐ Production
- ☐ Quality Assurance

Marketing

- ☐ Marketing Communications
- ☐ Marketing Management
- ☐ Marketing Research
- ☐ Merchandising
- ☐ Professional Sales

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

- ☐ Engineering and Technology
- ☐ Science and Mathematics

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

- ☐ Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance
- ☐ Health, Safety and Environmental Management
- ☐ Logistics Planning and Management Services
- ☐ Sales and Service
- ☐ Transportation Operations
- ☐ Transportation Systems/Infrastructure Planning, Management and Regulation

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