



Michigan Educational Research Association, Inc  
**FALL CONFERENCE**  
**Monday and Tuesday, November 23 and 24, 2009**  
**Bavarian Inn Conference Center**  
[www.merainc.org](http://www.merainc.org)  
*One Covered Bridge Lane, Frankenmuth, Michigan 48734*

### **THEME: Building a Balanced Assessment Program**

What is assessment? How can assessment energize students? How can we use assessment to build confidence within students rather than destroy it?

The fall MERA conference will demonstrate how educators can form a vision of assessment that will inform and energize the learner and also increase student learning. Building this kind of assessment system is challenging. One way to effectively meet that challenge is to ensure that the assessment system is balanced.

Dr. Commodore will share a vision of balance, quality assessment that honors all users of assessment and meets their information needs with dependable data. Accurate assessments provide all of the users from the boardroom to the classroom with accurate information. Recognizing the student as a critical user of assessment and bringing the student in as an assessment partner in the classroom will maximize learning.

The second day of the conference will build on Dr. Commodore's full day workshop. Speakers from four districts involved in the Michigan Assessment Coalition will discuss their work. Other presenters will bring us up to date on using the Census for school districts and updates from OEAA.

#### **Monday, November 23, 2009 (beginning at 9:00 am)**

**8:00 to 9:00 am: Registration and Continental Breakfast**

**9:00 to 9:15 am: Welcome from Conference organizer Kathy Miller**

**9:15 to 4:00 pm (with appropriate breaks, including lunch): Assessment, Balance and Quality, Dr. Carol A. Commodore.** The Seven Assessment Actions that lead to assessment balance and quality within our districts and schools will be described: what the actions are, why they are important, how to get there, and who has the locus of control in getting there.

**Dr. Commodore** will present a Path to the Vision: Seven Assessment Acts (The "What," "Why," "How" and "Who"). This includes

1. Balance local assessment systems
2. Refine local academic standards
3. Assure the quality of assessments
4. Turn learners into assessors
5. Provide descriptive feedback to learners during their learning
6. Motivate learners through success rather than through intimidation
7. Promote assessment literacy throughout the system.

Participants will be invited to analyze where their district or school is right now in the implementation of those actions.

Deepening an understanding of the role of leaders in the shaping of the vision and in the planning for implementation will be intertwined throughout the day.

**Tuesday November 24, 2009 (beginning at 8:30 am)—note times are approximate**

**7:30 to 8:30: Continental Breakfast**

**8:30 to 10:30: A panel of districts participating in the Michigan Assessment Consortium, facilitated by Kim Young of OEAA and Kathy Dewsbury White of Ingham ISD.** The mission of the MAC is to improve student learning and achievement through a system of coherent curriculum, balanced assessment, and effective instruction. Four districts who are members of the consortium will discuss how they use the concept of balanced assessment in their districts. The panelists include:

**Dearborn Heights District #7: Taryn Sonesson – Wayne RESA, Assessment Consultant, Laura Telepo, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher, Madison Elementary School, Leah Beck, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher, Madison Elementary School;**

**Bath Community Schools: Kassandra Lawhorne, Middle School teacher and Gabe Sowa, Middle School teacher;**

**Fowlerville Community Schools, Fowlerville High School: Ben Mainka, Assistant Principal, Kathleen Bowling, English Language Arts teacher, and Bobbiesue Adams, Science teacher.**

**10:30 to 10:45: break**

**10:45 to 12: OEAA updates: Joseph Martineau** will discuss the process of aligning MEAP and MME with the national core standards. How will this happen in Michigan? Other updates on MEAP/MME will be presented.

**12 to 1: Lunch**

**1 to 1:45: The American Community Survey, the latest school district specific data: Bettie Landauer-Menchik, MSU.** ACS has lots of data for 2006 to 2008 for districts with 20,000 people or more. Included in the data estimates are social, economic, demographic and housing characteristics. Find out about this gold mine of newly released data and how to use it.

**1:45 to 3: An Accountability Update from OEAA- MI-SAS, Paul Bielawski** will share the latest updates on MI-SAS and present analysis of the proposed federal rules that focus new federal funds on the "lowest 5%" of schools.