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HEADLINE: NEW **EXAM** TO PUT ALL **MICHIGAN STUDENTS** ON PATH TO COLLEGE

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BODY:

The following information was released by the **Michigan** Governor:

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced that for the first time, all **Michigan students** will take a college entrance **exam** as part of the state's high school assessment. Beginning with the class of 2008, **students** will be required to take the American College Test (ACT) and a work skills assessment known as WorkKeys in place of the existing **Michigan** Education Assessment Program (MEAP) test. "To compete in a global economy, our **students** must continue their education beyond high school," said Granholm. "To make this expectation a reality, we must give **students** the tools they need to succeed, including the opportunity to take a college entrance **exam**." The switch to the nationally-recognized college entrance **exam** implements a key recommendation of the Cherry Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth which Governor Granholm charged with finding ways to double the number of college graduates in **Michigan**. The Commission found that the use of a college entrance **exam** as the standard high school assessment in other states actually led to an increase in the number of **students** who decided to attend college. Currently, high school **students** who choose to take the ACT must pay approximately \$70 and take the test on a Saturday. By making this **exam** available to all high school **students** at no cost to the **student**, the state will ensure that every **student** has the needed entrance **exam** completed in order to qualify for admission into a college or university. "Based on the experience of other states, changing our high school assessment is a win-win for **Michigan and our students**," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan. "Not only are we removing one of the financial barriers for many **students** as they prepare for college, but we likely will see an increase in the number of **students** who choose to continue their education beyond high school." In January 2005, Granholm signed Public Acts 592-596 of 2004 which required the state to replace the high school MEAP test with a **Michigan Merit Exam**. The Department of Management and Budget was instructed to contract with a provider to develop, administer and score an **exam** which measured English language arts, mathematics, reading, social studies, and science and would be accepted by colleges and universities for entrance and placement purposes. Pearson Educational Measurement and its partner, ACT, were awarded the competitively-bid contract. In addition, the new

assessments will need approval from the U.S. Department of Education to be used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress as required by the federal No Child Left Behind law. The new test will be administered on a common two-day period in the spring of each year, with one day for the ACT, and the other day for WorkKeys and the assessments of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies tests. A two-day re-test period will occur two weeks later. The spring tests will be administered in schools exactly as the college entrance tests are administered in a national Saturday administration. The State will pay for one re-test for each **student**, although ACT offers a fee-waiver program for qualified low-income **students**.