



October 11, 2019

Amendments to Montana's State Plan under ESSA

Dear Partners in Education,

Montana is in the second school year implementing the State Plan under ESSA, which was developed with stake-holder involvement and received federal approval in January 2018. Now that we have had the opportunity to see the plan in action, it is time to add and adjust components to make the plan stronger.

Thus, the OPI is preparing to submit two (2) amendments to the Montana ESSA plan. The amendments include:

- 1. Updating the proficiency and exit criteria for English Learners as measured by the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Assessment and adding exit criteria for the WIDA Alternate Assessment.**

Purpose: To update English Learner proficiency and exit criteria to align with more rigorous academic English language proficiency expectations recommended by WIDA in 2016.

Process: In August 2019, the OPI convened stakeholders to review the exit criteria for Montana ELs. The OPI selected participants from a diverse group of Montana stakeholders, including (but not limited to): School administrators, school Title coordinators (e.g., Title III), English learner specialists, Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) teachers, cultural experts (i.e., persons with heritage language expertise with immigrant, indigenous and colony students), community, and parents. The purpose of the OPI WIDA Standard Validation Workshop was to establish meaningful proficiency criteria for Montana's ELs and meet the federal statutory requirement for

assessments used in the statewide accountability system and Peer Review as mandated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE).

2. Amending the allocation process of Title IVA, Part A, funding to follow the revised federal funding formula for Title 1 districts.

Purpose: To update the allocation process for awarding subgrants under Title IV, Part A, funding now that Montana is funded at a level that allows the distribution of a minimum of \$10,000.

Below is a timeline outlining the amendment process with stakeholder involvement:

Timeline:

- October 8- Introductory discussion with Education Advocates
- October 15- ESSA Update and posting of the red lined amendments for public comment period on the OPI website
- November 12- Consultation with the Governor's office
- November 18- Feedback and input discussion with Education Advocates
- **November 19, 2019- at 11:00 am Q & A Conference Call: (712)-770-3665 code: 514145**
- **November 22, further discussion with the Governor's office**
- November 26, Final Draft prepared and submitted to the DOE

Please send feedback, input and questions to ESSAinput@mt.gov

Putting Montana Students First **A⁺**