



Dear Partners in Education,

January 26, 2018

The Department of Education approved the Montana ESSA Plan:

- January 18, 2018, the Department of Education approved the Montana ESSA Plan. This was the 119th day of the DOE's 120-day deadline to approve the state plan.
- Montana received formal feedback from the DOE on December 13th and began communication with them to clarify and add further detail prior to resubmission.
- Just 48 hours prior to the DOE deadline, we were asked to take another look at our student subgroups in the accountability system. We agreed to work towards adding Hispanic as a subgroup over the next year since our Hispanic student population is on the rise. During the 2016-2017 school year, the Hispanic student population in Montana was 4.5%. This was an increase from 3.5% during the 2011-2012 school year. Therefore, schools will eventually be identified for targeted support if their Hispanic population is underperforming the same way schools are currently identified if their SPED, American Indian, white or low income students are underperforming. The OPI will support schools in implementing targeted services for these student groups.

Information on assessments under ESSA will be presented at the February assessment conferences in Billings and Helena and included in the next ESSA Update!