



Dear Partners in Education,

December 3, 2019

Support Available for Implementing SBAC Interim Assessments:

- Professional Development Opportunity: 2020 OPI Data and Assessment Conference
The OPI Assessment Division is hosting a conference, which will have sessions tailored to the needs of Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement schools.
 - The conference will be conducted at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Helena Colonial in Helena, Montana and attendees will attend a two-day conference filled with diverse sessions to meet individualized need. The conference will begin at 8:00 am on Day 1 and conclude at 5:00 pm on Day 2.
 - Registration for this conference will take place in early December. Links to registration will be posted on the MT Assessment Conference page as soon as they are available. This page will also host the final agenda, session materials, hotel location maps, and other logistical details for planning. Participants are encouraged to make their travel arrangements as soon as possible under the "JAN2020" room block with the Delta Hotels at (406) 443-2100.
- To request in person or virtual training on SBAC Interim Assessments (Grades 3-8) complete [this google form](#).
- Here is a [google folder](#) for schools/districts with a PowerPoint and handouts from our SBAC Interim Assessment Trainings. Schools may use these materials as needed.
- Teacher Learning Hub two renewal unit course, [Implementing Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment](#), covers all you need to know about implementing Smarter Balanced interim assessment.
- Questions can be directed to OPI Assessment Help desk: opiassessmenthelpdesk@mt.gov, 1-844-867-2569.

Targeted Support and Improvement Grant Opportunity

The OPI is providing financial assistance for schools identified as Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) under the Montana State Plan federally approved for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These funds will be available for strategic use in the current school year

(2019-2020) to support improving student outcomes for subgroup(s) identified for TSI. LEAs with more than one TSI school may choose to combine 2019-2020 TSI funding to develop a localized strategy that will impact multiple TSI Schools within the LEA.

Eligibility: To be eligible to receive these funds, an LEA must have one or more schools identified under the federally-approved definition for TSI schools. These are schools with at least one subgroup of students that scored at or below the lowest 5% of all-students group's performance in the state.

Criteria for Identification: ESSA requires states to use accountability indicators, disaggregated by subgroup, to annually differentiate public schools by several categories. One category, Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), identifies schools with at least one subgroup of students that scored at or below the lowest 5% of the state's schools' all-students group's performance. These schools, identified for TSI, must develop and implement their own intervention plan that focuses improvement efforts on the subgroup(s) that resulted in being identified for TSI. The school improvement plan must be developed with stakeholders, approved, implemented and monitored by its district. A school will exit TSI if no subgroup is performing in the lowest 5% of all schools.

The OPI will identify Targeted Schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) if TSI schools have not increased the performance of all student subgroups to exceed the level of performance of the lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools overall after three years of additional targeted support. These schools will first be identified for comprehensive support and improvement beginning with school year 2021-2022.

Funding: ESSA requires 7-percent state-level set-aside of Title I funds for school improvement. This set-aside, as designated in ESSA Section 1003, must be used to support districts with CSI and TSI schools. These school-improvement funds must go to local school districts, education service agencies, or consortia of districts, by formula or competition. States must give priority to school districts that

- serve high numbers or percentages of elementary and secondary schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support;
- demonstrate the greatest need, as determined by the state; and
- demonstrate the strongest commitment to using the funds to improve student achievement and outcomes.

As federal appropriations allow, the Montana OPI, will annually award the 1003 fund allotments through a formula grant to CSI and TSI schools.

The funds allotted will be based on approval of an **application** that:

- Is informed by a comprehensive needs assessment;
- Is informed by a gap-analysis;

- Includes interventions and practices that are supported by moderate and strong evidence; and
- Is developed with stakeholder involvement (teachers, principals, school leaders, school staff, parents, students, and community members).

TSI Grant Timeline:

October 3rd & 10th: TSI Webinars

October 3rd to November 1st: Grant Pre-work

 Completing the CNA and Gap Analysis as part of the CSIP process in TEAMS

 Researching Evidenced-based practices

 Conducting Stake-holder involvement

October 11th: Email notification of Formula Grant Allocation by School

November 21st: Grant Application Opens

November 21st: Optional webinar for Overview of Grant Application

December 13th: Grant Application Closes

December 20th: Notification of approval or corrections required

For more information, contact julie.murgel@mt.gov, 406-444-3172