



Montana

Office of Public Instruction

Special Education Director's Call

2021 Montana Strategic Waivers

Office of Public Instruction Staff

January 21, 2021

Note: slides were prepared on January 21, 2021.



Waiver and Assessment Topics

1. Cover information about the Strategic Waivers;
2. Provide opportunity to answer any questions;
3. Collect concerns or comments.



Session Disclaimer

The information shared in today's webinar is current as of [Timestamp: 01/21/2021] and stems from laws, regulations, and the OPI's policies for testing, accountability, and reporting.

The purpose of this webinar is to elicit public participation and comment for the addendum and strategic waivers being sought for testing, accountability, and reporting requirements under ESSA.

Your participation in this webinar is critical to the overall process! We look forward to hearing your ideas, concerns, questions, and recommendations on areas likely impacted by these pursuits.



The Purpose of Waivers

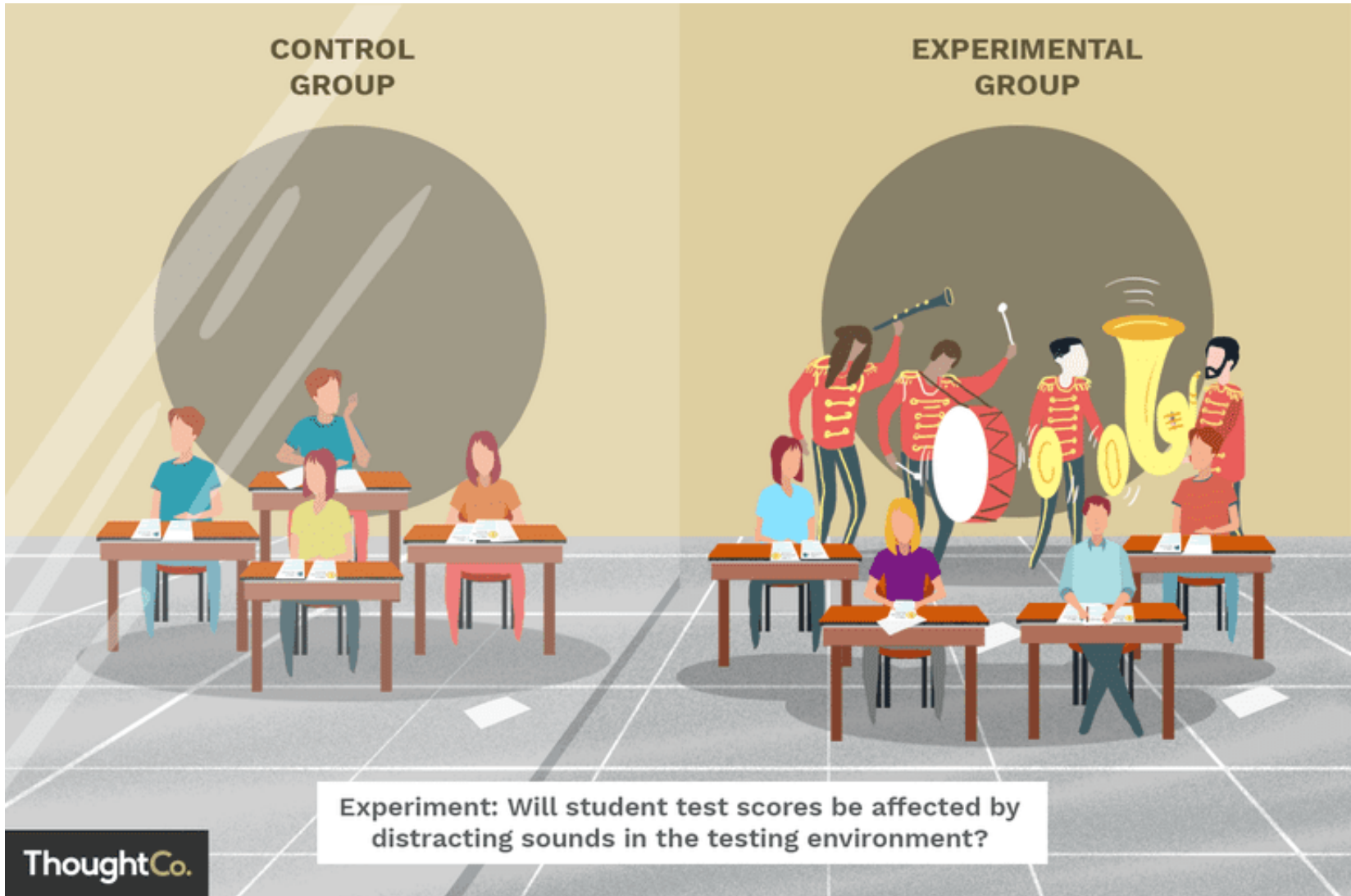
- Health & Safety
- Equity & Fairness
- Impact of COVID-19 on students & families
 - Disproportionate impact on underserved and disadvantaged students
- Prioritize resources to the most vulnerable student populations

State Assessment Purpose (Why)

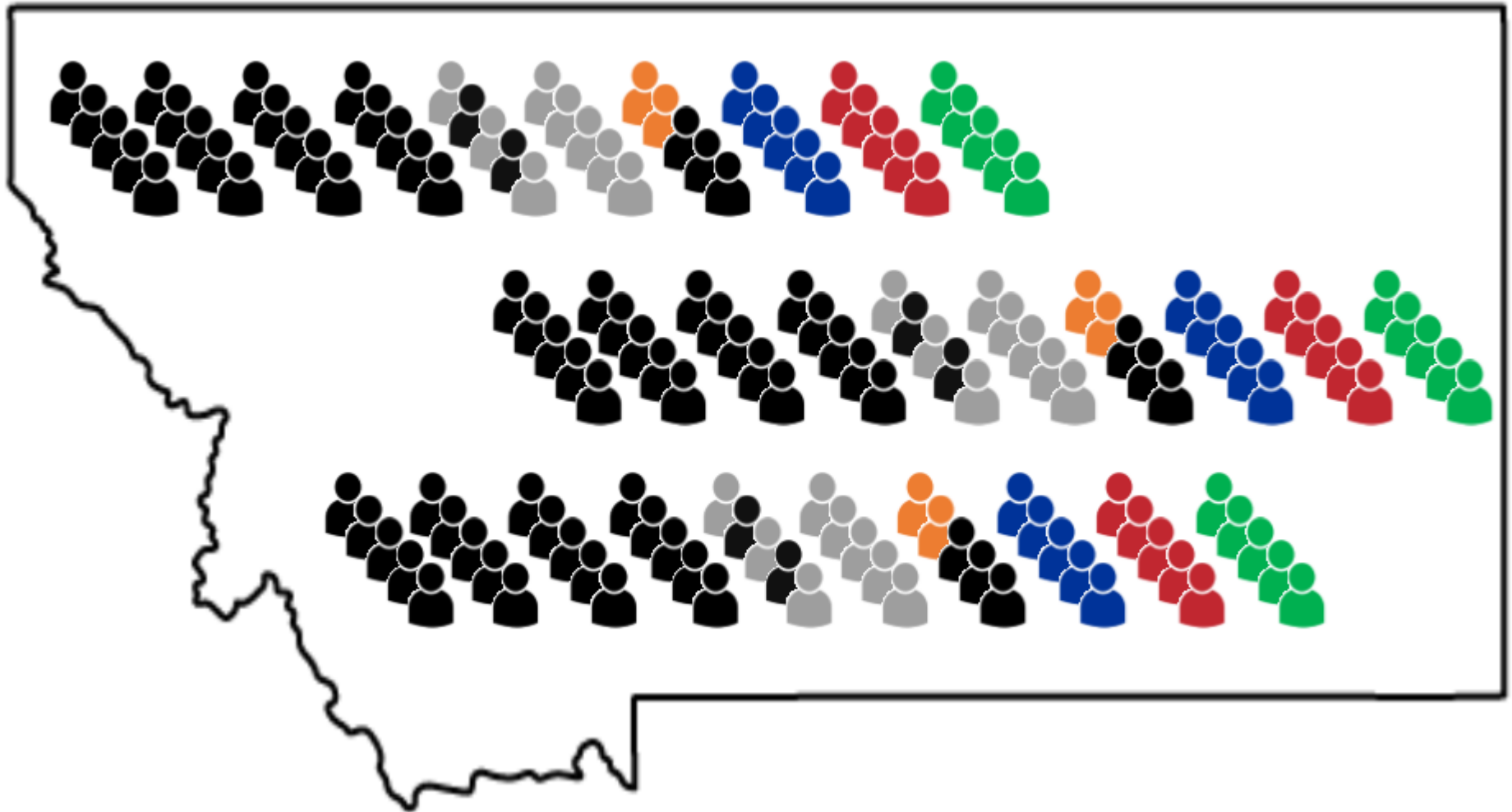
- Ensure all students have equitable access to high-quality education services
- Measure attainment of education
- Monitor student learning and progress
- Address and close educational gaps.
- Inform and provide accurate and timely information to parents
- Support education information processes at local and state levels.



Establish Standard Conditions



Census Participation & Inclusion



Adequate Technical Quality

State assessments MUST be valid, reliable, and fair for the purposes they are used.



(2) What do the Waivers DO

Here is what the waivers MAY do:

Cancel

- Requirements to administer the statewide assessments for Math, ELA, and Science in the spring 2021.

Suspend

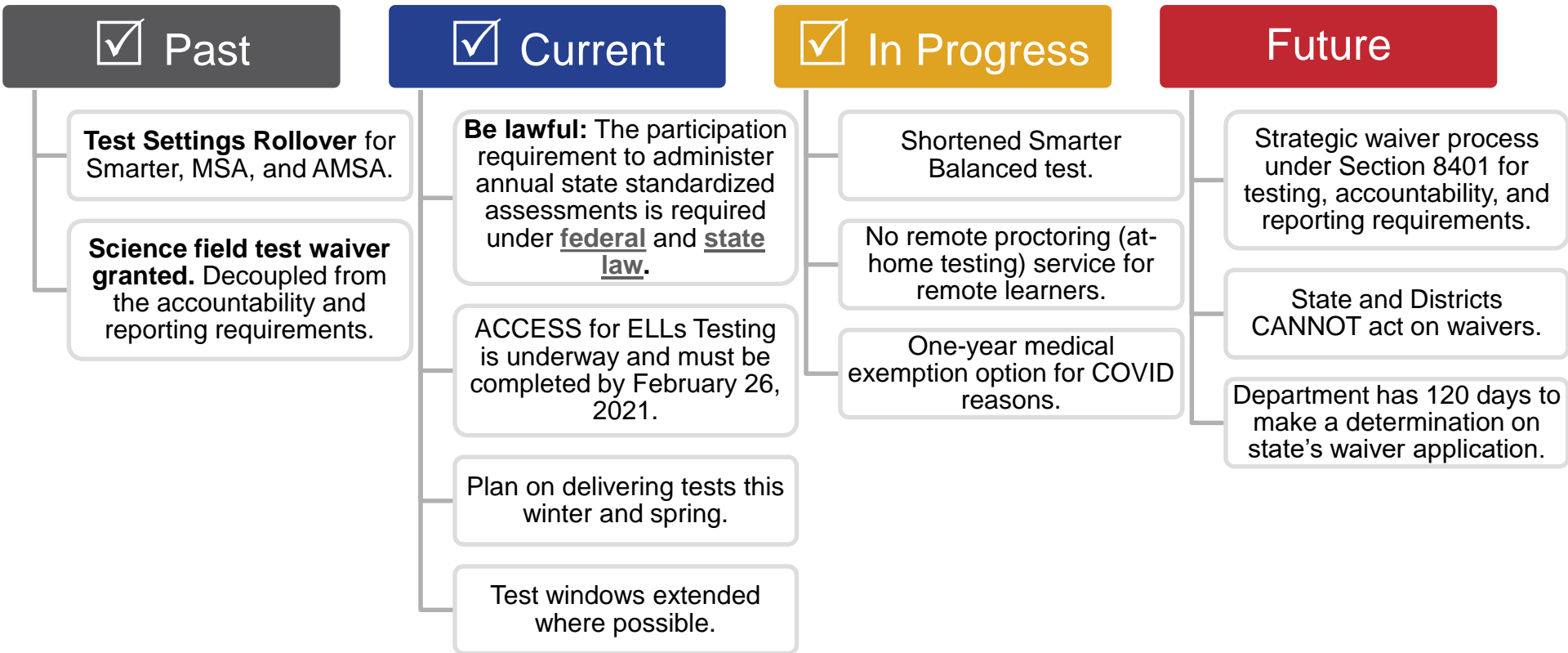
- Accountability system for the 2020–2021 data year.

Remove

- Certain elements from the 2020–2021 ESSA Report Card.

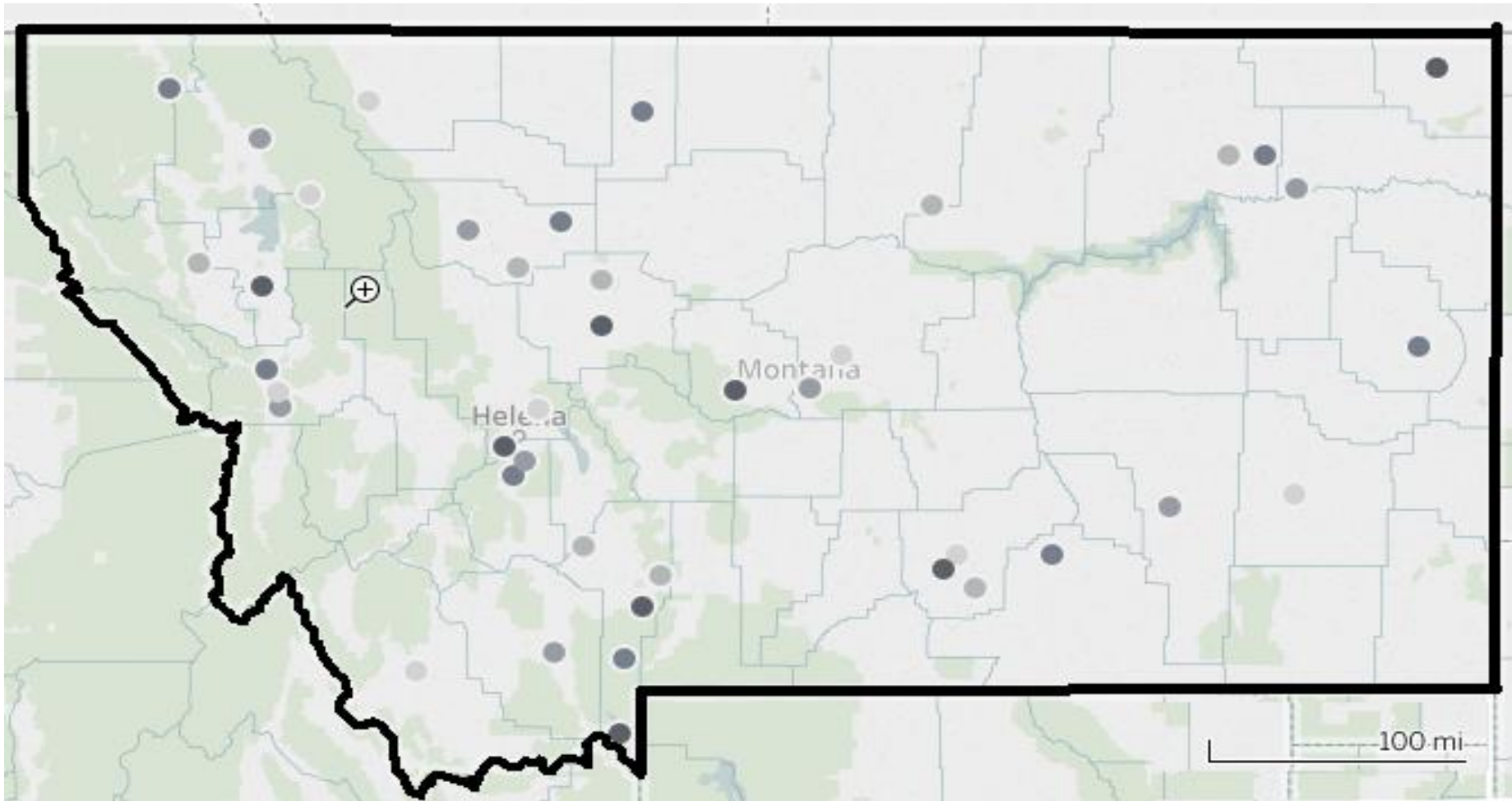


What are we DOING? Key OPI Activities



#2) Why Does Your Voice Matter?

Note: Image was taken from Universal Waiver Respondent Representation in July 2020.





#1) How to Lend Your Voice?

1. Provide comments or concerns today
2. Complete our public comment survey
3. Send comments to us at ESSAInput@mt.gov

Instructions for Using Menti

Using your device go to:

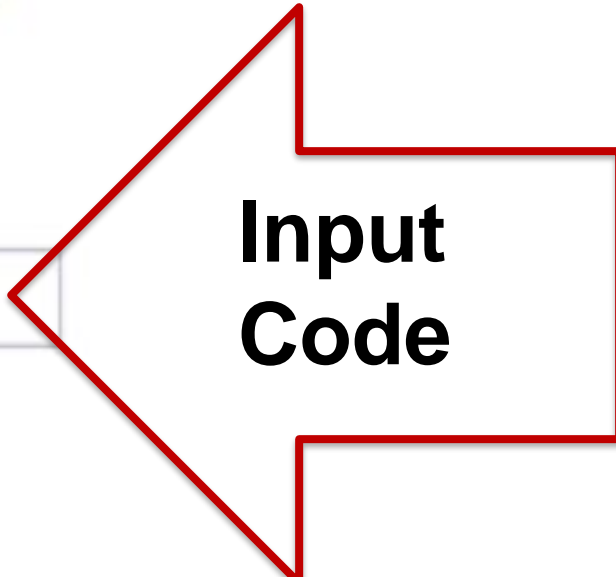
www.menti.com



Please enter the code

Submit

The code is found on the screen in front of you

A large red outline arrow pointing to the left, towards the input field. Inside the arrow, the text 'Input Code' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**Input
Code**



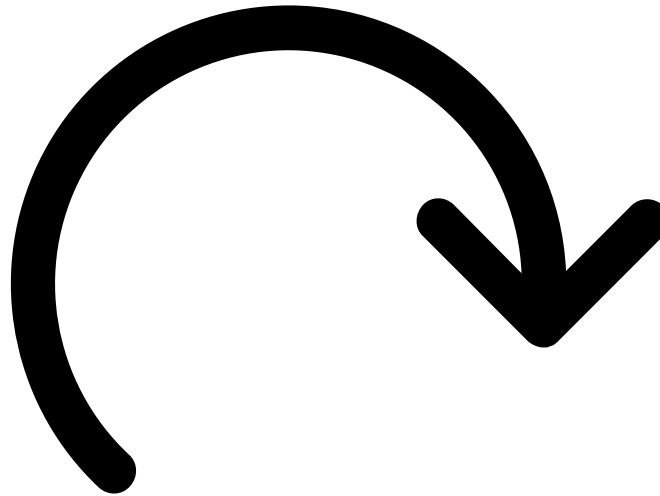
Menti #1

- Where are you joining us from (i.e., enter your 5-digit zip code)?



Menti #2

What questions on the testing setting rollover process do you have?





Menti #3

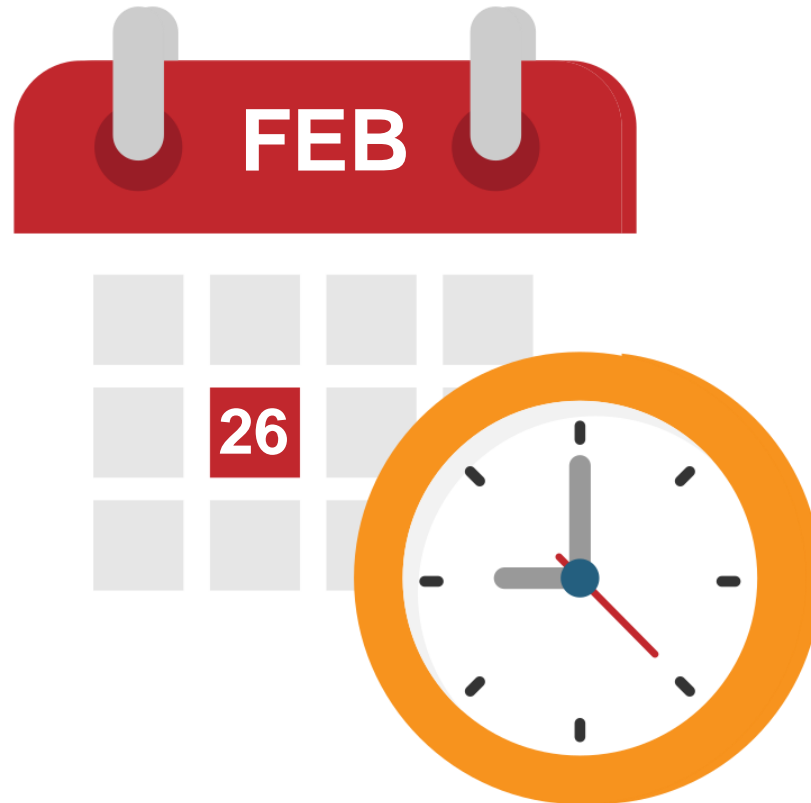
What questions on the approved field test waiver for science (MSA) and (AMSA) do you have?



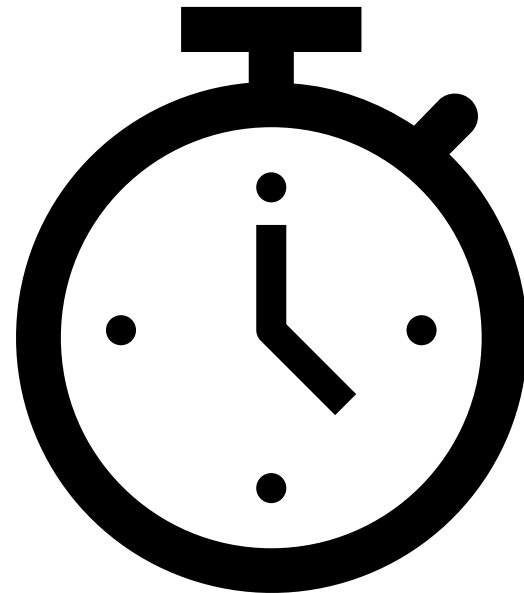
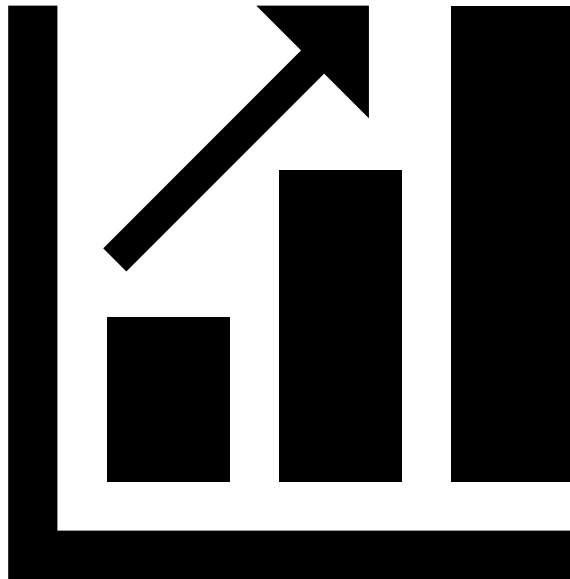


Menti #4

What questions on the ACCESS for ELLs requirement or test completions do you have?



What questions on the shortened Smarter Balanced blueprint do you have?



What questions on the medical exemption for COVID reasons and the OPI's plan for data collection for non-participation do you have?

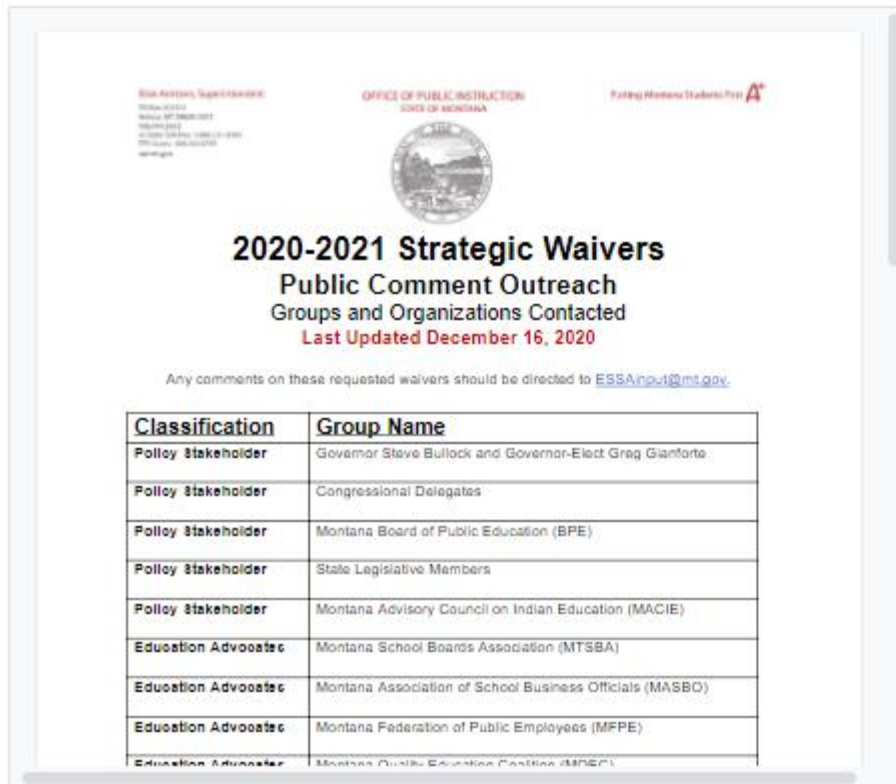


Concerned Stakeholders

2020-2021 Strategic Waivers Public Comment Outreach

- Outreach Page

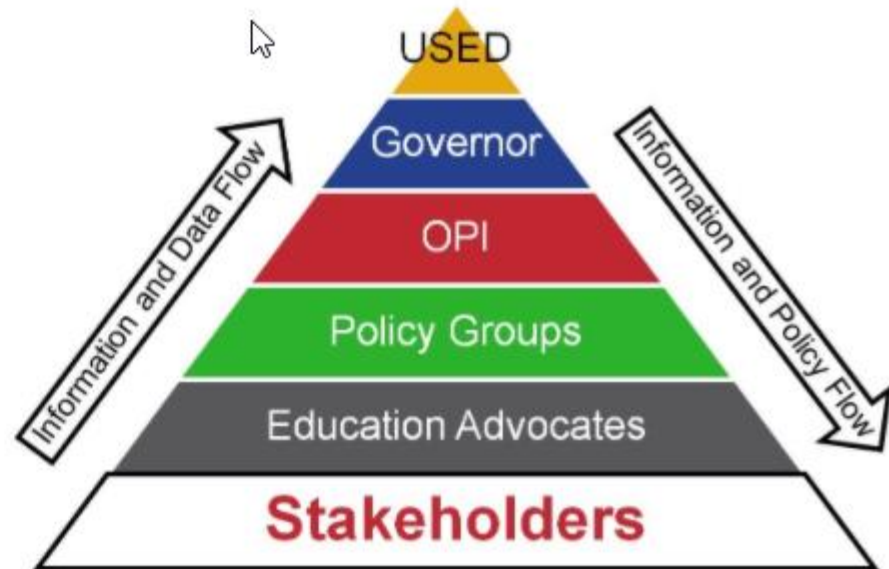
This page is intended to provide the reader with information on the efforts of the OPI to notify likely impacted stakeholders.



2020-2021 Strategic Waivers
Public Comment Outreach
Groups and Organizations Contacted
Last Updated December 16, 2020

Any comments on these requested waivers should be directed to ESSAinput@mt.gov.

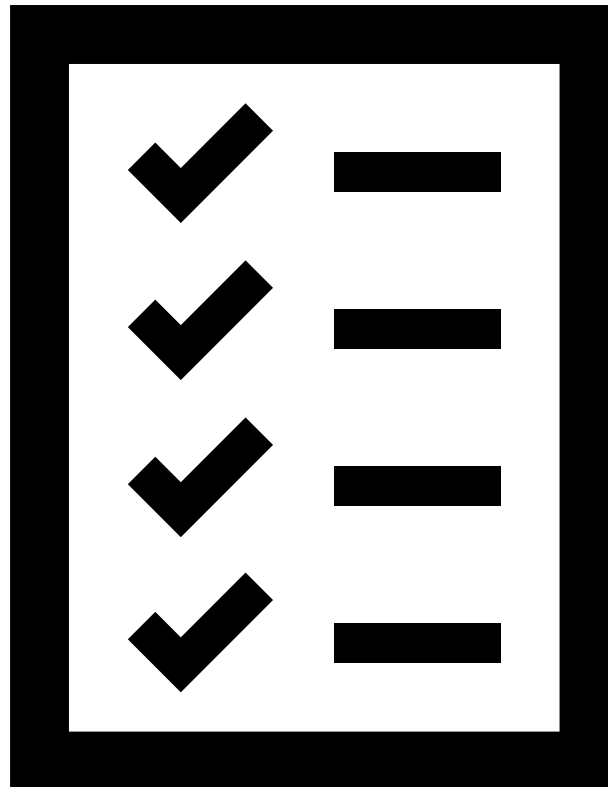
Classification	Group Name
Policy Stakeholder	Governor Steve Bullock and Governor-Elect Greg Gianforte
Policy Stakeholder	Congressional Delegates
Policy Stakeholder	Montana Board of Public Education (BPE)
Policy Stakeholder	State Legislative Members
Policy Stakeholder	Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE)
Education Advocates	Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA)
Education Advocates	Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO)
Education Advocates	Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE)
Education Advocates	Montana Public Education Coalition (MPEC)





Complete the Survey

Complete the Public Comment Survey.





Strategic Waiver Public Participation & Comment Tools

Montana 2020-2021 Strategic Waiver: Public Comment Survey

The "Public Comment Survey" is organized around the following sections to address (1) Profile Information, (2) Adequate Notice, (3) State Testing Waiver, (4) Training and Technical Assistance, (5) Accountability Waiver, (6) Reporting Waiver, (7) Fiscal Impacts, and (8) Closing. The questions in Survey Sections 2-8 are optional so you may answer a select few or all questions based on your interest. Click the "Submit" at the end when you are finished to record and finalize your submission. There are 44 unique questions in total.

As of [Timestamp: 12/23/2020], the participation requirement to administer annual state standardized assessments is required under federal and state law. The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) recognizes that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic poses many new challenges and is seeking maximum flexibility and options under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The "Montana Strategic Waiver Actions Timeline" is specific to the 2020-2021 school year and reflects the state activities that led to Superintendent Arntzen's December 2020 decision to submit a request for testing, accountability, and reporting federal waivers under 20 U.S. Code §7861 and ESEA-ESSA Section 8401.

Q: Why is the OPI pursuing these strategic waivers? The pandemic impact continues to increase and the health and safety concerns for our students continue to rise. With highly variable instructional models, health and safety concerns, and school access restrictions, the OPI is concerned about the overall validity and reliability of any score reports.

Q: What does this strategic waiver process mean? The OPI and school districts cannot act on the waivers until a determination has been made by the Department and the Montana Board of Public Education (Board). The Department may take up to 120 days to approve or deny the waiver requests under the Section 8401 process. While we wait for a decision from the Department we are obligated to proceed with all current obligations in existing law and policy.

- 79 Public Comment Survey Responses

- These numbers are current as of January 20, 2021.



Email Us

Email questions, support, or concerns to
ESSAinput@mt.gov.





Menti #7

Do you support the strategic waiver for state testing?



Menti #8

Do you support the strategic waiver to suspend accountability for the 2020-2021 School Year?



Menti #9

Do you support the strategic waiver for reporting?



Menti #10

If you answered Yes to this set questions, what are some of the benefits these waiver will have to you?



Menti #11

Please describe your overall concerns about the addendum or strategic waiver process.



Menti #12

Do you have any concerns about funding or programs that rely on these data? Please explain.



Key Documents and Resources for Strategic Waiver Process

[December 23, 2020 Public Notice](#)

[Strategic Waiver Purpose and Cover Letter](#)

[Strategic Waiver Timeline](#)

[Testing FAQ](#)

[Accountability FAQ](#)

[Reporting Card FAQ](#)

[Strategic Waiver Google Website](#)



Menti #13

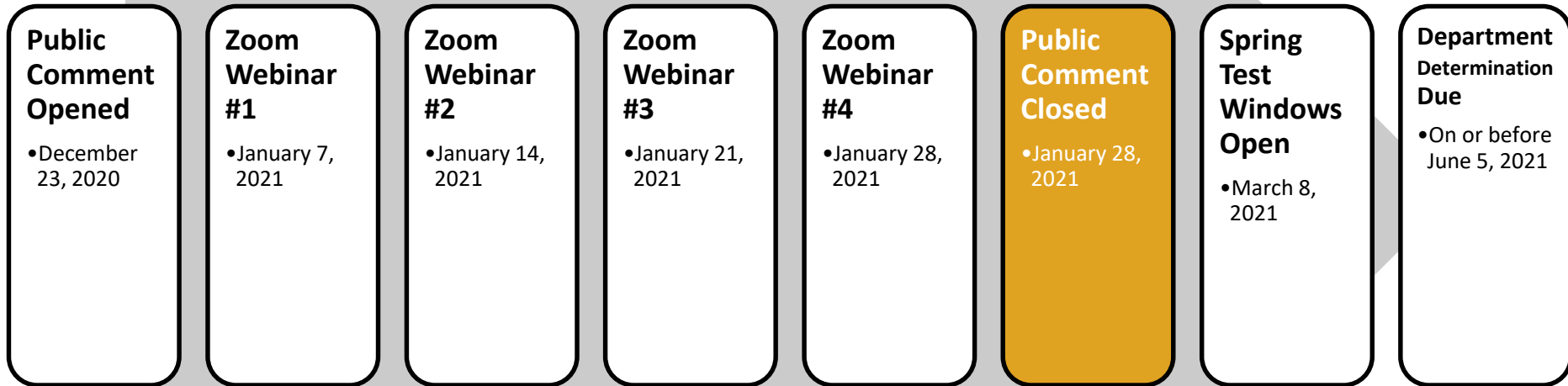
Do you have questions on the Key Documents and Resources?



Strategic COVID Waiver Process

Link to full [FY2021 Montana Strategic Waiver Actions Zoom Webinar Schedule](#).

Public Comment Period: December 23, 2020 – January 28, 2021 [Period of 36 days].





Menti #14

YOUR TURN: Is there anything else you need or have concerns on?

Questions?

For questions on state testing, please direct those to the OPI Assessment Help Desk at 1.844.867.2569 or e-mail at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov.

