

---SPECIAL ISSUE---

ASSESSMENT BULLETIN OCTOBER 2020

OPI COVID Page: opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information

CORONAVIRUS AND SCHOOLS

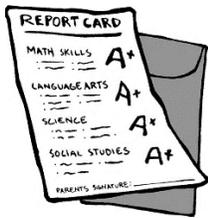
Coronavirus Information and Updates

[+ Read more](#)

Special Issue

This issue shares updates with state assessments and resources to support data literacy and its direct influence in guiding instruction, alongside a balanced approach including the use of formative and interim strategies. In this issue, you will find four sections tailored to these state assessment updates: (1) assessment updates, (2) state assessment activities, (3) webinar resources, and (4) contact information.

Table of Contents



[Assessment Updates](#)



[State Assessment & Accountability Activities](#)



[Webinars & Educator Resources](#)



[Contact and Support Information](#)

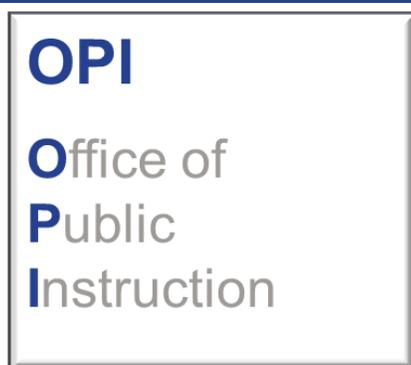
Assessment News

We thank the readers for the planning, preparation, training, and overall effort to support state assessment at the local level and to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements under state and federal law. Given the uncertainty that exists with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we look forward to creative solutions to address the requirements and opportunities to build strong partnerships as we strive to improve student outcomes across the state. On September 3, Secretary DeVos issued a memo to Chief State School Officers on the requirements of testing this school year. To learn more about this directive and what it means for schools, please read the [September 3 Memo](#). In this issue, we have **highlighted in yellow** noteworthy content for your review this month.

This section is tailored to System Test Coordinators (STC) with a lens for providing the current news, testing alerts, and changes planned for each of these program areas. Use these hyperlinks to navigate to each section of the Bulletin:

- [OPI News](#)
- [MontCAS News](#)
- [Smarter News](#)
- [ACT News](#)
- [MSAA News](#)
- [MSA News](#)
- [AMSA News](#)
- [ACCESS for ELLs / WIDA Screener](#)
- [NAEP and International](#)

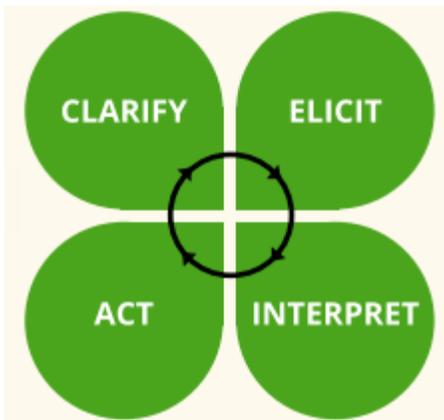
OPI News



We have received several requests to share the Assessment Team's PowerPoint/Script from the interim recommendations presented to the [Board of Public Education at the September 2020 meeting](#). Here is a link to the [Fall 2020 OPI Recommendations](#) (script embedded). The [guidance webpage](#) includes a comprehensive overview of all things interims and including an [18-min Quick Start Video](#). This guidance is supported by mixed measures to fully match the instructional utility while preserving time, resources, and energy. (No assessment can fulfill multiple and diverse purposes well so a coherent, system of assessments (balanced) is important.) This guidance reinforces the [Restart & Recovery: Assessment Considerations for Fall 2020](#) from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Before putting an implementation plan into motion, please review these 5 important reminders:

1. **Create a Plan:** Ensure there is plan and intention for how the assessments will serve learning over the course of the school year.
2. **Ensures a Through Course Model:** Consider having a through course approach which could include using IABs and FIABs that connect to [Tools or Teachers](#). ([Tools for Teachers](#) provides educators with strategies to support individual needs.)
3. **Embedded in Practice:** Don't treat the measures as "things" but instead as an instructional process for the purpose of learning. When embedded in the learning plan the formative tools and interim blocks should not feel like tests they should feel like learning (e.g., lesson plans/strategies). The ICAs and Summative have a different purpose, frequency, and grain-



size and can be used to inform the curriculum over the course of the school year.

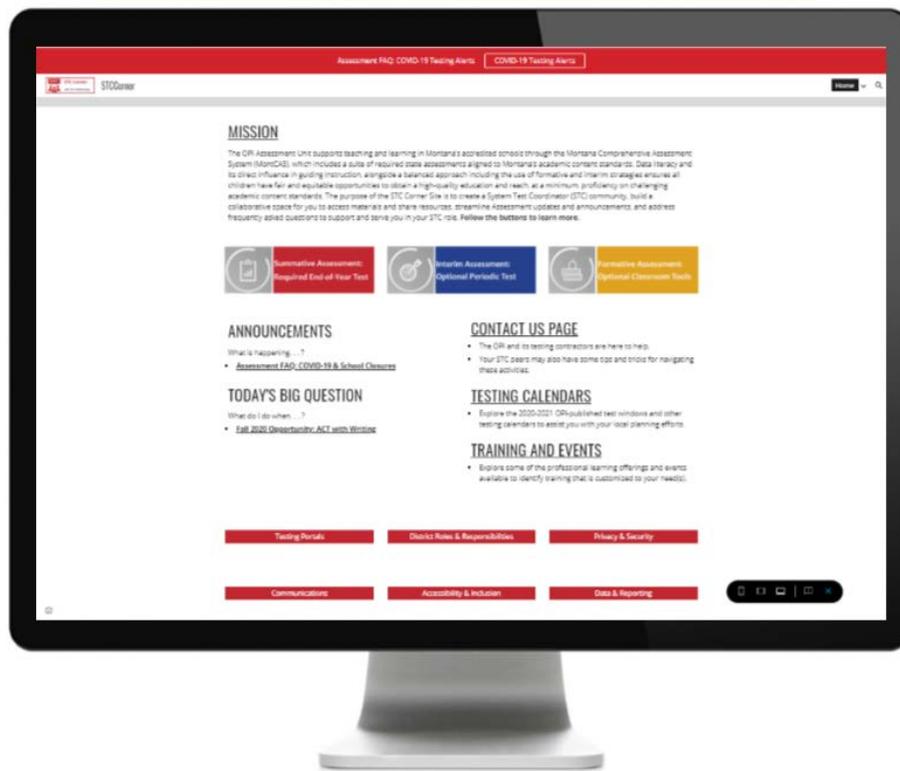
4. **Accessibility and Equity are MUSTs:** Support each child with accessibility tools per the student’s educational plan.
5. **Provide Time to Practice:** Ensure each child has time to practice and/or experience the tools before the Summative.

If you intend to follow this system of assessment guidance, please join us [Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 3:30 pm to participate in the MontCAS Monthly Webinar “A Balanced Assessment System”.](#)

Testing Portals:

1. Math, English Language Arts, and Science Interims are available on the [Montana Testing Portal](#).
2. To proctor an online assessment and receive access to the Test Administration Site, a user must complete the [TA Certification Course](#).
3. To proctor an online assessment, a user must acknowledge the Test Security Agreement located in TIDE.

The [STC Corner Site](#) has been released to STCs!



To learn more about this resource, attend the STC Open Forum Webinar Series. Joining details for this monthly event are described in the [Educator Opportunity Section](#)

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Published Test Windows for All Required Statewide Assessments
2020–2021 School Year

| Grade | ACCESS for ELLs (English Language Proficiency) | Alternate Montana Science Assessment (Alternate) | Montana Science Assessment (General) | MSAA (Alternate) | Smarter Balanced (General) | ACT with Writing* (General) |
|-------------------|---|--|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Window Period | 8 weeks | 8 weeks | 8 weeks | 7 weeks | 10 weeks | 3 Opportunities |
| Test Window | Dec 2 – Jan 29 | Mar 15 – May 7 | Mar 15 – May 7 | Mar 15 – April 30 | Mar 8 – May 14 | Date 1: March 23 Date 2: April 6 Date 3: April 20 |
| Required Subjects | ELP | Science | Science | Math and ELA | Math and ELA | Math, ELA, and Science |
| Grades Tested | K–12 | Grades 5, 8, 11 | Grades 5, 8 | Grades 3–8, 11 | Grades 3–8 | Grade 11 |

Prepared by the Office of Public Instruction on
July 27, 2020.

Putting Montana Students First



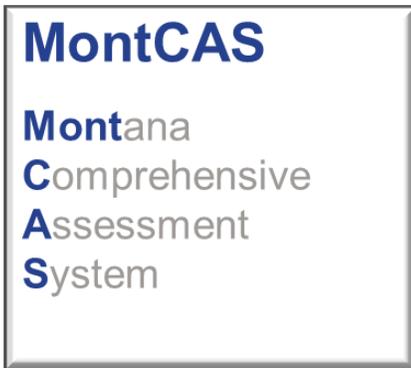
Dates and elements listed here are subject to change
*Online testing windows are posted on the Montana ACT site.

ACT with Writing Fall 2020 Optional Testing Opportunity for Grade 12 Students

| Date 1 | Paper Testing* | Accommodations Window |
|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | October 6, 2020 | October 6-16, 2020 (weekdays) |
| Date 2 | | |
| | October 20, 2020 | October 20-26, 2020 |

*Fall testing is paper only – no online testing available.

MontCAS News



*This section pertains to any updates or news under the umbrella of the
MontCAS program not specific to any one state assessment.*

Portal Link: [MontCAS Application](#)

NEW for 2020–2021 School Year – Electronic Test Security Agreements

The Assessment Division continues to use educator feedback to improve assessment related sites, responsibilities, and tools. Beginning the 2020–2021 school year, the collection of the Test Security Agreements (TSAs) started its migration to an online electronic format.

Authorized Representative (AR): The AR will electronically sign the test security agreement within the TEAMS Report this year. Check the [TEAMS page](#) for data collection deadlines and guidance.

System Test Coordinator (STC): STCs must sign the electronic TSA and the testing plan assurances in the [MontCAS Application](#) by the dates specified in the “MontCAS Test Security Collection Schedule 2020-21”.



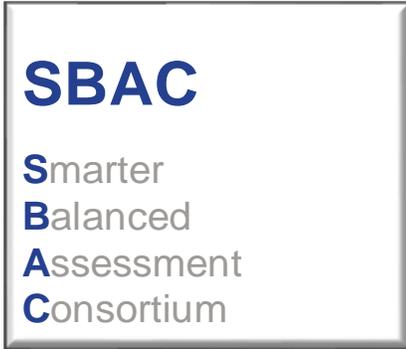
Test Administrators (and other portal account holders): All staff with [TIDE Testing Portal accounts](#) will be required to sign an electronic TSA. All staff with WIDA accounts, ACT accounts, and MSAA accounts will be required to sign an electronic TSA or non-disclosure agreement (NDA) to gain access to the online test administration and reporting sites.

Staff in Supporting Roles: All staff within the district who may assist with state assessments (e.g., storing ACT materials, sending score reports home, and scribes) will sign the [MontCAS Test Security Agreement for Supporting Roles](#). The TSA should be electronically signed prior to the opening of the state assessment test windows.

The STC is responsible for maintaining records of TSAs at each level for at least three years as the OPI may request copies of them within that time period. **Table 1** below outlines the test security requirements for each state assessment.

Table 1. TSAs Across Assessment Portals

| | |
|---|---|
| ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA) and Screener | Educators logging into the WIDA Secure Portal on or after July 1 will be prompted to agree to the “Non-Disclosure and User Agreement” (NDUA). Educators will not be able to view secure materials and resources without first agreeing to the NDUA. |
| Smarter Balanced, Montana Science Assessment, and Alternate Montana Science Assessment | On or after August 3, current and new users are required to sign the Online TIDE TSA. Users will be unable to access the interim or summative assessments without first agreeing to the online TIDE TSA. |
| Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) | When the MSAA portal opens users will be required to agree to the online TSA in order to access the secure materials and administer tests. |
| ACT with Writing | STCs for the state required ACT will be requested to sign the ACT TC Student Privacy Assurances Form prior to administration. Test Coordinators (TC) and proctors are required to complete the ACT’s test security assurances including the NDA before testing. |



This assessment must be annually administered to all students in Grades 3–8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI’s published guidance for test administration and test security.

Portal Link: [Montana Testing Portal](#)

Interim Recommendations

The OPI recommendations for administering math and ELA interims can be found on the [Fall 2020 Interim Benchmarks](#) webpage. This webpage includes a [19-minute Quick Start Video](#) and the Five Ws of interims. Districts are encouraged to develop interim plans for Fall 2020 to include an action plan on using the data. As of September 23, Montana districts have administered over 1,200 Interim Comprehensive Assessments and over 30 Interim Assessment Blocks.

Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs)

The [Smarter Balanced](#) Interim Assessment Blocks ([IABs](#)) show individual student attainment of the math and ELA standards for specific learning targets and connect to online instructional resources.

Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs)

Districts are encouraged to administer the [Smarter Balanced ICAs](#) this fall to establish a benchmark and show growth over the school year on the same scale as the summative assessment.

High School Interim Eligible Testing Grades

Grade 11 is the default eligible testing grade for all high school students. When districts administer the grade specific ICAs they need to modify the individual student test settings to include their enrolled grade alongside Grade 11 (e.g. Grade 9 students will not be able to take the Grade 9 ICA unless the test setting is modified for them). Directions on student test settings is found on pp. 14–15 in the [TIDE User Guide](#).



For more information or resources on this program, contact Duane Schlabach at 406-444-0748 or Duane.Schlabach@mt.gov

Smarter Balanced August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|----------|--------------------------|
| | No deadlines this month. |

Timely Tasks

| Task | Responsibility |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintain Student Records | Ensure that all newly enrolled students are updated, or transfer students are end-dated, in AIM/Infinite Campus at the district level. This is the data used to upload into TIDE for interim use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources: AIM Website |

Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 60–100 minutes to complete this month.

Resources and Supports

| Resource | | Support with... |
|---|---|---|
|  | Montana Testing Portal | The portal on which TIDE users and student test settings can be added. This portal also includes the summative and interim administration and scores. |
|  | TIDE Upload Schedule | This calendar shows the dates student data files are uploaded to the TIDE portal. All uploads are conducted in the afternoon and processed that night; the updates in TIDE will be effective the morning after each upload. |
|  | Schedule of Events | This document provides the deadlines and calendar events for the 2020–2021 school year as it relates to math and ELA interims and summative assessments. |
|  | The Reporting System | This new reporting system replaces both AIRWays and the Online Reporting System. Both interim and summative score reports will be housed in this new tile on the Montana testing portal. View the tutorial video to learn more. <i>*The summative Online Reporting System will be retired on Sept. 28. All historical data will be transferred over to the new Reporting System.</i> |
|  | Data Literacy Hub Course | This course provides insight into data literacy and data analysis strategies for teachers and administrators in Montana. The course uses examples of formative, interim and summative assessment data from the Montana Comprehensive Assessment System. Leave this course with skills and protocols to use data in ways that can be immediately implemented in the classroom. |
|  | Tools for Teachers | A brand-new resource, higher-quality suite of tools carefully crafted to save teachers time, streamline lesson planning, and help students learn. |
|  | Remote Administration | Flexible options to administer interims in synchronous or asynchronous modes of remote teaching. |
|  | Interim Assessment Item Portal (IAIP) | A new site, that is housed within Tools for Teachers, is designed for educators to interact with sample test questions just as students experience them. A print feature has been enabled to permit printing items for remote learning via packets. |
|  | Content Explorer | This new website is designed for educators to help interpret student results by understanding the claims, targets, and standards that are being assessed. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com | 877-365-7915 | Montana Testing Portal |

ACT with Writing News

ELA, Mathematics, and Science



This assessment must be annually administered to all students in Grade 11 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

Portal Link: [PearsonAccess Next \(PA^{Next}\)](#)

Review ACT's plans to address COVID-19 related safety and protection during administration of the ACT with Writing

- [Testing Amid COVID-19 landing page](#) acknowledges ACT's soon-to-be released requirement for students to wear face coverings while testing.
- ACT CEO Janet Godwin's blog: [Testing Amid COVID-19: Our Plans to Help You Achieve Success.](#)

Spring 2021 ACT with Writing Testing Dates

| Test Window 1 | Test Window 2 | Test Window 3 |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard: March 23 • Accommodated: March 23–April 2 • Online: March 23–April 1 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard: April 6 • Accommodated: April 6–16 • Online: April 6–15 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard: April 20 • Accommodated: April 20–30 • Online: April 20–29 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY) |

For more information or resources on this program, contact Marcy Fortner at 406-444-3511 or MFortner@mt.gov.

ACT with Writing August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|------------------|---|
| Past Due | Complete the parent-notification tasks and assurances outlined in the ACT Test Coordinator Student Privacy Assurances Form . |
| October 7, 2020 | For fall senior testing purposes: Return test booklets, used answer documents, and test administration forms from October 6 standard time test date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: Materials must be received at ACT no later than October 13, 2020 or they will not be scored. |
| October 9, 2020 | For fall senior testing purposes: Order materials in PearsonAccess Next for use on the October 20 test date. Call ACT Accommodations to order materials for the October 20-26 accommodations and/or supports testing window at 800-553-6244, ext. 1788. |
| October 9, 2020 | For fall senior testing purposes: Request to enroll any new students for paper testing on October 20 by submitting the <i>Enroll or Unenroll Students file</i> in PearsonAccess Next . |
| October 21, 2020 | For fall senior testing purposes: Return test booklets, used answer documents, and test administration forms from October 6-16 accommodations and/or supports testing date. Materials must be received at ACT no later than October 23, 2020 or they will not be scored. |

Depending on the number of students, we estimate this will take 60–240 minutes to complete this month.

Timely Tasks —

| Task | | Responsibility |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Review testing activities and timelines | STCs review the ACT Fall Schedule of Events to confirm planning for voluntary Fall 2020 test administration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Office Hours via Teams | Every Thursday from 3:30 p.m.– 4:30 p.m. through December 10 you can ask an ACT Montana Team Member a question or send one via open chat. Join Microsoft Teams Meeting or call +1 515-207-8727 [Conference ID: 375 657 79#]. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | View Q&A Session | View the recorded Q&A session about test administration and ACT accommodations and supports. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Train staff | Train all staffed involved in administration of the ACT per the Test Administration Manual . |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Online Reporting System Access | Set up access to ACT's Online Reporting System . District administrators received an email from the system with instructions in May, 2020. |

Resources and Supports —

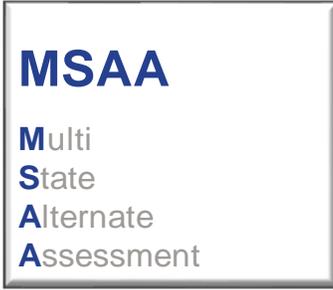
| Resource | | Support with... |
|---|--|---|
|  | PA^{Next} User Guide | This guide explains how to complete Manage Participation and Enroll/Unenroll students. |
|  | TAA User Guide | This guide explains how to request accommodations and support and re-assign test dates. |
|  | TAA Tutorial | This click-through tutorial outlines the steps to create accounts to request accommodations through the Test Accessibility and Accommodations (TAA) site. |
|  | Schedule of Events | All required tasks and their due dates are presented in this document. |
|  | Test Administration Guide | Includes information for training staff, setting up for testing, and administering the ACT. |
|  | Online Reporting System | ACT is transitioning away from PearsonAccess ^{Next} for score reporting. By Spring 2021, reports will be available only through this new reporting system. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| Email Form | 800-553-6244 | PearsonAccess^{Next} (PA^{Next}) |
| | 319-337-1270 | State ACT Testing and District Testing |

MSAA News

Alternate Assessment, ELA and Math



This assessment must be annually administered to only students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3–8 and 11 using the OPI’s published guidance for test administration and test security.

Portal Link: [MSAA System](#)

Students eligible to participate in alternate assessments make up approximately 1% of the total student population. The decision to move a special education student to an alternate assessment has significant implications for the path that a student will take in their K–12 school career. It means the student is not able to participate in the general education curriculum even when provided with accommodations. A student who participates in alternate assessment requires a modified curriculum. See [Eligibility Guidelines for MontCAS Alternate Assessments](#) document.

Distance Learning Resources for Parents with Children with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Share the [MSAA Parent Brochure](#) with parents and families. The brochure includes links designed for parents with Students with Significant Disabilities (SwSCD) to provide insight into what students are able to do.

For more information or resources on this program, contact Duane Schlabach at 406-444-0748 or Duane.Schlabach@mt.gov.

MSAA August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|----------|--------------------------|
| | No deadlines this month. |

We estimate this will take 0 minutes to complete this month.

Timely Tasks

| Task | Responsibility |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No tasks this month. |

Resources and Supports

| Resource | Support with... |
|---|---|
| OPI Special Education COVID-19 resource | The OPI webpage offering resources and support for districts to ensure that ALL student needs are met. |
| MSAA Parent Brochure | The resources are designed for parents with Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SwSCD) to provide some insight as to what students are able to do. |
| Instructional Supports | MSAA Instructional Supports and Resources are available on the NCSC Wiki site . A recorded webinar on instructional supports and resources is available on the District Test Coordinator webpage under “Webinars” tab. This information should be shared with teachers. |
| MSAA Consortia Site | This new website designed by the MSAA consortia member-states offers guidance and resources for educators. |
| TIES Center | The TIES Center is the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies with resources on teaching during the novel coronavirus. |

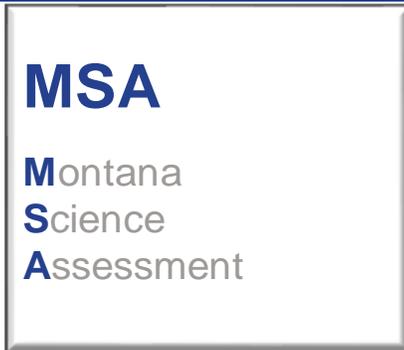
| | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
|  | Schedule of Events | All required tasks and their due dates are presented in this document. |
|---|------------------------------------|--|

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| MSAAServiceCenter@MeasuredProgress.org | 866-834-8879 | MSAA System |

MSA News

Science



This assessment must be annually administered to all students in Grades 5 and 8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

Portal Links: [Montana Testing Portal](#)

In the spring of 2021, the MSA will be delivered as operational field tests, integrating items developed for Montana with items previously field tested in our partner states.

Announcing the Addition of Science Interims

Item clusters are aligned to a specific science standard (or NGSS Performance Expectation) at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Students will automatically be eligible for Science Interims in their grade band. See our new [MontCAS Science Development Site](#) for more information about this new resource. Visit bit.ly/MTSciTest for more information.

For more information or resources on this program, contact Nathan Miller at 406-444-5899 or Nathan.Miller@mt.gov.

MSA August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|---|--------------------------|
|  | No deadlines this month. |

We estimate this will take 0 minutes to complete this month.

Timely Tasks

| Task | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plan specific rosters and technology set-up tasks | Preview the MSA Schedule of Events to plan specific rostering and technology set-up tasks. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintain student records | Ensure that all newly enrolled students are updated, or transfer students are end-dated, in AIM/Infinite Campus at the district level. This is the data used to upload into TIDE for interim use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources: AIM Website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Explore the Montana Testing Portal Practice Test Site | Note that this practice test is designed to showcase interaction types and 3-D science assessment design. It does not reflect the general structure of the MSA. Pay special attention to interactions such as investigations and graphing activities, as students may require repeated practice with these. |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☑ | Administer the Science Interim assessments | <p>Use the Science Interims to establish students’ baseline skills and knowledge with respect to the Montana Science Standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are eligible for the interims in their current grade band (elementary, middle, or high school). • Select one Performance Expectation per discipline and administer them across several weeks to plan instruction. |
|---|--|---|

Resources and Supports

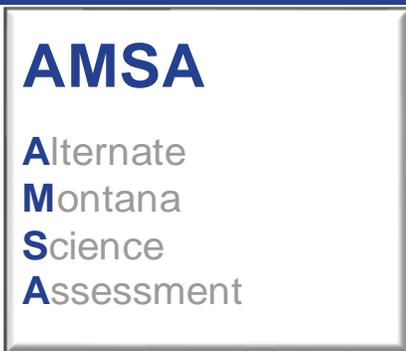
| | Resource | Support with... |
|---|---|---|
| 📄 | Montana Testing Portal | Access to Montana Science Assessment and resources. |
| 📄 | MontCAS Science Development Site | Explore this one-stop shop for all the information you need about Montana’s science assessments and how they are being developed. |
| 📄 | OPI Science Content Standards and Instruction | Model curriculum guides, professional development opportunities, and science resources. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|--------------|--|
| ✉ E-mail | ☎ Phone | 🌐 Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
| ✉ E-mail | ☎ Phone | 🌐 Website |
| mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com | 877-365-7915 | Montana Testing Portal |

AMSA News

Science



This assessment must be annually administered to only students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 5, 8, and 11 using the OPI’s published guidance for test administration and test security.

Portal Links: [Montana Testing Portal](#)

In the spring of 2021, the AMSA will be delivered as operational field tests, integrating items developed for Montana with items previously field tested in our partner states.

Students eligible to participate in alternate assessments make up approximately 1% of the total student population. The decision to move a special education student to an alternate assessment has significant implications for the path that a student will take in their K–12 school career. It means the student is not able to participate in the general education curriculum even when provided with accommodations. A student who participates in alternate assessment requires a modified curriculum. See [Eligibility Guidelines for MontCAS Alternate Assessments](#) document.

For more information or resources on this program, contact Nathan Miller at 406-444-5899 or Nathan.Miller@mt.gov.

AMSA August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|---|--------------------------|
|  | No deadlines this month. |

We estimate this will take 0 minutes to complete this month.

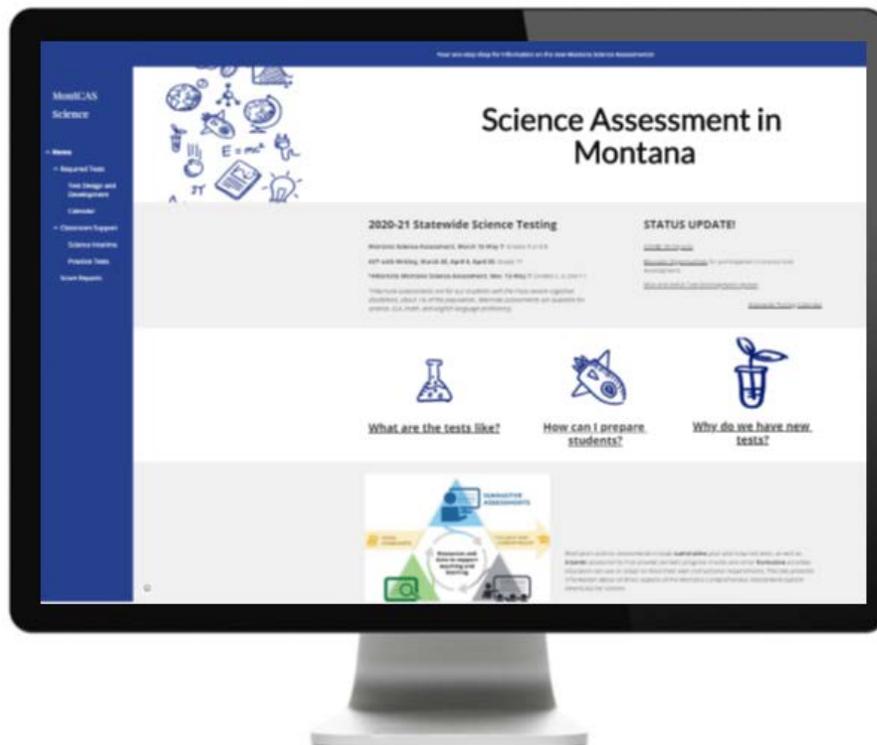
Timely Tasks

| Task | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plan specific rosters and technology set-up tasks | Preview the MSA Schedule of Events to plan specific rostering and technology set-up tasks. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Explore the Montana testing portal Practice Test site . | Note that this practice test is designed to showcase interaction types and 3-D science assessment design. It does not reflect the general structure of the MSA. Pay special attention to interactions such as investigations and graphing activities, as students may require repeated practice with these. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Update IEP/504 Plan status | Ensure the IEP and/or 504 Plan for students are updated in the AIM/Infinite Campus system. Check to be sure alternate student records have the alternate flag checked and locked. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com | 877-365-7915 | Montana Testing Portal |

Check out the new [MontCAS Science Development Site!](#)



ACCESS for ELLs News

English Language Proficiency Assessment



This assessment must be annually administered to all students in Grades K–12 who are indicated to take the assessment based on the results of the WIDA Screener (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI’s published guidance for test administration and test security.

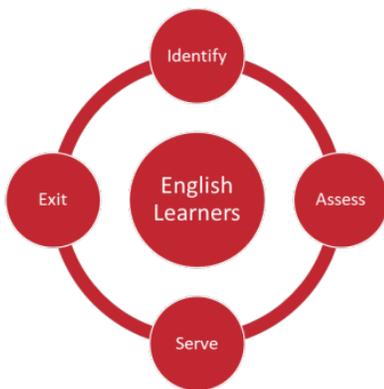
Portal Links: [Training and Online Resources](#)
[Assessment Management System \(AMS\)](#)

WIDA Exit Criteria

Under federal law, all school districts are required to identify students who are eligible for language assistance. School districts must use the “[2020-2021 ELP Guidance for School Districts](#)” to identify and support ELs. More resources are available on the [Title III English Learners](#) web page of the OPI website.

Effective August 1, the new proficiency criteria for ELs is in effect. The criteria cited in the “[2020-2021 ELP Guidance for School Districts](#)” was approved by the U.S. Department of Education on June 12.

School districts must enter and maintain accurate data for ELs in the Achievement in Montana Student Information System/Infinite Campus (AIM) database and annually monitor individual progress in acquiring academic English consistent with all state and federal laws and regulations ([ARM 10.56](#)).



Follow the [EL Checklist for Districts](#) steps:

- Districts administers the [Home Language Survey \(Appendix A\)](#).
- District **screens** potential ELs within 14 days of enrollment using an approved WIDA screener.

| Standard Screener Process | Remote Screener Process |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Screener Online Webinar • WIDA Screener – Accessing Data Export | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Remote Screener Flyer • Remote-learning guidance document |

- Newly identified students AND transfer students are marked correctly in AIM. **AIM data includes:** (1) Home Primary Language (HPL), (2) Language of Impact (LOI), (3) EL identification (within 30 days), (4) Date identified as EL, (5) Date identified as proficient, and (6) 2 years of monitoring after exiting EL status.
- EL identification:** Parents of newly identified ELs receive an EL designation and [placement letter](#) within the first 30 days of enrollment.
- ALL EL students are marked in AIM with the primary home language and language of impact coded by October count date (see the [AIM Data Collection Schedule 2020-21](#)).
- All identified ELs are administered the ACCESS for ELLs during the test window, Dec. 2 to Jan. 29, 2021.

For more information or resources on this program, contact Jacob Barto at 406-444-4420 or Jacob.Barto@mt.gov

WIDA August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|---|--|
|  October 19, 2020* | Ensure ALL EL students are marked in AIM/Infinite Campus with the primary home language and language of impact coded by October 19 to receive pre-ID labels. |

*Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 30–60 minutes to complete this month.

Timely Tasks

| Task | Responsibility |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administer Home Language Survey | As students enroll, districts must administer the Home Language Survey . Read the 2020-2021 ELP Guidance for School Districts and EL (English Learners) Tool Guide for more information. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Screen potential ELs | District screens potential ELs within 14 days of enrollment using an approved WIDA screener. For schools or districts teaching remotely, check the Provisional EL Identification Procedure During Periods of Remote Learning . Newly identified students AND transfer students are marked correctly in AIM. AIM Data includes: (1) Home Primary Language (HPL), (2) Language of Impact (LOI), (3) EL identification (within 30 days), (4) Date identified as EL, (5) Date identified as proficient, and (6) 2 years of monitoring after exiting EL status. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place ELs and notify parents/guardians | EL identification: Parents of newly identified ELs receive an EL designation and placement letter within the first 30 days of enrollment. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> View Score Reports | View score reports on WIDA AMS by selecting Test Results from the Report Delivery menu to display the Test Results page. You can use the Administration, District, School, and Report drop down menus to filter the display. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Send Score Reports home | Schools districts are required to notify parents/guardians of assessment results in a timely manner. Send home ACCESS Score Reports accompanied by the OPI Sample Parent Letter . |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learn about the temporary WIDA Remote Screener | If you missed the WIDA Remote Screener webinar earlier this month, view the recorded version. Find it, and the paper screener webinar, on the WIDA Q&A Webinar Schedule . View the WIDA Remote Screener Flyer for more information. |

Resources and Supports

| Resource | Support with... |
|--|---|
|  English Learner Guidance for School Districts | The guidance document describes the OPI's policies and procedures required to serve English Learner (EL) students in the state of Montana. These requirements fall under the authority of both state and federal laws and regulations. |
|  Provisional English Learner Identification Procedure | This remote-learning guidance document provides a means of provisionally identifying ELs in times of extended school closures where remote-learning plans have been approved by the Governor and school districts are providing a continuity of educational services online and face-to-face screening is not possible. |
|  Remote WIDA Screener | This flyer provides guidance and instruction for administering the remote WIDA Screener. |
|  WIDA Micro-Offerings | Three 30-minute mini-PD courses available to the public to help teachers support multilingual students during remote learning. |
|  WIDA Support for Distance Teaching and Learning | In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning plans at many schools, WIDA has compiled resources for EL teachers providing remote instruction to support them and their multilingual students. |
|  WIDA Educator Exchange (Open Facebook Group) | This group allows EL educators from around the world to share their ideas and ask questions about EL teaching and assessment, and it's especially helpful during times of remote learning and/or social distancing. |

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|  | WIDA Secure Portal | Access the WIDA Secure Portal for training and remote screener test materials. |
|  | WIDA AMS Site | The WIDA AMS site serves as the test administration site. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| help@wida.us | 866-876-7735 | WIDA Training & Resources |
| WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com | 855-787-9615 | WIDA Assessment Management Site |

WIDA eSummit Announcement

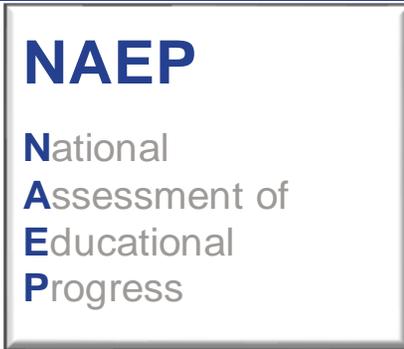
The WIDA eSummit is a free virtual learning opportunity for educators in WIDA Consortium states, territories, and federal agencies from **October 12 to 30, 2020**. Each week of the eSummit will have a theme with multiple webinars relating to the weekly topic:

- **2020 Standards:** sessions introducing the WIDA ELD Standards, 2020 Edition, Proficiency Level Descriptors, and updated Key Language Uses.
- **Teaching Multilingual Learners:** a panel discussion with the WIDA Fellows exploring responses to COVID-19 and sessions focused on the planning and implementation of instructional practices that support language development and content learning.
- **WIDA Assessments:** webinars about the WIDA assessment system, the upcoming WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, and WIDA MODEL.

Members of WIDA Consortium states, territories, and federal agencies will be able to access the live virtual sessions through the eLearning Center in the WIDA Secure Portal. Webinar recordings and downloadable resources will be available after the event. Additional information will be available on the WIDA website in September.

NAEP News

National and International Assessment Studies



This assessment is administered to ONLY selected schools and students. This year NAEP will be given in mathematics and reading in grades 4 and 8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate).

Portal Links: [My NAEP](#)

[National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) (NAEP) is a congressionally mandated program administered by the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. The [National Assessment Governing Board](#) (NAGB) oversees and sets policy for NAEP.

NAEP is not administered in all schools. The schools and students selected to participate in NAEP represent the demographic and geographic composition of the nation as a whole. The participation of selected schools and students is critical to ensuring accurate performance estimates for different groups of students in states and districts across the country. NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas.

For more information or resources on this program, please contact Shantel Niederstadt at 406-444-3450 or SNiederstadt@mt.gov.

NAEP August 2020 Tasks

Due This Month

| Due Date | Complete |
|---|---|
|  December 11 | Task 5 – Notify Parents/Guardians of Selected Students: NAEP School Coordinator reviews the parent/guardian letter for their school mailing and verifies on MyNAEP the date the letter was sent to parents/guardians. |

We estimate this will take 60 minutes to complete this month.

Resources and Supports

| Resource | Support with... |
|---|---|
|  Step-by-Step Instructions: Registering for MyNAEP | This document provides step-by-step directions to complete Task 1: Register on MyNAEP. |
|  Step-by-Step Instructions: Provide School Information | This document provides step-by-step directions to complete Task 2: Provide School Information, School Characteristics Information and Student Attendance and Schedules in MyNAEP. |
|  Step-by-Step Instructions: Notify Parents/Guardians | This document provides step-by-step directions to complete Task 5: Notify Parents. Note: Parent/guardian letters will be available on October 5 th in MyNAEP. |

Questions? Contact

| Office of Public Instruction Staff | | |
|--|---|---|
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov | 844-867-2569 | OPI Statewide Assessment Testing Pages |
| Assessment Help Desk | | |
|  E-mail |  Phone |  Website |
| naephhelp@westat.com | (800) 283-6237 | Nation's Report Card |

Webinars and Educator Resources

Educator Opportunities

MontCAS Monthly Webinar Series

The OPI Assessment Unit will be hosting a monthly webinar focused on timely content each month. Visit the [MontCAS Monthly Webinar Schedule](#) for dates, times, and content. Webinars will be scheduled for one hour, will include an opportunity to ask questions, and will be recorded for future viewing.

The October webinar, “A Balanced Assessment System”, is scheduled for Wednesday, October 14th from 3:30-4:30 p.m. See [the flyer](#) for more information about what to expect at this webinar.



Register for the Zoom Meeting to receive information about joining <https://mt-gov.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAsc-uorj8pHNLGPH>

STC Open Forum Webinar Series

In addition to the monthly focused webinar, the Assessment Unit will be hosting a monthly, half-hour session for questions and comments from the STC community. The series, STC Open Forum, will be open only to confirmed STCs. It will provide an opportunity for STCs to ask questions of the OPI Assessment Unit and other STCs across the state and to share tips and tricks for managing the Montana state assessments. View the [STC Open Forum Webinar Schedule](#) for dates and times. Confirmed STCs will receive an invitation to the webinar each month.

2021 ASSIST Conference

Planning has begun for the annual Assessment and Data Conference – [ASSIST Conference 2021](#). The conference will be conducted in a virtual format and is scheduled to take place over two full days in January – January 28 and January 29, 2021. View the [conference announcement](#) for more information and watch for updates here in the OPI Assessment Bulletin and on the [2021 ASSIST Conference Site](#).

Contact Information

Assessment Team

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Assessment Unit Teaching and Learning Department Phone: 844-867-2569 Email: OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov State Testing General Sites: OPI Statewide Testing Website STC Corner Site | Ashley McGrath State Assessment Director amcgrath@mt.gov  | Marcy Fortner Assessment Specialist mfortner@mt.gov  |
|---|---|--|

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Duane Schlabach Assessment Specialist Duane.Schlabach@mt.gov  | Nathan Miller Assessment Specialist Nathan.Miller@mt.gov  | Jacob Barto EL Assessment Specialist Jacob.Barto@mt.gov  |
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| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Shantel Niederstadt NAEP State Coordinator sniederstadt@mt.gov  | Additional Contacts Digital Library State Lead Marisa Graybill Marisa.Graybill@mt.gov | Accessibility Support Specialists Paula Schultz Smarter Balanced Accommodations pschultz2@mt.gov Yvonne Field Assessment & Accountability Specialist YField@mt.gov |
|---|--|---|

Accommodation statement for publications

The OPI is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation, require an alternate format, or have questions concerning accessibility, contact the OPI ADA Coordinator, 406-444-3161, opiada@mt.gov, or call 711 for assistance.

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Human Resource Manager

406-444-2673

OPIpersonnel@mt.gov

For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, call 1-800-421-3481 or visit

<http://wdcrobcop01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address and phone number of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) that serves your area.