



MontCAS

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System The Month in Assessment—August 2017

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2017-2018 Statewide Assessment Calendar*	ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency (ELP)	CRT-ALT Alternate Science	CRT Science	MCAA Alternate English Language Arts (ELA) and Math	SBAC ELA and Math	ACT with Writing ELA and Math
Dates	Dec. 6–Jan. 31	Feb.20–Mar. 27	Mar.1–Mar.27	Mar. 19–May 4	Mar. 21–May 25	Initial: Mar. 20 Make Up: Apr. 24 Emergency: May 8
K	✓					
1	✓					
2	✓					
3	✓			✓	✓	
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	✓			✓	✓	
6	✓			✓	✓	
7	✓			✓	✓	
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
9	✓					
10	✓	✓	✓			
11	✓			✓		✓
12	✓					

***NAEP Schedule of Assessments**

2017–2018 Professional Development

New MontCAS Courses Available on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#)

Test Coordinator Academy:

The goal of this course is to provide system test coordinators with training and support for successful management and test administration of the MontCAS summative assessments (Smarter Balanced, ACCESS for ELLs, CRT and Alt Science, ACT, and the Multi-State Alternate Assessment). The course will take place over the school year to support STCs as the test window for each assessment approaches. This offering is especially relevant to new STCs.

Interim Assessments:

The goal of this course is to provide training that will allow districts and schools to implement the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. The training includes an overview of interim assessments, test administration basics, hand scoring, and using interim data to impact instruction.

Assessment and Data Professional Learning Community:

Except for December, the assessment and data online Professional Learning Community (PLC) will take place the third Wednesday of every month during the school year. This PLC will focus on assessment data and its varied uses in Montana's public schools. Each month will focus on a different topic in a live webinar. There will be an activity to complete each month prior to the live webinar. Possible topics include MontCAS data, uses of Smarter Balanced interim assessment data, the Smarter Balanced digital library/formative assessments, GEMS, alternate assessments, and others.

PAO Science Course

The goal of the PAO Science course is to help teachers gain deeper understanding and familiarity with the new Montana Science Standards through a backwards design process. As teachers make the transition to instruction aligned to Montana's Science Standards, they may need support with what and how to tackle the new standards. In this course, teachers uncover instructional shifts and key concepts in assessing the three dimensions of Montana's new science standards. Teachers will complete this course with a better understanding of the features of quality assessments and how to incorporate these fundamental aspects of assessment into instructional materials (e.g., considerations for rigor, alignment, bias, and accessibility). Teachers will apply their knowledge to develop meaningful and actionable resources that can be shared with colleagues across the state. This course is important for science teachers who wish to engage in developing high quality formative assessments.

Live Webinars

Date	Topic	Link
August 22, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
September 12, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
September 18, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Accessibility Series: MontCAS Assessment Accommodations and the IEP	Accessibility Series
October 10, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
October 16, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Accessibility Series: ACT	Accessibility Series
November 13, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Accessibility Series: ACCESS for ELLs	Accessibility Series
November 28, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Access for ELLs Special Edition	ACCESS for ELLs

December 12, 2017 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
January 9, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
January 16, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Accessibility Series: CRT and CRT Alt Science	Accessibility Series
February 6, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: CRT Special Edition	CRT & CRT Alt
February 27, 3:30-4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MSAA Special Edition	MSAA
February 28, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m. Tentative	The Month in Assessment: ACT Special Edition Place Holder	ACT
March 5, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	Accessibility Series: MSAA and Smarter Balanced	Accessibility Series
March 6, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: Smarter Special Edition	Smarter Balanced
March 13, 2018 3:30 AM–4:30 PM	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
April 10, 2018 3:30-4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
April 17, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	ACCESS for ELLs Results Reports	ACCESS for ELLs
May 8, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: MontCAS Updates	MontCAS Updates
June 5, 2018 3:30–4:30 p.m.	The Month in Assessment: Special Edition Results Reports	MontCAS Updates

MontCAS System, School, and Student Results Reports

Science CRT and CRT–Alternate

- **Electronic Results:** Available now on the [Montana Analysis and Reporting System \(MARS\)](#).
 - **Passwords:** District and school accounts are not individual. Call the OPI to obtain log in credentials.
- **Paper Copies:** Mailed to districts in September. Districts should have a plan to distribute reports within two weeks of receipt.

Smarter Balanced–ELA and Mathematics

- **Electronic Results:** Available now on the [Online Reporting System \(ORS\)](#).
 - **Passwords:** Superintendents and STCs set up accounts and roles for access to the ORS. Contact the OPI if you are a superintendent or STC and do not have an account.
- **Paper Copies:** Mailed to districts in September. Districts should have a plan to distribute reports within two weeks of receipt.

ACT–ELA and Mathematics

- **Electronic Results: Student Level** reports can be accessed online. Examinee logs on to <http://www.actstudent.org> to access his/her web account. If a student needs to create a new account, the student must enter the ACT ID from the printed score report to view state scores. Non–College Reportable Scores are not available online.
- **Paper Copies:**
 - **Student Level** paper reports are mailed to the examinees at their home address three to eight weeks following testing.
 - **School Level** paper reports, including ACT High School Report (student level score data), Student Score Labels, and High School Check List Report, are mailed to the Director of Counseling three to eight weeks following testing. Non–College Reportable Score Notification Letters are mailed to school test coordinators no later than July 28, 2017. An aggregate report (ACT Profile Report) is mailed to test coordinators no later than July 28, 2017.
 - **District Level** reports are mailed to the district assessment coordinator on or before July 28, 2017. Both the ACT Profile Report and the ACT Student Level Data File on a CD are included in the district level reporting.

Multi–State Alternate Assessment ELA and Mathematics

- **Electronic Results:** Access to all results reports and a district CSV and school CSV files are available as a download on the MSAA System site. Reports are only available for download from *July 31–August 25*.
 - **Passwords:** The OPI sets up accounts for STCs and special education directors. Users with a test coordinator role have access to download results reports. Test coordinators can set up accounts for other users in their district. Contact the OPI for help accessing the MSAA System site.
- **Paper Copies:** No student MSAA paper reports will be mailed to the districts. Districts will print the individual student reports and should have a plan to distribute them with the other MontCAS reports in September.

ACCESS for ELLs

- **Electronic Results:** Available now on the [WIDA Assessment Management System \(AMS\)](#) site.
 - **Passwords:** The OPI sets up accounts for STCs. STCs are able to set up accounts for other users in their district and can add access to results reports. Contact the OPI for help.
- **Paper Copies:** Paper copies of the results reports were sent to districts on April 21, 2017. Districts should have a plan to distribute reports in the spring or with the other MontCAS reports that arrive in September.

Release of 2017 Statewide Longitudinal Education Data

Growth and Enhancement of Montana Students (GEMS)

This data reporting system provides access to multiple years of data and interactive reports on student achievement, graduation rates, enrollment, program and course offerings, district and school profiles, the National Assessment of Progress (NAEP), and financial information reported by school districts. Additionally, GEMS provides users the ability to compare Montana schools side-by-side.

GEMS and MontCAS Online Reporting Systems

There are differences in the OPI-released data and the data in the Online Reporting System (ORS), MSAA results reports, and WIDA AMS data sites. The OPI applied accountability rules to calculate the aggregate results: the ORS did not. The Science CRT, MSAA, and English Language Proficiency assessment data is not included in the ORS. The results are included in the OPI-released data. ELP assessment data from the 2016–2017 administration of the ACCESS for ELLs assessment is available on the GEMS website now. Other OPI-released data is tentatively scheduled to be released on the [GEMS website](#) in late August.

Many of the MontCAS programs, including administration and training materials, test results, and other administrative functions, require separate passwords. Please check with the OPI regarding protocols for obtaining or updating passwords. The following is a list of those programs that require separate passwords.

- **Smarter Balanced** test administration, administration certification, interim tests, and test results
- **Smarter Balanced Digital Library** of Formative Assessment Processes
- **CRT and CRT Alt** Test Results
- **ACT** Plus Writing
- **MSAA** (Multi State Alternate Assessment) test administration and training, results, and student reports
- **Access for ELLs** test administrator training, Assessment Management System, WIDA Access Placement Test (W–APT), results reports
- **MontCAS Online Reporting** nonparticipation and testing irregularity reports and nonstandard accommodations requests

Need help?
Click here to
contact us.

Montana Science Standards and Assessments

Updates on the Implementation of New Standards and Development of Science Assessments

Montana Science Standards Overview

The new science standards were adopted in September 2016 and were implemented on July 1, 2017. The Montana Science Standards encompass scientific ideas and practices that all students should learn by the end of high school in order to be prepared for college and career.

What about the Montana Science Standards is innovative, new, and different?

1. Explaining phenomena and designing solutions—beginning with local and real life challenges, students use content from the disciplinary core ideas, connection through the crosscutting concepts and tools from the science and engineering practices to create solutions.
2. Integrating three-dimensional learning—the integration of three dimensions in one lesson is both practically and intellectually challenging and more representative of tackling real-science challenges.
3. Building K-12 progressions—just like in real life, everything in science is connected to and builds on knowledge learned before to gain a new and deeper understanding about the world and phenomena.
4. Linking instructional materials to sustained and continuous professional learning to fully implement the Montana Science Standards in schools.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE for which students will use crosscutting concepts, science and engineering practices, and technology while investigating how matter and energy exist in a variety of forms and how physical and chemical interactions change matter and energy.

LIFE SCIENCE for which students will use crosscutting concepts, science and engineering practices, and technology while investigating the characteristics, structures, and functions of living things; the processes and diversity of life; and how living organisms interact with each other and their environments

EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE for which students will use crosscutting concepts, science and engineering practices, and technology while investigating the composition, history, and processes that shape the earth, the solar system, and the universe.

Students will learn science with integration of content area ideas, crosscutting concepts, science and engineering practices, and technology. Content standards for science ensure integration of the history, contemporary portrayals, and contributions of American Indians, with an emphasis on Montana Indians, for all students, across all content areas. Students will understand that American Indians' use of scientific knowledge and practices are interdisciplinary and are a valid way to learn about the natural world.



Science Assessment Development Plans

What is SCILLSS?

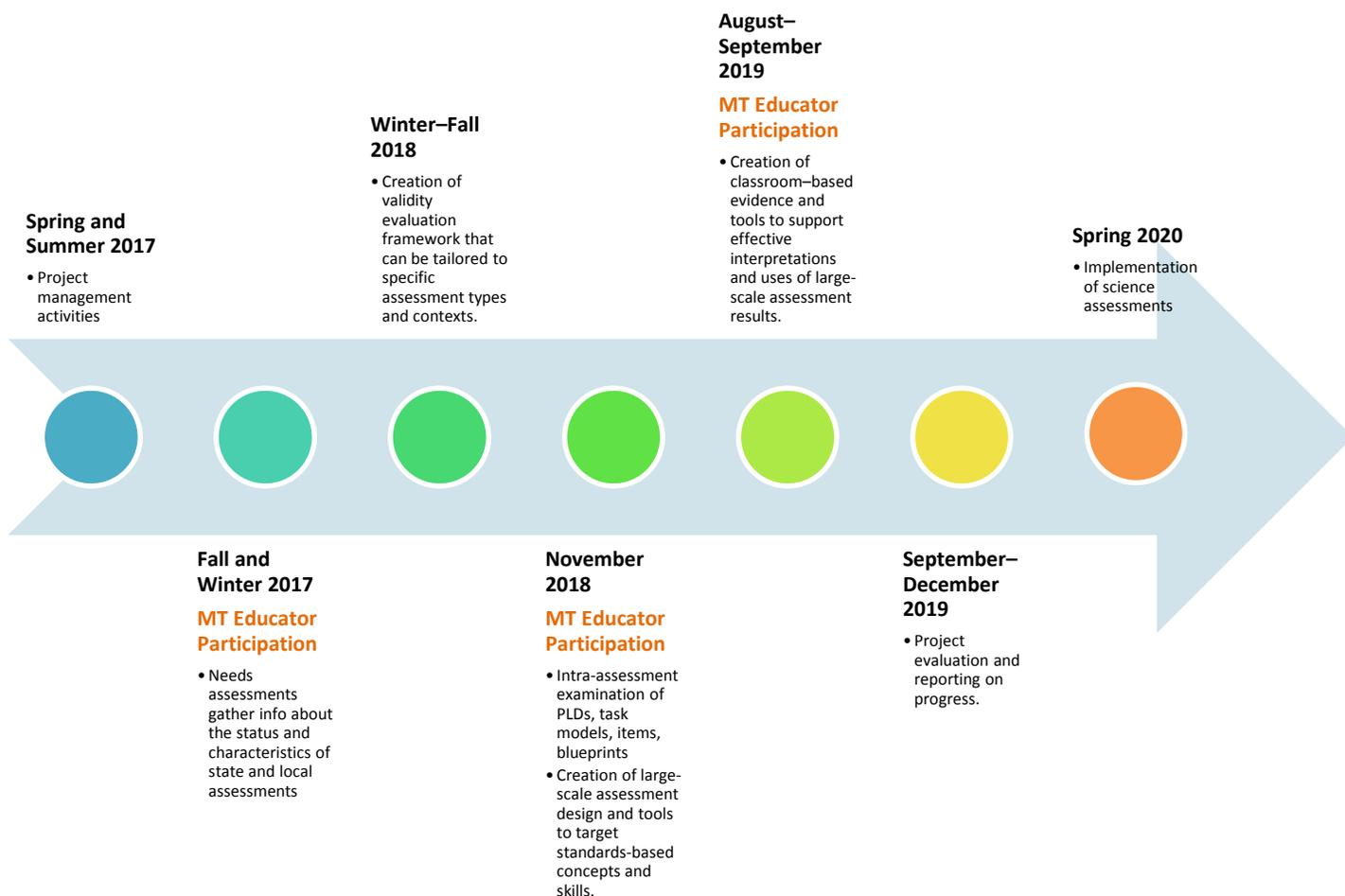
The Strengthening Claims-based Interpretations and Uses of Local and Large-scale Science Assessments (SCILLSS) project proposes to establish a foundation from which a broad range of enhanced science assessments that yield valid score interpretations can be built, evaluated, and shared across states, local education agencies, schools, and classrooms using a principled-design approach.

The participating states are Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming. During the project, Montana educators will have the opportunity to be involved in development activities. Project activities will be conducted virtually as well as on-site at local school districts and state education agencies within the partner states.

Theory of Action:

- Articulates the claims and assumptions for an assessment framework.
- Claims drive how interpretation and valid inferences about assessment scores are supported.
- Clearly identifies and connects project goals/outcomes.
- Defines the assessment claims that will serve as the foundation from which tests are built.

Assessment Development Timeline



SMARTER BALANCED

English Language Arts and Mathematics

Interim Assessment Course on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#)

The goal of this course is to provide training that will allow districts and schools to implement the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. The training includes an overview of interim assessments, test administration basics, scoring training, and using interim assessment data to impact instruction.

Formative Assessment: The Smarter Balanced Digital Library

Smarter Balanced recently announced the launch of the new Digital Library storefront web page: SBDigitalLibrary.org. This public-facing storefront promotes the resources and features in the Digital Library to new and existing users. It is one component of a long-term digital media campaign to encourage new users to register for an account and existing users to consistently use the Digital Library.

The storefront page includes videos of state network educators talking about the Digital Library, sample resources, and key features. Eligible users can register for a Digital Library account, and current users can login directly to the Digital Library from the new page.

MSAA

Alternate Assessment, English Language Arts and Mathematics

Results Reports Download Window

On Monday, July 31, the district and school results reports for the MSAA (Multi State Alternate Assessment, Grades 3-8 and 11 in ELA and Math) posted on the MSAA Test Portal (www.msaaassessment.org). The reports will remain available through *Friday, August 25*.

- The reports are available to test coordinators on the MY REPORTS tab.
- Directions for accessing and downloading district reports are in the MSAA Test Coordinator User Guide on pages 34-36.
- Districts will be responsible for printing paper copies of the reports for distribution to parents/guardians.

A short tutorial on downloading the results reports is available and takes about seven minutes to watch: [Results Reports Tutorial](#)

ACCESS FOR ELLs

English Language Proficiency Assessment

Testing Calendar

Test Cycle	Testing Specifics	Start Date	End Date
Pre-Testing	DRC Provides 2016-2017 Site Data to SEA	Fri 8/11/17	Fri 8/11/17
	SEA Provides 2017-2018 Site Changes to DRC	Mon 8/14/17	Thu 9/21/17
	Test Materials Ordering via Pre-ID File (SEA)	Fri 10/27/17	Fri 10/27/17
	SEA Loads Pre-ID File into AMS	Fri 10/27/17	Fri 10/27/17
	WIDA AMS Test Setup Available for Test Sessions	Fri 11/3/17	Wed 1/31/18
	Districts Receive Test Materials (On)	Tue 11/28/17	Tue 11/28/17
During Testing	Test Window	Wed 12/6/17	Wed 1/31/18
	Additional Test Material Ordering Window in AMS	Tue 11/28/17	Wed 1/24/18
Post Testing	Deadline for Shipping Completed Test Materials to DRC	Wed 2/7/18	Wed 2/7/18
	Districts Receive Reports, Printed and Online	TBD	TBD

Identification of ELs

As districts enroll new students who may have English language needs, it is important to understand the role that STCs have in ensuring that potential EL students are appropriately identified with the WIDA screener. Watch the updated [identification video](#) for more information on the identification process and an overview of changes to our English language screening tests.

NEW! WIDA online screener for Grades 1–12

Montana is moving to a new online screening assessment for students in grades 1-12. The online screener uses the same platform as the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Districts will no longer have access to the W-APT for Grades 1-12, but we will retain the Kindergarten W-APT. Districts may opt to purchase an updated paper screener that is available for Grades 1-12 as an alternate to the online screener.

Online Screener Sites and User Accounts

Test Management Site

Test management, secure browser downloads; technical setup resources, student management, and scoring are completed on the WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS) site. WIDA AMS is accessible online at wida-ams.us using Google Chrome as the preferred browser.

User Accounts

STCs have permissions to set up WIDA website and Assessment Management System (AMS) accounts. A DRC-specific login, that is separate from the WIDA-user account login, will allow login to WIDA AMS. Users who have given the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 summative assessment will use the same login for WIDA Screener. Test administrators and other testing personnel who did not participate in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 will need to be added to WIDA website and WIDA AMS and provided permissions for "WIDA Screener."

New STCs that do not have WIDA-user accounts may contact Marcy Fortner at the OPI.
mfortner@mt.gov, 406–444–3511

Training Resources

Test Administrator Training

Use the WIDA Screener training course to learn how to download printed test materials, set up the online test environment, score the speaking and writing tests, and view reports.

Online Test Administration Manual

This manual provides important information for test administrators who will administer WIDA Screener Online. It includes instructions on how to schedule test sessions and print the paper-based test materials. This manual also contains instructions on how to administer all four domains of WIDA Screener Online, which includes the paper-based writing test for Grades 1-3.

WIDA AMS User Guide

This user guide discusses the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS), which is the interface to the administrative functions of the DRC INSIGHT Online Learning System. Educators with the following roles use WIDA AMS: test coordinator, technology coordinator, and test administrator. This guide covers the portions of WIDA AMS that these users must be familiar with in order to perform administrative functions for testing with DRC INSIGHT.

Registration for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

The OPI will register all students who are identified as EL/LEP in AIM as of the fall program participation deadline 10/27/17. Please ensure that all students who met the exit criteria have been exited and that any new students have been assessed with the W-APT screener and are identified are entered into the AIM system as LEP.

Resources:

[LEP Tool Guide](#),

[English Learner Annual Progress Review](#)

The Month in Assessment, August 2017

ACT with Writing

ELA and Mathematics

Montana ACT call for panelists

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is in the process of recruiting panelists to participate in establishing state-specific performance levels for the ACT assessment administered to Grade 11 students in mathematics and English language arts (ELA). Establishing categorical proficiency among Montana's students is imperative to meet the federal statutory requirements for assessments used in the statewide accountability system and peer review as mandated by the U.S. Department of Education.

In order to meet these requirements, the OPI will convene a panel to review historical ACT performance data and consider possible cut scores for establishing three or more performance levels. The OPI will seek recommendations from a diverse representation of Montana stakeholders, including but not limited to, school administrators, teachers, higher education officials, business leaders, and parents from across the state. This panel shall be comprised of approximately 8-12 panelists for mathematics and 8-12 panelists for ELA and will contribute to the adoption of performance level descriptors (PLDs) used for Montana's public reporting. Apply now with the [panelist recruitment survey](#).

2018 Assessment Conference

2018 Assessment/Data Conference

Save the Date!

The locations and dates have been set for the 2018 Assessment/Data Conference:

- Billings—February 8-9 (Thursday/Friday)
 - Red Lion Hotel and Convention Center
 - 406-248-7151, Room Block: OPI Assessment
- Helena—February 12-13 (Monday/Tuesday)
 - Radisson Colonial Hotel
 - 406-443-2100, Room Block: OPI Assessment

Online Assessment System Portal Links

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and W-APT Screener, English Language Proficiency Screener

- Training and online resources: www.wida.us
- Assessment Management System: www.wida-ams.us
- The OPI link: http://opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/index.html?gpm=1_5#gpm1_6

Smarter Balanced

- Assessment system link: <http://mt.portal.airast.org/>
- The OPI link: http://opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/index.html?gpm=1_5#gpm1_2

Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA)

- Assessment Management System: www.msaaassessment.org
- The OPI link: http://opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/index.html?gpm=1_5#gpm1_4

ACT with Writing

- Assessment Management Link: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/state-and-district-solutions/montana.html>
- The OPI Link: http://opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/index.html?gpm=1_5#gpm1_6

MontCAS Assessment Help Desk Contact Information

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and W–APT English Language Proficiency Screener

- WIDA Help Desk Phone Number: 866-876-7735
- WIDA Help Desk Email: help@wida.us
- WIDA AMS Help Desk Phone: 855-787-9615
- WIDA AMS Help Desk Email: WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com

Smarter Balanced and Science CRT and Alt Service Desk

- Phone: 888-792-2741
- Email: montanahelpdesk@measuredprogress.org

Multi–State Alternate Assessment (MSAA)

- Phone: 866-834-8879
- Email: MSAAServiceCenter@MeasuredProgress.org

ACT Plus Writing

General Inquiries

Phone: 800-553-6244, Ext. 2800

Email: [Contact Form](#)

Accommodations Questions:

800-553-6244, Ext. 1788

ACTStateAccoms@act.org

Assessment Contacts

Assessment Division

Phone: 844-867-2569

[OPI Assessment Help Desk](#)

[Email](#)

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Paula Schultz

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Ashley McGrath

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Pam Birkeland

Smarter Balanced Digital

Library Lead

pbirkeland@mt.gov

**Not sure who
to contact?
Click here**

Updating System Test Coordinator Contact Information

If your district has a new System Test Coordinator (STC) this school year, contact information may be updated by phone or online form (link below). Assignment of STCs is a decision made by the county superintendent. OPI may confirm new STCs and changes.

- Assessment contact: Marcy Fortner, Administrative Assistant, 406-444-3511
- Online form for new test coordinators: <http://app.keysurvey.com/f/693797/16c7/>

Online link for existing system test coordinator contact updates: <http://app.keysurvey.com/f/689583/f789/>