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Office of the Superintendent

Special Session:

The special session of the Montana Legislature wrapped up on November 16th after one day of committee hearings and two days of floor sessions. The Legislature made permanent the Governor's proposed budget reductions by amending appropriations in [HB 2](#). Additionally, [SB 2](#) removes the requirement in MCA 20-9-630 and 20-9-632 for OPI to pay schools for the school combined block grant, school transportation block grant, the county retirement block grant, and the county transportation block grant. In addition, the transportation appropriation for OPI schools is reduced by \$1.7 million each fiscal year of the current biennium and restricts payments to schools to the appropriation level. The block grants and the transportation payment represent the only impact to the Program 9 general fund appropriation budget (distribution to schools). Program 6 funding (state-level activities at the OPI) is being reduced by \$1.7 million, which we are prepared to absorb.

For more details, please visit the following [Special Session Link](#) from our Finance Division.

ESSA:

With Montana's ESSA plan submitted, we are waiting to hear from the U.S. Department of Education on whether they would like to see changes or need any clarification. We expect to hear from the Department within the next week or two. We will continue to update you throughout this process and you can find the most current information on our [Montana ESSA website](#).

Events in Montana Education:

- Montana Television Network did a "Face the State" special on [Montana's rural schools](#).
- Honoring Shodair educators- Superintendent Arntzen honored 2017 outstanding teachers at Shodair Children's Hospital.
- Havre CTE event- Superintendent Arntzen in conjunction with Havre High School, MSU Northern, Lakeside Excavation, and the Montana Contactors' Association, hosted an event at MSU Northern's new Diesel Mechanics Center to showcase the importance of trade career pathways for Montana students.
- Additionally, Superintendent Arntzen was involved with the monthly Land Board meeting, the Board of Publication Education meeting, the Board of Regents meeting, and the special session of the Montana Legislature.

Follow Superintendent Arntzen on social media:  

For more information, contact [Dylan Klapmeier](#) at 406-444-3559

Content Standards and Instruction

Information You Can Use

- Learn about professional development on the [OPI Professional Learning Opportunities Portal](#).
- Enroll in NEW self-paced online courses on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#).
 - [Media Arts 101](#) (2 renewal units) Introduction to the new Montana Media Arts Standards. This course will guide you through the new Montana Media Arts Standards and provide resources for integrating media arts into your classroom.
 - [Reading Between the Lines: Close Reading Strategies for Secondary](#) (3 renewal units) Participants in this course will understand the purpose of teaching close, analytical reading of informational text in their classes and will step through the process of creating a lesson to use in their classroom. Applicable to all content areas.
 - [A Universe of Learning: Digital Tools and Digital Learning](#) (2 renewal units) This concise self-paced course is designed to provide you an introduction to universal design for learning (UDL). You will explore strategies that can be used to design curriculum that give all individuals in your class equal opportunities to learn. More specifically, the course will cover the basic principles behind UDL, including the theory and research that substantiates UDL, as well as practical strategies that work across grade levels and content areas that can be used to design UDL opportunities.
 - [A School's Guide to Creating a School-Wide Reading and Writing Protocol](#) (3 renewal units) **Virtually Guided Group Course:** Participants take this course together as a group in order to create a set of protocols and common language for teaching close reading and evidence-based writing in order to enhance reading and writing instruction across all curricular areas and grade levels.
 - [Growth Mindset](#) (3 renewal units) **Virtually Guided Group Course:** Participants take this course together as a group and put themselves in the shoes of a learner to discover their own mindset, as well as understand the research and vocabulary necessary to address the importance of addressing mindset with their students.
- Check out Upcoming [Facilitated Courses](#)
 - Orientation to Special Education, Jan 8th – Feb 3rd (15 renewal units)
 - Teaching and Assessing English Learners, Feb 19th - March 26th (35 renewal units)

- Subscribe to our [newsletters](#).
 - 3 Big Ideas (weekly)
 - English Language Arts Newsflash
 - Math
 - Montana Teacher-Librarian
 - Science Splash
- Visit the [K-12 Content Standards page](#) on the OPI website to access content standards documents and information about the content standards revision process.

For more information, contact [Colet Bartow](#) at 406-444-3583

Title I

2018 OPI Title I Conference

The 2018 OPI Title I Conference will be held March 27-28, 2018, at the Radisson Colonial Hotel in Helena, MT. This year's keynote speaker is Katie Garner, an internationally known educator, author, and literacy consultant. The cost to attend the conference is \$150. This includes two light breakfasts and two full lunches. Registration will open December 1, 2017.

For more information, contact [Shawna Pieske](#) at 406-444-5660

2018 OPI Title I Conference Presenters Needed

The Title I Unit needs presenters for the 2018 Title I Conference which will be held in Helena, MT, March 27-28, 2018. Sessions are needed for all grade levels in all subject areas. Accepted presenters receive two free nights at the conference hotel and a paid registration to the conference which includes two breakfasts and two lunches.

For more information, contact [Shawna Pieske](#) at 406-444-5660

Potential Funding for Refugees

There is no specific method in AIM for you to collect information on the number of students who are refugees from the various federal disaster zones (Houston, Florida, Puerto Rico, and California). However, schools who have received students relocating due to these events should develop some way in-house to be able to identify these students. When disaster relief money is approved by Congress, there MAY be money designated for McKinney-Vento. Some of that funding MAY go to the districts that receive these students.

This certainly isn't a guarantee, but we have information from the Department of Education that it might happen.

If you have students who meet the definition of ‘homeless’, then by all means they should be identified as such and indicated as so in AIM. But we know that there are other students who have relocated due to these natural disasters who do not necessarily meet the definition.

For more information, contact [Heather Denny](#), Title I & Homeless Education Specialist at 406-444-2036

Health Enhancement and Safety Division

New Webpage for Child Sex Trafficking and Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

While most Montanans wouldn’t believe that child sex trafficking and child sexual abuse are issues in our state, the data tells us otherwise. It is happening right in front of us, and often times these victims are enrolled in our public schools.

With the Montana Legislature’s 2017 passage of SB 197 and HB 298, the Montana Office of Public Instruction has created a new webpage with resources, contacts, and curriculum materials to support schools in their efforts to prevent and intervene with child sex trafficking and child sexual abuse. This website was designed with the help of many experts in this field including law enforcement, victim advocates, task forces, former school counselors, and those professionals working in our state to prevent and intervene in sex trafficking and sexual abuse crimes. Please visit this [link](#) to learn more about these new laws and resources within our state that your school can use to help prevent and intervene in these crimes.

Stay tuned for details regarding training at the Montana Behavior Initiative Summer Institute regarding these topics and mandatory reporter training.

For more information, contact [Tracy Moseman](#) at 406-444-3000

School Nutrition Programs Homepage

Don’t miss out! Visit our [School Nutrition Programs](#) homepage regularly for:

- Training opportunities
- Events
- Available grants
- The “Recipe of the Month”

For more information, contact [Jill Griffin](#) at 406-444-3574

Webinar Wednesdays

School Nutrition Programs continues to host one-hour webinars on Wednesdays from 2-3 pm. Join us for fun and learning. For webinar topics, click on the following link: [School Nutrition Programs Webinar Wednesday Calendar](#).

For more information, contact [Clay Hickman](#) at 406-444-2501

Assessment Division

SCILLSS

In 2016, the US Department of Education (US DOE) awarded an Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) to the “Strengthening Claims-Based Interpretations and Uses of Local and Large-Scale Science Assessments” (SCILLSS) project. Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska were identified as state partners for this work. Montana will work toward a comprehensive system of assessments for science through a staged process which requires significant input from stakeholders. To support our end goal (identifying meaningful and actionable data to monitor progress over time), the OPI is currently in the process of sharing its draft “[Theory of Action](#)” for comment. It is important to know that the end product of SCILLSS is not a summative large-scale science assessment; however, our involvement in this EAG is important to give Montana the support, tools, and expertise necessary to make plans for a re-envisioned system of assessments for science. The SCILLSS Kick-Off State Meeting was convened on Monday, November 13th to introduce the SCILLSS project, Montana’s role in SCILLSS, discuss our OPI Science Partner Taskforce, and to set the stage for our future efforts for a statewide science assessment. To launch our work in the SCILLSS project, the OPI brought together a diverse group of 27 stakeholders including three SCILLSS project leads, six OPI internal staff, and eighteen external state partners from across the state. Presently, the OPI is still seeking nominations for Taskforce partners who represent special student populations and geographic areas in Montana. If you know of someone who is engaged in and invested in building a statewide system of assessments for science, and they work with special student populations and/or geographic areas, please send their contact information to us. A main focus of the meeting was to provide the OPI with recommendations, resources, and revision ideas for its draft science Theory of Action.

Should any district wish to comment on the Theory of Action the document will be available as a Google Doc and open for comment from Nov. 13 - Jan. 15, 2018.

Instructions for Reviewing and Providing Theory of Action Comment:

1. Please review the “[Theory of Action Narrative](#)” before beginning your comments.
2. Read the component Theory of Action statements found on page 11 (Exhibit 2) of the Theory of Action Narrative.

3. Compare the Theory of Action statements organized by five major components to the corresponding guiding questions which help provide context behind the Theory of Action statements.
4. Open the [Comment Period Google Doc open from Nov. 13 - Jan. 15, 2018](#).
5. When the link asks you if you would like to make a copy, select “Make a copy”.
6. Make comments the OPI needs to consider for revisions, inclusion of resources, and/or local education recommendations.
7. After your comments have been made, please either copy the Google Doc link from the “share” settings to share back with the OPI, or send your file back to us as an e-mail attachment.

Contact [Ashley McGrath](#) with any questions about the meeting, SCILLSS activities, and/or to share your Theory of Action comments.

For more information, contact [Ashley McGrath](#) at 406-444-3450.

Professional Learning

This month the Assessment Division provided webinars on the following topics: Test Coordinator Monthly Updates and Tasks, Accessibility Series: Making Statewide Assessments Accessible to English Learners, Assessment and Data PLC: The Smarter Balanced Digital Library. Assessment Division webinars are recorded and available on the [Assessment Webinars & Training](#) page.

WIDA workshop on serving the needs of English Learners

This month 40 educators from across the state, who serve English learners, came together to participate in a 2-day workshop. The workshop: Scaffolding Learning through Language was presented by an EL specialist from the WIDA consortium. The focus of the workshop was on expanding instructional practices that foster high challenge and high support learning opportunities for English learners.

For more information, contact OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569

Measurement & Accountability

AIM Announcements December 2017

Expansion of Preschool Enrollments in AIM

Please make sure ALL preschool student enrollments are entered and maintained in AIM. The existence of all preschool student enrollments in the state AIM student system is imperative in order for the OPI to expedite accurate federal reporting throughout the year.

Please review your preschool student enrollments and have them accurate in AIM no later than November 29th.

Preschool enrollments include the following:

- Public school preschool students that are only receiving special education services or are being evaluated for special education services only (N service type enrollments).
- Public school preschool students (P service type enrollments).
- Public school preschool students that are involved in the MT Preschool Development Grant (MPDG) and STARS preschool grant (P service type enrollments).

As a reference, [ARM 10.63](#) is the state Administrative Rule of Montana related to the definitions of preschool students. See these sections specifically:

- 10.63.101 - Procedures
- 10.63.102 - Definitions
- 10.63.108 – Aggregate Hours

Note: If your district has already submitted their special education Child Count report, it is not necessary to re-submit due to changes made that result from this notice.

Please email the AIM help desk (opiainhelp@mt.gov) or call the AIM help desk 1-877-424-6681 (406-444-3800) if you have questions.

FALL CTE COLLECTION - due December 31, 2017

Follow the OPI [Fall CTE Collection Guide](#) to enter the CTE (Career and Technical Education) Post Grad Status and Date Contacted for each graduate identified as a CTE Concentrator the previous year; Verify data using State Published Ad Hoc Reports; and Resync enrollment data after entering data/and or uploading files.

ASSESSMENT REGISTRATION COLLECTION - due January 19, 2018

Follow the OPI [Assessment Registration Collection Guide](#) to populate "Sort By" field, if applicable; Modify enrollments to reflect semester grade level changes; and Resync enrollment data after entering data and/or uploading files.

SPRING ATTENDANCE COLLECTION – deadline February 9, 2018

Follow the [Spring Aggregate Hours Collection Guide](#) to enter aggregate hours for all students enrolled on 2/5/18.

Follow the [AIM & MAEFAIRS Verification Guide](#) to verify student enrollment and aggregate hours in AIM. This guide also has instructions for submitting the data to MAEFAIRS.

AIM Links:

- [AIM Collection Schedule](#)
- [AIM New User Guide](#)
- [AIM Staff Directory](#)
- [AIM District Contact Update Form](#)

For more information, contact [Candi Standall](#) at 406-444-3495

Career Technical and Adult Education

Fall 2017 CTE Data Collection CONTINUES

The Fall 2017 CTE Data Collection begins on October 1 and ends December 31, 2017. The Fall CTE Data Collection is a follow up to last year's Spring CTE Data Collection. Students identified as CTE Concentrators last year (2016-2017) and graduated in the spring of 2017 should be contacted between October 1 and December 31 and asked their current post-graduation status. After contact, the appropriate post-graduation status code must be entered into the AIM/Infinite Campus data system for each CTE Concentrator. All high schools that received funding from the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program in 2016-2017 are required to complete this fall follow up collection to maintain their eligibility to receive Perkins funding.

Instructions for completing the Fall CTE Data Collection--called the '*Quick Reference Guide*' for the Fall CTE Data Collection--are located in two places on the OPI website: on the AIM web page under the AIM User Guides button and also on the **CTE** web page under the '**Data Collections**' button.

Technical AIM questions regarding the Fall CTE Data Collection should be directed to the AIM Helpdesk at 1-877-424-6881 (toll-free) or email opiaimhelp@mt.gov. Questions regarding the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program data requirements should be directed to Christy Hendricks, CTE/Perkins Data Control Specialist at 406-444-9019 or email chendricks@mt.gov.

For more information, contact [Christy Hendricks](#) at 406-444-9019

School Finance Division

Changes to the FY 2017 Trustees Financial Summary

If you find a material coding error on your FY 2017 Trustees Financial Summary (TFS), you may submit a revision to [Mari Haefka](#) in the School Finance Division.

As provided in [10.10.504\(6\)](#), Administrative Rules of Montana, material revision to the FY 2017 Trustees Financial Summary submitted by December 10 shall be accepted, limited to the following types of adjustments:

- Coding revisions between revenue and expenditure line items provided no change occurs in the fund balance of the budgeted funds.
- Revisions in the balance sheet accounts provided no change occurs in the fund balance of the budgeted funds.

Revisions should be submitted to Mari Haefka by following these procedures:

1. Photocopy the original page of the Trustees Financial summary
2. Strike out amounts to be revised, *including subtotals and totals*
3. Hand write in the revised amount above or beside it, *including subtotals and totals*
4. Sign and Date pages to be revised
5. Scan and send as
 - Email to [Mari Haefka](#), (406) 444-1960 (preferred method)
 - Fax to Mari Haefka @ 406-444-0509

When sending balance sheet account revisions, please also send any expenditure and revenue line item changes that correlate with such changes. The fund balance on the balance sheet should equal the ending fund balance shown on the statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance report after the revisions are made.

Changes that affect fund balance in a budgeted fund or immaterial line item coding changes must be reported as prior period adjustments in the trustees' financial summary for the current year, FY 2018. The district may need to adopt a budget amendment in the current year to record the prior period adjustment within the budget of a fund.

Revisions must be received by the OPI by December 10, 2017.

For more information, contact [Mari Haefka](#) at 406-444-1960

Salary and Compensation Expenditure Reporting

MAEFAIRS is currently available for the salary and compensation expenditure reporting. The Salary and Compensation Expenditure Report requires that all employees who received a paycheck during 2016-17 fiscal year be entered into the district's 2016-2017 TOE data. For

many districts, the 2016-17 TOE did not include employees hired after the TEAMS application was closed. The missing employees can be entered into the compensation expenditure TOE screen in TEAMS. The Compensation Expenditure Report is due January 5, 2018.

For TEAMS/TOE information, contact [Danielle Murphy](#) at 406-444-1625

For MAEFAIRS information, contact [Mari Haefka](#) at 406-444-1960

School Elections

The 2018 Election Calendars and Handbook have been posted to the Finance Division's home on the OPI webpage: [Elections](#). The District Classification Report will be posted by mid-December.

For more information, contact [Nicole Thuotte](#) at 406-444-4524

Reporting American Indian Students

Students identified as American Indian in the AIM system at the time the data is imported into the MAEFAIRS fall count will generate funding for the Student Achievement Gap (SAG) payment in the ensuing year.

School district business managers/clerks should verify that the *Students Imported From AIM In SAG Report* located in the MAEFAIRS application accurately reports the number of American Indian students enrolled in the district. If the report is not correct, please contact [Nica Merala](#) at 406-444-4401 to make the necessary changes.

Pursuant to ARM 10.21.205, changes to this designation will not be accepted after December 31, 2017.

For more information, contact [Nica Merala](#) at 406-444-4401

State Paid Tuition

Just a reminder that any FP-14 Student Attendance Agreements and FP-15 Day Treatment and Out of State Tuition forms for the 15-16 school year must be submitted to the OPI no later than December 31st. Agreements received after this date will not be paid.

For more information, contact [Nicole Thuotte](#) at 406-444-4524

Accreditation and Educator Preparation

Application Due Date for Variances to Standards—March 5, 2018

The Board of Public Education rule, “Variances to Standards” (ARM 10.55.604), allows accredited schools to implement a variance to standards designed to meet or exceed results under established standards. Implementation of the variances to standards will be in September 2017. Districts interested in seeking a variance to a standard must submit a [Variances to Standards application](#) by March 5, 2018.

The variance to standards rule requires local boards of trustees to produce evidence of local public participation and evidence that the board officially approved the variance to standards application before submission to the Variances to Standards Review Board.

For more information, contact [Patty Muir](#), 406-444-4317 or [Linda Vrooman Peterson](#), 406-444-5726

Update on Montana RESAs—Collaborating to Improve Education for Montana’s Children

Montana’s Regional Education Service Areas (RESAs) are available to help with your professional development and cost-cutting needs. Recent developments include:

- Montana-EPAS training modules presented in multiple one-hour sessions,
- Negotiated discounts on a variety of classroom strategies and resources,
- Upcoming workshops on the hi-line with Susan Winebrenner on serving high ability/high potential students in the regular classroom,
- Low-cost in-state loan program for Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition (KBIT2) and Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) testing materials for screening for your Gifted and Talented Education program,
- Montana Advanced Placement Summer Institute in late June, 2018, in Missoula,
- And much, much more.

Continuing and new RESA executive directors and updated websites are listed below.

- PESA – [Prairie Educational Service Area](#)
Executive Director [Jordan O'Donnell](#), 406-851-1463
- MNCESR – [Montana North Central Educational Services Region](#)
Executive Director [Shawn Clark](#), 406-460-0488

- MRESA3 – [Montana Regional Education Service Area 3](#)
Program Manager [John Keener](#), 406-657-1743
- SWMSS – [Southwest Montana School Services](#)
Executive Director [Bruce Grubbs](#), 406-624-3336 ext.1
- WMPLC – [Western Montana Professional Learning Collaborative](#)
Executive Director [Daisy Carlsmith](#), 406-529-1113
- Montana RESA Network – contact OPI liaison [Julia Cruse](#), 406-444-0769
NEW RESA Network website coming soon!

For more information, contact Julia Cruse at 406-444-0769

Special Education

Reporting Discipline Incidents in the Behavior Module of AIM

The Behavior module is now available on your local AIM site to enter any discipline event that takes place during the reporting period that:

- results in an out-of-school suspension or expulsion, regardless of the length of time, for any enrolled student; or
- results in an in-school suspension, regardless of the length of time, for an enrolled student with a disability*; or
- involves weapons, drugs, or violence in which the perpetrator is a nonstudent (someone not enrolled in the school such as a former student who has graduated or dropped out, or someone unknown to the school).

* In-school suspensions may also be entered for regular ed students; however, only the special ed incidents are required for federal reporting.

Take the following [link](#), and under the column AIM Guides by Topic or Function you will find the title Behavior. This has reference guides related to the Behavior module, setting up Tool Rights, Event Code definitions, and Resolution Code definitions, etc.

For more information, contact [Mary Graff](#) at 406-444-0685