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Office of the Superintendent

School Safety

With the tragedy in Florida and recent security incidents in schools across Montana, school and student safety must be a top priority. Superintendent Arntzen has discussed this with statewide education stakeholders and legislators and plans to continue the conversation on how we can better promote school security and student safety. She is encouraging school districts to review their emergency operations plans as outlined in [MCA 20-1-401](#).

Teacher of the Year

Nominations and applications for the 2019 Montana Teacher of the Year are open! Please help spread the word and nominate a deserving teacher. More info can be on the OPI's [website](#).

Mental Health Awareness

The OPI is partnering with country music artist and mental health advocate Jason DeShaw to spread the message of hope to students across Montana. He visited twelve schools last fall and is touring eight more this spring. Check out our recent [coverage from Bozeman](#).

2017 AP Results

The College Board released national and statewide Advanced Placement data from the class of 2017. Montana saw a slight increase in participation and scoring. You can review the [press release](#) for a more in-depth look at the results.

Superintendent's February Events

- Met with school leaders in Clinton and Missoula to discuss the MCLP grants, adult education, and education policy. She also met with UM President Seth Bodnar and Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian regarding K-12 and higher education collaboration
- Met with leaders from the Education Commission of the States
- Met with MASS leadership and MSUB Chancellor Ron Larsen in Billings
- Met with College Board leadership
- Met with Montana Afterschool Alliance leadership
- Met with Ag leaders to discuss the future of the Ag in the Classroom program
- Hosted a monthly meeting with Montana's statewide education stakeholder groups
- Participated in an executive meeting of the Montana Library Commission
- Participated in an important [Land Board meeting](#)

Follow Superintendent Arntzen on social media:  

For more information, contact dylan.klapmeier@mt.gov or 406-444-3559

From the Desk of the Deputy Superintendent

Cancelled School?

As a life-long Montana resident, I cannot remember a winter as bad as the one we have had this year—and I remember what Sidney was like in the winter of 78! As such, I think we have had more school cancellations this year than any on record. We've provided this information before, but just in case you haven't seen it, [here is the link](#) for the statutes and rules regarding how this is addressed.

Also, note that the provisions in the above link regarding minimum hours of instruction do not apply if you are able to implement the provisions of [Senate Bill 103](#), which passed in the last legislative session. Here is the link to the [guidance document](#) on implementation of SB 103, which we put together last year. The key with this, however, is that it has to apply to individual students and not an entire system.

For more information, contact [Tim Tharp](#) at 406-444-7325.

School Finance Division

FY 2019 Preliminary General Fund Budget Data Sheets

On or before March 1, the OPI School Finance Division will post the FY2019 Preliminary General Fund Budget Data Sheets and the General Fund Budget Excel Spreadsheet to assist schools in budgeting for the FY2019 school year. The budget data sheets will reflect the state entitlement rates shown in 20-9-306, MCA and the current rates for the special education instructional block grant and related services block grant.

The Preliminary Budget Data Sheets will be posted at the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

The General Fund Budget Excel Spreadsheet will be posted at the following link: [CLICK HERE](#) (Note: Please download the current version of the spreadsheet to your computer (right-click on the link and choose "Save Target As" to save it to your desktop. Previous versions of the spreadsheet will no longer be applicable for preliminary budget purposes.)

Other resources posted on the website:

- FY 2018-19 General Fund Overview and Worksheets
- FY 2018-19 Budget Limitation Summary

Please contact the following individuals with questions:

- Mari Haefka, Finance Specialist 406-444-1960 or mhaefka@mt.gov
- Kara Sperle, Division Administrator 406-444-3249, KSperle2@mt.gov
- Paul Taylor, Budget Analyst 406-444-1257 or Ptaylor2@mt.gov

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

FY 2019 Indirect Cost Rate Applications Now Available

Districts that plan to charge indirect costs (e.g., general administration, accounting services, and personnel services) to FY2019 federal and state grant awards using an indirect cost rate must complete an indirect cost rate application form. Application for an indirect cost rate *does not* increase the amount of the grant award.

The U.S. Department of Education renewed our indirect cost agreement effective for FY2019. Consequently, some aspects of the indirect calculation have changed with this application round:

- Indirect Cost Rates will be awarded per school system rather than by LE.
- The use of a carry forward calculation has been eliminated. The calculation has been replaced with a five-year rolling average with a 5% discount.

Indirect Cost Rate Application and resources for FY2019 are available on the OPI website.

Please review the instructions and additional documentation for more details.

Indirect Cost Rate Cover Letter (please read): [CLICK HERE](#)

Indirect Cost Rate Instructions: [CLICK HERE](#)

If you reclassify costs to adjust the indirect cost rate, please read the Indirect Cost Rate Instructions prior to reclassification of costs for an adjusted rate. Costs that may be reclassified are highlighted in blue. A reclassification calculator is available for aiding in the determination of an adjusted indirect cost rate. The calculator is located at the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

Schedule A, which shows preliminary rates: [CLICK HERE](#)

The Certification forms: [CLICK HERE](#)

If you have questions or need assistance viewing the files, please contact Debbie Casey at 406-444-3096 or e-mail dcasey@mt.gov.

If you have questions about how to complete the indirect cost rate application, please contact Mari Haefka at 406-444-1960 or mhaefka@mt.gov or Paul Taylor at 406-444-1257 or ptaylor2@mt.gov.

For more information, contact [Debbie Casey](#), 406-444-3096

FY19 Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-Voted Levy

Districts must provide notice no later than March 31, 2018 if intending to impose an increase in a non-voted levy in FY19 for the purpose of funding any of the following funds: tuition, adult education, building reserve, transportation, bus depreciation.

For more information, contact Mari Haefka at 406-444-1960 or mhaefka@mt.gov or Paul Taylor at 406-444-1257 or ptaylor2@mt.gov.

School Election Deadlines

- Friday, March 2nd (at least 67 days before, within 3 days of passage of the election resolution): Last day to file resolutions for school election with the county election administrator.
- Friday, March 9th (at least 60 days before): Deadline for receipt of mail ballot plan, timetable, and sample instructions by the Secretary of State's office. Forward a copy of the approved mail ballot plan, including any amendments, to the county election administrator.
- Monday, March 12th (4 weeks preceding the close of regular registration): Notice of close of regular registration. This notice is the responsibility of the county election administrator, but districts should contact the election administrator of each county in which the district is located to verify publication of notice.
- Thursday, March 29th through Saturday, April 28th (not less than 10 days or more than 40 days before): Notice of election is posted. The notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation (if one is available within the district), in three public places, and on the district's website (if active) for the 10 days prior to the election. The notice must include the date and voting locations, voting location hours, each proposition to be considered, the number of trustee positions and length of terms, where and how absentee ballots may be obtained, and where and how late registrants may obtain a ballot on election day.
- Thursday, April 5th, by 5:00 pm (no later than 5pm the day before ballot certification): Last day trustee candidates may withdraw from the election and the deadline for write-in candidates to file a Declaration of Intent.
- Friday, April 6th (no later than the 30th day before): Deadline to notify election judges of appointment.
- Friday, April 6th (no less than 30 days before): Election administrator certifies the ballot. The election administrator certifies that the ballot is in its final form. Any resolutions stating exact levy amounts must be passed by this date.
- Friday, April 6th (no less than 30 days before): If the number of candidates filing an Oath of Candidacy or Declaration of Intent is equal to or less than the number of positions to be elected, the trustees may cancel the election and give notice that the election will not be held.

For more information, contact Nicole Thuotte at nthuotte@mt.gov or 406-444-4524

FY 2017 Federal Audit Reports Due to OPI March 31, 2018

The Federal Audit Reports (formerly A-133 audits and required by 2 CFR Part 200) are due to OPI by March 31, 2018, for entities that have federal expenditures of \$750,000 or greater; this includes USDA commodities.

FY 2018 Yellowbook Audits (regular audit) are required for entities with revenues less than \$750,000 are due to OPI by June 30, 2018.

FY 2018 Reviews (Agreed Upon Procedures) are required at least every four years for entities with \$750,000 or less revenues, are due to OPI by June 30, 2018.

Please remit audit reports and correspondence to OPIAuditReports@mt.gov.

For more information, contact Dan Moody 406-444-0701

Content Standards and Instruction

Looking Ahead to Content Standards Revision in 2018-19

Access content standards documents and other information on the [OPI K-12 Content Standards and Revision](#) webpage.

Feedback questionnaires and resource documents for the content standards revision process are open for the topics below. The information gathered through the brief set of questions will help guide the standards revision process. Please share the links with interested staff. The voice of Montana educators is essential to inform how challenging academic standards are defined for our students.

- [Computer Science](#)
- [Career and Vocational Technical Education and Workplace Competencies](#)
- [Technology and Library Media/Information Literacy](#)
- [Social Studies](#)

For more information, contact Colet Bartow, Content Standards and Instruction, cbartow@mt.gov

Teacher Learning Hub

Visit the [OPI Teacher Learning Hub](#) to see new courses and make your district, school, and individual professional development plans for the coming year.

Looking for a quick overview to share with staff or trustees? Here is [a short promo video](#) (3:31) that explains what the Hub is.

For more information, contact OPILearningHub@mt.gov

Spring and Summer 2018 Professional Development Planning

Learn about professional development on the [OPI Professional Learning Opportunities Portal](#) – online, in-person, and blended learning opportunities offered from a variety of professional development providers. Search by location, date, and topic. For more information, contact opicsi@mt.gov

Accreditation and Educator Preparation

Corrective Plans

If a school is in Advice or Deficiency accreditation status for 2017-2018, a corrective plan will be due by June 1, 2018.

Click [Here](#) to go to the 2017-2018 Corrective Plan.

For more information, contact [Patty Muir](#) or [Nathan Miller](#).

Digital Content Providers Registered in Montana Annual Reporting

Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 10.55.907(5)(b), registered digital content providers serving Montana schools are required to provide an annual report to the Montana Office of Public Instruction by *June 1, 2018*.

ARM 10.55.907(5)—Distance, Online, and Technology Delivered Learning

“(5) Digital content providers serving Montana schools accredited by the Board of Public Education shall:

- (a) annually, by the first Monday in August, register with the Office of Public Instruction;
- (b) annually, by the first Monday in June, identify the Montana school districts served in the current school year by the digital content provider, including the courses and student enrollments for each school district served; and
- (c) document the professional qualifications, including Montana teacher licensure and endorsement, of their teachers of distance, online, and technology-delivered programs and/or courses by providing names and credentials of other licensing entities, when not licensed and endorsed in Montana.”

Email the report to [Patty Muir](#) 406-444-4317.

FY2019 Montana Course Code Changes

Montana state course code changes have been made for the 2018-2019 school year. [Click Here](#) to find a complete listing of FY2019 Course Codes with endorsements.

Prior-to-Secondary and Secondary Course Code Change documents that outline these revisions are also located on this page.

Note that this will affect your Teacher Class uploads for the Annual TEAMS Report in the Fall. For questions contact [Patty Muir](#) or [Nathan Miller](#), or OPITEAMS@mt.gov.

Educational Opportunity and Equity Division

2018 OPI Title I Conference

Registration is now open for the 2018 OPI Title I Conference, which 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. [Title I Conference Registration Link](#). For more information, contact Shawna Pieske at spieske@mt.gov 406-444-5660.

2018-19 Private/Nonpublic School Participation in Federal Programs

The Montana Office of Public Instruction will be mailing out to districts the annual notification to inform private/nonpublic schools of their right to participate in federal educational programs. These notifications will go out the first week of March, and they are due back to the OPI no later than March 30, 2018. Please note that the timelines have been moved up by one month from previous years.

For more information, contact Jack O'Connor at joconnor2@mt.gov or 406-444-3083; or Andy Boehm at aboehm@mt.gov or 406-444-0375.

REAP Grant Will Be Open 2/20/18 through 5/20/18

The application for the REAP grant will be open 2/20/18 and will close on 5/20/18 4:30 EST. Your district could be eligible for RLIS, SRSA, or both and it is important to go [HERE](#) to follow the federal process.

If you have questions regarding this grant, please address them to REAP@ed.gov. The Office of Public Instruction does not handle this grant process.

Educator Licensure

Licensure Requirements – New and Renewal

As you are preparing to fill vacancies with applicants that may not yet be licensed as a Montana educator, specialist or administrator, please refer to the following links for a quick summary of the minimum licensure requirements for each position:

[Class 1 Professional Teaching License](#)

[Class 2 Standard Teaching License](#)

[Class 4 Career & Technical Teaching License](#)

[Class 5 Provisional License](#)

[Class 6 Specialist – School Counselor](#)

[Class 6 Specialist – School Psychologist](#)

[Class 7 Native American Language & Culture](#)

[Class 3 Administrator – Supervisor](#)

[Class 3 Administrator – Special Education Supervisor](#)

[Class 3 Administrator – Superintendent & Principal](#)

A reminder that those whose license(s) expire June 30, 2018, may complete the renewal process at any time.

- 60 renewal units earned during the validity period of the license are required
- College courses may be used to meet the 60 renewal units, but are not required
 - 1 quarter credit = 10 renewal units
 - 1 semester credit = 15 renewal units

If more renewal units are needed, there are a multitude of free, online resources available. Follow [this link](#) to renew or find renewal resources.

Visit [Educator Licensure home page](#) for additional information.

For more information, contact kthatcher2@mt.gov 406-444-2580

Health Enhancement and Safety Division

Youth Electronic Cigarette Use: Resources for Schools

Even though the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) indicates electronic cigarette use by youth in Montana declined from 2015 to 2017, we seem to be hearing more anecdotally about electronic cigarette use in schools.

Friend and/or family member use and a multitude of flavors like green apple, cotton candy and root beer float contribute to making electronic cigarettes the most commonly used tobacco product by youth in our state. In fact, according to the 2017 YRBS, more Montana high school students currently use electronic cigarettes (22.5%) than use cigarettes, cigars and smokeless tobacco combined (21.5%).

What resources do Montana schools have? Adopting and enforcing policy addressing electronic cigarette use by everyone on school property, in school vehicles and at school sponsored events is one of your most powerful tools. Updating your health curriculum to include educational materials about electronic cigarettes is also very important. The OPI's [Tobacco Use Prevention](#) webpage has a host of resources available to educators, administrators and parents and has links to several educational resources.

If you would like more information about youth tobacco use prevention resources or if you'd like to schedule a workshop for your school staff, please contact Kris Minard kminard@mt.gov 406-444-0785

Train the Trainers Workshop: What do you consider lethal?

March 19 – St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula

Kelly Browning of Impact Teen Drivers returns to Missoula to give a 4-hour workshop about distracted and reckless driving using recent research, statistics, and GDL laws. Actionable solutions to address this public safety concern will be offered. Train the Trainers provides participants with examples of school and community-based programs and presentations, including parent-teen safe driving workshops. The workshop is on Monday, March 19, 2018 at St. Patrick's Hospital in Missoula. For more information about Train the Trainer Workshops by Impact Teen Drivers, visit [this link](#).

Questions and RSVP to Michelle Schaefer, (406) 329-5660.

Montana Traffic Education Conference – April 22-24, 2018

The 2018 Montana Traffic Education Conference will be April 22-24 at the GranTree Inn in Bozeman. This conference is co-hosted by the Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Traffic Education Association. Up to 16 OPI renewal units are available. Registration will begin in March. Visit the [MTEA website](#) for details.

For more information, contact Fran Penner-Ray, fpenner-ray@mt.gov, 406-444-4396.

Need to renew your approval to teach Traffic Education? New online TE05 form!

Traffic education instructors with an endorsement and those working toward their endorsement must submit a TE05 form to the OPI to renew approval to teach traffic education. This approval usually expires the same year your educator license expires. The TE05 form is due before September 30. You may also submit it as soon as your educator license is renewed. [Use the new online submission form!](#)

For assistance, contact Patti Borneman, pborneman@mt.gov, 406-444-4432.

Register now for a Montana DRIVE Summer Workshop!

Take a Montana DRIVE advanced driving workshop and become a safer driver. This behind-the-wheel workshop is popular with school bus drivers for required training hours. Teachers can take the workshop for one college credit if they stay an extra day to student teach and write a paper. Registration costs less than a crunched bumper and, in many cases, successful completion of this workshop can lower auto insurance rates.

Operated by the Office of Public Instruction and on track in Lewistown since 1979, these one-day workshops help drivers learn and practice techniques for managing and avoiding risky driving situations. Adult workshops cost \$330. **Save \$10 if registered by March 5.**

Visit the [Montana DRIVE web page](#) to view the calendar and learn more. The one-day workshops start June 4 and end August 9 (no workshops the week of July 2-6). The teen workshops are July 23, 24 and 25 and registration for the teen workshops begins in mid-March. Sign up for the [Montana DRIVE E-News](#) for registration reminders and periodic updates throughout the workshop season.

For assistance, contact Patti Borneman, pborneman@mt.gov, 406-444-4432.

National School Breakfast Week March 5-9, 2018

Celebrate school breakfast with your students and staff this spring. Feature your school food service program in newsletters, on the website, with local media, and on the school Facebook page. Encourage students to participate in school breakfast by making announcements, planning fun and creative menu items, or covering the cost of school breakfast for students all week long. Invite parents or family members to join their child for breakfast or encourage older students to mentor their younger peers.

Visit the [School Nutrition Association website](#) for additional resources and ideas.

For more information, contact [Tara Jones](#) 406-431-2920

Webinar Wednesdays

Webinar Wednesdays are free, one-hour webinars that occur each Wednesday from 2 to 3 p.m. No registration necessary. Join us in March! See the [School Nutrition Programs Webinar Wednesday Calendar](#) for more details.

To participate in the webinar go to [Webinar Wednesday](#).

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

March 19-23: Harvest of the Month Cook-off

The Montana Harvest of the Month Cook-off (“Cook-off”) is a weeklong statewide event to celebrate Montana Harvest of the Month, National Nutrition Month, and National Ag Day! To participate schools will serve chili and cinnamon rolls as a school meal anytime during the Cook-off week, March 19-23, using at least one Montana grown or raised Montana Harvest of the Month food. Schools can be entered to win \$100 for their school by providing information about their event, recipe, and photo of the item. The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities.

For more information, go [HERE](#) or contact [Aubree Roth](#) 406- 994-5996.

MT Harvest of the Month Taste Test Competition

Ready, set, taste test! The Montana Harvest of the Month Taste Test Competition is now open! Students can research, prepare, and serve taste tests until April 30, 2018 and submit an entry each month to win \$100 for their school or student club. The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities.

For more information, go [HERE](#) or contact [Aubree Roth](#) 406- 994-5996.

Seeking Presenters for Montana Farm to School Summit 2018

Montana Team Nutrition and conference partners are seeking presenters for the **Montana Farm to School Summit: Cultivating Connections** to be held on September 13-14, 2018 at University of Montana in Missoula. Proposals are open for workshop (50 minute) and Montana Food Talks (5 minute) sessions. Presentation tracks include Procurement (for foodservice & producers), K-12 Education, Early Care & Education, Skill Building (e.g., social media strategies, fundraising). Proposals must be submitted online by March 31, 2018.

For more information go [HERE](#) or contact [Aubree Roth](#) 406- 994-5996.

Montana School Nutrition Association Conference

Save the Date! The Montana School Nutrition Association Conference will be held June 26-28, 2018 in Great Falls, MT at the Best Western Plus Heritage hotel for school food service employees from around the state. Members of MTSNA receive a discount on conference fees. Encourage your employees to become a member [here](#). Conference scholarships are available for member attendees [here](#). Scholarship applications are due May 1.

Online registration coming soon at

For more information, contact [Tara Jones](#) 406-431-2920.

Recognize Your School Food Service Staff

The Montana School Nutrition Association provides an opportunity to recognize the outstanding work of school food service staff at your school district. Awards include [1\) Professional of the Year](#) [2\) Wonderful Outstanding Worker Award](#) [3\) Silver Spoon Award](#). Click on the nomination form, complete it and submit by May 1 to Brian Jones at bjones@stlabre.org

For more information, visit [Montana School Nutrition Association](#) or contact Tara Jones, tray@mt.gov, 406-431-2920

Learn more about AEDs and First Aid in Schools

Is your school prepared in the event of a cardiac emergency? A new Montana law (MCA 20-7-1315) encourages Montana school districts to provide a program of study in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), install automated external defibrillators (AED), and train staff in the use of this life-saving equipment. The law also directs the Office of Public Instruction to help school districts find appropriate resources for cardiac readiness, CPR educational materials, AED purchase, grant funds, and staff training in AED use and CPR.

Visit the new [AED and First Aid in Schools webpage](#) for these resources and other links related to AEDs and first aid.

For more information, contact Karin Billings, Division Administrator, kbillings@mt.gov, 406-444-0829 or Janet Trethewey, EdD, Cardiac Ready Communities Program Manager, JTrethewey@mt.gov, 406-444-0442.

Measurement & Accountability

AIM Announcements March 2018

Three Upcoming Collections

There are three student data collections that start in March. Districts should verify their data for each collection by the 'due date' specified in the [AIM Collection Schedule](#) on our AIM website. The links to the specific user guides are provided below for each collection.

NOTE: In addition to these three data collections it is also important that districts check their Special Ed. Data now and make sure all COMPLETED IEPs are LOCKED.

1. Spring CTE Collection: From Thursday, March 1st – Monday, April 30th

Districts should identify their twelfth grade CTE Concentrators and enter concentration area data. Follow this link to view the reference guide: [Spring CTE Collection Guide](#).

2. Test Window Count: Enrollment, Aggregate Hours & Count Date Absence: From Tuesday, March 20th - Tuesday, April 3rd

Districts should verify their aggregate hours and absence data for all students enrolled on 3/20/18. Follow this link to view the reference guide: [Test Window Attendance Collection Guide](#).

3. Test Window Program Participation: From Tuesday, March 20th - Tuesday, April 10th

Districts should verify students' enrollment start and end dates, race/ethnicity and programs data for all students enrolled as of 3/20/18. Follow these links to view the reference guides: [Program Participation Collection Guide](#) and [Program Participation Verification Guide](#).

AIM Links:

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

For more information, contact Candi Standall at cstandall@mt.gov or 406-444-3495.

Career Technical and Adult Education

CTE Spring Data Collection BEGINS March 1

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Spring Data Collection begins March 1, 2018 and ends April 30, 2018. This AIM collection asks schools to identify all 12th grade high school students who were enrolled at any point during the current 2017-2018 school year who meet the definition of a CTE Concentrator. CTE Concentrators are 12th graders who have earned three (3) or more credits in any CTE program in any combination during their years of high school. Currently enrolled CTE courses count toward credits earned. CTE Concentrators must have the 'CTE Concentrator' box checked and an 'Area of Concentration' entered into the AIM/Infinite Campus data system. If the student has a child or shares the parenting of a child, the 'Single Parent' box should also be marked. High schools who receive funding from the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program must complete this CTE Spring Data Collection.

Instructions for completing the CTE Spring Data Collection can be found on the AIM webpage located at this [link](#). You can also find the AIM Collection Schedule [here](#).

Questions regarding this data collection should be directed to the AIM Helpdesk at 1-877-424-6681 or send an email to: opiainhelp@mt.gov.

Questions regarding CTE programs and/or the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program should be directed to [Christy Hendricks](#).

Assessment Division

2018 Assessment and Data Conferences

The OPI Data and Assessment Conference had over 300 participants attend the conference this February! We had some some exceptional presentations regarding our theme, "Making a Difference with Data." We also had two renowned keynote presenters affiliated with the Marzano Institute share their research on using data to inform instruction. Dr. Tammy Heflebower presented on "Measuring Impact" with emphasis on using practical examples to provide ideas, support, and specific strategies to ensure your efforts are showing impact. Jan Hoegh presented on "We Have Data! Now What?" with tips and ways to use common assessments to support responding to data in appropriate and effective ways.

In addition to these special keynote presentations, we also launched the New Test Coordinator assessment track based on feedback we received in years past. These sessions were tailored to the New Test Coordinator and included presentations on "Understanding Statewide Assessments", "MontCAS Policies & Procedures", "Smarter Balanced Test Administration for New Users", "CRT Science for New Users", "ACT For New Test Coordinators", and "Special Population Assessments".

Another exciting feature of this year's conference was bringing back instructional tools to support local data-driven decision-making. We had many sessions focused on the instructional side of things with sessions regarding formative assessments, interim assessments,

personalized instruction, upping the rigor of assessments, using assessments to enhance writing, using data to inform instruction, aligning materials, and on Montana's Early Warning System.

If you missed the conference or would like to refresh your memory on the topics and materials covered, please check out our [Conference Webpage](#)

For more information, contact Marcy Fortner at mfortner@mt.gov or call 406-444-3511.

Professional Development

New test coordinator track at the assessment conference

New test coordinators were able to participate in a six-session track which covered the essentials of test coordination including: Why we have statewide assessments, test management roles, test security, accessibility, and sessions on each MontCAS test.

Teacher Learning Hub Courses

Smarter Balanced interim assessment course

Implementing Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments is a new course available on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#). This self-paced course is intended to provide learners with the basics to get started using the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. The course covers: balanced assessment systems, interim administration, hand-scoring, and accessing and using results in the AIR Ways Reporting System.

This month's assessment and data PLC topic was the GEMs system.

Teaching and Assessing English Learners

This facilitated course opened on February 9, 2018. The purpose of this course is to increase understanding of teaching EL students in Montana and to help participants come to a better understanding of the tools available through the WIDA Consortium. This course is designed to help content teachers learn how to use a data based approach to differentiating and scaffolding content lessons for English Learners (ELs) in Montana. The course will be offered twice more this school year, starting in April and again in June.

MontCAS Webinar series:

Topics this month included: an overview of test activities for the month of February, The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA), and the Science CRT. Recordings of the webinars are available on the [OPI website](#).

External Partner Collaborative Webinar

A presentation on the topic of American Indian ELs was provided through Title I to external partners. The webinar covered characteristics of American Indian ELs, impact on achievement, issues in serving this population, and best practices in identification.

For more information, contact Yvonne Field at yfield@mt.gov or call 406-444-0748.

Legal Division

2017 School Laws Book Available Online

All hard copies of the 2017 School Laws of Montana have been distributed, but there is an [online version](#) available for download on the on the [OPI's Legal Resources page](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the Legal Division: [Bev Marlow, Paralegal](#) [Nicole Hanni](#), Paralegal Assistant

Special Education Division

Discipline Reporting in AIM

All public schools in each public school district in the state, including publicly funded schools, must enter all discipline data in their local AIM site. This report is due in our office by the end of business day on Saturday, June 30, 2018. Events that meet the following criteria must be reported.

Any 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*.

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

For more information, contact Mary Graff at mgraff@mt.gov or 406-444-0685.

Region I CSPD

March 19, 2018 – Executive Functioning training for Paras; Wolf Point, MT

Region II CSPD

Vocabulary: The Educational Gift that Keeps on Giving (3rd-HS) (Eliza Sorte Thomas)

March 15, 2018 (Havre, MT-rescheduled from February 15 due to extreme travel conditions)

Positive Behavioral Practice Based on Strategies for Self-Regulation (Shawna Heiser); April 6, 2018 (Great Falls, MT)

Trauma Informed Care (Stacy (York) Nation; April 19, 2018 (Havre, MT)

For more information contact cspd@bluepony12.com or call 406-395-8550

Region III CSPD

(All events in Billings)

- 3.7.18: Wired Wednesdays: Google A-Z Fasten Your Seatbelts
- 3.14.18: Rising to Dyslexia Challenges Through Effective Use of Classroom Strategies, Dyslexia-Specific Intervention, Accommodations, and Assistive Technology
- 3.21.18: Wired Wednesdays: Apps for iPads
- 4.4.18: Wired Wednesdays: Formative Assessment Tools
- 4.17.18: What Teachers Need to Know About Special Education
- 4.18.18: Understanding Conflict and Communication
- 4.18.18: Wired Wednesdays: Mother's Day

[Online registration](#)

For more information, contact Debra Miller, dmiller@msubillings.edu, 406-657-2072

Region V CSPD

Effective Differentiation Within Core Reading Programs

With Carrie Cole

Differentiation within "HM Journeys"—March 13, Red Lion, Polson

Differentiation within "McGraw Hill- Reading Wonders"—March 14, Hampton Inn, Kalispell

Meeting the diverse needs of all students can seem daunting or even impossible at times. The training will focus on how to effectively (and sanely) implement, organize and manage differentiated instruction within a core reading program—including targeted interventions—to meet individual student needs. Using assessment to effectively diagnose the needs of students will also be addressed. The training will be interactive, allowing participants time to practice, plan, reflect, and make connections to their current differentiation practices.

For information and registration, visit the [Western Montana CSPD webpage](#) or call 406-847-2236

SAVE THE DATE

WM CSPD SUMMER INSTITUTE

June 12, 13 & 14 2018

Red Lion & Kwatagnuk motels in Polson MT

Classroom Management ER - Dr Linda Karges- Bone

Data Driven Decision Making & Data Teams, Advanced Progress Monitoring & Instructional Practices for Student Growth - Wayne Callender

Reading & Writing k-8 with Carrie Cole

DATA Collection & Management & Distribution - Rob Reynolds

Numeracy & Math Diagnostics - Rhonda Birnie

Sp Ed for Administrators – Linda Maas & Megan Morris

Conscious Discipline with Angela Fraley
And more...

Registration opens in March ...

For information, visit the [Western Montana CSPD webpage](#) or call 406-847-2236