



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Superintendent Arntzen Announces 2017-2018 State Assessment Results

September 13, 2018

HELENA— The Office of Public Instruction has released Montana’s 2017-2018 statewide assessment results which show little variation over last year. Montana’s statewide assessments are the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) for grades 3 through 8 and the ACT for high school students.

The most recent data shows a 5-year trend of slight declines in ACT composite scores while more high school students are taking the ACT each year. SBAC has been administered for 3 years and has shown little variation with increasing numbers of students taking the assessment each year.

The 2018 average ACT composite score in Montana was 19.6 compared to 19.7 in 2017 and 20.0 in 2016. The ACT is taken by high school juniors and is also considered a measure of college readiness. The required composite score to enter Montana’s University System is 22.0, which only 33% of students achieved.

For elementary and middle school students, the 2018 SBAC scores showed that 41.5% were at or above proficiency in math which is a slight increase from 2017 scores which were 41.2% but slightly lower than 2016’s level of 41.8%. In the English Language Arts portion, 50.5% of students were at or above proficiency which is a slight increase from the previous two years’ levels of 50.3% and 50.1%.

“Federally mandated test results do not represent the academic potential of each individual student, but they do show where we can work as a state to better prepare all Montana students to be college and career ready,” **State Superintendent Elsie Arntzen said Thursday.** “We must ensure that ALL Montana students succeed.”

At-risk student groups such as English Language Learners (ELLs), special education students, economically disadvantaged students, and American Indian students continue to underperform compared to the all-student average. The OPI is working to provide comprehensive and targeted supports to schools through the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to ensure that all Montana students are served and have the opportunity to succeed.

Work is already underway with new school improvement plans developed at the local level for consistently underperforming schools as well as targeted professional development for educators to serve specific student populations. As required under ESSA, the OPI will be releasing “school report cards” in December which will be very viewer-friendly for parents and community members.

The complete 2018 assessment results as well as previous year’s data and local data can be found on OPI’s GEMS website:

<https://gems.opi.mt.gov/StudentAchievement/Pages/Overview.aspx>

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