

The OPI Monthly Summary: October 2020

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Office of the Superintendent

Montana Education Updates

2021 Legislative Priorities

1. BASE Aid plus inflation
2. Adding special education to BASE Aid plus inflation
3. Fund in-state residential treatment for at-risk students
4. Transfer the Broadband for Montana Schools program from the Department of Commerce to the Office of Public Instruction

In addition to the above priorities, the OPI has been working closely with the Education Interim Committee on language clean up bills. These priorities do not represent the full range of bills that the OPI may provide support or informational testimony for. The OPI recognizes that revenue will be tight this session and therefore the OPI's top priority is ensuring that existing funding promises to our K-12 public schools are fulfilled early in the session. Check out the OPI's [legislative webpage](#) to learn more.

Stars and Stripes Initiative

The OPI and American Legion of Montana are partnering on a [Stars and Stripes initiative](#) to donate American Flags for Montana classrooms. This coincides with our updates to Montana's social studies standards. We must all work together to have strong civics education programs in schools. One way to encourage this is by proudly displaying the stars and stripes in every classroom. State law [requires](#) Flags in every classroom but only if schools can afford them or have them donated. The cost of the Flags are \$10 and donors can choose which school that flag goes to. The Flags are classroom-sized 16"X24" and include the staff and wall mount bracket.

New Federal Digital Learning Guide

The U.S. Department of Education today released a new [Parent and Family Digital Learning Guide \[lnks.gd\]](#), a resource to help parents and guardians understand how digital tools can provide tailored learning opportunities, engage students with course materials, encourage creative expression, and enrich the educational experience.



OPI 2021 Budget Info

The [2021 OPI Budget](#) was finalized on October 16.

Superintendent's Office September Events

- Meetings with American Legions Posts for [Stars and Stripes initiative](#)
- Visit to MSU-Northern
- Meeting with Microsoft on Computer Science courses
- Meeting with the Governor's senior staff
- Meeting with state education partners
- Zoom meeting with local administrators

- Meeting with the Council of Chief State School Officers
- Montana State Library Commission
- Land Board
- CTE panel with the Department of Education and Montana Chamber of Commerce
- Meeting with Great Falls School Resource Officers
- Montana School Safety Advisory Committee

Follow the Office of Public Instruction on social media:  
For more information, contact [Dylan Klapmeier](#), 406-444-3559.

Data & Technology

Missing Child Photo Repository

We want to remind you to upload student directory photos to the OPI for inclusion in the missing child photo repository. The repository provides law enforcement with immediate, 24/7, year-round access to a child's school photo should a child be reported missing.

It's important to note that parents **must opt-in** for their child's photograph to be included in the repository, and **must be provided the following information** when opting-in:

- **Information about the electronic photograph repository:** *The repository is authorized by Montana Code Annotated ([20-7-1317](#), MCA) and requires the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to create and maintain an electronic directory photograph repository of all Montana students for the exclusive purpose of locating missing school-age children. The repository provides immediate and 24/7 year-round access to a child's school directory photograph to law enforcement should a child be reported missing. Annually, districts must provide parents and guardians notice of the repository and a form to opt-in their student(s).*
- **Who will have access to my child's photograph in the photo repository?** *Your child's photograph will only be used by law enforcement for the express purpose of locating your child should he/she be reported to law enforcement as missing. No other use by OPI or law enforcement is permitted. Access by OPI staff will be strictly limited and controlled to staff or contractors creating and maintaining the repository.*
- **How do I remove my child's photograph from the photograph repository?** *A parent can opt-out at any time. Contact your school/district to request your child's photograph be removed.*

- ***How long will my child's photograph be in the repository?*** Photos will be updated annually; if the photo is not updated and the parent doesn't opt-out, the photos will be purged from the repository after two years.
- Please visit <https://dojmt.gov/missing-persons/> to find more information about missing school-age children.

[A sample form to share](#) with parents is available on the [OPI's Photo Repository page](#), along with instructions for uploading photos to the OPI.

Contact [Michael Sweeney](#) with any questions at 406-444-4411.

AIM Information for November

1. **Opening November 2nd, and closing December 31, 2020:** This specific CTE data submission includes the Date Contacted and Post Graduation Status for CTE concentrator students who graduated in previous spring school year, 2019-2020.
Note: You should contact these students during the second quarter.
2. **Data that should be submitted all year long:**
 - behavior,
 - enrollment,
 - EL Identification,
 - optional Assessment Information for Interims, and
 - student photos for the OPI Photo Repository.

Find links for support on [the submission calendar](#) or via [AIM webinars](#).

Contact: [AIM support](#), 877-424-6681 or 406-444-3800.

School Finance

State Paid Tuition and FP-15's

Please submit your state paid tuition and FP-15 (day treatment) claims for the 2019-20 school year as soon as possible. These claims must be submitted and approved prior to December 31, 2020. Once your claims are entered in MAEFAIRS, the district must verify the claim and number of days enrolled. Claims will be paid in the month after they are verified and submitted through MAEFAIRS.

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

FY 2021 Bus Routes (TR1's)

By November 1 districts must electronically enter all approved TR1's into the Pupil Transportation Program, and send a copy signed by the board chair to the county superintendent.

By November 10 county superintendents must electronically receive all TR1's entered by the districts in the Pupil Transportation Program. County superintendents must have a paper copy from the district in order to electronically receive the TR1's. For questions or assistance, contact [Donell Rosenthal](#), 406-444-3024.

Compensation Expenditure Report

MAEFAIRS is currently available for compensation expenditure reporting. The Compensation Expenditure Report is due December 10th. There is a Compensation Expenditure Report training located here: [Compensation Expenditure Report Training](#).

For TEAMS/TOE information, contact Linda Peterson at 406-444-5726. For MAEFAIRS information, contact [Renee Richter](#) at 406-444-1960.

Changes to Trustees Financial Summary

If you find a material coding error on your FY 20 Trustees Financial Summary (TFS), please submit a revision to Renee Richter in the School Finance Division. Scan and email revisions to [Renee Richter](#), Financial Specialist, 406-444-1960, or mail revisions to: OPI School Finance, PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501. The deadline for submitting revisions is December 10.

School Innovation and Improvement Department

Every Student Succeeds Act

Seeking Public Comment on Proposed ESSA Amendment

After reviewing Montana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the US Department of Education indicated that Montana must include an exit criterion for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) small schools, similar to the exit criteria that is outlined for regular CSI schools.

Purpose:

The purpose of the exit criteria is to ensure continued progress to improve student academic achievement and school success in CSI small schools identified through the annual meaningful determination process. [*ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(I)*].

Thus, the OPI is preparing to submit an amendment to the Montana ESSA plan and seeks public comment on the following proposed amendment:

Using the process for annual meaningful differentiation, the OPI will monitor the schools identified for small school comprehensive support. The OPI has identified two criteria for exiting small school comprehensive support.

The first criterion is to exit out of the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I schools. This is the basic criteria necessary to exit small school comprehensive support. Title I schools that are no longer in the lowest-performing 5 percent and all high schools that have improved graduation rates to be at or above 67 percent will be eligible to exit small school comprehensive support.

Once schools have met the first criteria, they must meet the second criteria to demonstrate continuous improvement and not fall back into the lowest-performing five percent.

The second criterion is to meet the academic growth goals (ELA and Math) set in a school's Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) for the year they are in small school support and improvement as well as the following year. Every district and school is required to submit a continuous improvement plan. The plan will be driven by a comprehensive needs assessment and the school's report card and growth goals that include the same growth percentages each year as the long-term and interim goals set by the state.

Below is a timeline outlining the amendment process with stakeholder involvement:

Timeline:

- October 19, 2020- ESSA Update and posting of the proposed amendment for public comment period on the OPI website
- October 20, 2020- Introductory discussion with Education Advocates
- October 27, 2020-Introductory discussion with LEA superintendents and County Superintendents
- October 29, 2020- Consultation with the Governor's office
- November 5, 2020-Presentation and discussion with the Montana Board of Public Education
- November 17, 2020- Feedback and input discussion with Education Advocates**
- November 30, 2020 Final Draft prepared and submitted to the DOE

*Please email ESSAinput@mt.gov if you would like to receive the Zoom link for this discussion. Please send feedback, input, and questions to ESSAinput@mt.gov. For more information, contact Julie Murgel at Julie.Murgel@mt.gov

Competitive Grant Closing

The Targeted Support and Improvement Competitive Grant will be closing on October 31, 2020. If your district has a Targeted Support school you are eligible to apply.

List of Targeted Support Schools. For more information, contact Crystal Andrews, 406-444-3482

Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit

Our Unit works to incorporate Tribal voice and resources through consultation with our Tribal Nations and organizations on issues affecting Native students. Consultation, defined within the ESSA requirements, will create opportunities for school districts and tribal leaders to work together on behalf of American Indian students. We strive to lift the resiliency, wisdom, and beauty of our Tribal Nations at every level within OPI and LEAs.

For more information, contact Don Wetzel, Jr. at dwetzel2@mt.gov, 406-444-4527

Federal Programs

Comparability Reports

Title I, Part A Comparability reports for SY20-21 are due to the Montana Office of Public Instruction by November 16, 2020. Districts that must complete these reports have already been notified.

For more information, contact Sheri Harlow at sharlow@mt.gov or 406-444-5660.

SY20-21 Egrants Consolidated Applications

Egrant Consolidated Applications for SY20-21 must be submitted and approved no later than October 31, 2020. Districts that have not completed the process by this date will be locked out of Egrants, and they will not be able to drawdown funds. To gain permission to submit after this date, district board chairpersons will need to email a request to Sharyl Allen, Deputy Superintendent, at Sharyl.Allen@mt.gov. The request must contain an explanation of why the submission was late, and give a plan to prevent this from happening again. Districts missing this deadline are also at risk of more frequent federal monitoring.

For more information, contact Sheri Harlow at sharlow@mt.gov or 406-444-5660.

Student Support Services Department

Connecting Adults and Minors through Positive Parenting in Montana (CAMPP MT)

CAMPP MT (Connecting Adults and Minors through Positive Parenting) is a new program through MT Department of Corrections. It is an innovative approach to begin the process of reunification of incarcerated parents (within 5 years of possible discharge from prison) and their minor children in a safe and supervised environment while providing supports in the community for positive sustainable reunification. This program is intended to break the cycle of incarceration and build stable family relationships to prevent more victims of crime in Montana in the future.

For more information on CAMPP MT, please contact [Terryl Gochanour](mailto:Terryl.Gochanour) or [Marisa Britton-Bostwick](mailto:Marisa.Britton-Bostwick).

2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Registration Underway

Registration packets were mailed October 1 to district superintendents for the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The biennial survey will be conducted in late February 2021 and is administered by the OPI through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The YRBS is 30 years old and is the only school-based survey in which students self-report unintentional injuries and violence (including suicide ideation and mental health status), tobacco use (including electronic vapor products), alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors, nutrition and dietary behaviors, and physical inactivity. Registration is open through November 30, 2020.

If you did not receive a registration packet, need a registration form, or have questions about the YRBS please contact Susan Court at scourt@mt.gov or 406-444-3178. To view your school-specific results from past years' YRBS visit the [Montana YRBS](#) web site.

Upstart Update

Waterford UPSTART is a no-cost, at-home Kindergarten Readiness software offered the year before a child enters kindergarten. This Kindergarten Readiness software gives an exciting start in reading, math, and science (with a focus on reading). Currently, Montana has 206 families registered for UPSTART for the 2020/2021 school year! Of these families: 123 have completed the training, 100 have completed WACS (pre and post-test), and 93 families have begun using the program.

UPSTART is currently recruiting for the upcoming school year, 2021/2022. UPSTART will be serving 400 children who will be four years of age no later than September 10, 2021. If you know of any children who meet this, please reach out to Danni McCarthy, Early Learning Unit Manager.

For more information, contact [Danni McCarthy](#), 406-444-0452.

Summer Food Service Program Operations and Other Flexibilities Through SY 2020-21

On October 9th, the USDA extended multiple [nationwide waivers and flexibilities](#). These extensions mean that districts operating USDA Child Nutrition Programs may have options for feeding students through June 30, 2021.

- Districts may continue to operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or switch to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) through June 30, 2021. Please note that each program has different regulations and meal counting/claiming requirements. Districts must have an approved MAPS agreement with OPI School Nutrition Programs to operate and claim meals for either program.
- [Here is a helpful resource on Meal Program Options](#)

- Districts that have already been approved to operate the School Year SFSP may log into MAPS and extend their days/months of operation on the site applications through the end of the school year (or longer if planning to operate next summer).
- Districts that have not yet signed up to operate the School Year SFSP, but want to make the change must first complete the [School Year SFSP Form](#). Once this form is submitted, you will receive a call from your [regional specialist](#) to determine next steps.

For more information, contact Kimberly.Lloyd@mt.gov, 406-444-0772 or your [regional specialist](#).

State Personnel Development Grant Awarded to the OPI

Montana OPI is a recipient of the new State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), titled “The Montana Tiered System of Supports: Systematic Problem-Solving Approach to Implement Evidence-Based Practices with Autonomy”. The purpose of this new grant is to improve and expand our professional development and coaching support focused on data-analytic problem-solving at the systems level. The project is guided by current research for professional development, which entails a state, regional, and district approach to build capacity. Training in districts will begin in fall 2021 and will be piloted in one region, with expansion to other regions in subsequent years.

In the meantime, training content on MTSS and related topics can be accessed on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#). We will continue to add courses to the Hub to support MTSS implementation. Please check your [Regional CSPD](#) website as well, as they periodically offer professional development opportunities that support MTSS. Also, a new MTSS webpage located at <http://opi.mt.gov/Educators/Teaching-Learning/Multi-Tiered-Systems-of-Support> is currently under development and we will continue to add new content.

For more information, contact [Sheila Lovato](#), 406-444-5889

Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP)

The OPI Montana Autism Education Project has some scholarships available for educators to attend virtual Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) Level 1 or Social Thinking trainings. This intensive 13-hour interactive workshop is designed to teach educational and caregiver teams the theory and protocol for the Picture Exchange Communication System® (PECS®), an evidence-based practice based on Applied Behavior Analysis, typical language development, and B.F. Skinner’s Verbal Behavior. Using presenter demonstrations, role-play opportunities, and video examples participants will gain a thorough understanding and hands-on experience of each of the six phases of PECS.

There are a limited number of scholarships so please [request a scholarship here](#). We will provide notice as soon as possible to those who have been accepted to attend a training. You can find additional training opportunities and resources to support students with autism and a full description of the training [here](#). For more information, please email [Doug Doty](#).

Updated Special Education Guidance and Resources

The special education unit has been working diligently to get updated guidance and resources specific to COVID-19 posted on the [Re-Opening Montana Schools 2020 COVID-19 Special Education Information](#) webpage. A few key pieces to be aware of are the [Covid-19 Compensatory Services](#), [Personal Protective Equipment](#) state guidance, [Mask Wearing Resources](#), and [Documenting Due Diligence](#) documents.

In response to many inquiries around amending IEPs and responding to changing health and safety restrictions for students on IEPs, the special education unit has developed a description and example of the use of a [Pivot Plan](#) option for IEP teams to consider as they amend or write IEPs during this time. In addition, a decision tree ([Continuous Learning for Students with Disabilities During Covid-19 health and Safety Restrictions](#)) is available to IEP teams to help navigate and guide decisions at this time.

For more information or with special education COVID-19 related questions please email SpedCovid@mt.gov.

November Is American Indian And Alaska Native Heritage Month

November is American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month and Montana has a historic connection to this nationwide recognition. According to the U.S. Census Bureau: “The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. Red Fox James, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, rode horseback from state to state to get endorsements from 24 state governments to have a day to honor American Indians. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating November 1990 as “National American Indian Heritage Month.” Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994, and we now refer to this celebration as “American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.” Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Be sure to check out our [Indian Education for All website](#) for notifications, ideas, and resources to celebrate this special month. In the event that teachers or students want to learn about tribes outside of Montana or see how other states are celebrating AI & AN Heritage Month, we have links to other State Department of Education’s Indian Education pages on the [General Information page](#) of our website. Excellent resources are also available from the following organizations:

[Native Knowledge 360](#): Teaching resources from the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian

[Illuminative](#): Remote learning resources created in partnership with the National Indian Education Association.

[Learning at Home Resources](#): National Indian Education Association

For more information, contact [Mike Jetty](#), 406-444-0720

Teaching and Learning Department

Assessment Unit

State 2020–2021 Testing Requirements

As of today, the participation requirement to administer annual state standardized assessments is required under [federal](#) and [state law](#). The OPI recognizes the pandemic challenges Montana schools face and we are seeking flexible approaches to administer these required assessments. 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](#).

For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Tips for Preparing for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Assessment

Last week, System Test Coordinators with English Learner (EL) students were notified of the guidance on how to plan, prepare for, and address some matters related to testing ELs during the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 testing window (December 2 to January 29, 2021). Read the [ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 AIM Tips Email](#) to learn more about this guidance.

Attend OPI EL Office Hours from 3:00–3:30 p.m. each Wednesday through December 2. OPI representatives will be on the call to answer questions and assist schools. Join the [Zoom Call](#) at any time during the half-hour, or call +1 646 558 8656 or +1 406 444 9999 [Meeting ID: 971 9652 0092].

For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Notification to NAEP 2021 Schools

The participation requirement to administer NAEP in mathematics and reading in Grades 4 and 8 is required under the Every Student Succeeds Act for any district receiving Title I funding. Montana schools selected to participate in the 2021 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have been notified. The assessment will take place between January 25 and March 19, 2021.

For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Fall Senior Testing with ACT

Remember to return test booklets, used answer documents and test administration forms as soon as possible after testing. Materials must be received by ACT no later than October 27 for the October 20 test date, or they will not be scored.

Attend ACT Office Hours from 3:30–4:30 p.m. on each Thursday through December 10. ACT representatives will be on the call to answer questions and assist schools. Join the [Microsoft Teams Call](#) at any time during the hour, or call +1 515-207-8727 [Conference ID: 375 657 79#].

For seniors unable to test on October 6 or October 20, the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) and OPI are in conversations with the test delivery contractor (ACT) to see if additional dates can be added in the spring should enough seniors benefit from this possibility. Until we are able to determine if this flexibility is possible for Montana students, students eligible for the [ACT's free fee waivers](#) can test on the national test date, December 12, 2020 (Saturday). Updates on this option will be published in the [OPI's Published Test Window Calendar](#) and the “Staying Informed” resources described below.

For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Fall 2020 OPI Recommendations

See the Monthly Assessment Bulletin Newsletter (Page 2) for five key tips to use the English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science Interim Assessments available on the [Montana Testing Portal](#). The [Fall 2020 OPI Recommendations](#) (script embedded) 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. The [guidance webpage](#) includes a comprehensive overview of all things interims and includes an [18-min Quick Start Video](#). This guidance reinforces the [Restart & Recovery: Assessment Considerations for Fall 2020 from the Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\)](#).

The OPI is in the process of crafting “Montana COVID-19 State Standardized Testing Guidance.” In the meantime, schools are encouraged to reach out to the OPI to share questions, concerns, and any challenges happening at the local level so the OPI Assessment Unit can support schools with these testing requirements. We are learning more every day with respect to what the local needs and conditions are. For these reasons, please send any COVID-related items to OPICOVID19@mt.gov. We will continue our efforts on crafting guidance for assessments so schools can conduct test administrations and learn what efforts the OPI has undertaken to pursue flexibilities for school districts amidst the COVID pandemic.

For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Staying Informed with Testing Alerts

The OPI Assessment Unit will continue to share information to the field via its [Assessment FAQ: COVID-19 Testing Alerts](#), [Monthly Assessment Bulletin Newsletter](#), [Monthly Webinars](#), [Assessment 411](#), and other communication means. For more information on what the OPI is doing, visit the [OPI Statewide Testing Page](#). For more information, contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 844-867-2569.

Career, Technical and Adult Education Unit

For questions, please contact:

Shannon Boswell, Division Administrator - 406.444.7915

Eric Tilleman, Agriculture Education Specialist - 406.444.4451

Renee Erlandsen, Health Sciences Education Specialist - 406.994.6986

Ian Beagles CTE/Perkins Data Control Specialist - 406.444.9019

Mike Houghton, Industrial Technology Specialist - 406.444.4452

Austin Schweitzer, Marketing Program Coordinator - 406.444.2059

Eric Swenson, Business Education Specialist - 406.444.7991

Megan Vincent, Family & Consumer Sciences Education Specialist - 406.444.3599

Katie Madsen, Adult Education State Director/ HiSET State Administrator- 406-444-4443

Emily Fuller, Adult Education Program Specialist, 406-444-1691

John Stankowiak, Veterans Education- 406-444-4122

Wanda Arlint, HiSEt Administrative Assistant, 406-444-415

Understanding Healthcare: Teaching Health Science as a Career Pathway

This Teaching Learning Hub course will be offered from November 3 - 17, 2020. Health Science is a Career and Technical Education program that will introduce your students to a variety of careers in the health care industry. It also prepares students with the foundation skills necessary to successfully matriculate to post-secondary health professions programs.

- 20 OPI Renewal Units will be awarded at the end of the course
- This course is designed for Secondary Science or health enhancement teachers that have taken a college course in Anatomy and Physiology or Human Biology
- All electronic curriculum materials will be provided free of charge. Textbooks will be discussed, but not furnished

For further questions please contact: Renee Erlandsen, Health Science Education Specialist

Perkins

E-grants will remain open until **5:00 pm on October 30, 2020**. If your program has already submitted a Perkins application prior to October 1, please return to the Perkins application to make any amendments or changes as the Final Perkins Allocations have been loaded. If you have any questions, please reach out to the CTE Specialist working with your grant.

Schools receiving less than \$5,000 in Perkins funding are also eligible for the [Montana Perkins Secondary Rural Reserve Grant](#). This grant application is due by January 15, 2021. Please contact [Shannon Boswell](#) with any questions.

State CTE/VoEd Funding Allocations for 2020-2021

The State CTE/VoEd funding final allocations for the 2020-2021 school year are posted for review. The State CTE/VoEd funding final allocations are generated based on the data entered into TEAMS (Terms of Employment, Accreditation, and Master Schedule) for the prior 2019-2020 school year.

The State CTE/VoEd funding final allocations include funds for student enrollment within CTE program area courses and funds for having an active Career & Technical Student Organization. Please note, due to federal reporting guidelines, program enrollment and CTSO chapter membership numbers are not listed in the posted report. If you want the numbers, please contact your CTE program area specialist.

The CTE tab in TEAMS was made available last April and districts were asked to complete a few additional items on the tab and review the details carefully to make sure the data was accurate.

The 2020-2021 State CTE/VoEd Funding allocations will be distributed to districts by November 1.

The [2021 Final VoEd Payment Detail by Legal Entity](#) can be found on the CTE page of the OPI website under the Funding menu.

HiSET Exam at Home

Individuals can now register to take their high school equivalency test (HiSET) at home. This additional testing option is safe and convenient for those unable to test at a public HiSET testing center.

- Identical in content, format, and on-screen experience to tests taken at a testing center
- Taken on your own computer at home or another secure location
- Monitored by a human proctor online through ProctorU
- Available 2:00 – 5:00 pm MST, seven days a week

HiSET state testing requirements must be met to qualify for the HiSET Exam at Home. Individuals who are 16-18 years of age must apply and be approved by the OPI to take the test.

Standards, Instruction, and Professional Learning Unit

Contact Us!

- [Colet Bartow](#), Senior Manager, Teaching and Learning Department, 406-444-3583
- [Stephanie Swigart](#), English Language Arts and Literacy Coordinator, 406-444-0736
- [Michelle McCarthy](#), Science Coordinator, 406-444-3537
- [Marisa Graybill](#), Mathematics Coordinator, 406-444-0706
- [Terri Barclay](#), Comprehensive Literacy State Development Program Manager, 406-444-0753
 - Literacy Grant Specialist, [Liz Tuss](#)
 - Literacy Grant Specialist, [Rachel Anderberg](#)
- [Carli Cockrell](#), Professional Learning Coordinator, 406-444-0769
 - Renewal Unit Providers, OPIRUPS@mt.gov
- [Jessica Bryant](#), Teacher Learning Hub Coordinator, 406-444-3557
- [Allyson Briese](#), Teacher Learning Content Specialist, 406-444-0716
- [Marjorie O'Rourke](#), Professional Learning Data & Information Specialist, 406-444-3538

Content Standards Revision Update

Did you know that we keep an updated timeline for the standards adoption activities posted to the [OPI Website?](#) Individual content area pages also have this information posted, as well as the draft standards notices.

- [Career and Technical Education](#)
- [Computer Science](#)
- [Library Media](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Technology](#)

The Board of Public Education (BPE) will be taking action to approve the Career and Technical Education, Computer Science, Library Media and Information Literacy, Social Studies, and Technology Integration Standards at their November 2020 meeting. Please [check the BPE website](#) for further details for that meeting.

After the Board acts to adopt the updated standards, the OPI Standards, Instruction, and Professional Learning team will be working toward creating user-friendly versions of the standards that will also be posted to the web pages linked above. The official implementation dates won't be until July 2021 and we will be working toward that date to create documents and Hub courses related to the new standards. Additional announcements will be made in the [3 Big Ideas newsletter](#).

Attention Renewal Unit Providers!

The Renewal Unit Provider System and the renewal unit process is now under the purview of our Professional Learning staff, and we have a website that answers many of the Renewal Unit questions. [The Professional Learning website](#) is a one-stop location for all things related to educator professional learning in our state. The Renewal Unit Provider System was recently updated, and we have created a [brief video tour](#) of the updates.

You can reach OPI Professional Learning staff by email at opirups@mt.gov. Licensure can still be reached by visiting the [Licensure website](#), by emailing cert@mt.gov, or by calling 406.444.3150.

OPI Learning Opportunities Portal

Visit the Learning Opportunities Portal website to find out about classes, workshops, and courses. The Portal is just one of the ways the OPI informs educators about upcoming professional learning opportunities in our state. We are updating with any cancellations or postponements as we are made aware of these changes.

Contact Professional Learning staff at OPIRUPS@mt.gov with any questions or to let us know about changes to your events.

New Courses on the Teacher Learning Hub

If you haven't already, [check out](#) what more than 16,000 Montana educators have experienced! The Hub team is always adding and updating our self-paced and facilitated courses. Please check the [Learning Hub homepage](#) for a complete [listing](#) and [catalog](#).

Take a look at these recently released courses!

- [Building the Foundation of Digital Literacy](#) – This introductory course provides insight into data literacy and data analysis for teachers and administrators in Montana. (3 renewal units)
- [Montana Science Standards 501: IEFA and Equity](#) – This course addresses the why and how's of culturally responsible integration of Indian Education for All (IEFA) while ensuring your science instruction is equitable and meaningful. (3 renewal units)
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): [Tier 2](#) – This course gives participants the knowledge necessary to understand and implement the second tier of strategies in MTSS. (3 renewal units)
- [Playing with Pythagoras](#) – Investigate how the Pythagorean Theorem provides a vital foundation in 8th grade that progresses into high school geometry! (4 renewal units)
- [Standards-based Grading and Reporting: Feedback](#) – This course outlines one step toward implementation that teachers can take – providing feedback through standards-based rubrics. (2 renewal units)

Contact OPILearningHub@mt.gov with any questions.

Accreditation and Educator Preparation

Licensed Educators and Professional Staff

Reminder: December 1, 2020, is the date that all educators and professional staff hired by Montana accredited public schools must hold an active Montana license issued by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). If not licensed by this date, the educator is considered nonlicensed and their FTE is not eligible for Quality Educator Payment.

For more information, contact [Linda Vrooman Peterson](#)

TEAMS and CSIP

Reminder: TEAMS and CSIP close December 1, 2020. Due to the impact of Covid-19 the TEAMS and CSIP data collection windows were extended to provide ample time and flexibility to complete these reports. If you experience login issues while trying to access TEAMS or CSIP, please contact OPITEAMS@mt.gov or OPI.CSIP@mt.gov.

For more information, contact [Amber Zietz](#)

Transformational Learning and Advanced Opportunities

FY22 Application and Annual Report Templates Available Soon!

Application and annual report templates for the upcoming submission window, opening December 7th at 8am, will be available on the OPI website under Transformational Learning and Montana Advanced Opportunities on Wednesday, October 28th.

For more information, contact krystal.smith@mt.gov.

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