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Office of the Superintendent

Updates in Montana Education

The OPI Legislative Priorities

The OPI is advocating for a strong education budget that fully restores reductions from last session plus an inflationary increase for special education. The OPI also has several policy initiatives around school safety, data sharing with the university system, evening out state school payments, and providing school safety grants. You can see the OPI's full legislative agenda and a transmittal review on the OPI website: <http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Finance-Grants/Legislative-Updates>.

2020 Teacher of the Year

Applications and nominations for the 2020 Montana Teacher of the Year program are open! Additional information can be found on the OPI's [website](#). Please be sure to share with your community!

ESSA Report Cards Coming Soon!

State, District, and School Report Cards will be coming out this spring. District administrators will receive embargoed information at least a week in advance to craft messaging for your communities and ensure a positive rollout. Check out the OPI's [working report card webpage](#) for updates and to review the latest prototypes.

Superintendent's February Events

- State of Education [Address](#)
- Dyslexia Task Force Meeting
- CSPAC Conference Call
- State of the Tribal Nations Address
- Meetings with the Governor's Office
- Conference call with the Education Commission of the States
- Conference call with MT Teacher of the Year Alumni Group
- Meeting with the Montana Farm Bureau Federation
- Meetings with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education regarding the ACT
- Conference call with the Wyoming Department of Education
- Perkins Advisory Committee Meeting
- Montana Association of County School Superintendents Annual Conference
- Boys and Girls Club of Montana Youth of the Year Banquet
- Recurring Land Board, Education Advocates, State Library Commission, Education Caucus, and Tribal Education Caucus Meetings

Follow the Office of Public Instruction on social media:  

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



- **Family, student, and community engagement**
- **Safety, mental health, and suicide prevention**



- **Celebrating teacher excellence and extending leadership opportunities**
- **Teacher retention and recruitment**



- **Closing achievement gaps**
- **Improving math and reading with a focus on middle school**



- **Expanding industry, military, and post-secondary partnerships**
- **STEM, CTE, and workforce development emphasis beginning in middle school**

Accreditation and Educator Preparation

Gifted and Talented Education Grants – Intent to Apply

The Gifted and Talented Education Grants, Intent to Apply for 2019-2021 school years will open on **Friday, March 1, 2019**, and close at the end of business on **Friday, March 29, 2019**. The state-funded grants are made available through funds allocated by the state legislature. Funding for the 2019-2021 grants are available pending legislative approval.

The Intent to Apply is in the E-Grant system. Authorized Representatives log in to [E-Grants](#):

- From the menu list, click the **eGrants Access/Select** hyperlink in the menu list;
- If given access to multiple legal entities, in the **Organization Search Results** page, select the organization desired from the list and then click **Select** toward the bottom of the page;
- On the **E-Grants Access Select** page, Select the Fiscal Year of 2020 from the dropdown;
- Scroll down the page and find the **Available** section to locate the **Gifted & Talented Intent**;
- Click **Create** on the right-hand side of the **Gifted & Talented Intent** listing
- Complete the Intent and submit by **March 29, 2019**.

For assistance, contact [Linda Vrooman Peterson](#), 406-444-5726.

2019 Montana Advanced Placement® Summer Institute

June 24-27, in Billings, Montana

[Registration is open](#). Calling teachers and administrators to participate in the 2019 Montana AP® Summer Institute on June 24-27 at Montana State University Billings, 1500 University Drive, Billings, Montana. All workshops are fully endorsed by the College Board. Five subject areas offered include:

- AP® Biology
- AP® English Literature and Composition
- AP® Statistics
- AP® Studio Art
- AP® World History

REGISTRATION HERE [2019 Montana AP® Summer Institute](#)

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION HERE [2019 AP® Summer Institute GT Scholarship](#)

For more information, contact [Linda Vrooman Peterson](#), 406-444-5726.

Rigorous Core Updates

It's time to review your high school's college prep/rigorous core page in GEMS. This should be done every year. Many of the pages are several years old. If the courses have changed or if new courses have been added, your page needs to be updated!

For more information, contact [Harlan Reidmohr](#), 406-444-1852.

Corrective Plans

For 2018 to 2019, if a school has an accreditation status of Advice or Deficiency, a corrective plan will need to be submitted by **June 1, 2019**. When the final school accreditation reports are electronically sent in April, the report will include the website address to submit corrective plans.

For more information, contact [Patty Muir](#), 406-444-4317, or [Nathan Miller](#), 406-444-2410.

Digital Content Providers Registered in MT 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, 2019**. See below for Administrative Rules of Montana requirements for content providers:

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.”

To email the report or for more information, contact [Patty Muir](#) or 406-444-4317.

University of Montana Seeking New Education Dean

Information about the position can be found on [UM's website](#).

Career and Technical Education

CTE Spring Data Collection

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Spring Data Collection begins March 1, 2019 and ends April 30, 2019. This AIM collection asks schools to identify all 12th grade high school students who were enrolled at any point during the current 2018-2019 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:

<http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/AIM-Achievement-in-Montana>

Questions regarding this data collection should be directed to the AIM Helpdesk at 1-877-424-6681 or send an email to: opiaimhelp@mt.gov. Questions regarding CTE programs and/or the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program should be directed to CHendricks@mt.gov or 406-444-9019.

Ag Literacy Tax Check-Off

The State of Montana has a voluntary tax check-off designation for Agricultural Literacy. These funds have the potential to provide materials and agricultural curriculum to teachers and schools across the state providing adequate knowledge of agriculture for students. Learn more on the Montana Farm Bureau Federation's [website](#).

MedStart Summer Camps

MedStart Summer Camp is a 5-day summer camp program sponsored by the Montana AHEC (Area Health Education Center) system. The program is designed to encourage sophomore and junior high school students to pursue their interest in a variety of healthcare careers. Additional information can be found on AHEC's [website](#).

MT Tow Truck Association Scholarships

The Montana Tow Truck Association is offering two \$1000 scholarships to students. Visit their website for additional information: <https://www.montanatowing.com/index.html>.

Adult Education Programming for credit recovery/dropout retrieval (**local innovation/flexibility opportunity**)

Use your Adult Education Programming for credit recovery/dropout retrieval and retraining for community members facing economic disruption. Under 20-7-702, MCA, a district can use adult education to provide any area of instruction approved by the trustees, including basic and secondary general education and technical education for persons 16 years of age or older who are not regularly enrolled, full-time pupils. Adult education is supported by a non-voted levy without caps.

Content Standards and Instruction

Content Standards Updates

Check out the updated Content Standards page on the OPI website

The Content Standards and Instruction division has updated the [K-12 Content Standards and Revision webpage](#). There are individual pages for each of the content standards areas and a lot of resource links. Please contact opicsi@mt.gov for any questions about these updates!

[Content Standards 101 course on the Teacher Learning Hub](#)

Montana Content Standards 101 course on the Teacher Learning Hub is for anyone interested in getting a better understanding of how the standards are developed and the history of standards. The course is required for anyone who wants to participate in the upcoming revision process. Visit the [Teacher Learning Hub](#) to learn more about the course.

[Accepting applications for committees for the upcoming revision process](#)

The Content Standards and Instruction Division is accepting applications for revision teams to work on revising the following standards:

- Technology
- Library Media - Information Literacy
- Computer Science
- Social Studies
- Career and Technical Education

Visit the [Montana Content Standards Revision website](#) to learn about the standards. [The application](#) to be part of a revision team is also found on the website.

Revision Work Sessions (Helena)

- July 24-26, 2019: Social Studies, Career and Technical Education/Workplace Competencies
- July 31 - August 2, 2019: Computer Science, Technology, Library Media

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

Learning Opportunities Portal

The [Learning Opportunities Portal](#) provides professional development events, both online and in person. It isn't too early to look ahead to spring and summer 2019 to plan your professional development opportunities!

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

Learning Hub

If you haven't already, [check out](#) what more than 11,000 Montana educators have experienced! Our 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](#).

For more information, contact OPILearningHub@mt.gov

MCA 20-7-119: Administration of the U.S. Civics Test

Just a reminder that [Montana Code Annotated](#) encourages the administration of a United States civics exam for high school students. It also encourages the OPI to publish a list of schools who administer an exam. The OPI will check with schools toward the end of this school year.

Classroom Grants from the DAR

The Montana Daughters of the American Revolution are offering two \$500 classroom grants. Contact Leigh Haislip Spencer at leighhaislipspencer@gmail.com or 406-452-4727 for additional information and an application.

Educational Opportunity and Equity

Private School Participation in Federal Programs

The Montana Office of Public Instruction has sent out the yearly notices to all districts of the requirement to notify all private/non-public schools within their boundaries of their right to participate in federal programs. This notification went out on March 1, 2019. In the past, this notification was sent out in a paper format through the mail. Starting this year, however, the notification will be sent out electronically through the OPI bulk email system. Also, the reporting system is now online. Districts will enter their information at the following link: <https://apps.opi.mt.gov/nonpublicschool/frmLogin.aspx>. Districts must complete their data entry no later than March 29, 2019. Paper submissions to the OPI will not be accepted.

For more information, contact Andy Boehm at aboehm@mt.gov or 406-444-0375, or Jack O'Connor at joconnor2@mt.gov or 406-444-3038.

New National Campaign on Homelessness

Head Start programs across the nation are being challenged to enroll more children and families experiencing homelessness. Local school districts are encouraged to refer families of students identified as homeless to local Head Start, Early Head Start, and Tribal Head Start programs for educational services for preschool aged siblings. The [Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center](#) also offers free online training regarding homelessness. This training can be used to fulfill the three (3) hours of training that all district homeless liaisons must complete on an annual basis as required under Montana's ESSA State Plan. Head Start's training includes eight (8) modules and offers a certificate of completion. Liaisons who complete this training will need to keep a copy of the certificate as documentation.

For questions regarding collaboration with your local Head Start program, contact Kathy Rich, Head Start Collaboration Coordinator, at krich@mt.gov or 406-444-0589. For more information regarding professional development for homeless liaisons, contact Heather Denny at hdenny@mt.gov or 406-444-2036.

Small, Rural School Achievement Grants

The FY 2019 Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) grant application is now open in [Grants.gov](#). To access the application package, click this link: <https://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?dpp=1&oppld=313089>. SRSA-eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) have until **April 26, 2019, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time** to submit an SRSA application.

Applicants must complete the following pre-application actions in order to complete and submit an FY 2019 SRSA application in [Grants.gov](#):

1. Check Column K on the [FY 2019 REAP Eligibility Spreadsheet](#) for your LEA's SRSA eligibility status. Only those LEAs listed as eligible on this spreadsheet can receive an FY 2019 SRSA grant award.
2. Make sure you accurately record your LEA's **NCES ID number** from Column A of the spreadsheet. You will need this number to successfully complete the SRSA application in [Grants.gov](#).
3. Make sure your LEA's **DUNS number** is active and registered in [SAM.gov](#).
4. Register in [Grants.gov](#) as an Organization Applicant.
5. Create a Workspace profile in [Grants.gov](#) for your SRSA application.

FY 2019 SRSA Application Walk-Through Webinars

The REAP Team will offer SRSA application walk-through webinars again this year.

Thursday, March 6, 3-4:00 p.m. EST

<https://educateevents1.webex.com/educateevents1/onstage/g.php?MTID=ead60df04133007260bc62d4487bdacfe>

Tuesday, March 21, 3-4:00 p.m. EST

<https://educateevents1.webex.com/educateevents1/onstage/g.php?MTID=eb8782fc8f5f4ec69aa9bea95f39450af>

Tuesday, April 10, 3:30-4:30 p.m. EST

School Finance

FY 2018 Federal Audit Reports Due to OPI March 31, 2019

The Federal Audit Reports (formerly A-133 audits and required by 2 CFR Part 200) are due to the OPI by March 31, 2019, for entities that have federal expenditures of \$750,000 or greater, which include USDA commodities. FY 2018 Yellowbook Audits (regular audit) are required for entities with all revenues totaling more than \$750,000 are due to the OPI by June 30, 2019. FY 2018 Reviews (Agreed Upon Procedures) are required at least every four years for entities with \$750,000 or less revenues, are due to the OPI by June 30, 2019.

Please remit audit reports and correspondence to OPIAuditReports@mt.gov.
For more information, contact Dan Moody 406-444-0701 or Dan.Moody@mt.gov.

School Election Deadlines

- Friday, March 8th: Mail ballot plan, timetable, and sample instructions must be received by the Secretary of State's office. Forward a copy, including any amendments, to the county election administrator.
- Monday, March 11th: Verify that the county election administrator has published the notice at close of regular registration.
- Thursday, March 28th through Saturday, April 27th: 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 4th, by 5:00 pm: Last day trustee candidates may withdraw from the election and the deadline for write-in candidates to file a Declaration of Intent.
- Friday, April 5th: Deadline to notify election judges of appointment.
- Friday, April 5th: Election administrator certifies the ballot. Any resolutions stating exact levy amounts must be passed by this date.
- Friday, April 5th: The trustees may call the election by acclamation, 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 2020 Preliminary General Fund Budget Data Sheets

On or before March 1, 2019 the OPI School Finance Division will post the FY 2020 Preliminary General Fund Budget Data Sheets and the General Fund Budget Excel Spreadsheet to assist schools in budgeting for FY 2020. 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.

Please contact the following individuals with questions: • Keri Ludwig, Finance Specialist 406-444-0783, Keri.Ludwig@mt.gov • Kara Flath, Division Administrator 406-444-3249, Kara.Flath@mt.gov

FY 2020 Indirect Cost Rate Applications Now Available

Districts that plan to charge indirect costs (e.g., general administration, accounting services, and personnel services) to FY 2020 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 FY 2020. 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.

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 about how to complete the indirect cost rate application, please contact Keri Ludwig at 406-444-0783, Keri.Ludwig@mt.gov.

March School Finance Webinar

The OPI School Finance Division will be hosting a monthly interactive webinar event on March 8, 2019 at 10 am. The topic this month is Data Sheets and Permissive Levy Notices. We will be discussing the use of Data Sheets in budget preparation, timelines, and guidelines for Permissive Levy Notices.

To register for this event, e-mail Debbie Casey at dcasey@mt.gov by March 6, 2019. Debbie will send you the information to attend the meeting when you register.

Health Enhancement and Safety

School Nutrition

Summer Food Service Program sponsor applications open on March 1st [MAPS-2018-19 Applications/Claims](#). Contact Emily Dunklee at edunklee@mt.gov or 406-461-9917 for more information.

National School Breakfast Week March 4-8, 2019

<https://schoolnutrition.org/Meetings/Events/NSBW/2019/>

Food Research and Action Center School Breakfast Scorecard School Year 2017-2018

<http://frac.org/research/resource-library/school-breakfast-scorecard-2017-2018-school-year-february-2019>

Montana Highlights:

- Montana saw an increase in the number of participants in the 2017–2018 school year when compared to the prior school year.
- When comparing the ratio of low-income students participating in school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch, Montana jumped from 34th among the states in school year 2016–2017 to 23rd in school year 2017–2018 — the largest increase in rank among all states.
- Montana saw an increase of 3,220 low-income students participating in school breakfast compared to the prior year, an increase of 12.3 percent. This resulted in a ratio of 58.9 free and reduced-priced students participating in school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch, an increase of 6.9 points over the prior school year.

School Health

February going forward into the year: Warning Signs: Child Sexual Abuse: Why are we providing training on child sexual abuse to the educators in Montana? Educators have a vital role in the identification, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect. The OPI now has a 2-hour self-paced course on the [Learning Hub](#) you can enroll in by going to the Mental & Behavioral Health category under Search Courses. Contact is Holly Mook; hmook2@mt.gov; 406-444-0773.

Traffic Education

Registration for Montana DRIVE Workshops is open!

Montana DRIVE celebrates 40 years on track in Lewistown since 1979! Workshops begin June 3 and run through August 8. Teachers, school bus drivers, first responders, firefighters, and drivers of all kinds are invited to register for a one-day summer workshop. Adult workshops are \$330. Register by March 5 for a \$10 discount. **Montana DRIVE Teen Week** is July 22-26 and registration begins in March. Visit <http://montanadrive.mt.gov>. For more information, contact [Patti Borneman](mailto:Patti.Borneman@opi.mt.gov) at 406-444-4432.

Montana Traffic Education Conference – April 28-30, 2019 - Butte

Plan to attend the annual Montana Traffic Education Conference, hosted by the Montana Traffic Education Association and the Office of Public Instruction. The conference begins Sunday, April 28 and concludes Tuesday, April 30 at Butte's Copper King Hotel and Convention Center. This year's theme is *Teaching the Whole Student* with sessions on teaching from the heart, sharing the road with bicycles, motorcycles and semis, parent meetings, and more! Registration will begin in March. All traffic education instructors will receive MTEA's spring newsletter with a registration form. Visit <http://mteaonline.org> for details. For more information, contact [Fran Penner-Ray](mailto:Fran.Penner-Ray@opi.mt.gov) at (406) 444-4396

Indian Education

Tribal Education Summit

On February 7-8, on the Flathead Indian Reservation, The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes hosted, and the OPI sponsored the first event of its kind, ***the Regional Tribal Education Summit***. Tribal leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members came together to create plans to help improve achievement for American Indian students in reservation schools. Exciting ideas and plans were shared and the work will continue as these groups work together to improve area schools.

Indian Education for All Best Practices Conference

The thirteenth annual Indian Education for All Best Practices Conference is March 2-3, 2019 at Carroll College in Helena. Click [here](#) for additional information or contact Zach Hawkins at Zachariah.Hawkins@mt.gov, 406-444-0708.

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, 2019, may complete the renewal process at any time after the first of the year in which their license expires.

- 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)
- **There are specific requirements for the first renewal of a Class 4 license per [Administrative Rule 10.57.420\(4\)](#). Please watch for an announcement from CTE for an upcoming opportunity in May to meet this requirement!**

There are a multitude of free, online, quality resources available at the [OPI Learning Hub](#). Click [here](#) to renew or find additional renewal resources. Also, you can find helpful information on our [Educator Licensure](#) home page!

For more information, contact Kristine Thatcher at kthatcher2@mt.gov or 406-444-2580