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Office of the Superintendent

Updates in Montana Education

Legislative Session

The legislative session is past the halfway point and the outlook for education funding appears to be much more positive than the last biennium. Many of the reductions from the 2017 regular and special sessions are restored in the current state budget bill (HB 2) and the record \$77 million inflationary increase to K-12 BASE Aid has been signed into law. In addition to funding, legislation addressing school safety, CTE, special education, educator recruitment & retention, and other programs are still working their way through the legislature. For continued updates, check out the OPI's legislative [webpage](#).

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](#).



Comment Period Open on ESSA State Plan Amendment

Previously, under NCLB, states were required to provide a definition of a “highly qualified teacher.” Under ESSA, states are required to submit a definition for “ineffective teacher” to the U.S. Department of Education through an amendment to our state ESSA plan. The OPI's proposed definition is: *“Montana teachers who are non-licensed or show a pattern of ineffective practices as determined by a local evaluation”*. However, Montana is a local control state and the OPI will not collect a new data point for local evaluations. **The OPI will host a Q&A conference call to discuss this proposed amendment on April 4th at 9am. The call-in number is (641)-552-9164 and the code is 514145.**

Comments on the [proposed amendment](#) can be sent to ESSAInput@mt.gov. For additional information, visit the OPI's [ESSA webpage](#).

Superintendent's March Events

- Academic World Quest Competition at the University of Montana
- University of Montana Dean of Education search committee
- Lunch with superintendents in Stillwater County to discuss civics standards
- Meeting with the Governor's Office and MFPE to discuss state ESSA plan amendment
- Meeting with Education Northwest for annual planning
- Legislative hearings and testimony related to K-12 education
- Recurring [Land Board](#), [Education Advocates](#), [Board of Public Education](#), [Board of Regents](#), Education Caucus, and Tribal Education Caucus Meetings

Follow the Office of Public Instruction on social media:  
For more information, contact [Dylan Klapmeier](#), 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 the 2019-2021 school years has been extended to **Monday, April 8, 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 side of the **Gifted & Talented Intent** listing

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

2019 Montana Advanced Placement® Summer Institute

June 24-27 in Billings

[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, MT. 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

REGISTER 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

If a school is in Advice or Deficiency accreditation status for 2018-2019, a corrective plan will be due by June 1, 2019. This requirement is indicated on the 2018-19 Accreditation Status report for each school. If the school is in [Comprehensive support](#), no corrective plan is required. The Corrective Plan application is located on the [OPI School Accreditation website](#).

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](#), 406-444-4317.

FY 2020 Montana Course Code Changes

Montana state course code changes have been made for the 2019-2020 school year. [Click Here](#) to find a complete listing of FY 2020 Course Codes with endorsements.

Note that this will affect your Teacher Class uploads for the Annual TEAMS Report in the Fall.

For questions contact [Patty Muir](#), [Nathan Miller](#), or OPITEAMS@mt.gov.

Content Standards and Instruction

Content Standards Updates

DUE MAY 3: 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

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 resource links. Please contact opicsi@mt.gov for any questions about these updates!

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

The *Montana Content Standards 101* course on the Teacher Learning Hub is for anyone interested in gaining 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.

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.

Computer Science Courses to Meet Graduation Requirements (Local Innovation/Flexibility Opportunity)

Governor Bullock and Superintendent Arntzen are encouraging schools to offer computer science courses to meet core graduation requirements. Learn more at news.mt.gov.

Educational Opportunity and Equity

Private School Participation in Federal Programs-Extended

The Montana Office of Public Instruction has sent out the yearly notices to all districts for 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 electronically through the OPI bulk email system. Also, the reporting system is now online. Districts will enter information at the following link:

<https://apps.opi.mt.gov/nonpublicschool/frmLogin.aspx>. Districts must complete their data entry no later than April 12, 2019. Paper submissions to the OPI will not be accepted.

For more information, contact [Andy Boehm](#), 406-444-0375, or [Jack O'Connor](#), 406-444-3038.

April: Month of the Military Child

April is "the Month of the Military Child" with April 18th being "Purple Up Day" to recognize military families. In Montana, we have many students with an active-duty parent. The Montana National Guard's Child and Youth Program is encouraging schools to recognize military families and they have put together classroom resources which can be found on their [website](#). They have also created a student-centered video available on [YouTube](#) which shows the challenges military children face as they balance academics with family responsibilities.

School Finance

Upcoming School Election Deadlines

- Thursday, April 4th (by 5 pm): Deadline for candidate withdrawal, deadline for write-in candidates and deadline to notify election judges of appointment
- Friday, April 5th: Election administrator certifies the ballot **or** Election by Acclamation and cancellation of election
- Monday, April 8th: Close of regular voter registration and contact county election administrator for absentee ballot list
- Tuesday, April 9th: Start of late voter registration
- Thursday, March 28th through Saturday, April 27th: Notice of election is posted
- Wednesday, April 17th: Absentee ballots available
- Wednesday, April 17th through Monday, April 22nd: Mail ballots mailed
- Saturday, April 27th through Sunday, May 5th: Absentee/mail ballot counting notice posted

New Montana Ballot Interference Prevention Act Requirements

There are new requirements regarding the return of both mail and absentee ballots for the May school election (and all elections thereafter). The guidance and notice have been posted to the OPI webpage. Please read carefully and familiarize yourself with the new requirements [here](#).

2019 Montana Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) Bus Driver Conference

Registration is now open for the 2019 MAPT Bus Driver Conference. The conference will be held June 19-21, 2019, at the Heritage Inn Resort & Convention Center in Great Falls. Drivers will have the opportunity to fulfill their mandatory 15 hours of training requirements.

To register for the conference, please click on the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

To view the tentative agenda, please click on the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

To print the award applications, please click on the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

For questions with registrations, please contact MAPT at montana.mapt@gmail.com

For other questions or if you need assistance, please contact [Donell Rosenthal](#), 406-444-3024.

School Finance Election Webinar

Join us on Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 10:00 am for a pre-election interactive webinar. Learn all the information you need to know about conducting the May school election, including the new ballot collection requirements. You'll have time to share stories and get all of your questions answered.

To register for this event, e-mail [Debbie Casey](#) by April 2, 2019. Debbie will send you the information to attend the meeting when you register.

Health Enhancement and Safety

School Nutrition

2019 Summer Food Service Program sponsor applications open on March 1st

<https://montanaopi.cnpus.com/Prod/Splash.aspx>

Contact [Emily Dunklee](#), 406-461-9917 for more information.

2019-20 School Nutrition Programs sponsor applications open on April 1st

<https://montanaopi.cnpus.com/Prod/Splash.aspx>

Contact [Christine Emerson](#), 406-444-2502 for more information.

Important CEP Dates:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| April 1 | OPI captures Identified Student Percent (ISP) snapshot data from DCA to determine CEP eligibility for LEAs and schools. Snapshot data serves as proxy data. |
| April 15 | LEA deadline to correct proxy data and/or report school ISP rates above 30%. |
| May 1 | OPI posts eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools on the website. |
| June 30 | LEA deadline to complete the CEP Schedule for participating schools within MAPS 2019-20 Application Packet. |

Contact [Alie Wolf](#), 406-444-4413 for more information.

21st Century Community Learning Center Competitive Grants Now Open

Applications for the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grants opened March 20th. This is a highly competitive grant process, and the successful applicants will use the funding to provide before school, after school, and summer month programming for students. For access to important grant guidance documents and the grant application, please visit <http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Academic-Success/After-School-Programs>. Applications close April 29th.

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

Traffic Education

Registration for Montana DRIVE One-Day 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. **Montana DRIVE Teen Week** is July 22-26 and registration is open for all teen drivers who have at least six months of driving experience. Visit <http://montanadrive.mt.gov>.

For more information, contact [Patti Borneman](#), 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! Visit <http://mteaonline.org> for details and to register.

For more information, contact [Fran Penner-Ray](#), 406-444-4396.

Indian Education

Essential Understandings Regarding Montana American Indians

The Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians has been updated and is now available. The Essential Understandings are some of the major issues all Montana tribes have in common. They were originally developed in 1999. This booklet will be sent to school libraries later this month.

This revised version was completed in conjunction with educators from across Montana including several of the original participants from the 1999 meetings - Norma Bixby (Northern Cheyenne), Julie Cajune (Salish), and Joyce Silverthorne (Salish). The review process included members of the Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education. Special thanks go to Dr. Heather Cahoon (Pend d'Oreille) who synthesized the comments and input received during our revision process and provided additional background information. The updated version includes [key concepts](#) and [detailed background information](#) for each Essential Understanding.

IEFA Best Practices Conference

The OPI Indian Education for All (IEFA) Unit recently completed the 13th annual IEFA Best Practices Conference at Carroll College. Over 100 educators from around the state braved sub-zero temperatures and winter roads to attend. Additionally, four outstanding educators received the IEFA Advocacy Award in recognition of their amazing implementation of IEFA.

Opinion Editorial on IEFA

IEFA Unit Director Zach Hawkins and 2019 Montana Teacher of the Year Dylan Huisken wrote an article for Montana newspapers about the importance of IEFA:

https://helenair.com/opinion/columnists/indian-education-for-all-makes-montana-schools-unique/article_b7b8bfef-6c41-5141-a36f-266d44e38963.html