



---

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PO BOX 202501  
HELENA MT 59620-2501  
[www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)  
(406) 444-3095  
(888) 231-9393  
(406) 444-0169 (TTY)

Linda McCulloch  
Superintendent

**TO:** Educators and Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Superintendent Linda McCulloch  
**DATE:** July 2, 2003  
**RE:** Montana Statewide Accountability System for Education

On June 10, the U.S. Department of Education gave final approval to Montana's plan for implementing the initial components of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). As you know, this act, which reauthorizes the long-standing Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), is having a profound impact on education in Montana and across the country.

The law imposes specific expectations for an enhanced accountability system for states. In response to that requirement, the Montana Statewide Accountability System for Education (MTSASE) has been developed. In addition to our present accreditation process, the new system looks at three critical educational performance areas. These areas include:

- 1) student academic success in the areas of Reading and Math;
- 2) student attendance rates in grades 4, 8 and graduation rates for high schools; and
- 3) the percentage of teachers who are considered highly qualified as defined by NCLB

In each of these educational areas, NCLB provides for the establishment of goals that states, districts, and schools must meet in order to insure the continued flow of Title I allocations.

While not all schools and districts are Title I eligible, all states are charged with establishing one overall accountability system to insure compliance with the act by all districts and schools accredited by the state. This accountability system for some states is a modification of an existing system or it may need to be created from scratch, as was the case for Montana, as our current accountability system -our accreditation system - is not based upon student results.

Administering this new system will require the efforts of many of the OPI divisions and specialists. We are also committed to working in partnership with the state's schools and districts to insure the accountability system serves our students and communities efficiently and effectively.

In the coming weeks and months, our office will provide additional information and guidelines as may be required by the law. The OPI will also schedule workshops around the state to provide opportunity for questions and dialogue on the new system.

There are many challenges ahead for all of us as we work through the implementation of NCLB, but working together, we can and will overcome them!

Listed below is a tentative timeline:

### **Updates**

Week of July 7            Additional Update on MTSASE

Week of July 21        Additional Update on MTSASE

### **SAM Workshop**

August 7                Information Workshop        SAM Summer Meeting - Lewistown

### **AYP Notification**

August 8 & 11 Districts will be receiving 2003 AYP notification letters.

### **Regional Workshops**

August 13                Kalispell MTSASE Workshop

August 14                Missoula MTSASE Workshop

August 17                Glendive MTSASE Workshop

August 18                Billings MTSASE Workshop

August 20                Helena MTSASE Workshop

### **Primary OPI Contacts for MTSASE**

Accreditation – MTSASE Oversight        Al Mc Milin        444-3128  
[amcmilin@state.mt.us](mailto:amcmilin@state.mt.us)

Title I – MTCASE Coordinator        BJ Granbery        444-4420  
[bgranbery@state.mt.us](mailto:bgranbery@state.mt.us)

State Assessment Director        Judy Snow        444-3656  
[jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us)