



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

Office of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406.444.3095
888.231.9393
406.444.0169 (TTY)
opi.mt.gov

MEMO TO: Montana Educators and General Public
FROM: Superintendent of Public Instruction Denise Juneau
DATE: March 28, 2016
RE: Montana Waiver Application Request

On behalf of the State of Montana, the Office of Public Instruction will submit the waiver application request, specified below, to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) regarding section 1111(b)(3)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

- Request to waive for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years measuring the content included in Montana's speaking and listening strand that is not otherwise currently assessed by the State and is part of the State's reading/language arts academic content standards

As part of its English language arts content standards, Montana measures the assessable elements of its listening standards. Montana, however, is not yet ready to measure some elements of the standards included in the speaking and listening strand. Montana therefore requests this waiver only *with respect to measuring the content in the State's speaking and listening strand that is not otherwise currently assessed by the State*. Montana is requesting this waiver because it is not practicable at this time for Montana to administer a large-scale summative assessment that includes measures of the full range of the standards included in the speaking and listening strand. This waiver will advance student achievement by permitting Montana to have a valid and reliable assessment system that measures the full range of the rest of the State's academic content standards while providing time to complete the work necessary to have a valid and reliable measure of the full range of the standards included in the speaking and listening strand.

Montana requests this waiver to allow for continued State and local receipt of Title I, Part A funding in good standing while Montana completes additional work to develop accurate, valid, reliable, and instructionally useful assessments related to additional content within the speaking and listening strand. This waiver is requested for the 2015-2016 through the 2016-2017 school years. Montana assures that, if it is granted the requested waiver it will continue to

- meet all other requirements of section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, and implementing regulations with respect to all State-determined academic content standards and assessments, including reporting student achievement and school performance, disaggregated by subgroups, to parents and the public; and
- work toward assessing additional content within the speaking and listening strand consistent with the State's academic content standards.

The USDE requires states to provide all districts and interested parties in the state with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on this waiver request. We are providing this notice by sending an Official E-mail to all LEAs and posting this notice on the Office of Public Instruction's public website. Any public comments must be submitted prior to noon on April 4, 2016.

Please submit any written comments regarding this waiver application to Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff, mquinlan@mt.gov. Thank you for your attention to this matter.