



March 26, 2020

Dear Partners in Education,

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) requested and received approval from the U.S. Department of Education for waivers relative to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that were afforded to our State given the growing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Timeline:

- On **March 19, 2020**: The OPI Submitted an intent waiver letter to U.S. Department of Education for the provisions specific to state assessment, accountability, and reporting.
- On **March 26, 2020**: Pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the OPI submitted a one-year waiver for the provisions specific to state assessment, accountability, and reporting using the USED universal waiver form.
- On **March 26, 2020**: U.S. Department of Education issued a formal approval of the OPI waiver pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, of the following requirements.

Waivers Granted for provisions specific to state assessments accountability, and reporting:

- Assessment requirements in section 1111(b)(2): the requirements to administer all required assessments in school year 2019-2020.
- Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D): the requirements that a State annually meaningfully differentiate all public schools and the requirements to identify schools for

comprehensive and targeted support and improvement and additional targeted support and improvement based on data from the 2019-2020 school year.

- Report card provisions related to certain assessments and accountability in section 1111(h) based on data from the 2019-2020 school year.

Waiver Implications on Accountability and School Identification

Any school that is identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement or additional targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year will maintain that identification status in the 2020-2021 school year and continue to receive supports and interventions consistent with the school's support and improvement plan in the 2020-2021 school year.

Accountability System and Report Card Status

- Annual Meaningful Determinations, Identification of schools and the 2018-2019 Report Card were issued on **March 6, 2020**.
- Letters were sent to principals, superintendents and board chairs with each school's support designation, including Universal, Comprehensive Improving, Universal Declining, ATSI Exiting, ATSI Monitoring, First Year ATSI, and Second Year ATSI.
- The list of Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools and the Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Schools are available on this webpage at:

[2018-2019 Targeted Support and Improvement Schools List](#)

[2019 Comprehensive List](#)

- Report Cards for the 2018-2019 are available on this webpage at:

[State Report Card](#)

[District Report Card](#)

[School Report Card](#)

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