



**Montana**

**Office of Public Instruction**

**Field Test Flexibility and Section 1003 Funding Waivers**

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**Education Advocates**

April 18, 2023

# Field Test Flexibility Waiver



# Waiver Timeline

- March 30, 2023: Initiate public comment
- April 2023: Consultation with the Governor's office
- April 12, 2023: Assessment Site Testing Coordinator Webinar, 3:30pm-4:00pm
- April 12, 2023: Webinar 1 for public input, 4:15 pm-5:00pm
- April 18, 2023: Discussion with Education Advocates
- April 19, 2023: Webinar 2 for public input, 4:00pm to 5:00pm
- April 25, 2023: Webinar 3 for response to public input, 4:00pm to 5:00pm
- April 28, 2023: Public comment and survey deadline
- May 2, 2023: Final Waiver prepared and submitted to the USED.



# What is a Field Test Flexibility Waiver?

According to US Department of Education (USED), a Field Test Flexibility waiver is a **one-year waiver** granted to state education agencies (SEAs) that are **changing their assessment systems** and want **double-testing flexibility** and **identification flexibility**.



# Purpose of the Field Test Waiver

- Supports OPI's [Montana Alternative Student Testing Pilot Program \(MAST\)](#)
- Eliminates an undue burden on students, teachers, and district leaders by preventing double-testing.
- Ensures identification flexibility for the ESSA accountability system.



# Which schools would the field-testing flexibility waiver impact?

These flexibilities are applicable only to districts and schools participating in the MAST pilot program during the 2023-2024 school year, and parents will be notified of their child's participation in the field test.



# What are the requirements for MAST pilot schools?

- Administer and report results on all **other** State assessments, including science summative assessments, alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and English language proficiency assessments for ELs.
- Report Federal accountability designations (even if same as the prior year).
- Report all other required information for all participating districts and schools, including:
  - Percentage of students assessed and not assessed
  - Number and percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities taking an alternate assessment.



# What are the assessment requirements for schools not participating in the MAST pilot program?

- Non-participating districts and schools will continue to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) in the Spring of 2024.
- Accountability provisions and reporting for non-participating districts and schools will not be changed.





# What will be the impact of the waiver on the accountability system for schools participating in the field test?

Schools that participate in the field test will maintain the federal school identification determined in Fall of 2023 based on data collected during the 2022-2023 (i.e., school participating in the field test will not be identified for support, or existed from support status, on the bases of data collected during the year of the field test-2023-2024).



# What data will be publicly reported for schools participating in the MAST pilot program?

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The OPI will make publicly available chronic absenteeism data, disaggregated by subgroup, science assessment results, assessment participation rates, and progress in English Learner Proficiency.



## What is the long-term plan for assessment after the 2023-2024 school year?

OPI assures that an operational test will be administered during the 2024-2025 school year that, following standards setting, will result in data that can be publicly reported, disaggregated by student groups, shared with parents and educators, and feed into the Federal accountability, providing an opportunity for OPI, in partnership with New Meridian, to lead the nation in implementing a statewide innovative assessment system.



# How can you find more information and provide public comment on the waiver?

- **View the Waiver:** View Montana's request for a [field-testing flexibility waiver \(PDF\)](#).
- **Complete a survey:** You are invited to participate in a survey by April 28, 2023 using this [survey link](#).



# Written Comments

Any written comments should be submitted to [essainput@mt.gov](mailto:essainput@mt.gov). Written comments will be accepted through April 28, 2023.



## For more Information

For more information and resources regarding the MAST pilot or the Field Test Flexibility Waiver, visit the OPI Webpage:

[Montana Alternative Student Testing Pilot Program \(mt.gov\)](http://opi.mt.gov)

For questions or additional information please contact Julie Murgel @ [Julie.Murgel@mt.gov](mailto:Julie.Murgel@mt.gov) or Krystal Smith @ [Krystal.Smith@mt.gov](mailto:Krystal.Smith@mt.gov)

