



Proposed Waiver Request

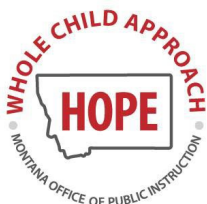
The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is requesting a waiver to extend the allowable use for Section 1003 Funding through the 2023-2024 school year. This request is subsequent to a waiver approved on April 15, 2022 for LEA eligibility requirements in [Section 1003- School Improvement](#) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The approved waiver extended the allowable duration of subgrants to LEAs from four to five years due to the pandemic. At this time, the OPI is requesting to extend the duration an additional year to accommodate our approved Addendum on April 22, 2022.

The request to extend allowable duration of the subgrants to LEAs for an additional year, to include 2023-2024, will allow for a complete alignment of the Montana Accountability System moving forward. In the Fall of 2024, current schools identified in comprehensive support and improvement will have the opportunity to exit or will be moved into rigorous action.

The OPI is requesting this waiver to ensure our agency can continue to support continuity of academic and support services during the recovery period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the extension would enable us to continue working on the goals established with the use of these funds, in accordance and consistent with section 1003 of the ESEA, that were not able to be completed in years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

This extension is in the public interest and benefits predominantly American Indian students, communities, and education in the following ways:

- The OPI recognizes that the continuous improvement of our education system is necessary to prepare our students for their future. They have committed to the belief that each child should have the opportunity to learn and to reach his/her highest potential. This waiver will benefit public interest by providing the educational opportunity that all children deserve and need.
- Section 1003 funds are identified for comprehensive support and improvement schools that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources to raise substantially the achievement of their students.



In seeking this waiver, the OPI will use and ensure that its sub-grantees use funds under the respective programs in accordance with the provisions of all the applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications not subject to this waiver, and will work to mitigate, and ensure that its sub-grantees work to mitigate, any negative effects that may occur as a result of the requested waiver.