



*From the Desk of*

**JP Williams – State Director of Special Education Services**

Dear School Leaders, Teachers, and Colleagues,

August 17, 2022

Welcome to the 2022-2023 School year! This is an incredibly special time of year that allows the entire state an opportunity to renew the commitment to continue putting Montana students first! Providing every student, in every classroom, every opportunity to succeed is a foundational basis for statewide educational success on many levels. Now is a great time for leaders to visit with your school teams and set yearlong goals and objectives for obtaining high levels of sustainable student success throughout the school year. There are no secrets to success. Preparation, hard work, and learning from previous failures will have lasting implications to the future of Montana.

Over the past summer months, the OPI Special Education Unit has worked extremely hard to develop an ongoing and responsive coordinated support system for all schools. The Summer Institute offered opportunities to over 500 educators statewide to learn from experts in the educational field. The Native American Elders and Youth forum was an exciting highlight of the weeklong event. Overall, stakeholders took full advantage of the opportunity to learn, review, and make positive network connections. There continues to be ongoing development and updates on the OPI Special Education website as well as learning and growth opportunities for educators. See more at this link: [OPI SPED Website](#).

Student success is the priority for the 2022-2023 school year and for the years to come. Understanding that when teachers are supported and successful, student learning and growth becomes unprecedented for children of all abilities. I look forward to your celebrations and highlights. Certainly, there remains many challenges ahead for all schools in Montana however, I would like to encourage everyone to take advantage of upcoming trainings offered by the OPI Special Education Unit staff and on the OPI Learning Hub. To learn more about trainings visit the OPI Learning Hub or reach out to any of our office staff for more information. I bid you all a great and exciting start to an amazing school year ahead. Thank you for the opportunity to serve Montana families and students. If you need assistance, or support please reach out. Again, on behalf of the entire staff at OPI and the Special Education Unit, welcome back Montana!

With warmest regards,

*JP Williams*

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