

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MONTANA ESSA PLAN

Montana's state plan for the 2015 federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) follows a required [template](#) that was issued by the U.S. Department of Education in March of 2017. The purpose of the plan is to show how Montana is meeting federal education requirements and providing a quality public education to all students. Below are the major highlights of each section of the Montana ESSA Plan:

Syllabus, Superintendent's Introduction, Montana Education Facts, and Federal Information (Pgs. 1-11)

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies (Pgs. 12-39)

- **Content and Standards (pgs. 12-14):** The State Superintendent recommends to the Board of Public Education content and accreditation standards for their approval. Currently, Montana is in Cycle One, or a four-cycle, ten-year content standards review. The OPI is recommending Social Studies, CTE Education, and Computer Science content standards be reviewed beginning in January 2018.
- **Native Language Assessments (pgs.14-15):** Montana has determined that in order for state tests to be offered in a language other than English, 15 percent of a particular language must be spoken statewide. This section also describes the unique influence of Montana's Native American languages and German-speaking populations.
- **Long-Term Goals (pgs. 15-24):**
 - Montana has determined that the minimum number of students necessary to carry out the provisions of Title I, Part A for the purposes of disaggregating subgroups for accountability purposes is ten. Because of their size, 582 Title I schools would be included and 92 schools would be excluded in order to protect student privacy.
 - The OPI has developed long-term goals for academic achievement that are both ambitious and attainable. Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year as a baseline, schools are expected to reduce the number of students that are not proficient by four percent each year through the 2022-2023 school year including student groups.
 - Montana has some of the most realistic goals in the country. These long-term goals take into account the unique baseline starting points of various student groups and sets their end goals proportionately, unlike No Child Left Behind or other state ESSA plans which require student groups to achieve the same level of proficiency regardless of their starting point.

- Academic achievement will be based on Montana’s state tests: The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) for grades 3-8 and the ACT for high school. The charts on pages 2 and 3 of this document show growth models in Language Arts, Math, and Graduation.
- Each year, public “report cards” will show whether schools have met, not met, or exceeded statewide goals. Local districts will have flexibility to add additional indicators that promote their unique successes.

English Language Arts Achievement Goals Over Six Years							
Subgroups	Language Arts: Baseline Data (2017)	Language Arts: Year 1: (2018)	Language Arts: Year 2: (2019)	Language Arts: Year 3: (2020)	Language Arts: Year 4: (2021)	Language Arts: Year 5: (2022)	Language Arts: Year 6: (2023)
All Students	50.3%	52.4%	54.4%	56.3%	58.1%	59.9%	61.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	37.7%	40.3%	42.8%	45.2%	47.5%	49.8%	51.9%
Children with Disabilities	18.3%	21.8%	25.1%	28.3%	31.4%	34.4%	37.3%
English Learners	6.5%	10.6%	14.5%	18.4%	22.1%	25.7%	29.2%
White	55.3%	57.2%	59.0%	60.7%	62.4%	64.0%	65.5%
American Indian	21.4%	24.8%	28.0%	31.1%	34.1%	37.0%	39.8%

Math Achievement Goals Over Six Years							
Subgroups	Math Baseline Data (2017)	Math Year 1: (2018)	Math Year 2: (2019)	Math Year 3: (2020)	Math Year 4: (2021)	Math Year 5: (2022)	Math Year 6: (2023)
All Students	41.3%	43.7%	46.1%	48.3%	50.5%	52.5%	54.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	29.3%	32.2%	35.1%	37.8%	40.4%	42.9%	45.3%
Children with Disabilities	14.7%	18.3%	21.8%	25.1%	28.3%	31.4%	34.3%
English Learners	6.9%	11.0%	14.9%	18.7%	22.4%	26.0%	29.4%
White	46.0%	48.3%	50.4%	52.5%	54.5%	56.4%	58.2%
American Indian	15.3%	18.9%	22.3%	25.7%	28.8%	31.9%	34.9%

Graduation Rates							
Subgroups	Baseline (2016)	Year 1: (2017)	Year 2: (2018)	Year 3: (2019)	Year 4: (2020)	Year 5: (2021)	Year 6: (2022)
All students	85.6%	86.4%	87.0%	87.7%	88.3%	88.9%	89.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	76.4%	77.6%	78.8%	79.9%	80.9%	81.9%	82.9%
Children with Disabilities	77.8%	79.1%	80.4%	81.7%	82.9%	84.0%	85.1%
English Learners	58.7%	61.5%	64.1%	66.6%	68.9%	71.2%	73.3%
White	87.3%	88.0%	88.7%	89.3%	89.9%	90.5%	91.0%
American Indian	65.6%	67.5%	69.4%	71.2%	72.9%	74.5%	76.0%

- School Accountability Indicators (pgs. 25-27):
 - The following two charts illustrate the point systems that have been created to show school accountability and student success indicators. The first chart has the four federally required indicators which must be substantially weighted over the fifth indicator where Montana has flexibility.
 - The four federally required accountability indicators below add up to 65 out of the possible 100 points. These four indicators are academic achievement, academic growth, English Learner progress, and graduation rates.

1-4 Federally Required Indicators (65 points):

Accountability Indicators	K-8	High school
1. Academic Achievement: proficiency on statewide mathematics and ELA assessments	25 points	30 points
2. Academic Growth	30 points	N/A
3. English Learner Progress: applied to all schools with ten or more English Learners	10 points	10 points
4. Graduation Rate Four-year adjusted cohort	N/A	25 points

- Montana has flexibility over the fifth indicator which makes up 35 out of the possible 100 accountability indicator points. The fifth indicator is student engagement and school climate which is outlined in the chart below. Schools will have flexibility to show positive student engagement, and college and career readiness programs in their schools which are promoting student success.

5th Indicator for Montana Flexibility (35 points):

5. Student Engagement and School Climate Indicator	K-8	High school
Satisfactory attendance	20 points	15 points
College and Career Ready Percentage of students determined to be college and/or career ready, met by students meeting one or more of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College-ready benchmark on ACT composite or... • Concentrator in a Career and Technical Education pathway, or • Completion (with passing grade) of a dual enrollment course, AP or IB 	N/A	15 points
STEM Education: Proficiency on statewide science assessment	10 points	N/A
School Quality Survey: Program quality indicators for improving school climate, reducing behavior issues and increasing engagement	5 points	5 points

- School Support (pgs. 27-39):
 - Schools will be evaluated through the accountability system each year with the federally required school quality indicators. Every three years schools will be identified by OPI in three categories of school support:
 1. Comprehensive: These schools are identified as underperforming in all student subgroups. These schools will develop school improvement plans with support from OPI. They will receive funding and support based on their needs assessment.
 2. Targeted: These schools are identified as consistently underperforming in a specific student subgroup, but not all subgroups. OPI will work with these schools to improve student outcomes in underperforming subgroups.
 3. Universal: These are any schools that are not identified as in need of comprehensive or targeted support. OPI will serve all Montana students.
 - Key Initiatives to Support School Conditions Include:
 1. [The Montana Behavioral Initiative](#)
 2. [Bully-Free Montana Tool Kit](#)
 3. [Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Prevention](#)
 4. [School Safety and Emergency Operations Planning](#)
 5. [School-Based Child Nutrition Programs](#)
 6. Educator, Support Staff, and Administrator Training
 - OPI works in partnership with many state and local entities to ensure that students are successful through four major transitions in their education career. Family and community engagement is critical for transition success:
 1. Early Childhood to Kindergarten
 2. Elementary to Middle School
 3. Middle School to High School
 4. High School to College, Career, and Community

Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children (Pgs. 40-45)

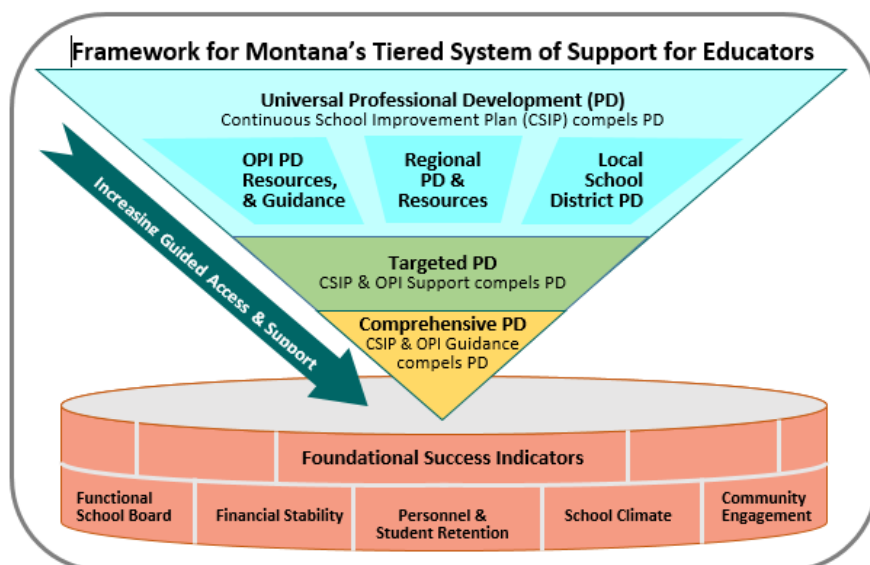
- Supporting Needs of Migratory Children: The Migrant Education Program provides supplemental educational and supportive services to students who are children of mobile agriculture, fishing, dairy, or processing workers and students who move across state, county or school district boundaries as a result of the seasonal or temporary agriculture-related qualifying work of their parents or guardians.

Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk (Pgs. 46-50)

- Transitions between Correctional Facilities and Local Programs: The OPI is currently coordinating efforts to create an online tool to facilitate the transmittal of records and information between facilities and LEAs. The OPI will continue providing services to any student placed in 24-hour care, regardless of special education status. This effort is in conjunction with the Montana Department of Corrections, county juvenile detention facilities, acute hospitals and psychiatric residential treatment facilities, Montana Department of Health and Human Services, and residential group home directors. The transition protocol better assists in successfully transitioning students to and from facilities and local schools.

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction (Pgs. 51-63)

- The OPI will use federal Title II, Part A grants to focus support on recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers through training, technical assistance, and capacity-building efforts that promote continuous professional growth of every Montana teacher:
 - Improving instruction will increase student achievement.
 - Pathways for teacher leadership will include a “Grow Our Own” model involving induction from the university system to mentorship at the district level which ensures sustainability.
 - Partnerships with higher education and community leaders will be prioritized for recruiting and retaining high quality educators, especially in Montana’s rural schools.
 - Montana will use a Tiered System of Support for Educators (see chart on next page).



Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement (Pgs. 64-67)

- **Entrance Procedures:** Montana is a minimally-funded state at \$500,000 annually. The OPI has developed standardized, statewide entrance procedures for the accurate and timely identification of all English learners. The first entry point to the identification process is administering the standardized, statewide home language survey to every student at the time of enrollment. Based on experience with American Indian ELs and the fact that they are the largest group of identified ELs in the state, Montana has created a second entry point for eligibility of EL status through a standardized Teacher Observation Checklist, which is available on the OPI website to all schools.
- **Exit Procedures:** Montana has established a rigorous, standardized, statewide exit process to determine when an EL no longer requires EL services. An EL must obtain a 5.0 or better score on the overall composite component on the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 (Grades 1-12) or WIDA ACCESS Kindergarten assessment. The student must also obtain a 4.0 or better score on each of the domain-specific subtests: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Enrichment Grants (Pgs. 68-71)

- For the 2017-2018 school year, Montana will receive \$1.94 million in new federal grants for the purpose of providing students with a well-rounded education, safe and healthy school environments, and effective technology. These funds are flexible and allow for local control. Because Montana is a rural state with many school districts, the federal formula requires these funds to be evenly distributed to each school district in Montana.

Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers (Pgs. 72-76)

- The OPI will use federal Title IV, Part B competitive grants to support 21st Century Community Learning Center initiatives for college, career, and community readiness. These afterschool and summer programs support Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields which in turn support Montana's future workforce. These funds engage students, families, schools and communities in learning enrichment.

Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program (Pg. 77)

- The OPI will approve and monitor the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) grant program. This program is targeted via federal rural and family income statistics from U.S. Census data.

Title VII, Subtitle B: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Pgs. 78-82)

- Support for Homeless Students: The OPI is committed to serving all Montana students and removing barriers to educational opportunities for students at all grade levels. Counseling and resources for college, career, and community readiness helps ensure future success for homeless students. Each school district must have a homeless student liaison.

Appendices (Pgs. 83-110)

- Appendix A: Tables
- Appendix B: Federal Notices to States
- Appendix C: Hope for Montana Students
- Appendix D: Timeline
- Appendix E: Student Records Confidentiality Policy
- Appendix F: Family Engagement in Montana

Join us in putting Montana students first! The OPI welcomes continued input from families, educators, communities, and all Montanans on how Montana can best serve our students. Please send your comments, questions, and input to ESSAinput@mt.gov, 406-444-3095, or 1227 11th Avenue, Helena, MT 59601.

Best Wishes,



Elsie Arntzen
State Superintendent

