OCTOBER 2021 ASSESSMENT BULLETIN
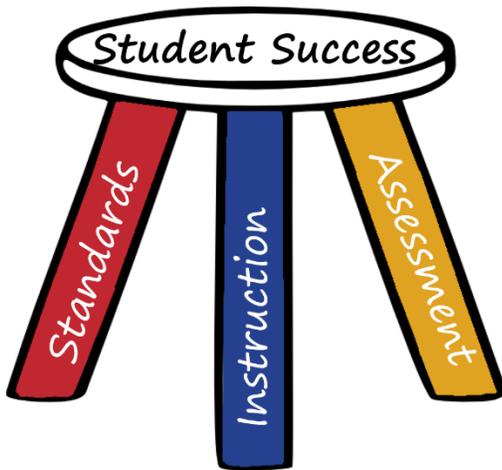
OPI Student Safety and Support Page

Assessment Quick Links
1-844-867-2569

- **OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov**
- **September 2021 OPI Assessment Bulletin**
- **Test Window Calendar**
- **Test Security**
- **Student Participation & Eligibility**
- **Staying Informed with Testing Updates and Alerts**
- **Accessibility Resources**
  Parent Corner

Testing Alerts and Updates: We thank the Assessment Bulletin readers for the planning, preparation, training, and overall effort to support state assessment at the local level and to the meet statutory and regulatory requirements. We recognize the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across Montana. The OPI will continue to listen and seek flexibilities and options for school districts within the law. In this issue, we provide guidance for statewide assessments with the priority centered around schools safely reopening. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provisions are in place for this 2021-2022 school year including the annual testing requirement so all children can have fair and equitable opportunities to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging academic content standards. This guidance stems from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Restart and Recovery Considerations for Teaching and Learning.

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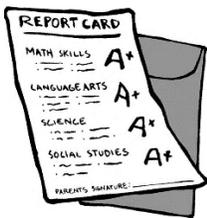
Assessment Updates

State Assessment & Accountability Activities

Webinars & Educator Resources

Contact and Support Information

Assessment News

This section is tailored to System Test Coordinators (STC) with a lens for providing the current news, testing alerts, and changes planned for each of these program areas. Use these hyperlinks to navigate to each section of the Bulletin:

- OPI News
- MontCAS News
- Smarter News

- ACT News
- MSAA News
- MSA News

- AMSA News
- ACCESS for ELLs / WIDA Screener
- NAEP and International

OPI News
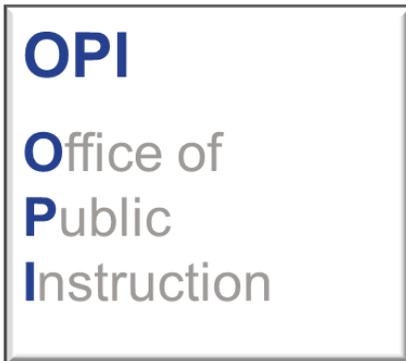
This section pertains to the policies, procedures, and updates from the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) program.
Portal Link: OPI Website

Score Reports: State assessment results provide information to the public and families that supports the educational needs and processes at the local and state level. We commend Montana schools for their focus on putting students first and for the manner in which they prioritized the safety, health, and well-being of every child this past academic year. View the OPI Score Report and Timeline Memo for more details. **The purpose of this memo was for the OPI to provide school districts with notice of the:**
1. Requirements for reporting at the local level;
2. Access to the 2020-2021 assessment results;
3. Instructions on what data and reports are available in each of the online reporting systems;
4. Resources to support data use and process needs; and
5. Resources that are available to share with families.

MontCAS News
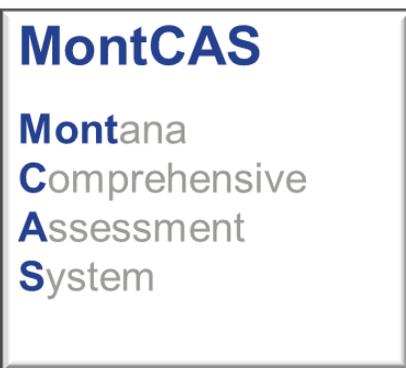
This section pertains to any updates or news under the umbrella of the MontCAS program not specific to any one state assessment.
Portal Link: MontCAS Application

System Test Coordinators (STCs) are responsible for verifying that the four testing plans (Test Administration Plan, Test Security Plan, Test Accessibility Plan, and Test Training Plan) have been completed. Per OPI policy, the STC is the only user that the OPI registers at the beginning of the year within the various Test Delivery Systems (or TDS). This role serves as the data steward for managing local users within the restricted web-based TDS portals used to administer each test. This role also serves as the local liaison for all standardized testing procedures (i.e., proctoring, safeguarding, securing, and reporting state test information) and ensuring staff are trained and certified to administer state assessments.

Note: New STCs should contact the OPI Assessment Unit to ensure proper access to TDS portals. Confirmation from the district Authorized Representative will be required prior to providing access to student level data in the portals. Contact the Assessment Unit at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or at 844-867-2569 for assistance.

STCs are the only persons registered in the MontCAS Application which is the centralized, restricted-use portal to annually report test security information, non-participation results, testing incidents, and other applicable assessment information [see the MontCAS Test Security Collection

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Schedule].

Beginning October 1, 2021, STCs can complete the affirmation of school system testing security and testing plans. STCs affirm system compliance with the guidance defined in the MontCAS Test Security Manual. These tasks are performed in the secure access MontCAS Application and steps for completing them are found in the MontCAS Application User Guide. This collection is due no later than December 1, 2021.

The STC Workshop Series will help STCs manage system user accounts, follow the student privacy laws for the state of Montana, and implement test security policies and procedures. The OPI Assessment Unit will share tips and strategies for creating local cultures and climates around data-driven decision-making and invite veteran STCs to share their experiences as well.

Note: Specific usernames and passwords allow access to confidential school and student data. All educators involved in the administration of state assessments are responsible for maintaining the privacy and security of all student records as specified in the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and by state law.

The OPI Staff will help guide through the various step-by-step processes in the STC Workshop Series to ensure the successful administration of the state assessments this 2021-2022 school year. For example, the series will provide you with "how-to" information to access the various TDS portals and complete many of the STC responsibilities. The OPI Assessment Unit will share best practices for rostering students, registering users, setting up test settings for accessibility, administering tests, and reporting score information. Whether you are a veteran STC or new STC, this workshop will have something to serve your professional learning needs.

The STC Corner Site is designed specifically for STCs. This site houses all the up-to-date and relevant information for each assessment program, including summative, interim, and formative resources.

TAC News
Technical Advisory Committee
The Montana Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) serves as a consulting group to the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to ensure the validity and reliability of the test scores and fairness in testing all students. The members are knowledgeable in educational measurement with rich experiences on psychometric and testing issues in the design, development, and implementation of large-scale assessments. Members of the TAC are highly regarded national, state, and local experts who have been widely published in their respective fields and have a good combination of various expertise to contribute to the OPI. TAC biographies are published on the OPI's Statewide Testing Page.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 25 – 26, 2021.

Montana's Theory of Action
### Balanced Assessment Systems
Per ARM 10.56.101, "A balanced assessment system including formative, interim, and summative assessments aligned to state content standards, will provide an integrated approach to meeting both classroom learning needs and school and state level information needs…" A balanced assessment system is needed because state assessment systems that focus on once-a-year summative do not provide sufficient information to improve student learning and school capacity. Balance occurs when we don't rely on one measure to tell the entire story of a student's growth as a learner. The idea is not to have an equal amount of each type of assessment, but rather, as many different data points from assessments to guide teaching that will, in turn, improve student outcomes. The Balanced Assessment Roadmap has resources to support implementation of Smarter Balanced interims.

MetaMetrics Pilot
The OPI is working with MetaMetrics on a pilot study to establish a proof of concept to use district's local interim assessments in developing Lexile and Quantile scores for math and reading/language arts that could be used to inform policymakers, the federal government, the OPI, and the district reporting in the future. The goal of this study is to reduce

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burden and provide analytical techniques that use a school's local interim tests to gauge student performance and improvement over time. Districts interested in participating should contact Deputy Superintendent, at Sharyl.Allen@mt.gov.

Math and ELA

SBAC

Smarter
Balanced
Assessment
Consortium
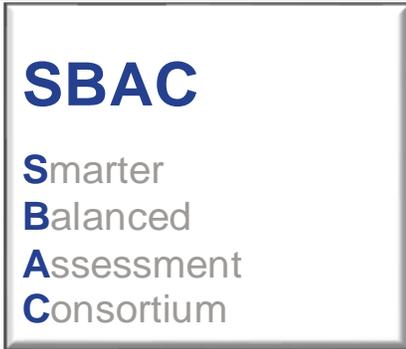
This assessment opportunity is available to all students in Grades 3–8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

[Assessment Profile](#)	[Consortium Map](#)	[Testing Calendar](#)	[Testing Time Facts](#)

Portal Link: [Montana Testing Portal](#)

Website Link: [Smarter Balanced Resources](#)

Contact Cambium Help Desk at 1-877-365-7915 or e-mail at mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

[Program Overview](#)

Grades(s):	3 – 8
Subject(s):	Mathematics English Language Arts (ELA)
Test Time:	3 – 4 hours
Testing Window:	March 7 – May 27, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:

Interims Are LIVE for the New School Year

Interims are available in the [Montana Testing Portal](#). If planning to administer interims, refer to the Smarter Balanced [Google Calendar](#) for a list of tasks in preparation to do so.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Do you plan to use Interims?

A: Please provide the OPI with notice at least 5 business days before planned use. This will ensure not only that students are properly rostered within the [Montana Testing Portal](#), but also provide your district with adequate time to ensure all test settings for universal, designated, and accommodations supports are properly configured locally before administration. The [OPI TIDE Upload Schedule](#) indicates planned student data uploads. If your plans fall outside these dates, you must notify the OPI of any required changes.

Q: Why are students missing in TIDE?

A: To support back-to-school and reopening efforts to leverage Smarter Balanced Interims, the OPI used a rollover student file from May 2021 and upgraded all students to roster them in the [Montana Testing Portal.](#) This upgraded file does not reflect current enrollments from AIM/Infinite Campus unless the district requests the OPI to update TIDE. Due to the dynamic nature of AIM until the October count date, the OPI will not start the twice a week upload from AIM into TIDE until October 12, 2021, after the enrollment data stabilizes. Please take the following steps to request updates to TIDE for any planned Interim use prior to that time:

- ✓ Make sure that all student information is accurate and updated in your local Student Information System (SIS) e.g., Infinite Campus or PowerSchool.
- ✓ Create a list of students not currently in TIDE you need added, but are accurately reflected in the SIS.
- ✓ Include SSID, first name, and last name in this excel file.
- ✓ Send the excel file using the secure [ePass](#) system. Do not send the secure PII file via regular email as this is in violation of student privacy and will result in a testing irregularity for your district.
- ✓ The OPI will conduct an upload on Friday using the list of students provided based on what is showing in AIM.
- ✓ **Note**: TIDE can only reflect what is in the state database i.e., AIM/Infinite Campus as entered by districts.

Q: Why are there are no score reports in the Reporting System for my district?

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A: The Reporting System default page is the current year [i.e., FY2021-2022]. To access FY2020-2021 summative score reports, change the reporting time period under "My Settings" in the top right-hand corner of the screen to 2020-2021 to see the spring summative reports. To print Individual Student Reports (or ISRs), review the resources in the STC Corner Site, under the "Data & Reporting District Requirements" tab, which includes a Quick-Start Tutorial video on accessing score reports and where to find the parent letter template.

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Smarter Balanced September 2021 Tasks
Due This Month

	Due Date	Complete
🕐	Prior to Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences	Download Individual Student Reports (ISRs) from the Reporting System [see District Data & Reporting Requirements] and prepare to provide to parents/families. ISRs can be either printed [color recommended], attached to an individual student tab in Infinite Campus where parents can access, or sent electronically via a secure file transfer system. **Note:** ISRs contain personally identifiable information (PII) and per FERPA and OPI policy may not be sent in an unsecure manner. Ensure that student data privacy is maintained at all times.
🕐	Prior to Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences	Access, download, and customize the Parent Letter template to be accompanied by the Individual Student Reports (ISRs).
🕐	Prior to Administering ELA/Math Interims	If planning to administer Interims, refer to the Smarter Balanced Google Calendar for a list of August tasks to complete prior to such. Tasks include: • Reviewing TIDE User Roles • Reviewing the student list in TIDE • Selecting Student Test Settings • Download an updated Secure Browser • Complete the 20-minute Test Administrator Certification Course • Sign the virtual Test Security Agreement (TSA)

Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 60–100 minutes to complete this month.

Smarter Balanced Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Administer interims per local discretion	As part of a district-wide balanced assessment system, districts are encouraged to administer ELA and math interims as it aligns with their data-driven curriculum mapping plans. **Note:** All FY2021 score reports should be analyzed within a local context and caution used in any interpretation with said data given the challenges around the coronavirus.

Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 60–100 minutes to complete this month.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
📋	Smarter Balanced Score Reports Quick-Start Tutorial	This OPI created Quick Start Tutorial Video provides Montana administrators and educators with an overview of how to access and download individual student reports from the grades 3–8 ELA/math [i.e., Smarter Balanced] state assessments.
📋	Reporting System	The new Reporting System is located in the Montana Testing Portal and houses current ELA/math grades 3–8 student state summative score reports, as well as historical data back to FY2015-2016.

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ELA, Mathematics, and Science

ACT with Writing

American
College
Testing

This assessment opportunity is available to all students in Grade 11 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

[Assessment Profile](#)	[Consortium Map](#)	[Testing Calendar](#)	[Testing Time Facts](#)

Portal Link: [PearsonAccess](#) Next

Website Link: [State ACT Testing and District Testing](#)

Contact ACT Help Desk at 800-553-6244 or 319-337-1270. You can use the [Email Form](#) to send questions or visit the [State ACT Testing and District Testing.](#)

[Program Overview](#)

Grades(s):	11
Subject(s):	Mathematics English Language Arts (ELA) Science
Test Time:	3.5 hours
Testing Window:	March 29, April 12, and April 26, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:

Online administration provides multiple days and greater flexibilities for schools to deliver the assessments. Schools considering the online option over paper should review the [ACT Online Testing Information for States and Districts](#).

Test Window 1	**Test Window 2**	**Test Window 3**
• Standard Paper Testing: Mar. 29 • Accommodated Paper Testing: March 29–April 8 • Online Testing: March 29–April 7 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY)	• Standard Paper Testing: April 12 • Accommodated Paper Testing: April 12–22 • Online Testing: April 12–21 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY)	• Standard Paper Testing: April 26 • Accommodated Paper Testing: April 26–May 6 • Online Testing: April 26–May 5 (Tues.–Thurs. ONLY)

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Where can I view student and school score data?

A: Score reports for Spring 2021 state testing can be found in both [Pearson Access](#)next under the 'Reports' tab, and in [ACT Success](#) under the "ACT Test Scores and Reports" tab. Score reports in the [ACT Success site](#) are interactive and can be filtered to view the data at many levels.

Q: What will the process for the ACT Test Accessibility and Accommodations (TAA) System look like this year?

A: The ACT has been working to increase equity and collaborate with school and industry partners to ensure students with disabilities and English learners (Els) are provided the appropriate resources and supports necessary to succeed. ACT's [Policy for Requesting Accommodations](#) has been updated to align with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the laws established to ensure our public schools meet the needs of our students with disabilities. This school year ACT has made enhancements to the TAA process to better support schools through providing accommodations to IEP and 504 students. Read the [ACT's Policy for Requesting Accommodations](#) for the ACT to learn more about these enhancements.

Q: What are allowable ACT accommodations for English learners (ELs)?

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A: The Allowable ACT EL Supports Document outlines information to describe these supports and the process for ensuring these requests are made and approved on an individual basis. Read Katie Featherston's, Senior Director for Accessibility, blog here on "Ensuring Students with Disabilities and English Learners Receive Necessary Supports For Success" or watch the OnDemand webinar.

ACT with Writing September 2021 Tasks

Due This Month

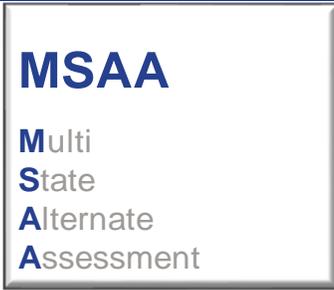|	Due Date	Complete
🕐	Prior to Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences	Provide Individual Score Reports [see District Data & Reporting Requirements] to parents/families. Score Reports received by the district from ACT can be shared during conferences, attached to an individual student tab in Infinite Campus where parents can access, or sent electronically via a secure file transfer system. **Note:** that Score Reports contain personally identifiable information (PII) and per FERPA and OPI policy may not be sent in an unsecure manner. Ensure that student data privacy is maintained at all times.
🕐	Prior to Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences	Access, download, and customize the Parent Letter template to be accompanied by the student score report. **Note:** that score reports delivered to students directly from ACT do not meet the district's reporting requirement to provide student level data to parents/families.

We estimate this will take 60-100 minutes to complete this month.

ACT Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	No tasks this month.	

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
📋	ACT State and District Testing	This is the Montana specific site for the ACT with Writing. The site provides resources for each step of the testing process for before, during, and after testing.
📋	ACT Success	The Success site provides access to student, school, and district level score reports. It also provides access to the Test Accommodations and Accessibilities (TAA) site. Reporting will move from PANext to the Success site for this coming spring's reports.
📋	PearsonAccess^next (PANext)	This is the site to manage test administration, students, and users.
📋	Performance Levels	The established proficiency levels for the ACT math and reading/language arts sub-tests in 2017 for ESSA accountability and reporting purposes are noted below. New this year the OPI has established proficiency levels for the ACT science sub-test for ESSA accountability and reporting purposes.

Montana's Grade 11 Performance Levels	Novice	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Math	Less than 17	17	22	26
Reading/Language Arts	Less than 16	16	19	24
Science	Less than 17	17	23	28

Note: The science performance levels were adopted from Wisconsin's Department of Education standards-setting for science. The OPI plans to validate these cut scores for Montana students in the future after another operational year with its overall plan for submitting its system of science assessments to the U.S. Department of Education's peer review in December 2022.

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Alternate Assessment for ELA and Math

MSAA

Multi
State
Alternate
Assessment

This assessment opportunity is available to only Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SwSCD) in Grades 3–8 and 11 using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

Assessment Profile	Consortium Map	Testing Calendar	Testing Time Facts

Portal Link: MSAA System

Contact Cognia Help Desk Hotline: 1-866-834-8879
MSAAServiceCenter@MeasuredProgress.org.

Website Link: MSAA Consortia

Program Overview

Grades(s):	3 – 8 and 11
Subject(s):	Mathematics English Language Arts (ELA)
Test Time:	5–6 hours The test is not designed to be completed in one sitting as tests may be paused and resumed as often as necessary. A break may consist of a few minutes to a few days.
Testing Window:	March 14 – April 29, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:

Students eligible to participate in alternate assessments make up approximately 1.0% of the total student population. The decision to move a special education student to an alternate assessment has significant implications for the path that a student will take in their K–12 school career. It means the student is not able to participate in the general education curriculum even when provided with accommodations. A student who participates in alternate assessment requires a modified curriculum. See the Eligibility Guidelines for MontCAS Alternate Assessments document for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Where Do I Get the Score Reports?

A: The MSAA district-level, school-level, and Individual Student Reports (ISR) for all students who participated in the ELA/Math alternate test in Spring 2021 were available for downloading in the MSAA System from August 2 – September 24, 2021. Beyond September 24, the MSAA scores are no longer available on the MSAA System Portal and any district who has not downloaded the reports prior to the closing date, will need to contact the Assessment Unit at **OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov** or at 844-867-2569 for assistance.

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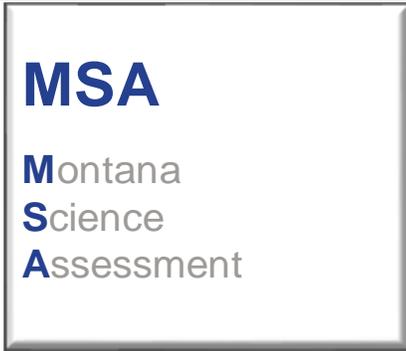*Assessment Bulletin* **Page 11**

Due This Month

	Due Date	Complete
🕐	Prior to Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences	Provide Individual Student Reports (ISR's) and grade-specific Family Guides to parents/families of any student who has participated in the MSAA in 2020-2021. **Note**: ISR's contain personally identifiable information (PII) and per FERPA and OPI policy may not be sent in an unsecure manner. Ensure that student data privacy is maintained at all times.

MSAA Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Implement formative strategies per local discretion	As part of a district-wide balanced alternate assessment system, districts are encouraged to analyze MSAA score reports, review their alignment to the Core Content Connectors as outlined on the MSAA Curriculum Resources site, and plan instruction utilizing the Sample Items Teacher Guides as a formative tool during instruction. **Note**: All FY2021 score reports should be analyzed within a local context and caution used in any interpretation with said data given the challenges around the coronavirus.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
📋	MSAA System Portal	This is the portal where the Training Manuals, student information, user accounts, and testing are located.
📋	Formative Resources	Sample items accompanied with comprehensive Teacher Guides are now available on the MSAA System website, which are designed as formative teaching resources for educators.
📋	MSAA Consortia Site	This new website designed by the MSAA consortia member-states offers guidance and resources for educators.
📋	TIES Center	The TIES Center is the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies with resources on teaching during the novel coronavirus.

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Science

MSA

Montana
Science
Assessment

This assessment opportunity is available to all students in Grades 5 and 8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

[Assessment Profile](#)	[Consortium Map](#)	[Testing Calendar](#)	[Testing Time Facts](#)

Portal Links: [Montana Testing Portal](#)

Contact Cambium Help Desk at 1-877-365-7915 or e-mail at mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

Website Link: [MontCAS Science](#)

[Program Overview](#) and [Video](#)

Grades(s):	5 and 8
Subject(s):	Science
Test Time:	1.5 – 2 hours
Testing Window:	Mar 7 – May 27, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:

New Science Interims in Development

Based on feedback from the field, the OPI is working with our testing contractor to create new Science Interim assessments that are structured to better accommodate district needs. These interims are scheduled to be released in late November 2021.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Where and when can I access my MSA/AMSA scores from Spring 2021?

A: The Spring 2021 score reports for the MSA and AMSA are not available to download at the district, school, or student level. In Spring 2021, the MSA and AMSA were in field test status. A field test is a crucial part of the test development process, as it allows us to verify that the items are well aligned and produce valid data. Spring 2020 was scheduled to be the field test for the MSA and AMSA, however, due to the pandemic we were unable to administer the field test of the MSA and AMSA until Spring 2021. We will be receiving data as a state and assessing that data for validity, reliability, and alignment to our standards. This will help us determine which items meet our standards for inclusion on our operational MSA and AMSA in Spring 2022. After completion of the evaluation of the data, OPI will determine which data can be released to support instruction for the Spring 2022 MSA and AMSA.

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MSA September 2021 Tasks

Due This Month

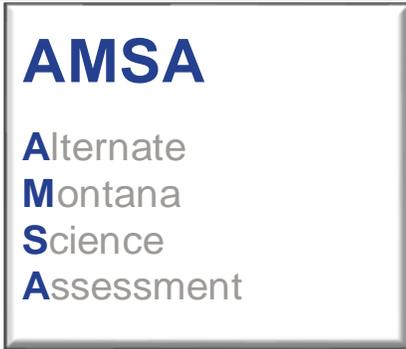|		Due Date	Complete
🕐		Prior to the Spring 2022 Operational Test	Spring 2022 is the first year of the operational MSA. To prepare for the MSA, here are some steps you can take this school year: • Review available resources for the MSA • Allow students the opportunity to use the practice tests to gain familiarity with the testing procedure • Utilize interims (once available later this fall) to assess student knowledge
🕐		Prior to Administering Science Interims	If planning to administer interims once they are available later this fall, complete the following tasks prior to administration: • Review TIDE User Roles • Review the student list in TIDE • Select Student Test Settings • Download an updated Secure Browser • Complete the 20-minute Test Administrator Certification Course • Sign the virtual Test Security Agreement (TSA)

MSA Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Update Student Information in AIM	Ensure that student demographic information is up to date for the 2021-2022 school year. All 504 plans, IEPs, and EL designations need to be up to date in AIM.
☑	Review Curriculum/Plan Instruction	Ensure alignment of local curriculum to the Montana Content Standards and plan instruction using data-driven practices.

Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 60–100 minutes to complete this month.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
🗐	Montana Testing Portal	This portal includes access to TIDE, TA Certification, Reporting, and Practice and Training Tests. Materials are available to utilize before, during, and after testing.
🗐	2021 Educator Conference	This year's sessions at the MFPE Educator Conference will include information about the new Science Interims, what we learned from our 2021 MSA Field Test, and instructional support for educators about administering and interpreting the MSA.
🗐	Teacher Learning Hub	Use the courses on the Teacher Learning Hub to understand the Montana Science Standards, teach students how to utilize real-world data, and more!
🗐	Science Assessment in Montana	This website is intended to share information on the new Montana Science Assessments.
🗐	Practice Tests	The practice test allows students to practice taking tests online and using test tools.

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AMSA

Alternate
Montana
Science
Assessment

This assessment opportunity is available to only students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 5, 8, and 11 using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

Assessment Profile	Consortium Map	Testing Calendar	Testing Time Facts

Portal Link: Montana Testing Portal

Website Link: MontCAS Science

Contact Cambium Help Desk at 1-877-365-7915 or e-mail at mthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

Program Overview

Grades(s):	5, 8 and 11
Subject(s):	Science
Test Time:	1.5 – 2 hours To accommodate for diverse student needs, the test can be paused for a break and resumed as often as necessary. A break in the test can be anywhere from a few minutes to a few days, depending on student needs.
Testing Window:	Mar 14 – Apr 29, 2022

Fixed Form and Alternate Response Options
Questions received from the field last year have resulted in some modifications to our fixed form. Only students who are eligible for the fixed form will have this accommodation available to be selected. Please note that districts who require fixed form for their students need to select "fixed form option" during set-up to print the test for their students. Alternate Response Kits need to be requested by the STC via the "Order Test Materials" option under the "Data Entry" tab of the MontCAS Application.

Frequently Asked Questions:
Q: Where and when can I access my MSA/AMSA scores from Spring 2021?
A: The Spring 2021 score reports for the MSA and AMSA are not available to download at the district, school, or student level. In Spring 2021, the MSA and AMSA were in field test status. A field test is a crucial part of the test development process, as it allows us to verify that the items are well aligned and produce valid data. Spring 2020 was scheduled to be the field test for the MSA and AMSA, however, due to the pandemic we were unable to administer the field test of the MSA and AMSA until Spring 2021. We will be receiving data as a state and assessing that data for validity, reliability, and alignment to our standards. This will help us determine which items meet our standards for inclusion on our operational MSA and AMSA in Spring 2022. After completion of the evaluation of the data, OPI will determine which data can be released to support instruction for the Spring 2022 MSA and AMSA.

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AMSA September 2021 Tasks

Due This Month

	Due Date	Complete
🕐	Prior to the Spring 2022 Operational Test	Spring 2022 is the first year of the operational AMSA. To prepare for the AMSA, here are some steps you can take this school year: • Review available resources for the AMSA • Identify students who will be taking the AMSA Allow students the opportunity to use the practice tests to gain familiarity with the testing procedure (once available).

AMSA Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Identify Students who will take the AMSA	Ensure that students who are eligible to take the AMSA participate in spring testing. Review the OPI's Participation Policies and Accessibility and Inclusion links to ensure that equitable opportunities are given to all students.
☑	Update Student Information in AIM	Ensure that student demographic information is up to date for the 2021-2022 school year. All 504 plans, IEPs, and EL designations need to be up to date in AIM.
☑	Review Curriculum/Plan Instruction	Ensure alignment of local curriculum to the Montana Content Standards and plan instruction using data-driven practices.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
📋	Montana Testing Portal	This portal includes access to TIDE, TA Certification, Reporting, and Practice and Training Tests. Materials are available to utilize before, during, and after testing.
📋	Science Assessment in Montana	This website is intended to share information on the new Montana Science Assessments.
📋	Practice Tests	The practice test allows students to practice taking tests online and using test tools.

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English Language Proficiency Assessment

ACCESS for **ELLs**

English
Language
Learners

This assessment opportunity was available to all students in Grades K–12 who are indicated to take the assessment based on the results of the WIDA Screener (unless the child is eligible for the alternate) using the OPI's published guidance for test administration and test security.

Assessment Profile	Consortium Map	Testing Calendar	Testing Time Facts

Portal Link: Assessment Management System (AMS)

Website Link: Training and Resources

Program Overview

Contact WIDA Training and Resources at 1.866.876.7735 or e-mail help@wida.us.

Contact WIDA Assessment Management Site at 1.855.787.9615 or email at WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com.

Grades(s):	K–12
Subject(s):	English Proficiency Assessment (ELP)
Test Time:	4 – 4.5 hours
Testing Window:	Dec. 1, 2021 – Feb. 25, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:

WIDA Secure Portal Update: Webinar Menu Available

The WIDA Secure Portal has gotten a big makeover! One of the new design features is the WIDA Webinar menu, which contains recordings of past webinars and links for future presentations. Upcoming topics of interest include software updates, tech readiness, and orientation for new test coordinators. Check it out!

New English Learner Screener Information

The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is now available to all test administrators in Montana. This screener is designed around a story book to allow for a comfortable and engaging assessment experience. The former kindergarten screening tool, K W-APT, will still be available for the 2021-2022 school year, but it will be discontinued in spring, so the OPI encourages test administrators to make the switch to the new screener as soon as possible. All training materials and certification quizzes are available in the WIDA Secure Portal. For all English Learner (EL) students, districts must screen potential ELs within 14 days of enrollment using an approved WIDA screener. For schools or districts with students learning remotely, check the Provisional EL Identification Procedure During Periods of Remote Learning. Mark newly identified students and transfer students correctly in AIM. AIM Data includes: (1) Home Primary Language (HPL), (2) Language of Impact (LOI), (3) EL identification (within 30 days), (4) Date identified as EL, (5) Date identified as proficient, and (6) 2 years of monitoring after exiting EL status. Direct questions to the OPI Assessment Help Desk at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov or 1-844-867-2569.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Where can I find students' ACCESS scores from 2020-2021?
A: Printed score reports were shipped to district offices in June 2020. Online reports are accessed through WIDA AMS via **Report Delivery → Test Results** and selecting the administration and school information for the desired reports.

Q: How do I know if a transfer student was previously identified as an EL?
A: District clerks must request EL records for transfer students, as these are not automatically carried over with student profiles. The AIM EL Tool Guide contains instructions for requesting records. Past ACCESS scores should be available in WIDA AMS, but if you have difficulty finding them, please reach out to the Assessment Help Desk for assistance.

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Q: I'm new to EL education and assessment. Where do I start?
A: Check out the OPI English Learners Page for resources related to general guidance, professional resources, classroom resources, and family and community engagement resources. The English Learner Guidance for School Districts is the OPI's primary document explaining state policies for identifying, serving, and assessing ELs.

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WIDA September 2021 Tasks
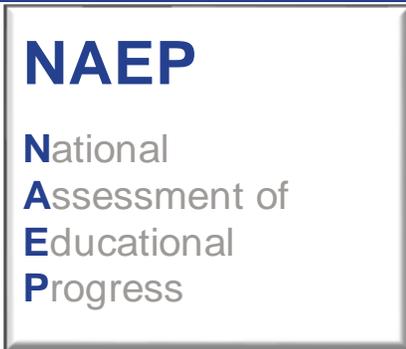
Due This Month

	Due Date	Complete
⏱	Before AIM Data Collection on 10/15/21	Ensure that EL students who tested proficient on ACCESS in 2020-2021 are exited from the EL program in AIM and ensure that students who are newly identified are enrolled in the EL program in AIM.
⏱	Before AIM Data Collection on 10/15/21	Ensure that EL records are requested in AIM for any newly transferred students. Instructions can be found in the AIM EL Tool Guide.

ACCESS for ELLs Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Administer Home Language Survey	As students enroll, districts must administer the Home Language Survey. Read the 2020-2021 English Learner Guidance for School Districts and EL Tool Guide for more information.
☑	Screen Potential ELs	Districts screen potential ELs within 14 days of enrollment using an approved WIDA screener. For schools or districts with students learning remotely, check the Provisional EL Identification Procedure During Periods of Remote Learning. Mark newly identified students and transfer students correctly in AIM. AIM Data includes: (1) Home Primary Language (HPL), (2) Language of Impact (LOI), (3) EL identification (within 30 days), (4) Date identified as EL, (5) Date identified as proficient, and (6) 2 years of monitoring after exiting EL status.
☑	Place ELs and Notify Families	EL identification: Newly identified ELs receive an EL designation in AIM and parents/guardians receive a placement letter within the first 30 days of enrollment.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
🗒	English Learner Guidance for School Districts	The guidance document describes the OPI's policies and procedures required to serve EL students in the state of Montana. These requirements fall under the authority of both state and federal laws and regulations.
🗒	EL Tool Guide for AIM	This document guides AIM users through the EL program features in AIM, including how to request records transfers, enroll newly identified EL students, and exit proficient students from the program designation.
🗒	ACCESS for ELLs Interpretive Guide for Score Reports	This document is designed to help educators interpret ACCESS for ELLs score reports for communications with families and for their own instructional purposes.
🗒	Alternate ACCESS Interpretive Guide for Score Reports	This document is designed to help educators interpret Alternate ACCESS for ELLs score reports for communications with families and for their own instructional purposes.
🗒	Provisional English Learner Identification Procedure	This remote-learning guidance document provides a means of provisionally identifying ELs in remote learning situations where face-to-face screening is not possible.
🗒	Remote WIDA Screener	This flyer provides guidance and instruction for administering the remote WIDA Screener, which can be found in the WIDA Secure Portal.
🗒	WIDA Micro-Offerings	Five 30-minute mini-PD courses available to the public to help teachers support multilingual students during the COVID-19 pandemic.
🗒	WIDA Educator Exchange (Open Facebook Group)	This group allows EL educators from around the world to share their ideas and ask questions about EL teaching and assessment. It's especially helpful during times of remote learning and/or social distancing.
🗒	WIDA Secure Portal	Access the WIDA Secure Portal for professional learning, training courses, test administrator certification quizzes, and screener test materials. Check out the Download Library for test administrator manuals, webinar recordings, and other helpful documents.
🗒	WIDA AMS Site	The WIDA AMS site serves as the test administration site.

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NAEP

National
Assessment of
Educational
Progress

This assessment is administered to ONLY selected schools and students in mathematics and reading at Grades 4 and 8 (unless the child is eligible for the alternate).

Assessment Profile	Nationwide Trends	Testing Calendar	Testing Time Facts

Portal Link: MyNAEP Testing Portal   Contact Shantel Niederstadt at SNiederstadt@mt.gov or 406-444-3450.

Website Link: NAEP   NAEP Help Desk at 1-800-283-6237 or naephelp@westat.com.

Program Overview

Grades(s):	4 and 8
Subject(s):	Math Reading Civics US History
Test Time:	2 hours
Testing Window:	January 24 – March 4, 2022

Testing Alerts and Updates:
No current updates.

Frequently Asked Questions:
Q: Is Participation in NAEP Mandatory?
A: Participation in mathematics and reading in Grades 4 and 8 is required under the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), commonly referred to as the "Every Students Succeeds Act" (or ESSA), for any district receiving Title I funding. As of 2003, participation became a requirement in all states/territories and school districts receiving Title I funding.

Q: If NAEP is based on a random sample, why are we picked so often?
A: "State" NAEP assessments, those that produce state-level results, are administered every two years, which means since 2003 there have been nine complete cycles. On average, 2,500 students in about 100 public schools are assessed per grade, for each subject. In Montana, about 145,000 students are enrolled in K–12 public schools. Our state has localized areas with higher overall population densities that contribute largely to our overall K–12 public schools. For instance, schools in these population pockets make up roughly 85% of Montana's K–12 public school population. This means the overarching characteristic that determines the chance of being selected for NAEP depends mostly on the school's enrollment size (i.e., the larger the school the more likely it is to be sampled). Several school characteristics like school location (city, suburban, town, rural) help ensure the sample is representative of Montana's demographics. The last aspect of selection is to obtain a random selection of students within sampled schools. For more information about this process, please visit the Nation's Report Card.

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NAEP September 2021 Tasks

Due This Month

	Due Date	Complete
⏲	October 1, 2021	NAEP School Coordinator – Tasks 1 & 2: MyNAEP Registration and Provide School Information.
⏲	October 1, 2021	Principal and/or NAEP School Coordinator – Communicate scheduled assessment date conflict (if any).

NAEP Timely Tasks

	Task	Responsibility
☑	Before Preassessment Review Call (PRC)	Task 5 – Plan for Assessment Day: NAEP School Coordinator answers school specific questions about logistics and details the NAEP Assessment Team needs to follow in order to ensure the assessment runs smoothly. (Expected time commitment 1 hour)
☑	Before Preassessment Review Call (PRC)	Task 6 – Notify Parents/Guardians of Selected Students: NAEP School Coordinator reviews the parent/guardian letter for their school mailing and in early December verifies on MyNAEP the date the letter was sent home to parents/guardians. (Expected time commitment 1 hour)

Depending on the number of schools and students, we estimate this will take 60–100 minutes to complete this month.

Resources and Supports

	Resource	Support with…
🗒	Task 1: Registering for MyNAEP	NAEP School Coordinator registers on MyNAEP by creating an account and accepting the MyNAEP Confidentiality Agreement (Expected time commitment 15 minutes).
🗒	Assessment Frameworks	Each NAEP assessment is based on an organizing framework, similar to a blueprint, that is developed by education and assessment experts. Frameworks provide information about the content to be assessed in each subject and what knowledge and skills are appropriate for students being assessed in those subjects. The frameworks also offer insights about how to measure skills and student achievement in innovative ways.
🗒	Task 2: Provide School Information	NAEP School Coordinator confirms the school contact information and provides school information in MyNAEP (Expected time commitment 15 minutes).
🗒	School Coordinator Checklist and Timeline	A complete list of all NAEP School Coordinator tasks and expected time commitment for the school year.
🗒	School Coordinator Responsibilities: A Guide to MyNAEP	A Guide to MyNAEP School Coordinator Responsibilities
🗒	NAEP COVID-19 Protocols	The protocols have been developed using CDC guidelines with the input of health professionals.

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	OPI Assessment Monthly Webinar During the 2021-2022 school year, the OPI Assessment Team will offer a Monthly Focused Webinar for 1-hour on Wednesdays. The focused webinar is designed to support educational practitioners such as district and school-level personnel involved in local assessment and local data-driven decision-making actions and/or continuous improvement processes. These 1-hour sessions are designed for educational practitioners to learn more about balanced assessments systems and strategies for implementing high-quality local assessment/data literacy practices including creating local systems around data-driven decision-making. A total of 11 webinars will be offered from August 2021 to June 2022 as published in the FY2022 Monthly Focused Webinar Plan [or Google Calendar]. **Attendees are eligible for 1-hour of renewal.**
	STC Open Forum Webinar Series During the 2021-2022 school year, the OPI Assessment Team will offer a STC Open Forum for System Test Coordinators (STCs) who are confirmed through the annual designation by Authorized Representatives in the TEAMS Collection. These half-hour sessions are scheduled the first week of every month on Mondays. This open forum series is in addition to the monthly focused webinar that the Assessment Team hosts. These monthly webinars are intended to provide the opportunity for STCs to connect with peers, ask questions, and discuss more deeply any OPI updates, or testing announcements. A total of 10 webinars will be offered from August 2021 to June 2022 as published in the FY2022 STC Open Forum [or Google Calendar]. This time is designed to bring questions and tips for the OPI Assessment Team and fellow STCs.

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Human Resource Manager
406-444-2673
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