March Focused Monthly Webinar

Critical Updates in Assessment

Assessment Team | Teaching and Learning Department
Montana Office of Public Instruction

March 17, 2021
Virtual Zoom Basics

1. Mute your mic when it is not in use.

2. Share your video.

3. Clearly name yourself as a participant.

4. Use the chat to introduce yourself, ask questions, and engage with your peers.
Session Disclaimer:
The information shared in today's webinar is current as of [Timestamp: 03/17/2021] and stems from laws, regulations, and the OPI's policies for testing, accountability, and reporting.

Critical Updates in Assessment
Getting to Know You

• Make sure your name is clearly visible in participant list.

• Who are you? Write your full name and district in chat!
  (e.g., Ashley McGrath at OPI)
Session Overview

- Critical Updates in Assessment, Accountability, and Reporting
- Assessment Setup and Preparation Support
- Local Monitoring Strategies for Assessments
- Reminders on Key Dates
- Open Forum for Questions/Clarifications
Department’s February 22 Memo

On February 22, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) sent a memo to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on guidance for assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

This memo outlined the expectations for (1) Accountability and School Identification, (2) Transparency and Reporting, (3) Assessments, and (4) Public Comment.
## 2021 Montana Waiver Updates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>The OPI submitted the waiver package to U.S. Department of Education (Department). This waiver application includes three reference materials, that is, (1) <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">Superintendent Arntzen’s Montana Strategic Waiver Request</a>, (2) <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">Montana Waiver Application</a>, and the (3) <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">Public Comment Summary Report</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>The Department sent a memo to the States on guidance for the assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements under ESSA. This memo outlined the expectations for (1) Accountability and School Identification, (2) Transparency and Reporting, (3) Assessments, and (4) Public Comment.</td>
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<td>March 4</td>
<td>The Department held a meeting with the OPI to learn more about Montana’s February 5th waiver application and Montana’s unique conditions and circumstances for schooling. The OPI shared the impetus for the waivers and concerns about statewide assessments in the spring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>The OPI released a <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">press release</a> to schools to share these updates and explain the spring options for schools. The health, well-being, and safety of Montana’s students is the number one priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>The first content area assessment will open as published on the <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">OPI’s 2020-2021 Test Calendar</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>The “optional template” for states was released by the Department <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">here</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Superintendent Arntzen <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">submitted a request</a> to the Department to ask them to grant an extension of the 2019-2020 waiver for an independent science field test. This field test was approved by the Department for the spring 2021 and it removes the accountability and reporting requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>The Department has until June 5, 2021 to respond. <a href="https://www.opi.mt.gov">The Department’s Secretary of Education shall issue a written determination regarding the initial approval or disapproval of a waiver request not more than 120 days after the date on which such request is submitted.</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Accountability and School Identification</td>
<td>(2) Transparency and Reporting</td>
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| The memo invites States to request a waiver for accountability and school identification requirements using an optional state accountability waiver template. | This waiver if granted to Montana does NOT eliminate state and local report card requirements. It requires all states to publicly report.  
- It eliminates the annually meaningful differentiation and identification requirements (e.g., LTGs, MIPs, AMD, and identification of CSI, ATSI, and TSI schools).  
- It waives the “Academic Achievement” indicator requirement to account for a participation rate below 95 percent.  
- States with the waiver must continue to support previously identified schools and resume school identification in the fall of 2022.  
- The OPI is in discussions with the Department to understand if the February 5th waiver suffices or what additional documentation is required to grant these flexibilities to Montana schools. | This waiver if granted to Montana does NOT allow for blanket waivers from state testing.  
- If a child is unable to attend school safely it is NOT expected to bring them into school buildings for the sole purpose of taking a test.  
- The health and well-being of staff and students must remain the priority of all efforts this spring.  
- Focus on assessments to provide information to parents, educators, and the public about student performance and to help target resources and supports.  
- The OPI has shortened the Smarter Balanced assessment and has extended all test windows.  
- The OPI has determined it is not practicable to allow state assessments to be delivered to students in remote (or at-home) settings this school year. | The Department’s accountability waiver template was released to states on March 8th.  
- The OPI will continue to meet with the Department to address its questions and Montana’s unique circumstances and conditions.  
- The OPI is waiting for the Department’s decision on its February 5th waiver application to determine what next steps are necessary to support schools this spring. |
### What Are We DOING?

#### Key OPI Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>What we KNOW</th>
<th>What we DON’T KNOW</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Settings Rollover</strong></td>
<td><strong>Be lawful:</strong> The participation requirement to administer annual state standardized assessments is required under federal and state law. State and Districts CANNOT act on waivers.</td>
<td>The OPI held its follow up with the Department on March 4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>for Smarter, MSA, and AMSA.</td>
<td></td>
<td>What unique state circumstances will USED consider?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science field test waiver granted.</strong></td>
<td>Decoupled from the accountability and reporting requirements.</td>
<td>When will a waiver determination be made?</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>ACCESS for ELLs Testing window closed on February 26, 2021.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Plan on delivering tests this spring.</strong></td>
<td>Note: Department has 120 days to make a determination on state’s waiver application.</td>
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<td><strong>Test windows are extended.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shortened Smarter Balanced test.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No remote proctoring (at-home testing) service for remote learners.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>One-year medical exemption option for COVID reasons.</strong></td>
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Safety First!

The OPI’s recommendations to address each of these elements of state standardized assessment in a traditional, hybrid, or remote setting. These recommendations are divided into seven sections, each describing a different area related to the OPI’s guidance.

1. Health and Safety Guidelines
2. Communication and Testing Plan Guidelines
3. Test Administration Guidelines
4. Test Security Guidelines
5. Test Accessibility and Accommodation Guidelines
6. Test Training Guidelines
7. Data Reporting and Accountability

FY2021 COVID-19 State Standardized Testing Guidance
Medical Exemption Policy

Released on February 19, 2021

Replaces the Statewide Assessment Participation & Registration Guide

Link: MontCAS Policies and Procedures for Participation in State Assessments

This guide explains the participation policies and procedures to register and include students in each of the state assessments.
Smarter Balanced Test Completions

FY21 ELA/Math Summative Completion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Student Started</th>
<th>Total Student Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Total</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>2,195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Updated 3/17/2021
Test Window Opens March 8

- The OPI has adopted a shortened blueprint for the Smarter Balanced assessment. The blueprint removes the ELA Performance Task (PT) and replaces it with brief writes in the Computer Adaptive Test (CAT).

- The average testing time is reduced by approximately 2 hours. To learn more about this test modifications, view the session titled “Five Things You Must Know About Smarter Balanced This Year”.
1. Student Test Settings

Local Responsibility

**Universal Tools**

**Embedded**

**Non-embedded**
- Breaks, English Dictionary, Scratch Paper, Thesaurus

**Designated Supports**

**Embedded**
- Color Contrast, Illustration Glossaries, Masking, Mouse Pointer, Streamline, Text-to-speech, Translated Test Directions, Translations (Glossary) Translations (Stacked or Toggle), Turn off Any Universal Tools

**Non-embedded**
- Amplification, Bilingual Dictionary, Color Contrast, Color Overlays, Illustration Glossaries, Magnification, Medical Supports, Noise Buffers, Read Aloud, Read Aloud in Spanish, Scribe, Separate Setting, Simplified Test Directions, Translated Test Directions, Translations (Glossary)

**Accommodations**

**Embedded**
- American Sign Language, Braille, Closed Captioning, Text-to-speech

**Non-embedded**
- 100's number table, Abacus, Alternate Response Options, Braille, Calculator, Multiplication Table, Print on Demand, Read Aloud, Scribe, Speech-to-text, Word Prediction
2. Test Administrator Prep

Test Administrator Certification Course

Online Test Security Agreement (TSA)
3. Update Secure Browsers

Annual updates required on all student computers
4. Review TAM

Test Administration Manual (TAM)

- Familiarity with TAM
- Refer to during testing
Test Window Opens March 15

- Test window has been extended two weeks until May 14, 2021.

- This test window extension is intended to provide Test Administrators and students with sufficient time to plan and conduct a safe test administration using the COVID-19 State Standardized Testing Guidance.
Student Uploads
Science Testing Progress

• Day 1/55 - Monday March 15th End of Day Stats
  – 10 Districts Have Begun Testing
  – 367 Students Have Started a Test (out of 22,430)
  – 91 Students Have Completed a Test
  – 1 District Has 95% or Higher Completion (out of 512)

• Day 2/55 - Tuesday March 16th End of Day Stats
  – 27 Districts Have Begun Testing (5.3% of Districts)
  – 1,211 Students Have Started a Test (5.4% of students)
  – 778 Students Have Completed a Test (3.5% of students)
  – 4 Districts Has 95% or Higher Completion (~1% of Districts)
The Department extended the OPI’s science field test from last spring to this spring 2021. This field test waiver decouples the accountability and reporting requirements from the census administration.

The waivers will benefit Montana’s students and educators in many ways including providing the opportunity to:

- Transition fully to the new science standards.
- Transition to new tested grades and to engage with new item types.
- Experience the new online science testing format.
Science Frequently Asked Questions

• Are we giving the science test this year?
  – Yes - our new science test is called the Montana Science Assessment or MSA and will be administered in Montana for the first time this year as a Field Test.

• Will there be scores?
  – Not formally - we have a federal waiver for accountability and reporting to allow for the Field Test to happen.
  – We will do our best to provide some form of reporting to districts so that the experience can be used to evaluate science instruction and prepare for next year’s operational assessment.
Science Frequently Asked Questions

• **Are we still testing grades 4 and 8?**
  – With the adoption of the new Montana Science Standards we shifted our assessment in science to grades 5, 8, and 11. This better matches the standards and our assessments in other subject areas.
  – The 11th grade assessment for science is the ACT

• **Why haven’t I gotten my CRT Science print materials yet?**
  – The MSA is delivered via computer through the same browser as the Smarter Balanced Assessment. If you need print materials for an individual student please contact us immediately.
A COVID Emergency testing date has been secured for districts and schools who need this opportunity.

- This testing date will occur in early May and will be offered only in paper/pencil mode.

ACT Assessment Update

Setup and Preparation Tips

For Online Testing
- Change Delivery Format in PANext
- Ensure all steps have been taken to ensure machines are ready for online testing

For Paper and Online Testing
- Distribute the Non-Test Instructions to students
ACT Frequently Asked Questions

- **Online/Paper - Options**
  - Can use both
  - Can use all three dates
  - Online - do not need to order or update for later dates
  - Paper - MUST order materials for later dates

- **MyACT Account**
  - Student Codes Location
  - In Class/At Home
  - Required?

- **Non-Test Questions**
  - 5 State Use Questions on answer document
  - Remaining Questions in MyACT account
44 STCs have not yet signed the Test Security Agreement within the MontCAS Application.
53 STCs have not yet signed off on the Required Records Tracking in the MontCAS Application.
It is the OPI’s responsibility to observe test administration activities in schools

- Targeted and Random Assessment Monitoring
- Required of schools for the 2020-2021 school year
- Revised process to request self-monitoring at the local level to meet this requirement due to the pandemic
Local Monitoring

**Before**
- Build Assessment Team
- Create strong Testing Plans
- Provide Appropriate Training

**During**
- Monitor Testing Rooms
- Monitor Assessment Portals
- MontCAS Reporting

**After**
- Review Test Incidents
- Debrief with TAs
- Review Results for Trends
MontCAS Test Security Portal

- Located on the OPI Website - Statewide Testing - Test Security
- New System Test Coordinators (STCs)/STCs to train Test Administrators (TAs)
- In Part 4, Monitoring and Your Role and Examples of Desk and Site Monitoring
- Purpose, YouTube link, PowerPoint presentation, H5P questions and resources
WIDA has announced dates for the release of ACCESS for ELLs score reports.

- Online: May 24, 2021
- Printed: June 2, 2021
Spring 2021 Test Windows

- The Multi-State Alternate Assessment has been extended 2 weeks.
- The ACT will allow a COVID-Emergency test date in early May.
- Extensions for the Science assessments and Smarter Balanced assessments have been granted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Alternate Montana Science Assessment (Alternate)</th>
<th>Montana Science Assessment (General)</th>
<th>Multi-State Alt Assessment (Alternate)</th>
<th>Smarter Balanced (General)</th>
<th>ACT with Writing² (General)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Window Period</td>
<td>11 weeks</td>
<td>11 weeks</td>
<td>9 weeks</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>4 Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Window</td>
<td>Mar 15 – May 28</td>
<td>Mar 15 – May 28</td>
<td>Mar 15 – May 14</td>
<td>Mar 8 – May 28</td>
<td>Date 1: March 23&lt;br&gt;Date 2: April 6&lt;br&gt;Date 3: April 20&lt;br&gt;Date 4: Early May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Subjects</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Math and ELA</td>
<td>Math and ELA</td>
<td>Math, ELA, and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades Tested</td>
<td>Grades 5, 8, 11</td>
<td>Grades 5, 8</td>
<td>Grades 3–8, 11</td>
<td>Grades 3–8</td>
<td>Grade 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Resources

FY2021 COVID-19 State Standardized Testing Guidance

Smarter Balanced, MSA, AMSA Pre-Testing Checklist

March Assessment Bulletin

March 17th Monthly Webinar: Local Test Administration Monitoring

STC Corner Site
Open Forum
Questions?

We are here to help. Contact us.

OPI Assessment Help Desk at 1.844.867.2569 or e-mail at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov.