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Office of the Superintendent

Updates in Montana Education

COVID-19 Updates

- To view the latest updates and press releases from the OPI, DPHHS, the Governor's Office, and other state agencies visit this [LINK](#).
- For education resources and updates related to COVID-19 visit this [LINK](#).
- Be sure to sign up for the OPI's newsletters at this [LINK](#).
- The U.S. Department of Education has approved the OPI's request to waive requirements for the 2019-2020 school year assessment, accountability, and reporting for states and local education agencies under ESSA. The waiver still requires the OPI to solicit public comment on the request. Any comments on this waiver should be directed to essainput@mt.gov.
- Montana is projected to receive \$41.3 million through the Title I formula (but with local flexibility over use) and \$8.8 million for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund from the federal CARES Act. The OPI will share with districts their projected allocations as soon as they are available. **Districts are also able to directly apply for Project SERV funds which can be used for a variety of disaster responses:** <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/applicant.html>

Superintendent's Office COVID-19 Outreach- Last Two Weeks

- Six calls with district and county superintendents
- Phone call with the Governor
- Phone call with Secretary DeVos
- Phone Call with Assistant Secretary Mark Schultz on Special Education
- Phone call with Deputy Education Secretary Zais and State Superintendents from ND, SD, WY, ID, and AK
- Seven press releases issued on OPI's actions and waiver requests
- Dozens of media interviews
- Dedicated COVID-19 education webpage with resources and updates
- Constant communication with the Governor's office, education associations, Congressional offices, the Department of Education, DPHHS, and the Montana Coronavirus task force

Follow the Office of Public Instruction on social media:  
For more information, contact [Dylan Klapmeier](#), 406-444-3559.

Assessment

COVID-19 FAQ

Visit the OPI's COVID-19 FAQ for statewide testing at this [LINK](#).

For more information, contact OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov, 1-844-867-2569.

Career and Technical Education

CTE Online Distance Learning

Family & Consumer Sciences

Family & Consumer Sciences Educators have access to resources and support to navigate online and distance learning through the following options. Emails with resources are sent out a few times a week from the FCS Education Specialist; these resources will also be posted on the OPI CTE website via a google doc.

There are two active FCS social media groups via Facebook with numerous resources, sharing, and networking. FCS professionals are also meeting via Zoom weekly to connect, brainstorm and facilitate discussions of best practices. Both professional organizations that many Montana FCS educators belong to, AAFCS and ACTE, have resources posted on their websites also. If your FCS teacher isn't connected, please ensure they reach out to Megan Vincent at mvincent2@mt.gov.

Industrial Technology

In the midst of this unprecedented COVID-19 situation, it is the goal and purpose of the OPI and CTE specialists to assist classroom teachers and support CTE programs as we are able.

In order to do provide support, Industrial Technology will be hosting a number of Zoom meetings to connect teachers, exchange ideas and brainstorm solutions to the challenges that all are facing.

Additionally, as resources are gathered, information is being disseminated to instructors and will be compiled and shared out on the <https://montanateched.weebly.com/> website. Several teachers have shared with me that they are taking advantage of the OSHA 10 training that the Montana Department of Labor has graciously offered to provide online.

The strength of our programs is in the people and the ideas that work to make them high quality opportunities for students and the tremendous energy and passion that they all share. Please reach out to Mike Houghton michael.houghton@mt.gov for assistance.

Health Science

Montana is a member of the National Consortium for Health Science Education, an association dedicated to furthering K-12 career exploration and certification in healthcare fields. To that end, two webinars were presented last week; one for state health science leads, and the second for all health science teachers across our 50 states.

Links to Google lesson plans developed and posted by health science teachers, as well as all the publishers of health science materials that have offered their services free of charge.

AES Education – Extended free trials- online curriculum - (Health Center 21)

<https://www.aeseducation.com/trial>

Cengage Publishing- MindTap curriculum - <https://cengage.com/covid-19-support/>

Goodheart-Wilcox – CTE curriculum – free <https://www.g-wlearning.com/healthsciences/>

ICEV- CTE curriculum online - <http://bit.ly/2U2beal>

Pearson CTE publishing – E-text free for schools with textbooks <http://bit.ly/2vyCwfk>

Today's Class – CTE curriculum – free until May 1st www.todaysclass.com

CareerSafe Online – More content for current customers <http://bit.ly/33vEU36>

F A Davis Company - May be advanced for health science level; for motivated teachers and students they are available <https://www.fadavis.com/product/davis-distance-learning-hub>

Another Health science presenter who has conducted trainings in Montana since 2009, has offered her Anatomy and Clay learning system to our health science teachers. Check out Starla's Teaching Tips. Starla is waiving her site license, but if you need clay and the printed cards that go with it, please let me know and I can help.

Anatomy in Clay - <https://www.anatomyinclay.com/free-resources>

National ACTE also has a plethora of ideas of online teaching.

Most of all, know that I am still working to gather solutions for industry-recognized credentialing, work-based learning, and alternative curriculum.

If you have any questions, contact Renee Erlandsen rerlandsen@mt.gov for assistance.

Agricultural Education

The Montana Agricultural Education teachers have continued to be supported through their Montana Ag Ed Network (MAGNET), [google site](#) where teachers can share resources, ask questions and access updated information.

Teachers have also been given many free online resources and content from the National FFA Organization, NAAE Communities of Practice, Ag Ed Discussion Lab, Owletts and other social media sites as well as our weekly Virtual Check-ins via Zoom. The Agricultural Education community continues to provide leadership for our teachers and students as well as working with our business and industry partners to make our students Montana Ready. Teachers or schools who need more support or have questions can reach out to Shannon Boswell at shannon.boswell@mt.gov or the MAGNET at agedadmin@opiconnect.org

Business Education

MBA Learning Center (MBA Research and Curriculum

Center): <https://www.mbaresearch.org/index.php/curriculum-teaching/mba-learning-center>
[\[mbaresearch.org\]](http://mbaresearch.org)

MBA Research is providing free unlimited student subscriptions for the [Learning Center LMS](https://www.mbaresearch.org/learning-center-lms)
[\[mbaresearch.us6.list-manage.com\]](https://www.mbaresearch.org/learning-center-lms) for all subscribers until June 30. The Learning Center holds over 200 ready-to-use lesson modules (LAPs) focused around business, marketing, ethics, and 21st century skills. Current subscribers can [click here \[mbaresearch.us6.list-manage.com\]](https://www.mbaresearch.org/learning-center-lms) for instructions on adding student accounts.

Schools that do not currently have a teacher subscription can [purchase for a special price of \\$200 \[mbaresearch.us6.list-manage.com\]](https://www.mbaresearch.org/learning-center-lms) for accounts expiring June 30, which also includes unlimited student subscriptions. The \$200 cost can be applied as a down payment toward the purchase of the Learning Center for the 2020-21 school year. For ordering questions or concerns, email service@mbaresearch.org. For technical issues, email helpme@mbaresearch.org.

Aquilla Social Media Mindset marketing curriculum: <https://aquillaed.com/cte-curriculum/social-media-mindset> [\[aquillaed.com\]](http://aquillaed.com)

In response to COVID-19, Aquilla is making their curriculum free for the remainder of the school year with no obligation to purchase to any school who is shutting down and needs online curriculum. Contact info@aquillaed.com.

KP digital curriculum in marketing (KP Education Systems):

KP is offering free access to its curriculum during the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. To participate, fill out the form at <http://www.kpcurriculum.com/covid19> [\[kpcurriculum.com\]](http://www.kpcurriculum.com).

Content Standards and Instruction

Online Learning Resources and Remote Learning Sharing Sessions

As we work to bring remote learning to our students during the COVID-19 pandemic, we know you want the opportunity to connect with other Montana educators to network, share resources, and ask questions.

Beginning Monday, March 23rd, the OPI began hosting remote learning sharing sessions using Zoom. There are multiple subject areas and grade levels to help accommodate K-12 educators and administrators.

[Session Schedule](#)

Contact OPICSI@mt.gov with any questions, suggest a topic, or volunteer to share your expertise.

OPI Learning Opportunities Portal

Visit the [Learning Opportunities Portal website](#) to find out about classes, workshops, and courses. The Portal is just one of the ways the OPI informs educators about upcoming professional learning opportunities in our state. We are updating with any cancellations or postponements as we are made aware of these changes.

Contact [Carli Cockrell](#) with any questions or to let us know about changes to your events.

Learning Hub

If you haven't already, [check out](#) what more than 12,000 Montana educators have experienced! Our Hub team is always adding and updating our self-paced and facilitated courses. Please check the [Learning Hub homepage](#) for a complete [listing](#) and [catalog](#).

Contact OPILearningHub@mt.gov with any questions.

Literacy Grant Information Update

UPDATED APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 17, 2020: Subgrant Applications Due to the OPI via US Mail. Any additional updates or changes to the grant timelines will be posted to [MCLSDP webpage](#). With school closures possibly extending into April, we will be monitoring guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on implementation and funding changes.

Contact MTLiteracyGrant@mt.gov with any questions.

Federal Programs

Regional Private School Trainings-POSTPONED

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the OPI Private School Regional Trainings have been postponed until May and will be conducted via Zoom. Invitations will be sent shortly.

For further information, please contact Jack O'Connor, Private School Ombudsman, Montana Office of Public Instruction at 406-444-3083 or joconnor2@mt.gov.

Federal Status for COVID-19 and Public Schools: Accountability and School Identification Waiver

- On **March 19, 2020**: The OPI Submitted an intent waiver letter to U.S. Department of Education for the provisions specific to state assessment, accountability, and reporting.
- On **March 26, 2020**: Pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the OPI submitted a one-year waiver for the provisions specific to state assessment, accountability, and reporting using the USED universal waiver form.
- On **March 26, 2020**: U.S. Department of Education issued a formal approval of the OPI waiver pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, of the following requirements.
 - Assessment requirements in section 1111(b)(2): the requirements to administer all required assessments in school year 2019-2020.
 - Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D): the requirements that a State annually meaningfully differentiate all public schools and the requirements to identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement and additional targeted support and improvement based on data from the 2019-2020 school year.
 - Report card provisions related to certain assessments and accountability in section 1111(h) based on data from the 2019-2020 school year.

Waiver Implications on the Accountability and School Identification

Any school that is identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement or additional targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year will maintain that identification status in the 2020-2021 school year and continue to receive supports and interventions consistent with the school's support and improvement plan in the 2020-2021 school year. For more information, contact julie.murgel@mt.gov, 406-444-3174

Finance

Updated School Election Information

NEW: Wednesday, April 1 (by 5pm): Deadline for mail ballot submitted to the Secretary of State

- Thursday, April 2nd (by 5 pm): Deadline for candidate withdrawal and deadline for write-in candidates
- Friday, April 3rd: Election administrator certifies the ballot or Election by Acclamation and publishes cancellation of election and deadline to notify election judges of appointment
- **NEW Monday, April 27th**- Monday, April 6th: Close of regular voter registration – coordinate the registration list and updates with the county election administrator
- **NEW Tuesday, April 28th**- Tuesday, April 7th: Start of late voter registration
- Thursday, March 26th through Saturday, April 25th: Notice of election is posted
- Wednesday, April 15th: Absentee ballots available
- Wednesday, April 15th through Monday, April 20th: Mail ballots mailed
- Saturday, April 25th through Sunday, May 3rd: Absentee/mail ballot counting notice posted

For more information, [Nicole Thuotte](#), Financial Specialist, 406-444-4524

Health Enhancement and Safety

School Nutrition

According to [guidance](#) from the USDA, if school facilities are closed unexpectedly during the school year for reasons provided in 42 U.S.C. 1761(c)(1), schools have options for feeding students. Schools are not required to provide meal service during school closures. The [OPI COVID-19](#) website is being updated regularly with school nutrition information. Programs should [contact their regional specialist](#) directly for other school nutrition questions & concerns.

Trauma Informed Educators Network

If you are on Facebook, there is an amazing Facebook group called [Trauma Informed Educators Network](#). It has over 23,000 people in it from all over the world. It was started by a principal in Nashville named Matthew Portal. He also is putting out a [great podcast](#) during this time. For more information please contact [Holly Mook](#).

Traffic Education

The OPI encourages the traffic education community to follow local, state, and national measures to remain safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Visit the OPI's [Driver Education](#) website for up to date guidance for traffic education programs or to access resources to support and enhance instruction. For more information, contact Tara Ferriter-Smith at tferriter@mt.gov or Patti Borneman at pborneman@mt.gov.

Indian Education

IEFA Best Practices Conference Cancelled

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the IEFA Best Practices Conference scheduled for May 3-5 in Billings has been cancelled. The OPI IEFA Unit hopes to provide remote PD opportunities in the near future and will consider other PD delivery methods and opportunities in the Fall. Registrants who have submitted payment will receive a full refund. Please be well and we hope to see you at next year's conference!

For more information, contact [Joan Franke](#), 406-444-3694.

IEFA Remote Learning Resources

To help teachers who are teaching remotely, the OPI IEFA Unit has emphasized remote learning resources as the [featured curriculum on our classroom resources](#) page. We hope you find this page helpful and will be adding lessons for students to do remotely in the coming weeks.

We encourage you to reach out to our office if you have a question regarding a resource, have a remote learning challenge, or feel we can be of assistance.

You can reach out to one of our [IEFA specialists](#) directly or contact [Joan Franke](#), 406-444-3694.

Licensure

Class 5A License Holders Expiring 6/30/2020

Educators that hold the one-year Class 5A license with an effective date of 7/1/2019 (expiration date of 6/30/20) have been emailed and advised of an expiration extension request. In May, OPI is taking a request to the Board of Public Education (BPE) to grant a one-year expiration extension due to the unavoidable disruption the COVID-19 has created. These educators will receive a follow up email upon conclusion of the BPE meeting advising them of the Board's decision. If the extension request is approved, an updated Class 5A license will be mailed to the educators with the revised expiration date. The Class 5A license is issued to educators seeking their initial MT license that meet all licensure requirements other than successful completion of the required Praxis.

Fingerprinting

Many law enforcement agencies are currently not providing fingerprint services due to COVID-19. Educators inquiring about applying for their Montana license are being advised to complete their online application and submit all other required documents. When they are able to complete the fingerprinting process, having everything else in place will expedite the progression of their license application.

Renewals

All professional development and or college courses applicable to license renewal must be earned during the validity period of the license, i.e. July 1, 2015 through August 31, 2020. There are a multitude of free, online, quality professional development resources available at the [OPI Learning Hub](#). Click [here](#) to renew or find additional renewal resources.

A reminder that helpful information may be found on our [Licensure](#) home page. Also, important resources, licensure forms, etc., are in the Useful Resources tab. For more information, contact Kristine Thatcher at kthatcher2@mt.gov or 406-444-2580.

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