



Dear Partners in Education,

August 8, 2017

- **Title IV A**

The Office of Public Instruction is currently seeking further input and feedback on Title IV A. Please review pages 68 -70 in the Montana draft plan and send input to ESSAinput@mt.gov.

- **Long Term Goals**

One section the OPI has received feedback on from many of you and has closely looked at is the long term goals section. A main concern is that student groups that struggle are expected to improve at greater rates; however, this is required and explicit in the law and guidance. Closing achievement gaps and civil rights are the essence of the ESSA law and it is very clear that greater rates of improvement are required for lower performing student groups. Montana is one of the states that is not expecting sub groups to get to the same proficiency level as all students because the OPI and partners in education considered where they are starting from and the large gap they have to work toward closing. Many states including Oregon, Colorado and Louisiana set the same expectation across the board for their student groups. Please see the [Long Term Goals Power Point](#) for further details on long term goals and the accountability system.

FEDERAL PEER REVIEW CRITERIA A.4.iii.a.3: Do the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for academic achievement take into account the improvement necessary for subgroups of students who are behind in reaching those goals to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency gaps, such that the State's **long-term goals require greater rates of improvement for subgroups of students that are lower achieving.**

- **Peer Review**

The OPI is analyzing the peer review feedback other states have received and are looking for common technical issues we can correct prior to submission. States that have received written formal feedback include: Tennessee, Oregon, New Mexico, New Jersey, Nevada, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Illinois, District of Columbia, Delaware, and Connecticut. The Department of Education has notified us that peer review feedback is no longer being written formally but will be discussed in a consultation. Once the OPI consults with peer reviewers, we have 15 days to respond. Then the OPI will work toward compliance or providing further information where appropriate and push back on areas that we do not intend to change because we feel they are written in the best way to serve all of Montana's students - and we do not intend to change.

- **Continued Collaboration**

The OPI will continue to meet with our partners in education throughout August to gain more feedback and input. Recent and upcoming meetings include: the Governor's office, MACIE Indian Education Council, School Administrators of Montana, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Leaders, OCHE Higher Education, PTA, Montana Library Association, Early Childhood Services, Head Start and MT-PEC education organizations: MREA, MASBO, SAM, MTSBA, MEA-MFT and MQEC.

Please send feedback, input and questions to ESSAinput@mt.gov