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Superintendent Arntzen Submits Montana's ESSA State Plan to Feds

1 message

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Superintendent Arntzen Submits Montana's ESSA State Plan to Feds: Commends Teamwork in Putting Montana Students First

September 14, 2017

HELENA—Today, Superintendent Arntzen submitted Montana's state plan under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to the U.S. Department of Education for their review. The plan and other ESSA information can be found at: <http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Academic-Success/Every-Student-Succeeds-Acts-ESSA>.

"Montana's state plan is the culmination of months of diverse community input from across the state about how we can best prepare all Montana students to succeed. All means all in Montana," Superintendent Arntzen said Thursday. "The OPI met with parents, educators, community leaders, tribal leaders, business leaders, legislators, and education advocates across Montana to ensure that our state plan truly reflects the education needs of our diverse communities."

Montana's state plan will:

- Support academic growth in all of Montana's unique student populations
- Engage families and communities
- Promote local control and flexibility
- Raise mental health and suicide prevention awareness
- Focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education beginning in middle school
- Increase student awareness of opportunities to be community, career, and college ready
- Recruit and retain high-quality teachers, especially in our rural communities

Below are quotes from various stakeholders about the importance of Montana's ESSA plan to their organizations:

"We need to return control of our children's education back to Montanans and back to the classroom where it belongs. I applaud Superintendent Arntzen for her leadership in crafting an educational plan with families, teachers and school administrators who play an active role in educating the future of our state."

-*Senator Steve Daines*

"The Montana Parent Teacher Association (Montana PTA) encourages and supports parents and families to be an integral part of a child's education. By creating comprehensive family engagement aligned with the six standards of family engagement, school districts will increase student achievement in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Montana PTA appreciates the opportunity to partner with the OPI, providing feedback and input, ensuring family engagement is part of the Montana State ESSA Plan."

-*Sheryl Scheafer, The Montana Parent Teacher Association (Montana PTA)*

"MREA is pleased with the level of input taken by the OPI Leadership from the field and education advocate stakeholders. Many revisions have been made throughout the process based on this input. We believe the MT ESSA Plan is representative of Montana school educators and school leaders who always keep the best interest of our students in mind."

-Dennis Parman, Executive Director of the Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)

"As a member of the original stakeholder's group that began the process of designing our state plan, I was keenly interested in ensuring that we were able to have more flexibility and local control in the ESSA process. From the beginning of the process until to the end, the OPI staff members and the other process facilitators were open to input and feedback from those of us who were actively engaged in public schools. While initially there was a degree of concern over the change in leadership at OPI, I found that the new leadership at OPI under Ms. Arntzen listened to input from practitioners in the field and to members of the original stakeholders' group. The end result is a state plan that combines flexibility and local control while satisfying all of the required components from the federal level. This new plan should provide a clear framework for schools as we strive to serve the needs of our students and communities."

-John Rouse, Principal at Potomac Elementary School

"The Montana School Counselors Association is pleased to have had involvement in the development of the ESSA plan and we are gratified that OPI recognizes the vital role that school counselors play in the success of ALL students."

-Renee' Schoening, President of the Montana Counselors Association

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