



Kirk Miller <samkm@sammt.org>

Local MASS Presidents--please share with your membership

1 message

Tharp, Timothy <Tim.Tharp@mt.gov> Tue, Sep 5, 2017 at 6:12 PM
 To: Scott Chauvet <schauvet@mhstigers.org>, Annette Hart <ahart@judithgap.k12.mt.us>, "Bart Hawkins (bhawkins@nsschools.org)" <bhawkins@nsschools.org>, Loren Dunk <ldunk@power.k12.mt.us>, Renee Rasmussen <rasmussen@bainvilleschool.k12.mt.us>, "davisschmidt@whitefishschools.org" <davisschmidt@whitefishschools.org>, "tharris@fromberg.k12.mt.us" <tharris@fromberg.k12.mt.us>, "nolson@jordanpublicschools.org" <nolson@jordanpublicschools.org>, Mike Perry <mperry@hotsprings.k12.mt.us>
 Cc: OPI MASSREPS <OPIMASSREPS@mt.gov>

TO: Local MASS Presidents
 FROM: Superintendent Elsie Arntzen
 DATE: September 5, 2017
 RE: Two big topics

As you get ready for your first MASS meetings of the year, I wanted to reach out to you personally, and ask that you pass this information on to your local MASS regions, regarding two big topics.

1. OPI Goals—Attached to this email are two documents which outline the goals that I have established for the Office of Public Instruction. Everything that we do will be filtered through these four over-riding themes in order to determine where we want to concentrate our time and efforts.

2. Budget—As you are well aware, the state is in an unprecedented budget situation where we are being asked to provide the Governor's Office and the legislative fiscal division with proposals on how we could cut funding by 10%. We already gave back 5% through the provisions of SB261.

We have been diligently working on this topic since presented with it at the end of last week and have been meeting daily to resolve just how this can be accomplished. We have also invited the members of MT-PEC to come meet with us to discuss how we can achieve this with the least amount of impact on schools. As a very brief budget primer, \$785 million flows through the OPI each year which is very roughly broken down as follows:

- Program 9 monies sent directly to schools \$744 million (not part of the 10%)
- Misc Prog 9 monies sent directly to schools \$30 million (eligible for the 10%)
- OPI Agency Operations \$9 million
- Montana Digital Academy (flows through OPI) \$2 million

So you see, we're dealing with some significant dollar amounts at stake and are sorting out our response to the Governor's Office. With the urgency on all of these decisions, I want to apologize for being unable to get the NW-

MASS meeting this week as I had previously planned on attending.

We have to submit our budget proposals to the Governor's Office by this Friday, but then we aren't likely to hear anything for sure until about September 25th when it goes through the legislative process.

Thank you for your continued patience on this.

ALSO—We know that there are schools that are being impacted by the smoke and fires across our state. There are provisions in MCA 20-9-806 regarding school closure which allow local trustees to declare one day without any penalty and then calls for 'reasonable efforts' to make up this time. If you are affected, please review this statute. In addition, please share any school closures due to emergency with Deputy Superintendent Tharp so that we can be aware of what is going on and see what assistance we may be able to coordinate from the state.



Timothy W. Tharp, Ed.D.

Deputy State Superintendent


Montana Office of Public Instruction

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2 attachments

 **OPI Goals List.pdf**
86K

 **OPI Goals Poster.pdf**
271K