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**MontCAS**  
**Montana Comprehensive Assessment**  
**System**  
**May 2008 Newsletter**

**2008-2009 MontCAS Testing Windows**

October 20 – November 21, 2008	English Language Proficiency (ELP) Grades K-12.
January 22 - March 6, 2009	NAEP, Grades 4 and 8, Reading, Math, and Science.
February 10 – March 25, 2009	CRT-Alternate, Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math; Grades 4, 8, and 10, Science.
March 2 – March 25, 2009	CRT, Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math; Grades 4, 8, and 10, Science.



**Thank You**

To presenters, participants, and sponsors of the 2008 OPI Assessment Conference, *Connecting Assessments and Classrooms*.

**Please save the date for the 2009 conference** which will be a combined training and assessment conference the week of January 26, 2009. More details will be available in the fall.

**Focus Groups Discuss Future Directions for Montana Statewide Student Assessment**

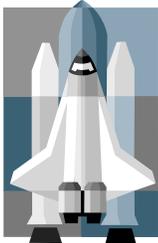
Thank you to focus group participants at the assessment conference for their contributions to the discussion and recommendations for future directions for statewide student assessment. The topics and concerns that were discussed will be developed into a questionnaire that will be distributed to Montana educators in September 2008.



## MontCAS CRT and CRT-Alternate

# Summer 2008

### CRT and CRT-Alternate Test Development Panels



#### Science Standard Setting Panels

Standard setting is the process of setting cut points for the proficiency levels of Novice, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient and Advanced. One panel per grade consists of 25 educators each.

- Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena
- June 10: CRT-Alternate, Grades 4, 8, and 10
- June 11-12: CRT, Grades 4, 8, and 10

#### CRT-Item Review Panels

Panels will review items to be field tested in the 2009 CRT test administration.

- Best Western Great Northern, Helena
- July 22-23
  - Reading and Math, Grades 3-8 and 10
  - Science, Grades 4, 8, and 10

**NOTE:** Some sessions are full; if you wish to be placed on a waiting list please contact one of the MP or OPI staff listed below.



**Each participant receives an honorarium, travel, lodging, and meal expenses, and renewal units.**



#### Registration is online:

<http://iregister.measuredprogress.org/>

Select Montana or Montana Alternate Assessment

**OR**

Contact one of the following to help you:

Nancy Hall at Measured Progress: [nhall@measuredprogress.org](mailto:nhall@measuredprogress.org) or 1-888-792-2741 **OR**

Gayle Allen at OPI, [GAllen2@mt.gov](mailto:GAllen2@mt.gov) or 1-406-444-3511 **OR**

Karen Richem at OPI, [krichem@mt.gov](mailto:krichem@mt.gov) or 1-406-444-0748 **OR**

Judy Snow, [jsnow@mt.gov](mailto:jsnow@mt.gov) or 1-406-444-3656

## MARS and CRT and CRT-Alternate Updated Schedule

**MARS** (Montana Analysis and Reporting System) will replace *iAnalyze* on June 2, 2008.

The table below includes updated information on the **MARS** report schedule.

Because of aggressive quality assurance practices, some data and reports will be posted online on **MARS** later than originally planned. This later posting will ensure the accuracy of the reports. Please note the date range of June 2 – June 6. All the reports should be posted on **MARS** by 5pm Montana time on June 6. Thank you for your cooperation.



	Date	Checklist
<b>MARS</b>	April 7, 2008	Schools may begin scheduling OPI provided training. A form to request training is online: <a href="http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/Forms/06TrainRqst.pdf">http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/Forms/06TrainRqst.pdf</a> If your system is interested in OPI provided training, please print the form and fax it to Karen Richem, 406-444-0743.
<b>MARS</b>	April 30, 2008	<b>MARS</b> training PowerPoint is posted online: <a href="http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/Assessment/CRT/08AnalyzeReportSystem.pdf">http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/Assessment/CRT/08AnalyzeReportSystem.pdf</a>
<b>MARS</b>	May 22, 2008	Updated password memos mailed by Measured Progress to System Test Coordinators
<b>MARS</b>	May 23, 2008	<i>User Guide</i> is posted on the Measured Progress iServices site <a href="http://iServices.MeasuredProgress.org">http://iServices.MeasuredProgress.org</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select "<b>Montana</b>" or "<b>Montana ALT</b>" (either works for both CRT and CRT-ALT) from the dropdown menu and click "Enter."</li> <li>• Select "Forms and Manuals"</li> <li>• Select MARS User Manual (pdf)</li> </ul>
<b>MARS</b> CRT	June 2, 2008	The following will be posted on <b>MARS</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ System student level Excel data file may be accessed by using the system username and password</li> <li>○ School roster reports on the interactive side may be accessed by using the school username and password.</li> </ul> Released item documents from the 2008 CRT will be posted online. The link will be emailed to system test coordinators by OPI. *Released Science items are included; Science test results will not be posted until September 2008
<b>MARS</b> CRT	June 2-6, 2008	During the date range of June 2 -6, the following will be posted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Summary Reports for the CRT and the CRT-Alternate Reading and Math Tests will be posted online on <b>MARS</b>. Reports include Roster and Item Level Report, School Summary Report, System Summary Report and System Roster data file.</li> <li>○ <i>2008 Report Interpretive Guide</i> will be posted online.</li> </ul>
<b>MARS</b> CRT	June 9, 2008	All system and school reports will be online on <b>MARS</b> .
<b>MARS</b> CRT	June 2-11, 2008	Schools and systems review online summary reports and contact OPI with questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Karen Richem: <a href="mailto:krichem@mt.gov">krichem@mt.gov</a> or 406-444-0748</li> <li>○ Judy Snow: <a href="mailto:jsnow@mt.gov">jsnow@mt.gov</a> or 406-444-3656</li> </ul>
<b>MARS</b> CRT	Sept. 2, 2008	Science results added to <b>MARS</b> .



## Something to JUMP About: CRT-Modified Grants Information

Thank you to Montana educators for encouraging the Office of Public Instruction to seek options for student participation in the Criterion-Referenced Test. The Montana Office of Public Instruction has received two grant awards to evaluate design approaches for assessments based on modified achievement standards. These assessments are targeted for students with IEPs who are not eligible for the CRT-Alternate but who are performing at low levels on the Criterion-Referenced Test even with standard accommodations. This student population is sometimes referred to as the 2% population and/or the Gap population. The grants' research will consider the following content areas and grades: Reading, Grade 10 and Reading and Math, Grades 7 and 8.

To complete this work, we need the partnership of Montana school systems, schools, and educators. Below is a schedule of the research and development activities. Each activity will be conducted professionally with strict adherence to ethical and legal requirements. Project activities will undergo review from a Human Subjects Review Board, ensuring that all activities are implemented in a respectful, professional manner that protects the confidentiality of all participants and "does no harm". All data will be aggregated and reported in such a way that no participating community, system, school, student, or teacher can be identified.

Date	Activity	Content and Grade
April 21-25, 2008	Researchers conduct cognitive labs.	Reading, Grade 10--completed
May-June 2008	Researchers collect a sample of IEPs for analysis. This sample is for research and is not part of any monitoring.	Reading and Math, Grades 7 and 8—in progress
May-June 2008	Identification of Montana Teacher Advisory Panel	Reading and Math, Grades 7 and 8—in progress
January 2009	Pilot Test Window	Reading, Grade 10
April 2009 (Tentative)	Researchers conduct cognitive labs.	Reading and Math, Grades 7 and 8
May 2009 (Tentative)	Beta Test Window	Reading and Math, Grades 7 and 8

Please share this information with educators in your districts and schools. The Office of Public Instruction will be contacting systems and schools to provide you with more information and to request your participation. Even better, please contact Judy Snow at the Office of Public Instruction to volunteer. We know from the communication from schools that these are important projects, and we are happy to work with you to find solutions.

## MontCAS English Language Proficiency (ELP) Test

### Planning for the October/November 2008 ELP Test Window

Below is a table of the materials and testing schedule for the 2008-2009 English Language Proficiency (ELP). OPI will provide training for ELP test administrators at the request of a system. If your system would like OPI to provide training, please contact Karen Richem well ahead of time. Her contact information is included in the table.



Date	Test Coordinator Checklist
August 1, 2008	Questar emails System Test Coordinators with information about ordering Level 1 (beginner form), Braille, and Large Print (LP) test forms.
August 4-22, 2008	System Test Coordinators fax orders for Level 1, Braille, or Large Print (LP) forms to Questar: 866-460-9778.
September 4, 2008	Questar ships test administration training materials to System Test Coordinators
September 12 – October 18, 2008	System Test Coordinators provide training for test administrators (examiners). If your system would like OPI to provide training, please contact Karen Richem, <a href="mailto:krichem@mt.gov">krichem@mt.gov</a> or 406-444-0748
October 6, 2008	Questar ships testing materials to System Test Coordinators
<b>October 20 – November 21, 2008</b>	<b>English Language Proficiency (ELP) Testing Window</b>
December 5, 2008	Deadline for systems to ship testing materials to Questar
February 2009	Questar ships reports to System Test Coordinators.

## Other Information

### 2008 AYP Schedule

Prior to the start of the 2008-2009 school year, the Office of Public Instruction will release Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations as required by federal law under the No Child Left Behind Act. As part of the AYP process, the Office of Public Instruction sends proposed AYP determinations to school districts. This is followed by a two-week appeals period during which time school districts may appeal their proposed determinations by submitting statistical information and evidence to justify any change in the proposed determinations.

If you have questions about AYP, please contact

Assistant Superintendent Nancy Coopersmith  
[ncoopersmith@mt.gov](mailto:ncoopersmith@mt.gov) OR 406-444-5541



Planned Dates	AYP Checklist
July 18, 2008	OPI mails proposed AYP determinations to school districts.
August 5, 2008	Deadline for school districts to request an appeal
August 18, 2008	OPI mails final AYP determinations to school districts.
August 21, 2008	Public release of AYP determinations

### OPI Assessment Contacts

- + Gayle Allen, Administrative Specialist, [gallen2@mt.gov](mailto:gallen2@mt.gov), 406-444-3511
- + Karen Richem, Assessment Specialist, [krichem@mt.gov](mailto:krichem@mt.gov), 406-444-0748
- + Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, [jsnow@mt.gov](mailto:jsnow@mt.gov), 406-444-3656
- + FAX: 406-444-0743



**Have a great summer!!!!**