From:	Cathi Rude
To:	OPI Waivers
Subject:	testing waiver
Date:	Tuesday, October 01, 2013 9:18:58 AM
Importance:	High

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to support the waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education from Superintendent Denise Juneau to allow Montana students to participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) field test in the spring of 2014. The approved waiver would permit students to take the new online assessment rather than the Montana Criterion Referenced Test (CRT). Eliminating the requirement for the CRT would provide the following benefits to education in Montana:

1. Add instructional time for students by eliminating double testing of students;
2. Test computer hardware and network infrastructure to determine gaps and needs;
3. Provide professional development for teachers as they review the delivery, content, vocabulary, and structure of the SBAC assessment;
4. Provide a more effective and efficient transition to the 2014-2015 assessment; and
5. Students will be assessed on the standards being taught in Montana classrooms.

Our students and teachers have so much more than testing to focus on including their futures. Granting this waiver would allow them to do just that by focusing on what lies ahead and not on a system of assessment that is no longer applicable. Let's set them up for success rather than failure.

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*Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way. ~**George Evans***