From: Ruth Uecker
To: OPI Waivers
Subject: Waivers
Date: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 12:45:00 PM

Dear OPI,

As the Superintendent of Great Falls Public Schools, 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).

I think having all students participate in the field testing of the new SBAC tests will provide valuable experience for students, teachers, and administrators so they will better know what to expect the next year. It is also a good idea to have all our students and schools represented in the field testing to make sure it is well-suited and fair to students in our state.

Additionally, by eliminating the requirement for the CRT, the following benefits to education in Montana will be realized:

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

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