From: lheld@shieldsvalleyschools.org
To: OPI Waivers
Subject: Support the waiver
Date: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 1:36:16 PM

I am the K-12 Professional School Counselor and the testing coordinator for my small district. I have been coordinating assessment since before the implementation of the CRT and have studied the transition to the SBAC assessment carefully. Our district has been working hard for the past several years aligning our curriculum to the common core state standards. 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.

Sincerely,
Lisa Held
Shields Valley Schools