From:	Dean Jardee
To:	OPI Waivers
Subject:	Support for Waiver Request
Date:	Monday, September 30, 2013 10:41:43 PM

October 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

As a homeowner and taxpayer, parent of two teenage children, and Montanan educator, I am writing to share my support of 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 field test in the spring of 2014.

Many years ago when the No Child Left Behind portion of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was enacted, it proved to have good intent, but came with knowledge that as we neared the 2014 testing period, more and more schools would not meet adequate yearly progress. I work at a school that has met AYP every single year until this year. I am naturally an optimist, but in all reality, there is no way that schools will be able to meet the 100% student proficiency expectation in 2014. It is also a fact that because of Montana's adoption of the Common Core Standards, schools will be required to test differently beginning in 2014. If the waiver is not requested and granted, Montana schools will be administering two major standardized assessments within a 2-3 month period. This is incredibly stressful for students and staff members and wastes valuable instructional time.

I support an approved waiver because it would permit students to take the new online assessment rather than the Montana Criterion Referenced Test. Doing so would result in the following:

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.

I urge you to seriously consider this waiver request. As an educator of 17 years, a parent of 16 years, an adjunct professor of assessment classes in the Montana University System, and an advocate of student learning, I truly believe this waiver request and approval is the best solution for Montana children.

Sincerely,

Dean V. Jardee

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