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Montana  
Office of Public Instruction  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

## School Finance



### Spring 2012 Student Count for ANB – AIM Data Used to Populate MAEFAIRS

MAEFAIRS will be open soon for reporting the Spring Student Count for ANB (Average Number Belonging). The official count date is **Wednesday, February 1, 2012**. If February 1 is not a scheduled pupil instruction day for your district, use the next school day for your enrollment count. Student Count for ANB reports must be submitted to the MAEFAIRS system **no later than February 10, 2012**. Send a copy of the submitted report to your county superintendent.

AIM data will be used to feed student count, to the MAEFAIRS system for ANB calculations. We encourage AIM specialists to have all AIM data entered and verified for import into the MAEFAIRS system. AIM specialists and MAEFAIRS registered users should work closely to ensure accurate and verifiable data is submitted to the OPI by the February 10 due date.

Please read the document located at [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about enrollment and ANB.

Student Count for ANB reporting instructions are available on the OPI website at this link: [CLICK HERE](#)

For more information contact Nica Merala, (406) 444-4401 or [nmerala@mt.gov](mailto:nmerala@mt.gov).

### Student Count for ANB – Clarification of “10-Day Rule”

A district may count an enrolled student who is absent on the official count date, but only if the count-date absence is less than the 11th consecutive absence (excused or unexcused) and the student is still enrolled in the district. See 10.20.102, Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM)

The commonly-called "10-day-rule" should not be used as a grace period to keep a student in enrolled status if the student has left the district. For example, do not use the "10-day-rule" to count a student when, within 10 days of the count date, the student:

- (a) has enrolled in another district,
- (b) has discontinued attendance pursuant to verbal or written notice given to the district,
- (c) is otherwise unable to continue in attendance due to death, detention, etc.
- (d) has had his/her records transferred to another school.

The "10-day-rule" should be applied only for the purposes of the official enrollment count (i.e., to determine which students can be counted in the enrollment for calculating ANB). OPI is not aware of any law, rule, or regulation that requires a district to routinely un-enroll or "drop" a student when the student reaches his/her 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive absence. Again, apply the "10-day-rule" only for the purposes of determining which students can be included in the count.

ARM 10.20.102(10), provides an exception to the 10-day-rule. Extenuating circumstances for students who do not meet the criteria for inclusion in the official enrollment count but would support a variance should be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction by a responsible school official *prior* to the official enrollment count date for consideration of inclusion of the student in the enrollment count for ANB purposes beyond the 10th day of absence.

For more information contact Nica Merala, (406) 444-4401 or [nmerala@mt.gov](mailto:nmerala@mt.gov).

### **Montana Youth Challenge (MYC) Students**

A school district may claim one-half time enrollment under certain conditions for youth who are residents of the district and who attend the Montana Youth Challenge (MYC) program. A school district may include a student attending the MYC program in its ANB count if:

- The school district has entered into an interlocal cooperative agreement with the MYC program; and

- The interlocal agreement complies with Title 7, chapter 11, part 1 of Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and
- The student is enrolled in a public school in the student's district of residence; and
- The credits taken at the MYC program are approved by the resident school district; and
- The credits meet the resident district's requirement for graduation at a school in the district; and
- The credits are taught by an instructor who has a current and appropriate Montana high school certification; and
- The credits are reported by the MYC program to the student's resident school district.

See also 20-9-707 and 20-9-311(12), MCA.

For more information contact Nica Merala, (406) 444-4401 or [nmerala@mt.gov](mailto:nmerala@mt.gov).

### **FY2011-12 Second Semester Bus Inspections**

Buses must pass inspection by January 31, 2012 in order to be eligible for full funding for the second semester. Please schedule inspections early to allow time for re-inspection by January 31, if necessary.

Pre-filled bus inspection forms (TR-13) for the second semester may be printed from the transportation system.

For more information contact Donell Rosenthal, (406) 444-3024 or [drosenthal@mt.gov](mailto:drosenthal@mt.gov)

### **IRS Mileage Rate for 2012**

Effective January 1, 2012, the reimbursement rate for personal car mileage driven in connection with State business is 55.5 cents per mile. The rate is authorized by 2-18-503, MCA and is made in conjunction with the official change by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS announcement is available at the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

For more information contact Rebecca Phillips (406) 444-0783 or [rphillips2@mt.gov](mailto:rphillips2@mt.gov)

### **FY2010-11 Federal A-133 Audits Due March 31, 2012**

A-133 "Federal" audits for FY2010-11 are due to the OPI by March 31, 2012. This affects districts and cooperatives that spent more than \$500,000 of federal money (including USDA commodities) during FY2010-11.

For districts and cooperatives that spent less than \$500,000 of federal funds and received more than \$500,000 of revenue under all sources during that year, audits for FY2010-11 are due June 30, 2012.

Audited financial statements must comply with national reporting requirements passed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) under Statement No. 34. For more information about GASB 34, see the GASB 34 webpage at: [CLICK HERE](#)

Click on Accounting (left side of screen), then click on the GASB34 tab.

For more information contact Rebecca Phillips (406) 444-0783 or [rphillips2@mt.gov](mailto:rphillips2@mt.gov)

### **Payment of One-Time Incentive Funds for Districts Participating in Multidistrict Cooperatives**

Senate Bill 329 and House Bill 2 appropriated \$2 million for the biennium for one-time payments to school districts participating in multidistrict cooperatives as of December 31, 2012. The purpose is to contribute to interlocal cooperative funds provided for in 20-3-363, MCA. Payments will be allocated to districts based on the proration of each district's FY2013 general fund BASE budget to the total BASE budgets for all districts participating in multidistrict cooperatives.

A district must be participating in a multidistrict cooperative in FY2013 in order to be eligible for a portion of the \$2 million appropriation. The prime applicant (prime agency) of the cooperative must send a copy of the finalized multidistrict agreement and the name of each participating district to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Please send this information to Denise Ulberg, OPI School Finance Division, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501. School districts have until December 31, 2012 to submit the required paperwork.

However, the OPI will make a partial preliminary payment to school districts in mid to late August 2012 based on the written agreements

it receives as of July 31, 2012.

After the December 31, 2012 deadline, OPI will recalculate the final distribution and send final payments to all school districts eligible for the incentive funding.

For more information, please contact Denise Ulberg, (406) 444-1960 or [dulberg@mt.gov](mailto:dulberg@mt.gov).

### **Reconcile County Treasurer Reports to District Records**

In 10.10.501(3), ARM, each school district is required to reconcile ending cash, investments, cash receipts and cash disbursements reported by the county treasurer with the district's records for all funds. Any difference shall be documented and adjustments to the school district or county treasurer's records made as necessary.

School district clerk/business managers should strive to reconcile the cash balances in the district's accounting records to the county treasurer's cash reports on a monthly basis. OPI has some spreadsheets available on our website at [CLICK HERE](#) to help with this important task.

Spreadsheets include:

- Fund 15 Recap – Reconciling Cash in the Miscellaneous Programs Fund
- Reconciling Cash to the County Treasurer
- Student Activity Fund Recap

For more information, contact Rebecca Phillips, (406) 444-0783 or [rphillips2@mt.gov](mailto:rphillips2@mt.gov)

### **Loan Repayment Assistance Available to Eligible Teachers**

Did you know that the State of Montana provides loan repayment assistance to teachers who teach in critical shortage areas at impacted schools? An eligible educator can receive repayment assistance up to \$3,000 annually for four years. For the 2011-12 school year, the following education fields are impacted by educator shortages: Special Education, Career and Technical Education, Mathematics, Music, Science, Speech-Language Pathologists, School Counselors, and World Languages. To be eligible for loan repayment assistance, a teacher must be employed full-time in a public school that is designated as impacted by critical shortages, a special

education cooperative, the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, the Montana Youth Challenge Program, or a state youth correctional facility. The teacher must also hold a valid educator license and have an outstanding loan balance on an educational loan made by a federal loan program. For a list of the 576 public schools that have been designated as impacted by critical shortages, click on this link [CLICK HERE](#) and go to page 9. Applications for loan repayment assistance will be available on February 1 through the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program.

For more information, contact Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff, (406) 444-3168

## **GEMS**

The 'Student Achievement' domain in GEMS has been uploaded into the new data warehouse and is continues to undergo User Acceptance Testing (UAT).

The GEMS Portal will be presented at the Assessment and Data Conference in January 2012. Sessions will be held to present the functionality of GEMS and how to use the new web portal and business intelligence tools. Additionally, two keynote speakers from Microsoft will discuss data warehousing and how education can benefit from having access to longitudinal data. An appreciation luncheon for our participating stakeholders and advisory groups is also planned.

The design and development of the 'Student Characteristics' domain has also begun. Data sets included in this next domain are Enrollment, Homeless, Neglected and Delinquent Students, Migrant Students and Limited English Proficient.

The OPI extends many thanks to all of our stakeholders who have participated in the GEMS project in many ways. We always welcome more volunteers to become part of our team and help us make GEMS a statewide success.

For more information contact Jamey Ereth at [jereth@mt.gov](mailto:jereth@mt.gov)

## **School Staffing Project**

The OPI is in the process of testing the Montana State Educator Information System (MSEIS), the new Educator Licensure system. The system will automate and improve many tasks related to

licensing educators. This system will also provide greater electronic access by school district personnel to the educator licensure system, including a feature for school administrators to inform licensure staff when schools are trying to hire someone with a pending licensure application. Testing is going very well and the new system will be in production in April 2012.

Development of the new accreditation and master schedule module, which will integrate with the MSEIS, is also underway. This module will collect compensation (Terms of Employment) information and personnel assignments for individual school district employees, highly qualified teacher status, FTE information and also student rosters. Through this collection, the School Employment ID (SEID) will also be generated. We have begun the detailed requirements gathering phase of this project. In an attempt to reduce the burden on school districts, the intent is to develop file formats to allow an upload of this information from school district's local systems, as much as possible. Manual entry screens will also be available for submitting the data. We will be requesting feedback on these file formats as soon as they are available.

Through this project, the OPI will also implement the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Course Codes, which will be the means for linking teachers to students. In January, the OPI will provide a list of NCES courses to be used by schools and a tool to map the current course offerings to the NCES courses. The current plan is to have this new module in place in late summer 2012, in time for 2012 fall reporting.

The OPI is currently working with an advisory group of districts to develop a process for collecting actual salaries and benefits information for all district employees (SB329). The first collection for all districts will be in the fall of 2013 during the Trustees Financial Summary (TFS) process.

If you would be willing participate on a team to provide input on this project or if you have questions, please contact Kellee English, School Staffing Project Manager, at (406) 444-1625 or [kenglish@mt.gov](mailto:kenglish@mt.gov).

### **Useful Links**

#### ***State Entitlement Payments to Schools***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_9](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_9)

***School Accounting Manual***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_3](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_3)

***Forms and Publications & Tuition***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_10](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_10)

***Pupil Transportation***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/Pupil\\_Transportation/index.html](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/Pupil_Transportation/index.html)

***Student Count for ANB***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_8](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_8)

***Audit Information***

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_4](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_4)

***OPI Calendar***

<http://opi.mt.gov/Calendar/calendar.php>

**OPI School Finance Division**

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## About Our Division

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"The Montana Office of Public Instruction provides vision, advocacy, support and leadership for schools and communities to ensure that all students meet today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities."

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