**NEWS FROM: *Montana Small Schools Alliance***

**UPDATE: May/June 2024**

**Happy Teacher Appreciation Week!**

Message from the Director:

Congratulations on a successful 2023-2024 school year!

You may have a few weeks of school left, but you are getting very close to summer vacation. This is the last newsletter for the year, starting up again in August.

I know for many this has been a rough Spring. Budgets, enrollment unknowns, and of course all the testing that comes this time of year. But, just know as long as some of these days are, you are making a difference and you are appreciated.

I recently attended an event where there was a lot of talk about education, teacher needs, and how to best show appreciation for the work you do every single day. There were lots of ideas, some “well let’s do that”, and some “great, but how do we do that” comments. The bottom line however was that we all know you are not shown the appreciation, the compensation, the gratitude that you deserve.

Personally, I can’t do much to solve compensation, but I can and do (every chance I get) appreciate you. I tell anyone who will listen how much our rural teachers do. That you and your staff are the backbone of education, and that because of you Montana has students who are well prepared and go on to do great things. Thank you!

It is with gratitude that I tell you, “job well done”, and it is with joy that I wish you a wonderful summer vacation.

**Thank you for all you do for our students!**

Janelle

**"Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened.” Dr. Suess**

Remember to check out our Facebook page and add news from your school! [Facebook.com/mtsmallschools](http://facebook.com/mtsmallschools)

**2024-2025 Standards and Workshop**

Sign up now for the August Standards Workshops on the MSSA website.

Please remember that the **Standards Workshops are mandatory**.

Plan your August vacations accordingly. These are in person trainings only! And, for added incentive- **Thanks to StopIt Solutions one free iPad will be given away at each Standards Workshop!** Plus our regular prize drawings.

Standards Dates and Locations

August 5, Miles City- Miles City Community College

August 7, Big Timber- Ambulance Barn

August 9, Helena- University of Montana

August 12, Kalispell- Springhill Suites

**MAPS News from NWEA**

Please see the attached information from NWEA regarding MAPS testing. Our new contact Rick Weber is working to keep us in the loop, and communicate without confusion. He realizes some information has been sent directly to schools and wants to clear up that confusion. See the attached information. **Sign up is available for the August 6, 2024, free workshops. 40 participant max.**

| **From NWEA-**  [**MAP - Montana expansion of the Enhanced Item Selection Algorithm**](https://connection.nwea.org/s/nwea-news/16-state-expansion-of-the-enhanced-item-selection-algorithm-MCKLJPL3UN3RACFCGOFHLE4JQI7M?language=en_US#:~:text=The%20enhanced%20item%20selection%20algorithm%20is%20designed%20to%20prioritize%20items,to%20fulfill%20the%20test%20blueprints)    [**MAP Accelerator end of life transition**](https://connection.nwea.org/s/nwea-news/map-accelerator-end-of-life-transition-MCRFIXV64YEFDDRHJCMFSJJEG7CY?language=es)  **Discovery Education**    **Days of Discovery-**  **Discovery Education has announced TWO amazing days of learning in Montana this summer. Free professional learning to all teachers, administrators, and other educators in Montana Public Schools. This is through a partnership with OPI who has purchased the resources for you! For more information and registration see the attached flyers. (Miles City on August 6, the day after our Standards workshop, and August 8 in Helena, the day before our Standards workshop there.)**    **April Mental Health Newsletter from the Cook Center**  Discover how to nurture resilient minds and foster emotional intelligence in your children as you help them navigate mental health at any stage. We hope the **May Mental Health Newsletter** ([English](https://app.box.com/s/fl9cdhdj3im1kw3abahp982he317ljsr)/[Spanish](https://app.box.com/s/mvpmwhi7nfljezbge2ipw38za80htwd7)) brings you insights and expert advice to nurture your child's mental well-being. From toddlers to teens, we'll discuss navigating the challenges, and concerns around mental health and wellness.  **Hutterite Colony Educator Conference**  August 7, 2024- The event is open to Hutterite Colony Teachers, German teachers, and the administrators who serve the colonies- whether members or not. Mona Shortman is the opening keynote and breakout sessions throughout the day on the topics of Special Education, ELL, multi-grade classrooms, technology integration, and more. Go to gtccmt.org to register.  **Golden Triangle Summer Institute**  Registration is open for the 2024 GTCC Summer Institute. There are many great courses both in-person and online. Courses may be taken for 15 OPI Renewal Units or 1 college credit through MSU Northern. Register today at gtccmt.org and click: Summer Institute.  **Teacher Residency Program Recruitment**  The OPI is actively recruiting for the third year of the [Resident Teacher program](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vb3BpLm10Lmdvdi9FZHVjYXRvcnMvTGljZW5zdXJlL01vbnRhbmEtVGVhY2hlci1SZXNpZGVuY3kiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwNDI2LjkzOTUxMDcxIn0.jNW9-u6VUdHYAM9zyP2R9SueM-febe8Wl7uDFaQRyeg/s/2176165291/br/241451395846-l), a comprehensive year-long student teaching initiative designed to provide aspiring educators with immersive, hands-on experience in real classroom settings. This full-year student teaching program aims to foster the growth and development of future educators while simultaneously supporting the needs of schools and districts.  The Resident Teacher program is structured to offer a symbiotic relationship between the resident teacher, mentor educators, and the school community. Resident teachers are selected through a collaborative process and are paired with experienced mentor teachers to facilitate their professional growth and learning.  Throughout the duration of the residency placement, the resident teacher will actively engage in classroom instruction, curriculum development, student assessment, and other essential aspects of teaching under the guidance and mentorship of seasoned educators. The goal is to provide them with a well-rounded experience that prepares them for a successful and lasting career in education, striving to improve the recruitment and retention rates of Montana teachers.  If your school is interested in participating in our Resident Teacher program for the 2024-25 school year, please contact Krystal Smith to discuss the details further and answer any questions you may have.  Below is the link to complete the district survey if you're interested in participating.  [https://forms.gle/E9H5w2S58GVDV9y17](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZm9ybXMuZ2xlL0U5SDV3MlM1OEdWRFY5eTE3IiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDQyNi45Mzk1MTA3MSJ9.G_lbG4BCnuT6Vnj-uCZ1Wkw2k0fUDWjGrkjd2WbwdSE/s/2176165291/br/241451395846-l)  **2025 Teacher of the Year Nominations**  The 2025 Montana Teacher of the Year applications opened on April 8, 2024. All Montanans are encouraged to fill out the simple [nomination form](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDgsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZG9jcy5nb29nbGUuY29tL2Zvcm1zL2QvZS8xRkFJcFFMU2ZKY1ZnSEZqTktQckRzNVVWNDlVc1ZsMElyWVQ1ejN4STN2YjNVRjR3cjVCWU5YUS92aWV3Zm9ybT91c3A9c2ZfbGluayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDA0MjYuOTM5NTEwNzEifQ.ym9xNrxOUPKI-L-8beR4B_ctsE0xOIrz6prGx55HCFY/s/2176165291/br/241451395846-l) before May 10, 2024. Teachers may self-nominate through the form as well. All nominated teachers will be contacted and asked to fill out an application. Applications should be sent to MTTOY@mt.gov. As of April 24, 2024, there were 28 nominations submitted to OPI.  The 2025 Montana Teacher of the Year timeline is:   * May 10, 2024 Nominations due * June 21, 2024 Applications due to MTTOY@mt.gov * July-August 2024 Applications reviewed by committees * Mid-September 2024 Finalists selected * Mid-September 2024 Finalists interviewed by state committee, MT TOY selected * October 2024 National Teacher of the Year Application Due to CCSSO * February 2025 MT TOY begins duties and NTOY activities   For more information, please contact Brian O’Leary, TOY Coordinator, at brian.o'[leary@mt.gov](mailto:leary@mt.gov). |
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