

NEWS FROM: *Montana Small Schools Alliance*

UPDATE: October 2023

Message from the Director:

I hope you are all enjoying the start of fall weather and the change of seasons. I hope we don't change too fast- I love the fall colors and the crisp but not snowy air.

I know it has been a busy start to the year, getting to know your students, early assessments, and long days of planning. Thanks for the time you put into the success of our students.

Fall is also the time for school events. Homecomings, Fall Festivals, field trips, and many more. I traveled to Oregon last week for my high school class reunion. It is hard for me to believe, but yes, it was my 50th reunion! It certainly does not seem that long ago.

It was a fun time, and great to catch up with those I had not seen for many years, and some I had not seen since graduation. Needless to say we had all changed a lot. I went to a smaller high school, with 90 in my graduating class, 63 attended the reunion, a good turnout. Since we were small we knew each other's families, siblings, etc., it was easy to catch up and fill in the blank years.

Small schools have a huge advantage when it comes to connections with not only our students but the families we work with. Those connections last a very long time, I can attest to at least 50 years. I am so happy I was able to attend and see all those people who were part of my life for many years, at least a couple dozen of us who went 1st-12th grade together.

Besides the physical changes we all have had, it was also very noticeable that attitude plays a big factor in how we age mentally. We were all basically the same age, but there were miles of difference in how everyone handles aging.

Positive attitude, seeing life as a wonderful challenge, and surrounding yourself with family, friends and activities/hobbies seems to be the key to staying young at heart if not on the calendar.


Most of you have a very long time until you encounter a 50th reunion, but I can guarantee you it is a wonderful memory you won't want to miss.

Stay positive, keep busy, and surround yourself with those you love and care about. It truly makes a world of difference today and down the road!

Thank you for all you do for our students!

Have a great fall,

Janelle

"Keep calm and scary on!" Author Unknown **Happy Halloween!** 

Newsletter Attachments

Attached to this newsletter are the following documents and information. Please take the time to read them.

Library Newsletter

Counseling Newsletter

Montana Cares- survey, handouts on the Grant and opportunities for our schools.

NWEA- October Newsletter

Discovery Education-

Masonic Grant Opportunity

November Workshops

The November workshops are just around the corner. These workshops will all be in Zoom format on November 2, 3, and 6, 2023. The November workshop is divided into two topics, Discovery Education curriculum and materials, and Writing Across the Curriculum. (**See the Discovery Education information below**).

You can sign up on the website anytime.

Please don't wait until the last minute to sign up! And remember, if you are an MSSA member we pay for your substitute.

Discovery Education

Some information from Discovery Education will be sent to you in the next few days. You will need this information for the November workshops.

NWEA News and Information

Attached to this newsletter, NWEA has shared their monthly newsletter with us. This includes information on resources that can be helpful when navigating and using MAPS.

Below is information sent from NWEA on how to add or change users or roles.

Here are the instructions below for your districts that may need to add additional roles, adding a user and deleting a user. Please feel free to add to your newsletter or send directly to districts.

The power to add additional MAP roles to staff is within your school/district and done by those with either the System Administrator, Data Administrator, or District Assessment Coordinator role as designated in the MAP system.

Give Additional Roles to a User

1. Log in to MAP, choose Rostering in the left corner and select Manage Users. Type in name and click search.
2. Select name and click View/Update.

3. In the User Role section, under Available Roles, select a role that you want to assign this user, then click Add.
4. Click Submit.

Add a User

1. Log in to MAP, choose Rostering in the left corner and select Manage Users. Type in name and click search.
2. Select name and click Create User. Complete fields and roles needed.
3. Click Submit.

Deleting a User

3. Log in to MAP, choose Rostering in the left corner and select Manage Users. Type in name and click search.
4. Select name and click View/Update.
5. Click Delete.

** If all of your staff with the MAP system roles of System Administrator, Data Administrator, or District Assessment Coordinator are no longer at your school/district, contact your NWEA Account Manager or Partner Support for assistance.

OPI Early Learning Collaborative

The OPI is creating an Early Literacy Collaborative, in order to support the OPI's implementation of [HB 352](#), a bill that provides for early literacy interventions for identified students leading up to grade three. HB 352 intends for strong collaboration between government agencies, schools, families, educators, educator preparation programs, and communities.

The focus of the OPI's collaborative will be to provide guidance for implementation of the school and home-based literacy intervention programs determined by the Board of Public Education. In addition, the collaborative will provide data and feedback to the Board of Public Education's Early Literacy Advisory Council. The OPI's Early Literacy Collaborative will meet virtually monthly, starting in mid-October. If you are interested in participating in this exciting opportunity, please complete [this form](#).

For more information, please contact Christy Mock-Stutz, Assistant Superintendent, at christy.mock-stutz@mt.gov.

Imagination Library Expansion

Advancing her initiatives as Montana's first lady, Susan Gianforte today announced the statewide launch of the Imagination Library of Montana in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. The non-profit program boosts early childhood literacy by providing free high-quality, age-appropriate books to Montana children.

"Literacy is critical for our kids and their development. When parents read to their kids or when a child reads, it engages them, it fires their imagination, and sparks their

curiosity,” First Lady Susan Gianforte said. “I’m proud of the partnership we’ve developed with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library and local organizations throughout Montana. Working together, we’ll make sure all our youngest kids have access to reading resources so they can dream, grow, and reach their full potential.”

Dolly Parton said, “I’m so excited to be launching my Imagination Library statewide in Montana! I want to send my very special thanks to First Lady Susan Gianforte for her partnership in making this amazing gift available to children and families across the state.”

Through the partnership, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library will provide a free book each month to any Montana child, ages 0 to 5 years old, who is registered with the organization. A child may be registered at imaginationlibrary.com.

The partnership will assist programs already in place while also expanding programs statewide to every zip code in all of Montana’s 56 counties.

The program has been widely researched, and results demonstrate its positive impact on early childhood development and literacy skills. Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

Boosting literacy to empower more Montana children and promoting and expanding access to STEM education, particularly for girls and students in our rural communities, are the first lady’s chief initiatives.

For more information, or to register a child, please visit imaginationlibrary.com.

This October, may your treats be many and your tricks be few. Hope you have a sweet Halloween and your candy supply lasts you well into the Christmas season.