

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

**UPDATE: March 2023**

Message from the Director:

 Happy St Patrick's Day!

Happy Spring!

Just kidding! Well at least it is almost Daylight Savings Time, and it will officially be spring on March 20, 2023. I know it doesn't feel like it when most of us still have snow on the ground but really, spring is coming. I promise!

With longer days and better weather, I always feel a sense of hope in the air. A hope for warmer days, for feeling healthy, and for enjoying all that nature has to bring. Blooming flowers, budding trees, newborn calves and sitting outside without a hat and gloves (well maybe not for a while yet). I live in a neighborhood and it is always nice to actually see my neighbors for more than a glimpse as we are running to the car or putting out the garbage. It is like we all emerge from our warm cocoons and become friendly humans again, and I like that.

I know that for most of our teachers, spring is a busy time of worrying about what has to be done before the end of the year, scheduling field trips, talking with parents for future planning, and testing, and more testing. It is the start of the race to the finish.

Please take time to cherish the minutes you have with your students. To enjoy the journey you are on and to give them moments they can remember for years to come. We all look back at our school experiences with a different lens and yet all of us can remember a special teacher, a special project, or a special adventure we had in school. Let's make sure our students have those from this year!

Wishing you a wonderful start to spring!

Thanks for all you do,

Janelle 

## **Montana Cares Help App Now Available for Sign Up**

Are you interested in becoming an early adopter for the Montana Cares?

For more information and to sign up, see the attached flier. Completely free for MSSA member schools.

***“Some old fashioned things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat.”*** *Laura Ingalls Wilder*

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### **April Workshops In Person and Zoom Dates**

#### **Register Now!**

*The format for the April workshops has changed to include one Zoom option, and three in person sessions.*

#### **Mathematics Instruction**

*April 14, 2023- Miles City (Miles Community College)*

*April 17, 2023- Big Timber (Ambulance Station)*

*April 18, 2023- Zoom*

*April 20, 2023- Butte (Copper King Hotel and Convention Center)*

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### **Standards Workshops for 2023-2024**

Dates for next year's Standards Trainings are below.

Make sure you put these on the calendar, and make sure if you are part of the Library or Counseling Standards Program that a licensed teacher from your school attends. There will be no make-up sessions next year.

**August 9, 2023- Miles City**

**August 11, 2023- Big Timber**

**August 14, 2023- Kalispell**

**August 16, 2023- Helena**

### **Congratulations Rural Teacher of the Year!**

Congratulations to Toni Hatten from Sunset School for her award as the 2023 Montana Rural Teacher of the Year. Toni was recognized at the County Superintendent's meeting in Helena on March 2, 2023.

Toni's full biography is attached to this email.

**Free online workshop on March 22 features MSU researcher who combines biology and mathematics**

Montana middle and high school science teachers are invited to attend a free workshop on **Wednesday, March 22, 2023 from 4pm to 5pm** called **MSU Research in Action**.

The workshop is part of a monthly series hosted by the MSU Science Math Resource Center. The March workshop features Dr. Bree Cummins, an MSU assistant research professor who conducts research in several areas of mathematical biology, including modeling the genetic control of cellular processes, modeling social processes related to disease spread, and most recently, using artificial intelligence to understand complex biological systems.

Teachers can earn 1 OPI renewal unit for participating. Registration is limited to 30 participants.

Each monthly Research in Action workshop features a Montana State University STEM researcher. You will not only hear about the work they do, but you will hear about their own STEM pathway. We will then have facilitated discussion to think about how you can bring the information into the classroom. Recordings of past workshops are on the SMRC Professional Development web page.

- More info and the link to register is here.  
<https://www.montana.edu/smrc/profdev.html>
- To learn about future workshops from SMRC, subscribe to their monthly newsletter: <http://bit.ly/smrc-news>

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### **MAPS Training**

**The date for the 2023 MAPS training has been set.**

**August 7, 2023 via Zoom**

**Add this to your calendar now!**

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### **Accreditation Standards Workshop**

The OPI will be providing daily working sessions for Districts on their Integrated Strategic Action Plan at the Summer Institute, June 19-23, 2023, at the MSU Campus. Registration is free for Montana Educators. For more information visit the OPI website or contact Crystal Andrews at [crystal.andrews@mt.gov](mailto:crystal.andrews@mt.gov), or 406-444-6325.

## **World Languages Standards Review Task Force**

Applications to be part of the World Languages task force will close on March 17, 2023. The Task Force will create standards to guide instruction and prepare our students for their lives beyond the classroom. The single application is for three separate task forces. An application review team, standards writing team, and standards review team. For more information contact Destin Markland at [destin.markland@mt.gov](mailto:destin.markland@mt.gov), or 406-444-0044.

## **Teachers Needed for Paid Opportunities at OPI**

The OPI is seeking 3-8 Math and Language Arts teachers to participate in-

1. A review of testlet items during a virtual meeting on March 28-29, 2023.
2. An item writing workshop on June 12-16, 2023. This workshop will be in person and will focus on developing testlet questions for the MAST pilot program. Location TBD in Montana.

For more information on these workshops please contact Sam Walsh, Project Manager, at [samantha.walsh@mt.gov](mailto:samantha.walsh@mt.gov).

***“Spring is nature’s way of saying ‘Let’s party.’”***

*Robin Williams*