

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

SEPTEMBER 2016

MASBO is dedicated to training and supporting the people responsible for business operations in Montana schools. Our goal is to enable members to manage the business in order to support education for Montana children.



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REGISTER NOW!

MONTANA CONFERENCE OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP (MCEL)

Collaboration is the Glue that Holds G.R.E.A.T. Schools Together

It's not too late to sign up for the 2015 MCEL Conference, **October 19-21 in Billings.**

The conference schedule is posted on the MCEL website (click [here](#)). Look for information on the opening and closing keynote speakers and session descriptions for several topics important to you as a school business official, such as:

- How Can Schools Collaborate, Innovate and Thrive in the Face of Uncertainty, Challenges and even Chaos?
- Available Innovations You Need to Know, Discuss and Consider Implementing
- Board/Administration Collaboration
- Montana School Law Update
- Payment Card Best Practices
- Fostering a Respectful Relationship Between School Leaders and the News Media
- Energy Performance Contracting Assistance Portal
- Negotiations: A Story of Successful Collaboration
- Applicant Process & Privacy and Security
- Community Engagement for School Districts
- IRS Payroll Audits
- When Two Worlds Implement
- Bringing Fresh Perspectives to your District and Community
- Joy and Celebration, Stress Management, Supporting Staff, and Finding Balance
- The Relationship Between Policies, the Contract, and the Law
- Reserves: What's in YOUR Wallet?
- Recruiting and Retention Resources and Strategies
- Special Education Q&A Panel
- Your Retirement Plan Reporting Requirements
- School Bond Overview – How to Make Your District's Facilities Plan a Reality
- Understanding Your PERS Retirement
- Impact Aid – A Program that Fills the Gap
- Montana Harvest of the Month – Growing Farm to School Through Collaboration
- Unemployment Insurance - Best Practices for Substitutes



CLICK [HERE](#)
FOR SESSION
DESCRIPTIONS



MASBO Board of Directors

President	Tammy Tulberg, Target Range Schools	Region 1 Director	Noreen Anderson, Hellgate K-8 School
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Ex-Officio, OPI	Kara Sperle	Region 6 Director	Jen Mettler, Baker Schools

MEET YOUR MASBO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KARA SPERLE, OPI EX-OFFICIO

I grew up in Montana, spending majority of my life in the Missoula and surrounding area. I will always consider Missoula my hometown. I moved around several schools growing up. I attended Potomac School, DeSmet School, Alberton School, and eventually landed at Helena High School my junior year. As a student, the experience of attending class C schools and moving to a AA school was certainly an experience, so I can appreciate the challenges schools face with differing needs, populations, and communities. I worked life a little backwards as I found myself with a glowing baby boy at 18 years old. This year that glowing baby boy went off to college in... that's right Griz fans – Missoula. (I had nothing to do with that decision!)



While taking on a tour of duty as a Certified Nurse's Assistant (this is tough work!) in a local nursing home, I finished my Associates of Applied Science degree with an emphasis IT Networking May of 2001. I starting working for state government in 2001 as an IT intern as a CJIN help desk operator for the Department of Justice. I had a few IT job interviews but I took the first full time permanent position offered to me which happened to be a Payroll Technician with the Department of Corrections. While working at the DOC, I moved up quickly from a payroll technician to accountant to budget analyst to budget manager. Within 5 years, I was the Budget Bureau Chief for the Department of Corrections responsible for managing the almost \$200 million yearly budget for the agency. The DOC has two youth accredited correctional schools, which is where my school budgeting experience comes from. The two schools have state general fund, which includes quality educator funding, and receive school nutrition, Title I, IDEA B, Title II (at times), and REAP federal funding. I started by Bachelor of Science Degree from Montana State University while having my second child in 2003 and graduated from MSU in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science.

After working for DOC for 14 years, I decided it was time to branch out and see what I wanted to do when I grow up. I found a great opportunity at the Department of Public Health and Human Services in the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division as the Operations Bureau Chief in August of 2015. During my transitional period of employment, I felt it was finally time to meet my educational goals and I completed my Masters in Business Administration from Western Governors University in March of 2016. Working at DPHHS was an intriguing experience that opened my eyes to a whole different world. Montana Medicaid Expansion has been a wonderful addition to Montana and the work at that agency does is so important to so many Montanans. However, I still found I wanted to move away from state government budgeting and happened to fall upon the job announcement for OPI School Finance Division Administrator. I started here August 2016 and have enjoyed the staff and work here at OPI.

I look forward to working with school staff, the MASBO board, and all the future ventures my career at OPI has to offer.



P-CARD NEWS-----

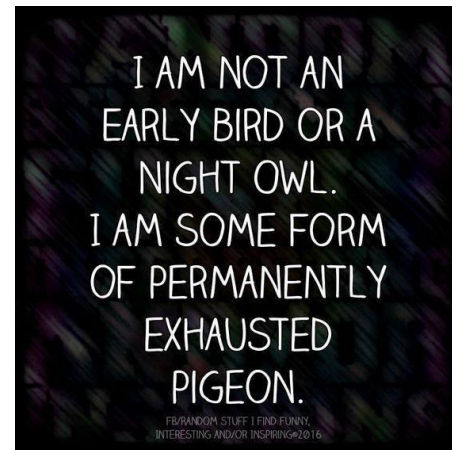
MASBO P-CARD PURCHASES REPORT

P-Card purchases for the first four months of the rebate year (April – July 2016) totaled just over **\$6.7 million** with 109 school districts and special education cooperatives participating in the program. Last year at this time, there were 95 participants spending over \$5.2 million. Click [here](#) to see the current year P-Card purchases report.

MASBO P-CARD RESOURCES

Check out these handy resources posted on the MASBO website:

- [P-Card Servicing Tips & Information](#) contains contact info for adding, deleting or changing cards, increasing your credit limit, over- and under-utilization of cards and much more.
- [Purchasing Card Handbook](#) is a step-by-step guide about everything you need to know about your purchasing card program.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Registration will open soon for these important workshops.

DATE	WORKSHOP	LOCATION
Tuesday, November 1	½ ELECTIONS	Miles City Sleep Inn & Suites
	½ TECHNOLOGY	
Wednesday, November 2	TECHNOLOGY	Billings Billings Hotel & Convention Center
Thursday, November 3	TECHNOLOGY	
Friday, November 4	½ TECHNOLOGY	
	½ ELECTIONS	Bozeman GranTree Inn
Monday, November 14 Tuesday, November 15	NEW CLERK ACADEMY	
Wednesday, November 16	TECHNOLOGY	Missoula Courtyard Marriott
Thursday, November 17	½ TECHNOLOGY	
	½ ELECTIONS	

HANDY RESOURCES FROM THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

[Tax Information for Federal State and Local Governments](#)

[Quick Reference Guide for Public Employers](#)

[Fringe Benefit Guide](#)

Tax Implications of Meal Reimbursement

[By Jeff Weldon, School Attorney
Felt, Martin, Frazier & Weldon — Billings]

A recent school audit raised this question: What are the tax implications of reimbursing a school employee expenses for meals? Not surprisingly, the answer is complicated and probably starts with “it depends.” Sorry.



In some instances, the fair market value of meals provided by an employer is nontaxable to the employee. However (insert big red flag here), sometimes the fair market value of meals IS taxable to the employee and must be included in the employee’s wages for tax purposes.

When are meals NOT taxable to the employee? Meals are excludable from wages if they are provided on the employer’s business premises and for the employer’s convenience. You don’t have to include in your teachers’ salary the value of the 2 slices of pizza consumed during the staff meeting. The intent in that instance is not to give your teachers more pay; rather, it is to keep their blood sugar up so they will stay awake during the staff meeting. There are other rules that exclude de minimis meals, meals provided with a charge, meals during entertaining clients, and meals as part of overnight travel. See the IRS Fringe Benefit Guide, pages 43 – 46 (the link is at the end of the article).

When are meals taxable to the employee? Generally, the fair market value of meals away from “tax home” but NOT overnight is taxable as wages to the employee. (Incidentally, your tax home is your regular place of business or post of duty, regardless of where you maintain your family home. It includes the entire city or general area in which your business or work is located.) This was the situation in the school audit referred to above. The school has employees who are required to travel out of town during the day, but not overnight. The school occasionally reimbursed at a per meal per diem and/or the actual verified cost of the meal. The school auditor concluded that the school in the future should “either (1) not reimburse employees for meals incurred during non-overnight business travel [unless an exception to the rule applies] or (2) include those meal reimbursements in the recipient employee’s wages for Federal employment tax purposes.” THAT will make you popular. Incidentally, check your local collective bargaining agreements to make sure there isn’t language pertaining to off-site meals; if there is, the first option above may not be available to you or some other solution explored.

So, here is the helpful IRS example: “An employee is required to travel out of town to work for the day. The employer agrees to pay for the employee’s meals while away. The employee leaves home at 7:00 a.m. and returns home at 9:00 p.m. Before the employee returns in the evening, the employee takes a nap in his car for an hour.” (Hmmm, if you have a school employee napping on the job, this article just got even more complicated.)

The IRS instructs: “Although the employee is away from his tax home for substantially longer than a normal work day and even stops for rest, the rest is not considered to be substantial. The employee is not considered to be away from home overnight. Any meal money that the employee receives is taxable as wages.” (Emphasis added.)

The same rules apply whether you provide cash or a p-card before the non-overnight travel or reimburse the employee later, the meal money is taxable as wages.

I am not a tax lawyer or a CPA; I just dream about becoming one (and my wife wouldn’t let me go back to tax school. Really.) So, if you have questions about the tax implications of the benefits your district provides to employees, please consult with your auditors or a local CPA.

IRS resource: Fringe Benefit Guide, <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p5137.pdf>



MASBO ENDORSES THESE PROGRAMS

	<p>Health, Dental, Vision, Life & Long-Term Disability Benefits Andy Holmlund, Chief Executive Officer 406-457-4400 aholmlund@ms-sf.org http://mustbenefits.org/</p>
	<p>Montana Schools Property & Liability Insurance Plan Dave Pillatzke, Program Manager 406-457-4531 dpillatzke@paynewest.com http://msplip.com/</p>
	<p>Healthcare Reform Section 125 Services Health Savings Account Services Cheryl Brandt, State Manager 877-589-2544, ext. 353 Cheryl.Brandt@americanfidelity.com http://www.americanfidelity.com/home.aspx</p>
	<p>Workers Compensation Insurance Shawn Bubbs, Director of Insurance Services 406-457-4500 sbubb@mtsba.org http://www.msgia.org/home</p>
	<p>Unemployment Insurance Program Theresa LeSueur, Director 406-457-4407 tlesueur@mtsba.org http://www.mtsuip.org/</p>

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

OCTOBER 1

TR-4 Individual Transportation Contracts	By October 1, or as received from the district, the county superintendent must electronically verify the County Transportation Committee's receipt of each transportation contract to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.	OPI Transportation Form Calendar A.R.M. 10.7.106 (13)
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OCTOBER 3

Fall Enrollment Count Date	<p>The official fall count day is Monday, October 3, 2016. <i>MAEFAIRS Student Count for ANB must be submitted <u>no later than October 14, 2016.</u></i></p> <p>Extenuating circumstances for students who will be gone 10 days prior to the count date, but which would support a variance <i>should be submitted to the OPI prior to the official enrollment count date</i> for consideration of inclusion of the student in the enrollment count for ANB purposes beyond the 10th day of absence.</p> <p>Students identified as American Indian in the AIM system at the time the data is imported into the MAEFAIRS fall count will generate funding for the Student Achievement Gap (SAG) payment in the ensuing year. <u>Deadline for changes/corrections is December 31.</u></p>	<p>A.R.M. 10.20.102 ANB Memo Reporting Instructions Step-by-Step Student Count for ANB Instructions</p> <p>A.R.M. 10.20.102(10)</p> <p>A.R.M. 10.21.204</p>
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OCTOBER 10

File school food program claim for reimbursement with OPI	Claims for reimbursement are due on the 10 th of each month; except months with less than 10 operating days. If a month has less than 10 operating days, combine the month with another (i.e., combine August and September on the September claim and May and June on the May claim).	School Nutrition Programs Checklist FY2016-2017 Reimbursement Rates
OPI pays grant cash requests	OPI pays grant cash requests submitted by the 25 th of the previous month.	<p>OPI Grants Calendar E-Grants System</p> <p>Log in to your district's account, or click on Public Access, then Vendor Payee Details</p>

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

OCTOBER 15

WCRRP (workers comp) and MTSUIP (unemployment insurance) reports due	<p>If your district is a member of WCRRP, the workers comp report for 3rd quarter payroll (July, August, September) is due.</p> <p>If your district is a member of MTSUIP, the unemployment insurance report for 3rd quarter payroll is due.</p>	<p>http://www.msgia.org/home</p> <p>http://www.mtsuip.org/</p>
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OCTOBER 21

OPI makes K-12 BASE aid payments	(DSA) Direct State Aid (QEC) Quality Educator Component (ARC) At Risk Student Component (IEA) Indian Education for All (SAG) Student Achievement Gap (SPED) State Special Education Payments (D4A) Data for Achievement (NRD) Natural Resource Development	<p>FY2017 Payment Schedule</p> <p>State Payments to School and Cooperatives</p>
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OCTOBER 25

Grant cash request due to OPI	Grant cash requests made by this date will be paid on November 10.	OPI Grants Calendar
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OCTOBER 31

Last day to liquidate funds for grant projects ending September 30	Last day to liquidate funds for projects that end September 30. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDEA, Part B: CSPD • IDEA, Part B • IDEA, Preschool • IDEA, Part D: MTSS • Title I, Part A, Improving Basic Programs • Title I, Part A, Schoolwide • Title I, Part C, Migrant Education • Title I, Part D, Neglected and Delinquent • Title I, Part E, Striving Readers Literacy • Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality • Title II, Part B, Math Science Partnerships • Title III, English Language Acquisition • Title VI, Part B, Rural Low Income • Title X, Part C, McKinney-Vento Homeless Education 	OPI Grants Calendar
Form 941 for Quarter 3 payroll is due.	Form 941 payroll report for Quarter 3 (July, August, September) is due.	<p>Form 941 (form)</p> <p>Form 941 (instructions)</p>

Protect your health with the flu vaccine



Don't get caught without a flu shot

No one wants to face coming down with the flu. That's why it's important to get a flu shot to help avoid the illness altogether.

Flu shots can be helpful for most people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests a yearly dose for those who:

- Are age 6 months through 18 years
- Are pregnant
- Are age 50 and older
- Have a chronic health condition, such as asthma, diabetes, or heart, kidney or lung disease
- Have a weakened immune system
- Live at a nursing home or other long-term care facility
- Are child-care or health care workers
- Live with or care for someone at high risk of flu complications, like a child with asthma



Ask your doctor
about a flu shot
and get up-to-date
information on
immunizations
and treatment.



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Montana**



www.mustbenefits.org

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research;
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

53201.0116

IRS Urges Taxpayers to Check Their Withholding

IRS YouTube Video: *IRS Withholding Calculator:* [English](#) / [Spanish](#)

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today encouraged taxpayers to consider a mid-year tax withholding checkup following several new factors that could affect their refunds in 2017. Taking a closer look at the taxes being withheld can help ensure the right amount is withheld, either for tax refund purposes or to avoid an unexpected tax bill next year.

The withholding review takes on even more importance this year given a new tax law change that requires the IRS to hold refunds a few weeks for some early filers in 2017 claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Additional Child Tax Credit. In addition, the IRS and state tax administrators continue to strengthen identity theft and refund fraud protections, which means some tax returns could again face additional review time next year to protect against fraud.

"With these changes, it makes good sense on many different levels to check on your withholding and plan ahead for next tax season," said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. "It's a personal choice if you want to have extra money withheld to get a bigger tax refund, but you have options available if you prefer to have a smaller refund next year and more take-home money now."

So far in 2016, the IRS has issued more than 102 million tax refunds out of 140 million total individual returns processed, with the average refund well over \$2,700. Historically, the refund figure has increased over time in size.

By adjusting the [Form W-4](#), Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, taxpayers can ensure that the right amount is taken out of their pay throughout the year so that they don't pay too much tax and have to wait until they file their tax return to get any refund. Employers use the form to figure the amount of federal income tax to be withheld from pay.

In many cases, a new Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, is all that is needed to make an adjustment. Taxpayers submit it to their employer, and the employer uses the form to figure the amount of federal income tax to be withheld from pay.

The IRS offers several online resources to help taxpayers bring taxes paid closer to what is owed. They are available anytime on IRS.gov. They include:

- [IRS Withholding Calculator](#) – Online tool helps determine the correct amount of tax to withhold.
- [IRS Publication 505](#) – Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax.
- [Tax Withholding](#) – Complete information on withholding, estimated taxes, FAQs, more.

Self-employed taxpayers, including those involved in the sharing economy, can use the Form 1040-ES worksheet to correctly figure their estimated tax payments. If they also work for an employer, they can often forgo making these quarterly payments by instead having more tax taken out of their pay.

CODING CORRECTION

USE OBJECT CODE 681 FOR SOFTWARE

682 Supplies – Technology Related *(revised)*

Technology-related supplies include supplies that are typically used in conjunction with technology-related hardware or software. Some examples are CDs, flash or jump drives, parallel cables, and monitor stands. E-readers, including Kindles and iPads, that fall below capitalization thresholds should be reported here as well. ~~Software costs below the capitalization threshold should be reported here.~~ Licenses and fees for services such as subscriptions to research materials over the Internet should be reported with object code 535 Communications. (Used primarily with functions 1000, 2230 and 2580, but may also be used with 2620, 2650 and 2730.) Audio-Visual supplies previously reported here are now reported under object code 610.

MASBO EXHIBITOR MEMBERS

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