K–12 education has traditionally been a state and local responsibility, with the federal government’s role limited to ensuring against unlawful discrimination and providing supplemental assistance to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and children with disabilities. Over the last 14 years, however, the federal government has expanded its role well beyond its capability of ensuring the attainment of desirable outcomes, and this has translated into a byzantine and bureaucratic maze of contradictory laws and administrative regulations that result in over testing of students and overregulation of Montana’s public schools. It’s time for a change.

MT-PEC wants to:

- Eliminate high-stakes testing and incorporate growth models and multiple measures of accountability.
- Retain Maintenance of Effort to help sustain and improve services for students.
- Oppose diversion of public funds to private education interests and hold charter schools to the same standards of public accountability including regional accreditation standards, educator effectiveness, teacher and principal certification, regulation, and financial accountability.
- Return control to the state and local district to determine how best to attain student educational outcomes.
- Return to formula-based funding and a decrease in competitive or grant-based funding.
- Preserve provisions requiring high-quality instructional teams in schools including licensed, credentialed, and profession-ready teachers, principals, school librarians, counselors, and education support personnel.
- Reduce the overall number of tests to increase classroom time spent teaching students.
- Oppose diversion of public funds to private education interests and hold charter schools to the same standards of public accountability including regional accreditation standards, educator effectiveness, teacher and principal certification, regulation, and financial accountability.
- Return control to the state and local district to determine how best to attain student educational outcomes.
- Return to formula-based funding and a decrease in competitive or grant-based funding.
- Preserve provisions requiring high-quality instructional teams in schools including licensed, credentialed, and profession-ready teachers, principals, school librarians, counselors, and education support personnel.

MT-PEC recommends assessing the value of specific federal legislation according to these MT-PEC priorities. Does the legislation:

- Eliminate high-stakes testing?
- Incorporate growth models and multiple measures of accountability?
- Decrease number of mandated tests?
- Retain Maintenance of Effort?
- Keep public funds in public schools. Require accountability for charter schools?
- Preserve local control regarding outcomes and how to attain them?
- Increase formula-based funding, and avoid competitive grants?
- Require highly-qualified staff?

If the answer to the each of the questions is yes, then the legislation will work for Montana’s public school children and will align with MT-PEC’s priorities, which we have adopted out of our shared interests in the best interests in students.
We are united by our shared interests in the best interests of students.

Schools need greater flexibility and support to innovate and adapt to increase student achievement.