



# MONTANA LEGISLATIVE AUDIT DIVISION

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS AUDIT

# Achievement in Montana: Security of Student Information

Office of Public Instruction

FEBRUARY 2010

09DP-10

REPORT SUMMARY

According to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, only authorized individuals with a legitimate educational interest should have access to student data.

### Context

OPI implemented the Achievement in Montana (AIM) system to administer education information and support accountability at the local school districts and state level. AIM is designed to track a wide variety of student data including enrollment and demographics information. Montana school districts collect and store information on students in accordance with federal regulations, as well as state requirements for data reporting, including calculation of average number belonging for school funding, registration for student assessment, and graduate and dropout rates. In AIM, local school district personnel enter each student's primary data just once. The data is then uploaded to the State Edition for reporting. A student's record contains the student's legal name, gender, birth data, race/ethnicity, and types of educational services received.

The primary focus of this audit was to ensure the security of student data from the input process at the district level, to the reporting and analysis processes performed by OPI.

### Results

Based on our work, we conclude OPI has successfully implemented a statewide student information system. We identified system and security controls in place to maintain AIM data security and integrity. We reviewed controls over data entry to ensure consistency of data, as well as delivered processing controls ensuring AIM data validity. We reconstructed baseline reports and compared the output with delivered reporting functionality to ensure AIM is generating accurate reports. While controls are in place, we identified areas in the management of user accounts in AIM where OPI could improve. Specifically, OPI should establish procedures for reviewing all user accounts and related privileges in the State Edition of AIM.

Recommendation Concurrence	
Concur	1
Partially Concur	0
Do Not Concur	0

Source: Agency audit response included in final report.

For a complete copy of the report or for further information, contact the Legislative Audit Division at 406-444-3122; e-mail to [lad@mt.gov](mailto:lad@mt.gov); or check the website at <http://leg.mt.gov/audit>. Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse to the Legislative Auditor's FRAUD HOTLINE Call toll-free 1-800-222-4446, or e-mail [lad@mt.gov](mailto:lad@mt.gov).