

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM 2010
TITLE II – IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY**

INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) solicits proposals for projects under the Higher Education portion of **Title II, Part A: Improving Teacher Quality State Grants**. OCHE generally awards annual grants in the \$30,000 to \$120,000 range, based on the number of teachers served. Contingent upon continued funding from the Department of Education, grants may be renewed for second and third years, if year-end reports demonstrate reasonable progress toward goals, adequate involvement of partners, and prudent fiscal accounting.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to partnerships comprised at a minimum of: 1) a private or State Institution of Higher Education (IHE) and the division of the institution that prepares teachers and, where appropriate, administrators; 2) a school of arts and sciences; and 3) a high-need local education agency (LEA)*. In addition to those required partners, an eligible partnership may also include one or more regional professional development delivery organizations, a nonprofit educational organization, and/or additional school districts.

*A high-need LEA is defined as an LEA for which not less than 20 percent of the children served are from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the US Census Bureau (see attached list); and

1. A high percentage of teachers are not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach; or
2. A high percentage of teachers have emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing.

As long as a high-need LEA is a principal partner, schools in districts that do not meet the definition of “high need” may be additional partners, and their teachers and principals may participate in the project. Partnerships should facilitate the delivery of workshops to multiple schools within regions for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. The professional development may be designed to bolster the college-preparatory curriculum that includes English, mathematics, laboratory science, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts.

This competition targets schools with:

1. A high percentage of secondary teachers (7-12) assigned to teaching courses in which they do not have college majors;
2. A high percentage of students who do not meet the mathematics and/or writing proficiency thresholds for the Montana University System;
3. A low percentage of students who continue to college and/or a high percentage of students who must take developmental coursework in the Montana University System;
4. A high percentage of students who do not enroll in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum; and/or
5. Adequate Yearly Progress not achieved.

PURPOSE

Partnerships use the funds to ensure that teachers of a core academic subject meet certain minimum requirements to be considered “highly qualified.” Teachers must hold at least a bachelor’s degree, be fully licensed by the State, and demonstrate subject-matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which they teach, in a manner determined by the State Education Agency and in compliance with Section 9101(23) of ESEA. Partnerships are encouraged to offer college credit for their activities and to assist teachers in earning majors in the subject they teach. The underlying purpose is to improve student achievement in a specific content area.

RECOMMENDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Partnerships should provide sustained, high-quality professional development activities that provide teachers, highly-qualified paraprofessionals, and administrators with specific content knowledge, instructional strategies, and assessment skills that enable students to achieve State academic content standards, enter and succeed in the college of their choice, and/or gain the proficiencies needed to achieve admission standards in writing and mathematics for the Montana University System. Recommended activities include:

1. Training/coursework that focuses on the writing process (prewriting, drafting, etc.); reading and/or writing for the content areas; elements of argumentation; reasoning skills; or assessing and providing feedback to writers for the purpose of improving writing skills/instruction/curriculum;
2. The development of workshops that focus on science and/or mathematics (inquiry-based science, statistics, data analysis, problem-solving, algebra, or geometry);
3. Reading in the content areas, especially for students in high school;
4. Intensive programs designed to prepare individuals to provide professional development to others (training of trainers) and serve as mentors or exemplary teachers in their schools to improve teaching and learning in the content areas of the college preparatory program;
5. Collaboration between K-12 teachers, administrators and higher education faculty to develop early intervention programs so that students will be academically prepared for college-level coursework upon graduation from high school; or
6. High-quality professional development designed to ensure that teachers, highly-qualified paraprofessionals, pre-service teachers, and principals can use challenging State academic content and performance standards, college admissions standards, and assessment data (from State and college admissions tests and follow-up studies) to improve instructional practices and student academic achievement.

TIMELINE

Proposals are currently being accepted on an ongoing basis.

Grant Period: From notification date to October 1, 2010, with an additional one or two years contingent upon satisfactory progress and fiscal reports. Reports: Program and Year-end fiscal report reports due one year after award date or at least by November 31 of each year.

SPECIAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. The law requires any partnership receiving both this grant and an award under the Partnership Program for Improving Teachers Preparation in Section 203 of Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA) to coordinate activities conducted under the two awards.
2. Indirect Costs of 8% may only be taken on funds requested for the activities of higher education partners and **may not** be taken on funds designated for the other partners.
3. No one partner may take more than 50% of the funds.
4. Grant funds will not be awarded for the following purposes:
 - a. Supporting research of individual scholars and faculty members;
 - b. Funding faculty leaves not related to the project;
 - c. Directly supporting elementary or secondary schools' operating budgets;
 - d. Equipment purchases not directly related to and necessary to operate the project successfully. (Equipment purchased must be made available to participants after the project is completed.)

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Please submit two (2) paper copies of each proposal (with letters of support and résumés) using the guidelines in this solicitation. In addition, please submit the proposal electronically to jclinard@montana.edu.

Address: Director of Academic Initiatives
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
Montana University System
2500 Broadway PO Box 203201
Helena MT 59620-3201

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA: The proposal must address and meet the following criteria:

Program Partnering:

1. The program involves the joint effort of the higher education institution's education unit (School of Education) and the academic disciplines (College of Arts and Sciences) in which professional development will be provided;
2. The proposal includes data to show that at least one of the partners is a high-need LEA;
3. Letters of commitment from all partners, including participating school districts, the School of Education, and the College of Arts and Sciences describes how the activities fit their goals (such as a district's five-year plan).
4. If included, regional professional development delivery systems or educational organizations are used to increase participation in workshops and coordinate professional development offerings.

Program Content:

1. Activities will increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects they teach and enable teachers to become highly qualified or enable principals to support such activities;
2. College credits are available;
3. Activities will advance teacher or principal understanding of effective instructional strategies based on scientific research for improving student academic achievement;
4. Goals are aligned with and directly related to state academic content standards, admissions standards, and assessments; and
5. Activities are high quality, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on instruction in the classroom; and they provide follow-up designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented and sustained.

Capacity to Achieve and Sustain Goals:

1. The program provides appropriately qualified personnel to conduct program activities, equipment and materials necessary to the success of the program, and optimum teacher-faculty instructional contact time;
2. Key personnel with appropriate authority from each of the partners promote the program goals and achievements through integration into related activities for other audiences; and
3. The proposed program is within the capacity of the institution(s) or organizations(s) as evidenced by successful past and current activities and has the potential to make a continuing contribution to the improvement of teaching in the state.

Evaluation:

1. The objectives of the program are explicit, measurable, and aligned to the evaluation;
2. Activities for ongoing program evaluation are included in the proposed timeline;
3. The program evaluation plan outlines strategies for measuring the impact of the professional development program on teacher effectiveness and student performance; and
4. Program participants are taught to use data and assessments to inform classroom practice.

Budget:

1. The budget clearly stipulates the number of hours or fractional FTE that will be devoted to the program. Fractional FTE may not exceed 1.0 and extra compensation may only be earned beyond the regular work week or school year (i.e. weekend or summer workshops or classes);
2. The attached EXCEL budget page (with sections for School of Education, College of Arts and Sciences, and Partner School(s) is submitted with a narrative that describes the use of funds for each budget line;
3. The budget reflects a collaboration among partners, **with no more than 50%** of the allocated funds going to any one of the partners; and
4. The budget reflects an efficient use of funds, comparing favorably with other Title II projects in terms of the number of teachers and/or students served, the number of hours of professional development provided, and the compensation or stipends provided to managers and teachers. (EX. Teacher stipends, where necessary, range from \$50 to \$200 per day, or the cost of tuition.)

Final Report Requirement: Reports submitted to the Department of Education require a statewide summary of project profiles in accordance with specific formats. To ensure compliance, project directors should review Forms B and C and design their project approach to gather the requisite information in an ongoing manner. For additional

assistance regarding data collection, see guidance and the consolidated application for K-12 programs at www.opi.mt.gov.

Assistance Provided by Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

OCHÉ will assist partnerships that wish to develop projects related to Mathematics or Writing Proficiency Admissions, and provide assistance in gathering data. See <http://mus.montana.edu/preparingforcollege.htm> for more information about the Proficiency Initiatives. For an electronic version of this RFP with attachments in Word, please visit www.mus.montana.edu (Grants and Programs).

FORMAT FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

- 1) Cover Page, Abstract, and Assurances (Form A)
- 2) Narrative
 - a) Need/Goals (Describe how program increases number of highly-qualified teachers and improves student learning.)
 - b) Partnership (see review criteria)
 - i) Collaboration among higher education partners to provide professional development
 - ii) Description of LEA need (percent of teachers not highly qualified, etc.) and their support for project
 - c) Program Content (see review criteria)
 - i) Criteria for highly-qualified teachers and administrators
 - ii) Basis in scientific research
 - iii) Alignment with standards, academic achievement, and assessments
 - iv) Classroom focus, intensity, and provision of follow up activities
 - v) Estimated timeline for activities
 - d) Capacity to Achieve Goals and Sustain Program (see review criteria)
 - i) Description of personnel, materials, contact time, etc.
 - ii) Plan for dissemination (website, newsletter, conference presentations) to wider audience
 - e) Evaluation Plan (see review criteria)
 - i) Measurable objectives with timeline
 - ii) Method of collecting baseline, ongoing, and summative data collection
 - iii) Use of pre/post tests, classroom performance data, large-scale assessments, etc.
 - f) Budget Form with narrative describing each line item
- 3) Attachments
 - a) Program Report (Forms B and C)
 - b) Résumés for each person involved in program oversight and services
 - c) Letters of support from all partners

For complete Guidance go to: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/index.html>.

APPEALS PROCESS FOR UNFUNDED APPLICATIONS

The following procedures will be used to provide due process for non-funded applications:

1. Each institution of higher education will be notified if its application is not approved for funding. This notice will include a statement that further details can be obtained from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.
2. The applicant may request additional information and further review by the Grant Manager.
3. As a final step, the applicant may request a formal hearing by the Principal Coordinator for State Title II programs. State-approved procedures for granting due process to a local educational agency or an institution of higher education, whose application is disapproved, will be implemented.

**TITLE II -
COMPETITIVE GRANT PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

Name of Institution:

Project Director:

Director's Title and Address:

Director's Telephone:

Director's Fax:

Director's E-mail:

Partners:

Annual Budget Request \$ _____

Do you intend to request a second year of funding? _____

Title of Proposed Program:

Proposal Abstract
(250 words or fewer)

ASSURANCE OF USE OF FUNDS

Assurance that funds made available under **TITLE II – IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY** to supplement and not supplant non-federal funds in accordance with Section 8. The persons submitting this proposal agree to use funds received from this proposal only to supplement and not supplant non-federal funds, in accordance with Section 8.41.

(Signature of Project Director) (Date)

PROPOSAL PROJECTIONS AND PROGRAM REPORT: TEACHERS

Please complete first column in proposal; then complete other columns in year-end report.

Provide the number of participants in the program by each of the following categories:		Number Projected in Proposal	Actual Number of Participants	Sub-category	Sub-category	Comments
	Number of K-12 districts served:					
	Number of high-need districts served:					
	Number of schools served:					
	Number of K-12 teachers served by school level:			Out of field or uncertified:	Without major in subject taught	
1	Elementary					
2	Middle school					
3	High school					
	Number of administrators served:					
4	Elementary					
5	Middle school					
6	High school					
7	Paraprofessionals					
	Total Number of K-12 Staff					
	Number of pre-service teacher candidates served:					
	Number of higher ed faculty involved:					
	Other (such as adjuncts):					
	Total from Higher Ed:					

Intensity of Professional Development	Projected in Proposal	Actual Number	Comments
Total Number of Hours			
Total Number of Events			
Average Number of Participants Per Event			

NARRATIVE REPORT (Due at end of project year) The grant evaluator should conduct interviews and review objectives, performance indicators, survey instruments, observation logs, test data and/or anecdotal evidence. Please refer to the Proposal Review Criteria for more detail.

1. Provide evidence and documentation to demonstrate that expectations were met as outlined in the grant proposal and achievements can be sustained.
2. Provide evidence and documentation to demonstrate that the project partners worked collaboratively.
3. Provide evidence and documentation to demonstrate that the collection of assessment data measuring teacher content knowledge is ongoing and useful to the goals of the project.
4. Provide evidence and documentation to show that the funding is being used responsibly and effectively, and according to regulations, such as the 50% rule?

PROPOSAL BASELINE DATA AND PROGRAM REPORT: STUDENTS

Use a table **such as the following** to indicate how many low-achieving students you will (and do) serve. The measures in the table are sample suggestions. **Use one or more of these measures.**

Provide the number of students for one or more categories that your project will track:		Baseline	After Project
	Number of students scoring below proficient on a standardized test (NRT, CRT, etc.) in the targeted school(s).		
	Number of students earning grades of D or below in core subjects		
	Number of students scoring lower than 22 on the math portion of the ACT or 520 on the math portion of the SAT in the targeted school(s).		
	Number of students scoring below proficient levels on a writing assessment (such as 3.0 or below on the Montana University System writing assessment)		
	Number of students who do not complete the Rigorous Core (see policy 301.15)		
	Percent of H.S. graduates who must be remediated in MUS within one year.		
	Total number of students taught by participating teachers:		

Use at least one indicator **such as the following** to track improved achievement during the project period.

Provide averages (at targeted grade level or in targeted subject) for one or more categories such as:		Baseline	After Project
	Average score of district or school's students on a standardized test (NRT, CRT, etc.):		
	Average GPA of targeted students in core subjects		
	Average ACT or SAT score of targeted students (or in targeted subject)		
	Average score on the Montana University System Writing Assessment		
	School's average score on another test relevant to project		
	Scores of teachers on pre-test and post-test on topic of professional development (example: algebra test for elementary teachers assigned to middle school)		

NARRATIVE REPORT (Due at end of project year): Explain how the project is improving student achievement, based on above data and using observation or anecdotes.

What evidence and documentation exist to demonstrate that the collection of assessment data measuring student achievement is ongoing and useful to the goals of the project?

Title II Improving Teacher Quality Budget for Proposal/ CFDA # 84.367B

A) Costs for School of Education

Personnel Services		Cost Basis (salary, wage, item cost)	Formula (.x FTE, # of hours, amount)	Budgeted Amount
1	Salaries (Names:)			
2	Hourly Wages			
3	Employee Benefits			
4	Total Personnel Services			
Operating Expenses				
5	Contracted/Prof Services			
6	Stipends			
7	Materials and Supplies			
8	Communications			
9	Employee Travel			
10	Other (Specify)			
11	Total Operating Expenses			
12	Total Direct Costs (Lines 4+11)			
13	Indirect Costs (<9%)			
14	Total for Education			

B) Costs for College of Arts and Sciences

Personnel Services		Cost Basis (salary, wage, item cost)	Formula (.x FTE, # of hours, amount)	Budgeted Amount
1	Salaries (Names:)			
2	Hourly Wages			
3	Employee Benefits			
4	Total Personnel Services			
Operating Expenses				
5	Contracted/Prof Services			
6	Stipends			
7	Materials and Supplies			
8	Communications			
9	Employee Travel			
10	Other (Specify)			
11	Total Operating Expenses			
12	Total Direct Costs (Lines 4+11)			
13	Indirect Costs (<9%)			
14	Total for Arts and Sciences			

C) Costs for Partner School District(s)

Participant Costs		Cost Basis (salary, wage, item cost)	Formula (.x FTE, # of hours, amount)	Budgeted Amount
1	Contracts (Names:)			
2	Stipends/Substitutes			
3	Materials and Supplies			
4	Communications			
5	Non Employee Travel			
6	College Credits/Tuition			
7	Other (Specify)			
8	Total Budget for Partner Schools			

D) Costs for Additional Partner(s)

Participant Costs		Cost Basis (salary, wage, item cost)	Formula (.x FTE, # of hours, amount)	Budgeted Amount
1	Contracts (Names:)			
2	Stipends/Substitutes			
3	Materials and Supplies			
4	Communications			
5	Non Employee Travel			
6	College Credits/Tuition			
7	Other (Specify)			
8	Total Budget for Partner Schools			

A)	Total for Education (not to exceed 50%) Line A14	
B)	Total for Arts and Sciences (not to exceed 50%) Line B14	
C)	Total for Partner Schools (not to exceed 50%) Line C8	
D)	Total for Additional Partner(s) (not to exceed 50%) Line D5	
E)	Grand Total	

Note: On the Budget Request forms used by the accounting officers, sections A through D are combined. However, for year-end fiscal and program reporting, these funds must be reported on this form, using sections A, B, C, and D (if relevant) to verify that no one partner received more than 50% of the total award.